

U.S. POLICY TOWARD COLOMBIA

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U.S. POLICY TOWARD COLOMBIA

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2002

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:07 a.m. in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Cass Ballenger presiding.

Mr. BALLENGER. Would the witnesses be seated, please? I will make an opening statement, as will the Senior Member on the Democrats side; and also Representative Delahunt would like to say something. I think Congressman Hyde is going to come later—we might have to interrupt you all sometime.

But being first, let me just say, in Colombia democracy and economic progress are being held hostage by drug trafficking and terrorism. Latin America's oldest democracy is in trouble and we must not fail to help. For years, U.S. foreign policy toward Colombia has solely focused on counternarcotics activities. Drugs, indeed, are the tap root that feeds terrorism in Colombia and elsewhere in the world. The three main terrorist groups now operating in Colombia no longer hold to the political philosophies they once espoused. Instead, they have evolved into sophisticated drug traffickers and terrorists whose only philosophy is money and violence. They are nothing more than criminals, but they should be called what they are: Narcoterrorists.

Up until now, Congress has been reluctant to even address the 38-year-old conflict in Colombia directly. Instead, it has chosen to limit our efforts to counterdrug strategy in an attempt to avoid getting tangled in what seems to be an endless internal struggle. The \$1.3 billion aid package to Colombia, approved by Congress in the year 2000, limited U.S. assets to counternarcotics operations only. While Congress has strongly supported the peace process in Colombia, it continued to take on a drug war only approach.

The recent failure of the peace talks with the FARC, coupled with sharp increases in terrorist attacks in Colombia, is leading us to seek alternative solutions; and it only makes sense to apply the policies which now guide our worldwide war on terror to the scourge of terrorism in Colombia. If we are fighting terror halfway around the globe, surely we should help our ally, the democratically elected Government of Colombia, defend itself from drug-financed terrorism only 3 hours from Miami by plane.

I just returned from Colombia and can tell you that the threat posed by the drug-financed terrorism is all too real. Colombia has

three organizations named by the Department of State as foreign terrorist organizations: The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC; the National Liberation Army, or ELN; and the paramilitaries, or the AUC. All three are extremely violent and are all known to finance their operations through drug trafficking. The FARC and the AUC, particularly, are heavily engaged in the trafficking of narcotics. The ELN is attempting to negotiate peace with the government.

On Monday, March 18th, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the indictment of three FARC leaders on charges of drug trafficking and conspiracy to export cocaine to the United States. This is the first time a member of the FARC has been charged with drug trafficking in the U.S., and it is our first official link between drug trafficking and the terrorist groups.

Let us face it. The FARC, the ELN, and the AUC are terrorists who support their activities with drug money. Although they do not have the reach of Al Qaeda or Hamas, they do have international reach, which includes smuggling drugs out of Colombia into the United States and Europe. They have also been caught importing guns from neighboring nations, including Venezuela. Studies of recent FARC bombings indicate an increased sophistication in bomb making almost certainly linked to the capture of IRA operatives in Colombia last year.

The International Relations Committee has nearly completed a very substantial investigation into the IRA activities in Colombia. The IRA has been in Colombia, providing the FARC narcoterrorists with urban terrorist expertise and training. The presence of the IRA terrorists illustrates clearly the potential for a broader international terrorist threat to the United States financed by illicit drugs in an Andean nation. The terrorist groups operating in Colombia are all capable of large-scale military operations that threaten the stability of Colombia and the region.

The trafficking of cocaine and heroin is just a symptom of a greater ill in Colombia. The root cause is the terrorist groups themselves. Drugs fund these groups. Colombia has asked us for our assistance but not for the use of our troops. In my considered opinion, the U.S. should respond positively to that request.

Sometime next month, the House will consider the supplemental appropriations bill, which is expected to include funds to train an additional counternarcotics brigade and to provide the Colombian military with infrastructure for training. It is my hope that the final package will provide the Colombians with the necessary tools to fight both terror and drug trafficking at the same time.

I yield time to the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Menendez.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for holding this very important hearing, and I am glad that we will finally hear from the Administration an articulation of its Colombia policy. We have not heard much from them lately and I look forward to their testimony.

President Andres Pastrana has staked his entire presidency and all of his political capital on a peace process that, tragically for the Colombian people, never really took root largely because the key partners in that process, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colom-

bia, never acted honorably. As a matter of fact, as I have seen the situation unfold, they have acted rather savagely. The peace process has broken down, and an already intensely violent conflict has turned yet more violent and lethal, with the guerrillas now attacking urban centers and civilians indiscriminately.

From the time that drug financing dangerously exacerbated the conflict years ago, the question for the United States has been: Whether and to what extent and in what manner to assist Colombia, a friend in dire need? When the oldest democracy in South America, an important trading partner and oil supplier, and the pillar of the Andean region saw its stability as a state threatened, the United States came to Colombia's aid and appropriately so. Most Americans would probably accept the notion that securing the viability of the Colombian state and stability in the Andean region is a worthy project and an objective for U.S. policy. Most Americans would, hopefully acknowledge, as President Bush has, that the United States, with our constant demand for illegal drugs produced in Colombia, shares responsibility for this problem. So we try to do our fair share to strengthen Colombia's democracy and institutions and assist Colombia with its crisis.

But I believe we must put the Colombian situation in context. This crisis is not limited to the fight against drug trafficking. It never has been. When Colombia's political parties were practically at war during the La Violencia period of the early 1950s, drugs were not even part of the picture and that historic conflict is directly manifested in today's struggle. Nor has this transformed overnight strictly into a fight against terrorism.

We have before us a multifaceted crisis that is uniquely Colombian and that, at the same time, is directly linked with and affects Americans and increasingly European and South American society. Despite the drop in recent years in recreational drug use, roughly five million American drug addicts keep the demand for these drugs constant. Our borders are wide open to visitors and commerce, with close to 500 million people visiting the United States annually. Hundreds of air and seaports process billions of international commercial transactions. It is exceedingly difficult to stop illicit drug shipments among such massive flows so long as the demand persists. And, in terms of supply, the huge success of the Colombian rebels and paramilitaries at financing their murderous ways with drug production and trafficking makes them formidable adversaries for the Colombian government.

We, therefore, face a very complicated, interwoven set of challenges, and we would be fooling ourselves to believe that this could be resolved either in the short term or simply by focusing on one facet, whether it is terrorism or narcotics, or even both. The United States has stepped up, and the international community, including the European Union, should stand in solidarity with Colombia. But a lasting solution ultimately will not be brought about by the United States or Europe.

At its core, this is a Colombian problem and requires a Colombian solution. Ultimately, the hard decisions must come from leaders in Bogota and throughout Colombia, not Washington or the capitals of Europe. The United States and others may help, but Colombians themselves must take ownership of the crisis, resolve to

end it once and for all, and bear the burden necessary to save their country. Colombian elected and appointed officials, business and labor leaders, the security forces, judges, and civil society broadly must join together to address their national crisis. They must do the fighting, collect the taxes to finance their security forces, and make the sacrifices necessary to take their country down the path of peace.

As for the United States, we must periodically take inventory of our goals and objectives and ask: Where is the progress, where is the final goal, and how close is it to being in sight? After a significant commitment of training and equipment, when will the tide turn in favor of the Colombian government? When will the armed forces and police be sized and structured adequately to defeat their adversaries? When do the paramilitaries either go away, as some believe they will when the conflict wanes, or get prosecuted? When do those who are internally displaced find homes? When do eradication and interdiction efforts overwhelm the efforts of the illegal drug producers and traffickers?

I am interested in hearing about these questions and the answers thereto from both Assistant Secretaries Reich and Rodman. Plan Colombia is a 6-year plan. Will we see significant progress by this time next year? Will it take 2 more years or 5 more years? As guardians of the taxpayers' money, we need the answers to those questions.

Finally, are the Colombian people truly taking ownership of this conflict and showing through their deeds that they are willing to take back their country? I can agree with the main thrust of active U.S. engagement under the Clinton Administration, which has been largely adopted by the Bush Administration. That is certainly a course of action for us to take. We now tackle narcotics and terrorism as intertwined phenomena. Perhaps they are intertwined, but we must be careful not to get ahead of the Colombians in solving this problem or in taking the battle to the illegal groups. We cannot fight the Colombians' battles for them, and that brings me to my last point.

The Colombian conflict does have an underlying social dimension. Colombian society has failed, to date, to provide an adequate standard of living for a significant number of Colombians. Many social and economic needs remain unfulfilled. Economic opportunity, education, and health care are simply not available to millions of Colombians. That must be as significant a concern as battling the illegal groups, and that must be at the forefront of our policies as well.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses as well as our private witnesses and the opportunity to question them as they come forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you. And now our true leader, Congressman Hyde, let me turn it to you, please, sir.

Mr. HYDE. Thank you, Chairman Ballenger. I certainly commend you and the Ranking Democratic Member of this Subcommittee, Mr. Menendez, for holding this very important hearing. We extend a very warm welcome to the Administration witnesses, our friend, Assistant Secretary of State Otto Reich and Assistant Secretary of Defense Peter Rodman and the Acting Commander-in-Chief of the

United States Southern Command, Major General Gary Speer. We also welcome the panel of private witnesses.

There is a conflagration slowly emerging in the region where the North and South American continents join. Three hours by plane from Miami, we face a potential breeding ground for international terror equaled perhaps only by Afghanistan. The threat to the American national interest is both imminent and clear. We have become familiar with global terrorism. Even now our country's sons and daughters are in Afghanistan uprooting the infrastructure that supports the Al Qaeda terrorist network. Our President has also dispatched our military to Georgia in the Caucasus and to the Philippines in the Pacific to help these friendly governments combat terrorists and their organizations on their own soil. Al Qaeda and its Taliban allies finance their acts of terror with illegal drugs; and, in so doing, reap a murderous harvest of addiction, death, and misery in the civilized world.

The September 11 attack on the United States demonstrated that we have to look for threats where we least expect them. The dangerous nexus of the drug underworld and terrorism is a grave threat to our national security. There are few places in the world where this threat is more pressing than in Colombia.

I might point out that on the 24th of April, we are going to have a Hearing in the Full Committee exploring the IRA-FARC links further threatening Colombian democracy and their globalization effect on terrorism and national security in this hemisphere.

In the midst of the spreading chaos in that country, criminal terrorist networks mix freely, unfettered by morality or the rule of law. Cocaine and heroin are the illegal tender of this criminal and terrorist underworld; and narcotics procure the weapons, the explosives, and the expertise that terrorists employ in their campaign of destruction. As I noted, we are going to explore an international dimension of that sad situation. We should not be blinded by false ideological labels. There is no Left and no Right in Colombia, only competing bands of narcoterrorist criminals. Hizballah and other international terrorists have put down deep roots in the Western Hemisphere. They have found fertile soil in a region beset by violence, drug trafficking and corruption.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Colombians to fight for their country. Colombia's government must extend its effective sovereignty over the entirety of its national territory and protect its citizens from narcoterrorists and other criminals. No group of criminals, including the so-called "paramilitary groups," can be permitted to fill this vacuum, for that would assure victory for criminality and chaos. The toll of drug corruption on Colombian society and institutions has been great.

A new course is possible, but it will take courage. The Colombian National Police have undertaken reforms that have rooted out major elements of drug corruption. All legitimate institutions in Colombian society, especially those institutions that provide for the common defense and administer justice, must deepen their commitment to do the same. There can be no doubt that cutting off our aid to Colombia will only serve to strengthen the grip of narcoterrorists.

Recently, this Committee passed a bipartisan resolution recognizing the dire situation in Colombia and calling on the President to send legislative proposals to Congress for an American response. I intend to move legislation that includes the President's request for expanded authority to protect American interests in Colombia. The purpose of this legislation will be to free the Administration to employ the resources at its disposal in support of a democratically-elected government that is an ally of the United States.

Prior to the spread of the illegal drug trade, Colombia was a decent country. We have a waning opportunity to help Colombia's beleaguered good citizens recover their country and in so doing protect our own. Again, I commend you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Menendez and the Subcommittee, for this very important hearing. Thank you.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Recognizing an individual who has been heavily involved with the country of Colombia, let me give time to Congressman Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I will waive an opening statement. I do want to associate myself with the observations made by the Ranking Member, Mr. Menendez. I thought his statement encompassed my own perspective and I would only be repetitive.

I think it is important, as he pointed out, to note that violence and armed conflict has plagued Colombian society for decades now. This is not a recent phenomenon. Yes, Colombia has been plagued by the advent of the narcotrafficker. At the same time, I think it is important to focus on the historical context to better understand where we should be looking in terms of developing a plan, a comprehensive plan, a plan for peace in Colombia. Because, even if legislation should pass this Congress, removing the restrictions that the Chairman of the Full Committee alluded to, there will be no peace in Colombia. And until there is peace there will be no stability; and, until we have stability, there will be a continuing flow of illegal narcotics into the neighborhoods of our own society. So I dare say, it is time that we came with a more comprehensive perspective in terms of what we ought to be doing in Colombia. Again, I look forward to the questioning.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you. Let me, if I may, introduce our opening panel. First, Otto Reich, Assistant Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere, was sworn in on January 11, 2002, and has spent over 30 years in hemispheric affairs. As Ambassador to Venezuela, he has received the highest awards given to an Ambassador from both the United States State Department and the Government of Venezuela. He has served in a number of posts in the State Department, USAID, the military, and in the private sector, and he is one of the best-known experts on Latin America. Welcome, Otto.

Mr. REICH. Thank you, sir.

Mr. BALLENGER. Let me introduce the other two, then we will start. Next, we have Peter Rodman, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs since July 16, 2001. He is a principal adviser to the Secretary of Defense in the formulation and coordination of international security strategy and policy, with the responsibility for East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, the Per-

sian Gulf and Latin America. Mr. Rodman has worked in a number of posts in the State Department during the Reagan Administration and has held research positions in the private sector. He has also published a book on the Third World in the Cold War.

And finally, Major General Gary Speer. General Speer assumed the duties as Acting Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. SOUTHCOM on October 1, 2001. He has served as the Deputy Commander-in-Chief since the previous July and Major General Speer worked on the Army staff in the Pentagon as the Security Assistance Officer for Latin America. He is a highly decorated officer, whose awards include: The Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, Brazil's Peacekeeper Medal, Guatemala's White Nun Medal, and Paraguay's Marshal Solano Lopez Medal. I could go on.

Secretary Reich, before I turn to you, let me turn to a young lady who is vitally interested in this topic for a short statement.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you for the young lady reference. That wins you a lot of points. I am sorry I will not be able to stay for the Hearing. We have a Subcommittee hearing going on at the same time, but I wanted just to make some brief remarks, especially for my two good friends who are on this panel today: Ambassador Otto Reich, with whom I have had the honor of working on many Western Hemisphere issues for a number of years. It was a very proud appointment of President Bush to nominate you to this post, Ambassador, and I know that we will continue working closely together not only on Plan Colombia but on all of the issues that impact our hemisphere and most especially Cuba, and we look forward to your late-April visit to Miami as we outline U.S.-Cuba policy. And Major General Gary Speer, the Acting Commander-in-Chief of the United States Southern Command, is a good, longtime friend. We went to Guantanamo Bay together just a few months ago to see the conditions of the Taliban and Al Qaeda forces who are detained there. I came back with glowing reports about how their human rights conditions are wonderful, there are no abuses, that they are able to pray in their Koran in many different languages, the chimes ring five times a day so that they know where to face and how to pray, their dietary needs are being met, and I congratulate all of the men and women in our armed forces who are doing a valiant job of guarding these terrible individuals day in and day out under very difficult conditions. What they have built in Guantanamo in just a few short months is really remarkable. It is an entire city with air-conditioned hospital facilities and the best health care. We are fixing wounds that these prisoners have had for 15, 20 years, so any reports of human rights abuses from these organizations against Al Qaeda and Taliban forces are totally unfounded. And it is thanks to the leadership and the coordination that the Southern Command has been giving these and other operations.

Certainly, this hearing today, Mr. Chairman, is going to be a very interesting one. We want to know about the terrorist organizations, particularly the FARC, that rank as a real threat to the national security of our country. I am very pleased to hear from Chairman Hyde that on April 24th, we will be having a hearing on the activities of the three Irish nationals that are linked to the pro-

visional Irish Republican Army, who were arrested in Colombia last August. I am wanting to know whether this underscores the danger that Colombia has become a magnet for international terrorists.

And the Administration has testified before this Subcommittee that Hizballah and other Middle Eastern terrorist groups conduct large-scale fundraising efforts for their terrorist organizations in Brazil, in Paraguay, and they are involved in all kinds of illegal activities, including drug trafficking. We hope that, although we are focusing on Colombia, because we have Ambassador Reich with us, he can elaborate on the presence of the Middle Eastern terrorist organizations in our hemisphere. I know we have in our audience Colonel Soto, who is in the Washington Times today, focusing on a real criticism of the Chavez-Castro connection: "Chavez on Way Out, Says Dissenter." I do not know if Colonel Pedro Soto is here today, but if he could rise. I am going to be having a side meeting with him today. I look forward to that conversation.

I am also interested in knowing whether the Pastrana Administration has the political will to go after these terrorist groups in Colombia. What have they done to bolster the Administration's view that this really is a true effort? Yesterday, at a House foreign appropriations hearing, it was generally agreed by Committee Members that little concrete progress has been made in Plan Colombia. What changes do we see in the near term to getting some real results, and do we consider the situation in Colombia developing into a regional threat, and what is the panelists' impression on how Colombia's neighbors are responding to this threat?

And also, we have got to look at our European allies in Plan Colombia. Do we see in the Bush Administration a real role for them in helping us implement Plan Colombia? For years now there has been an ongoing agreement also concerning the role of terrorist organizations in narcotics trafficking. We have had previous U.S. Ambassadors in the past Administrations tell us that there was little evidence that these groups were in the illegal drug business. But we have seen the indictments of the FARC warlords for drug trafficking. How has this position now changed, and what is the role of other governments in the Western Hemisphere, such as the Chavez Administration in Venezuela and Cuba's Castro regime, in promoting and facilitating the drug arms and guerrilla network in Colombia? And finally, using Colombia as a test case, what is the U.S. hemispheric antiterrorism strategy?

So this is certainly an interesting Hearing. I apologize that I will be scooting in and out, but I have had an opportunity to look at the opening statements, and I congratulate you for having excellent private and public panelists.

Once again, welcome to Otto and Gary, my good friends, thank you. Not that you are not, Secretary Rodman. You are a wonderful friend. I have just known these guys a lot longer. Thank you. Thank you, Cass. You ought to call me young lady much more often.

Mr. BALLENGER. Okay. Thank you very much. Congressman Paul has a short statement to make.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for holding these hearings, which I think are very important. Before

we appropriate any more money, we ought to know what is going on. I am rather surprised that the money that we voted for last year, the \$1.7 billion, already it has probably not even been spent, and we are coming back for some more. I am concerned that we are drifting into nation building and world policeman. And getting involved has no justification. The idea that we can go down there and change our desire for drugs is rather extreme as far as I am concerned.

But I do not see any national security interest down here. I see a lot of special interests being concerned to go down and protect private property owned by oil companies, as well as selling a lot of military equipment. So to say the least, I am very skeptical of more money going into a Colombian operation. I yield back.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you. And finally, the panel. First, we will go with Assistant Secretary Reich. Go right ahead, Otto.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. REICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be with you here today, you and your colleagues. I want to thank you for accepting my complete testimony and making it a part of the record. I would like to give you an abbreviated statement and then pass the baton to my colleagues, Assistant Secretary Rodman and General Speer.

I know that some of you were in Colombia and Bolivia last week. Although the focus of today's hearing is Colombia, I would be glad to respond to any concerns you may have regarding challenges elsewhere in the region, in the Andean region, especially as it affects our policy toward Colombia.

President Bush's vision for the hemisphere is one of free markets and free people. With the exception of a single country, there is a remarkable hemispheric consensus in favor of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and open markets. Despite this consensus, democratic institutions face a wide variety of challenges in the hemisphere. In Colombia, the challenges are especially grave, including the outright assault by illegal armed terrorists on Colombia's government, society, and people. What happens in Colombia is of vital importance to all of us in the United States. Terrorism and narcotics trafficking not only exact a terrible human toll in Colombia, but their effects are felt here as well. The FARC, the ELN, and the AUC all have been designated as foreign terrorist organizations by the United States. All three threaten a wide range of U.S. security, political and economic interests.

Colombia is the source of 90 percent of the cocaine consumed in the United States and is a significant supplier of heroin to the U.S. market. The FARC and the AUC are intimately involved in this trade. Since 1992, the FARC and ELN have kidnapped 51 U.S. citizens and murdered 10. The FARC, ELN and AUC also threaten regional stability. The FARC regularly uses Colombia's border regions for rest and recreation, arms and narcotics trafficking, and resupply operations.

The ongoing attacks on Colombia's democracy have a tremendous cost within Colombia. The AUC has killed two legislators over the

past 12 months, while the FARC has kidnapped six, including presidential candidate Ingrid Bentancourt. Three thousand Colombians were killed by terrorist violence in 2001. Nearly as many were kidnapped. Colombian President Andres Pastrana took the initiative in 1999 with the launch of the 5-year, \$7.5 billion Plan Colombia. This plan called for substantial social investment, judicial, political and economic reforms, modernization of the Colombian armed forces, and renewed efforts to combat narco-trafficking.

Since July 2000, the U.S. has provided Colombia with \$1.7 billion in assistance. We also provided Colombia and our other Andean partners with trade benefits under the Andean Trade Preferences Act, also known as ATPA.

The early results of Plan Colombia have been significant but far from sufficient. Our counternarcotics efforts have made great strides. The Government of Colombia extradited 23 Colombian nationals to the U.S. in 2001. We trained, equipped and deployed the Colombian Army's counternarcotics brigade, which destroyed 818 base laboratories and 21 HCL laboratories. A record 84,000 hectares of coca cultivation in Colombia were sprayed last year.

Our efforts to ameliorate the effect of violence on civilians and help the Government of Colombia deliver public services have had a major impact. Through Colombia's Ministry of the Interior, we have funded a program that has provided protection to 1,676 Colombians whose lives were threatened, including human rights workers, labor activists, and journalists, since May 2001. The U.S., working with NGOs and international agencies, has provided substantial assistance in Colombia to persons displaced by violence since mid-2001. We have opened 18 Casas de Justicia, Houses of Justice, to provide cost-effective legal services and are working to set up a Casa de Justicia in San Vicente de Caguan, the main urban area in the former demilitarized zone.

Implementation of alternative development programs in Southern Colombia has made some progress despite the region's limited economic prospects, weak community cohesion, and especially the lack of security there. As you know, in light of these difficulties, we are adjusting our alternative development programs.

Human rights concerns have been a central element in U.S. policy toward Colombia, and our message is making a difference. In meetings in Colombia with senior civilian and military officials, we have regularly stressed the need for Colombia to improve its human rights performance and sever remaining military-to-paramilitary ties. The counternarcotics brigade that we trained and equipped has compiled an excellent human rights record to date. Still, too many Colombians continue to suffer abuses by state security forces or by terrorist groups acting in collusion with state security units. Those responsible for such actions must be brought to justice.

Under section 567 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 2002, the Secretary of State is required to certify as to the Government of Colombia's progress in meeting several human rights-related conditions. The Secretary takes very seriously his responsibilities under the Act, as do I. We are examining carefully each of the conditions, in light of events on the ground in Colombia, as part of preparing a rec-

ommendation to the Secretary. We have also been consulting with interested parties, including the Colombian government and armed forces and NGOs, both here and in Colombia.

I cannot presage what the Secretary's decision will be, nor when he will make it. In the meantime, we will continue to adhere to the provisions of the law.

On February 20th, President Pastrana ended the demilitarized zone and the Government of Colombia's peace talks with the FARC. The immediate catalyst for Pastrana's action was the FARC's hijacking of a civilian aircraft and its subsequent kidnapping of the President of the Peace Commission of the Colombian Senate. Since February 20, the Colombian military has reoccupied the main urban areas in the former zone, while the FARC has continued its terrorist violence.

Just as we supported President Pastrana's management of the peace process with the FARC, we believe it is critical that the U.S. help Colombia deal with the surge in violence that followed the end of the demilitarized zone. In the counterterrorism supplemental submitted on March 21, we seek new, explicit, legal authorities that would allow our assistance to Colombia, including assistance previously provided, to be used "to support a unified campaign against narcotics trafficking, terrorist activities, and other threats to its national security." These new authorities recognize that the terrorist and narcotics problems in Colombia are inextricably intertwined.

Our request for new authorities does not signify a retreat from our concern about human rights, nor an open-ended U.S. commitment in Colombia. It expressly recognizes that we intend to use the new authorities consistent with the human rights conditions relative to our assistance to Colombia's armed forces and the 400-person cap on U.S. military personnel.

We have asked for \$439 million in our Fiscal Year '03 budget request to sustain our Plan Colombia programs, as well as \$98 million in FMF funds to train and equip Colombian military units protecting the Cano Limon oil pipeline. The \$439 million request includes \$275 million for the Colombian military and police, and \$164 million for democracy and human rights programs, alternative development, assistance to vulnerable groups, and the promotion of the rule of law. These funds will be crucial as the Government of Colombia works to improve security, build effective democratic institutions and foster economic growth.

We have also requested \$292 million in FY '03 Andean Counterdrug Initiative funds, along with \$44 million in Economic Support Funds to support programs in Colombia's neighboring countries. There will be little benefit to reducing coca cultivation in Colombia, if it were accompanied by a resurgence in cultivation in Peru and Bolivia. Similarly, an effective strategy to reduce coca cultivation and narcotics trafficking in Colombia requires effective steps by Colombia's neighbors to improve controls over their borders and the people and goods that cross back and forth.

We are also seeking \$35 million in the FY '02 counterterrorism supplemental to help the Colombian government protect its citizens from kidnapping, infrastructure attacks and other terrorist actions.

We have also requested \$3 million in the FY '02 supplemental in funding for Ecuador.

President Pastrana and his Administration have made an exceptional commitment to fighting terrorism and narcotics trafficking and to try to bring peace to his troubled country. The United States has matched that commitment with its own in assistance to the Government and people of Colombia; and in our commitment to reduce the demand and consumption of illegal drugs here at home.

Over the past several months, the Colombian people have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to democracy and an exceptional repudiation of the violence and terrorism of the FARC and other terrorist organizations. Colombia is in the midst of a cycle of national elections to choose a new national congress and the successor to President Pastrana. The first round of elections to choose the new congress was carried out successfully in the face of FARC threats and attacks.

The commitment we have made to Colombia cannot succeed absent a sustained commitment of even greater magnitude by the Government of Colombia. We have met with the leading contenders in the upcoming presidential election to discuss their respective visions for the future of Colombia and their strategies for how to get there. Once the elections are complete and the Colombian people have chosen their next President, we will engage with the President-elect and his or her team to delineate the commitments they are prepared to make.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, I greatly appreciate the support that Congress has given in the past to the President's policy toward Colombia. I appreciate as well the House's passage of the Andean Trade Preferences Act and look forward to a positive response from the Senate to the President's call that it pass the ATPA by the 22nd of this month. Protecting our national interests in Colombia will require a sustained commitment on our part. I am here today as part of my commitment to work together with you to build the necessary programs and elicit the necessary counterpart commitment from the Government and people of Colombia and the rest of the Andean region. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Reich follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

I would like to begin by thanking you for the invitation to testify today on our policy toward Colombia. It is an honor to appear before the members of this subcommittee. In addition to Colombia, I also will touch briefly on our policies toward the rest of the Andean region as they affect what we seek to accomplish in Colombia. Some of you, including the distinguished chairman, were in Colombia and Bolivia just last week. I look forward to exchanging views with all of you on the challenges that we face in the region.

President Bush's vision for the hemisphere is one of free markets and free people. With the exception of a single country, there is a remarkable hemispheric consensus in favor of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and open markets. Despite this consensus, democratic institutions face a wide variety of challenges in the hemisphere. In Colombia, the challenges are especially grave, including the outright assault by illegal armed terrorists on Colombia's government, society, and people.

Colombia's 40 million inhabitants and its democracy are under assault by three terrorist groups—the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN) and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). The

three groups have a combined force of over 25,000 combatants, and engage regularly in massacres, kidnappings, and attacks on infrastructure and public utilities. The FARC and AUC are involved in all facets of narcotics trafficking, including cultivation, processing, and transportation. The income they derive—estimated at over \$300 million a year—has been key to their expansion over the last ten years.

U.S. INTERESTS IN COLOMBIA

What happens in Colombia is of vital importance to all of us in the United States. Terrorism and narcotics trafficking not only exact a terrible human toll in Colombia, but their effects are felt here as well. The FARC, ELN and AUC all have been designated “Foreign Terrorist Organizations” under U.S. law; all three threaten a wide range of U.S. security, political, and economic interests.

Colombia is the source of 90 percent of the cocaine consumed in the United States and is a significant supplier of heroin to the U.S. market. The FARC and the AUC are intimately involved in this trade, and in creating the lawless conditions under which this trade thrives. Both the FARC and the ELN have kidnapped and killed U.S. citizens, and regularly attack U.S. investments in Colombia. Since 1992, the FARC and ELN have kidnapped 51 U.S. citizens and murdered ten.

The FARC, ELN and AUC also threaten regional stability. The FARC regularly uses border regions in Panama, Ecuador, Brazil and Venezuela for rest and recreation, arms and narcotics trafficking, and resupply operations. For some time, conflicts between the FARC and AUC in northwest Colombia have led to the limited movement of displaced Colombians into Panama’s Darien region. Venezuela and Ecuador have experienced similar problems with displaced persons at various times.

The ongoing attacks on Colombia’s democracy—one of the hemisphere’s oldest—also have had a tremendous cost within Colombia itself. The AUC has killed two Colombian legislators over the past twelve months, while the FARC has kidnapped six, including Presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt. The three terrorist groups assassinated 12 mayors during the last year alone. 3,000 Colombians were killed by terrorist violence in 2001; nearly as many were kidnapped.

THE U.S. RESPONSE TO COLOMBIA

Colombian President Andres Pastrana took the initiative in 1999 with the launch of the five-year, \$7.5 billion Plan Colombia. This plan recognized that Colombia’s narcotics, political, terrorist and economic problems are interrelated, creating a vicious downward cycle. To break these links, it called for substantial social investment; judicial, political and economic reforms; modernization of the Colombian Armed Forces, and renewed efforts to combat narcotrafficking. The United States shared Plan Colombia’s vision of a peaceful, thriving, democratic Colombia free from the scourges of narcotics and terrorism; our support has been a key component of the plan.

Since July 2000, the U.S. has provided Colombia with \$1.7 billion to combat narcotics trafficking and terrorism, strengthen democratic institutions and human rights, foster socio-economic development, and mitigate the impact of the violence on Colombian civilians. We also during most of this time have provided Colombia and our other Andean partners with trade benefits under the Andean Trade Preferences Act (ATPA) to encourage economic development outside of the narcotics trade. Our assistance to Colombia using Plan Colombia funds is limited to support of counternarcotics activities.

The early results of Plan Colombia have been significant, but far from sufficient. Our counternarcotics efforts under Plan Colombia have made great strides. The Government of Colombia extradited 23 Colombian nationals to the U.S. in 2001, an unprecedented level of cooperation. We trained, equipped and deployed the Colombian Army’s counternarcotics brigade, which destroyed 818 base laboratories and 21 HCL laboratories, and provided security for our aerial eradication operations in Southern Colombia. A record 84,000 hectares of coca cultivation in Colombia were sprayed last year, up from 58,000 in 2000.

Our efforts to ameliorate the effect of violence on civilians have had a major impact. Through Colombia’s Ministry of Interior, we have funded a program that has provided protection to 1,676 Colombians whose lives were threatened, including human rights workers, labor activists, and journalists, since May 2001. Separately, the U.S. Government-funded Early Warning System helps to alert Colombian authorities to threats of potential massacres or other human rights abuses, enabling them to act to avert such incidents. To date, the EWS has issued 106 alerts. Lastly, the U.S.—working with non-governmental organizations and international agencies—has provided substantial assistance in Colombia to persons displaced by violence since mid-2001.

Our programs to help the Government of Colombia reform its administration of justice and strengthen local government have also advanced. We have opened 18 Casas de Justicia to provide cost-effective legal services to Colombians who have not previously enjoyed real access to the country's judicial system. We are working to set up a Casa de Justicia in San Vicente de Caguan, the main urban area in the former demilitarized zone. Similarly, our program to help municipalities improve their financial management, fight corruption, and boost community participation has completed six Social Investment Fund projects in Southern Colombia.

We have worked to increase the capabilities of the criminal justice system. Our work has included developing specialized units or task forces to pursue the investigation and prosecution of human rights, money laundering/asset forfeiture, narcotics, and corruption cases. In addition, we have provided training, particularly in oral trials, to prosecutors and police across the country. We have assisted in the development of maritime enforcement, port security and prison security; undertaken projects to develop and equip witness and judicial personnel security corps, and continued a vigorous program of bilateral criminal investigations against the highest-level traffickers and money launderers.

Implementation of alternative development programs in Southern Colombia has also progressed despite the region's limited economic prospects, weak community cohesion, and, especially, the lack of security there. The limited institutional capacity of the Colombian Government agency charged with implementing the programs has also been a problem. As you know, in light of these difficulties we are adjusting our alternative development programs in Southern Colombia to focus on job-creating projects to improve the infrastructure there. Other alternative development projects will be shifted to near-by areas of Colombia that offer better economic prospects and security.

Human rights concerns have been a central element in U.S. policy toward Colombia. In meetings in Colombia with senior civilian and military officials, U.S. officials, including Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Marc Grossman, Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Lorne Craner, and I have regularly stressed the need for Colombia to improve its human rights performance and sever remaining military-paramilitary ties. Most recently, Curt Struble, our Deputy Assistant Secretary for South America, and Scott Carpenter, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, traveled to Bogota late last month to underscore the importance we attach to human rights. This was but the latest in a series of such efforts both here and in Colombia.

Our human rights message is making a difference. The counternarcotics brigade that we trained and equipped has compiled an excellent human rights record to date. President Pastrana and Armed Forces Commander Tapias have repeatedly denounced collusion between elements of the Colombian military and the paramilitary terrorists. The Colombian military captured 590 paramilitaries and killed 92 in combat last year. Six military personnel, including two colonels and a lieutenant colonel, were charged with collaborating with paramilitaries or with having committed gross human rights violations in 2001. A senior Colombian naval official's career was recently ended because of allegations that he collaborated with paramilitaries.

LOOKING AHEAD

Still, too many Colombians continue to suffer abuses by state security forces or by terrorist groups acting in collusion with state security units. Those responsible for such actions must be brought to justice. The establishment of the rule of law and personal security for all Colombians will not be created through human rights abuses or impunity for the perpetrators of such crimes.

Under Section 567 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 2002, the Secretary of State is required to certify as to the Government of Colombia's progress in meeting the following human rights-related conditions:

- that the Commander General of the Colombian Armed Forces is suspending from the Armed Forces those members, of whatever rank, who have been credibly alleged to have committed gross violations of human rights, including extra-judicial killings, or to have aided or abetted paramilitary groups;
- the Colombian Armed Forces are cooperating with civilian prosecutors and judicial authorities, including providing requested information such as the identity of the persons suspended and the nature and cause of the suspension, access to witnesses and relevant military documents and other information, in prosecuting and punishing in civilian courts those members of the Colombian Armed Forces, of whatever rank, who have been credibly alleged to have com-

mitted gross violations of human rights, including extra-judicial killings, or to have aided or abetted paramilitary groups;

- the Colombian Armed Forces are taking effective measures to sever links (including by denying access to military intelligence, vehicles, and other equipment or supplies, and ceasing other forms of active or tacit cooperation), at the command, battalion, and brigade levels, with paramilitary groups, and to execute outstanding orders for capture for members of such groups.

The Secretary takes very seriously his responsibilities under the Act, as do I. We have been queried as to why the certification has not yet been made. The simple answer is that we are examining carefully each of the conditions in light of events on the ground in Colombia, as part of preparing our recommendation to the Secretary. We also have been consulting with, and gathering information from, all interested parties including the Colombian Government and Armed Forces, and non-governmental organizations both here and in Colombia.

I of course cannot presage what the Secretary's decision will be, nor when he will make it. In the meantime, we will continue to adhere to the provisions of the law.

THE NEED FOR NEW AUTHORITIES

On February 20, President Pastrana ended the demilitarized zone and the Government of Colombia's peace talks with the FARC. The immediate catalyst for Pastrana's action was the FARC's hijacking of a civilian aircraft and its subsequent kidnapping of the President of the Peace Commission in the Colombian Senate. These were merely the latest in a series of outrages by the FARC since Pastrana had renewed the zone on January 20. The FARC had also stepped up attacks on military and police targets, bombed key economic infrastructure, and refused to participate in good faith in peace talks.

Since February 20, the Colombian military has reoccupied the main urban areas in the former zone, while the FARC has continued its terrorist violence. President Pastrana has announced a hike in Colombia's defense budget to cover the cost of heightened military operations, and has announced plans to add 10,000 professional soldiers to the army. He also requested help from the U.S., including approval to use military assets provided for counternarcotics purposes to help cope with the increased terrorist threat.

Just as we supported President Pastrana's management of the peace process with the FARC, we believe it is critical that the U.S. help Colombia deal with the surge in violence that has followed the end of the demilitarized zone. We answered Pastrana's immediate request for help by providing increased intelligence support on terrorist actions, expediting the delivery of helicopter spare parts already paid for by the Government of Colombia, and assisting the Colombians with eradication activities in the former zone.

We are also acting to address the Colombian people's broader needs as they defend their democracy from terrorist violence. In the counterterrorism supplemental submitted on March 21, we are seeking new, explicit, legal authorities that would allow our assistance to Colombia, including assistance previously provided, to be used "to support a unified campaign against narcotics trafficking, terrorist activities, and other threats to its national security." These new authorities recognize that the terrorist and narcotics problems in Colombia are inextricably intertwined. If enacted, they will give us greater flexibility to help the Government of Colombia attack this hydra-headed threat.

I would stress that our request for new authorities does not signify a retreat from our concern about human rights nor an open-ended U.S. commitment in Colombia. Our proposal expressly recognizes that we intend to use the new authorities consistent with the human rights conditions relevant to our assistance to Colombia's armed forces and the 400 person cap on U.S. military personnel providing training in Colombia in support of Plan Colombia.

THE NEED FOR NEW ASSISTANCE

We have asked for \$439 million in Andean Counterdrug Initiative funds in our FY-03 budget request to sustain our Plan Colombia programs, as well as \$98 million in FMF funds to train and equip Colombian military units protecting the Cano Limon oil pipeline. The \$439 million request includes \$275 million for the Colombian military and police, and \$164 million for democracy and human rights programs, alternative development, assistance to vulnerable groups, and promotion of the rule of law. These funds will be crucial as the Government of Colombia works to improve security, build effective democratic institutions and foster economic growth.

We have also requested \$292 million in FY-03 Andean Counterdrug Initiative funds, along with \$44 million in Economic Support Funds (ESF), to support programs in Colombia's neighboring countries. At the same time that we assist the Government of Colombia to confront its narcoterrorist threat, it is important that we not neglect the serious challenges faced by Colombia's neighbors. There would be little benefit to reducing coca cultivation in Colombia if it were accompanied by a resurgence in coca cultivation in countries such as Peru and Bolivia. Similarly, an effective strategy to reduce coca cultivation and narcotics trafficking in Colombia requires not only action in Colombia, but also effective steps by Colombia's neighbors likewise to improve controls over their borders, and the people and goods that cross back and forth.

We are also seeking \$35 million in the FY-02 counterterrorism supplemental to help the Colombian Government protect its citizens from kidnapping, infrastructure attacks and other terrorist actions. Our \$35 million request includes:

- \$25 million in NADR funding for anti-kidnapping training and equipment for special units of the Colombian police and military;
- \$6 million in FMF funding for training for Colombian military units protecting the key Cano Limon oil pipeline; and
- \$4 million in INCLE funding for the construction of reinforced police stations to enable the police to reestablish a presence in conflicted areas.

We have also requested \$3 million in the FY-02 counterterrorism supplemental in FMF funding for Ecuador, principally for the purchase of spare parts and equipment to improve the air mobility of Ecuador's military. This is a particularly critical need to address if we are to assist the Government of Ecuador in strengthening its controls over provinces bordering Colombia.

COLOMBIA AT THE CROSSROADS

President Pastrana and his administration have made an exceptional commitment to fighting terrorism and narcotics trafficking, and to try to bring peace to his troubled country. The United States has welcomed that commitment, and has matched it with its own in assistance to the government and people of Colombia, and in our commitment to reduce the demand and consumption of illegal drugs here at home.

Over the past several months, the Colombian people have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to democracy, and an exceptional repudiation of the violence and terrorism of the FARC and other terrorist organizations. Colombia is in the midst of a cycle of national elections to choose a new national Congress and the successor to President Pastrana. The first round of elections, to choose the new Congress, was carried out successfully in the face of FARC threats and attacks in the wake of President Pastrana's decision to end the demilitarized zone. The people of Colombia deserve to be congratulated for their commitment to democracy. We are pleased that the Organization of American States, at the request of Colombia, stepped forward with a small observer mission for the Congressional elections and has committed to sending a robust observer delegation for the presidential balloting.

The commitment we have made to Colombia—to sustain our counternarcotics programs, step up our counterterrorism assistance, strengthen programs to protect human rights, and help to foment alternative development, among other areas—cannot succeed absent a sustained commitment of even greater magnitude by the Government of Colombia. In our Bogota embassy and in Washington, we have met with the leading contenders in the upcoming presidential election to discuss their respective visions for the future of Colombia and their strategies for how to get there. Once the elections are complete and the Colombian people have chosen their next president, we will engage with the president-elect and his or her team to delineate the commitments they are prepared to make.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, members of the sub-committee, I greatly appreciate the support that Congress has given in the past to the President's policy toward Colombia, including the recent passage of FY-02 funding for programs in the Andean region. I appreciate as well the House's passage of the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA), and look forward to a positive response from the Senate to the President's call that it pass the ATPA by the 22nd of this month. Protecting our national interests in Colombia will require a sustained commitment on our part. I am here today as part of my commitment to work together with you to build the necessary programs and elicit the necessary counterpart commitment from the government and people of Colombia and the rest of the Andean region. Thank you.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you, Secretary Reich, and now Secretary Rodman, if you will.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE PETER W. RODMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. RODMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, want to thank the Chairman and the Committee for your courtesy to us and to congratulate you for convening this Hearing on such an important and timely subject. I am pleased also to join my colleagues from Southern Command and the Department of State because we represent elements of the Executive Branch, who have, after long deliberation, come together on two propositions. One is that our national commitment to help Colombia in present conditions is at least as important as it was before, even given all of our other pre-occupations in the world right now.

The second proposition is that the time has come to offer some modifications of our previous approach. Our thinking in the Executive Branch has evolved over the last year, and I sense that thinking in the Congress has evolved, and I think what we are proposing is in the spirit of H.R. 358, which Chairman Hyde referred to. The reason we believe some adjustments need to be made in our previous approach is that a lot has happened in the last year. Obviously, September 11th has heightened everyone's awareness of the evil of terrorism. In Colombia itself, in addition, in the last year or so there is a greater awareness of the link that exists between narcotics and terrorism. That is why we are all thinking about enlarging the scope of our policy to some degree beyond just the counter-narcotics struggle, which has dominated our policy up to now.

The other event is the dramatic event that has been referred to, President Pastrana's decision at the beginning of the year that the peace process had come to a dead end and the courageous decision, in our view, to close down the despeje. We supported President Pastrana when he pursued the peace diplomacy, and we believe he deserves support now as he deals with the consequences of the very fateful decision he has made.

The last factor I would point to is that we believe there has been a noticeable improvement in the effectiveness of the Colombian military over the last year, and we believe this is in part the product of the training we have been giving them in the last couple of years. We believe that the improvement in their military effectiveness, the improvement in their professionalism—we will discuss also the improvement in their human rights performance—but all of these reflect, to some degree, the help we have been giving them. And this encourages us to believe, therefore, that an additional increment of support at this time will, indeed, make a significant difference in Colombia.

And the effectiveness of the Colombian military will allow a future Colombian President either to continue the military campaign if that is his choice or if he chooses to pursue a political solution, he will be able to pursue a political solution from a position of strength. In either case, as I said, we think that an additional increment of support and the adjustments of policy that we are discussing here will make a big difference.

The bottom line is that we have, as Chairman Hyde mentioned and the Chairman mentioned, a friendly, democratic government that is under assault from extremists of all stripes. This is a democratic government that is struggling to ensure basic security, and basic security is a precondition for every other goal, every other kind of economic or social progress that we hope for. Basic security is the precondition. And it is a government that is struggling to assert effective sovereignty over its national territory, and this is the prerogative of any legitimate government.

You have my prepared statement, but this is the point I wanted to emphasize to the Committee. All of us are here to engage with this Committee and to try to construct a national consensus of both Congress and the Executive Branch, because it is clear that without this kind of consensus between the two branches it will be much harder for this country to have an effective policy in Colombia. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rodman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE PETER W. RODMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this Subcommittee. I want to associate myself with the testimony of my distinguished colleague, Assistant Secretary of State Reich. I am honored to provide the Defense Department's perspective on threats to Colombian democracy and the Bush Administration's proposed initiatives to assist the Government of Colombia in addressing those threats.

POLICY THAT ADAPTS TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

The Administration has wrestled with developing a more effective policy and strategy to address terrorism as well as narcotics trafficking—the twin challenges posed by Colombia's illegal armed groups.

Both the U.S. and Colombian governments recognize that the threat has evolved and now requires new thinking and new programs. President Pastrana's decision to terminate the FARC safehaven and this Administration's request for new authority, as described by Ambassador Reich, reflect our shared assessment that terrorism and narcotics trafficking are inextricably linked in Colombia today.

For the past decade, U.S. aid has focused almost exclusively on counternarcotics. Although counterdrug programs remain an important part of the security equation in Colombia, our assistance has not yet had a decisive impact on the political and security challenges that continue to threaten both Colombian democracy and U.S. interests. Therefore, President Bush has asked Congress for:

- expanded authority for Colombia to use U.S.-provided support in its unified campaign against narcotics trafficking and terrorist activities; and
- new funding in Fiscal Year 2003 that would provide assistance to train and equip units to protect critical economic infrastructure.

These authorities will provide the Government of Colombia with the flexibility and resources needed to combat violent and formidable narcoterrorist threats to Colombia's national security. Over the past several years, these groups have increased their involvement in illicit drug operations. These drug revenues contribute to their war chests and have enabled them to increase their terrorist activities, placing further pressure on Colombia's democracy. This critical assistance will allow the Colombian security forces to confront more vigorously the increasing narcoterrorist attacks by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and National Liberation Army (ELN) and deal more effectively with the narcoterrorist paramilitary groups, like the United Self Defense Group of Colombia (AUC).

These three groups—the AUC, ELN, and FARC—already are designated under U.S. law as terrorist organizations. Although not considered terrorists with global reach, they threaten regional stability and U.S. interests through transnational arms and drug trafficking, kidnapping, and extortion. Together, these groups are responsible for more than 90 percent of the terrorist incidents in this hemisphere. The changes in authorities described by Ambassador Reich will help Colombia fight

these groups more effectively, not only in traditional coca-growing regions such as Putumayo and Caqueta, but throughout Colombia.

Beyond the toll in Colombian lives and treasure, these organizations have kidnapped and murdered U.S. citizens with impunity and damaged major U.S. commercial interests, such as oil pipelines. Accordingly, the Administration's strategy is to provide the Colombian government with the wherewithal and incentive to confront these groups throughout the national territory, whether or not individual units or combatants are engaged directly in drug-related activities. This is because, as we have learned, Colombia's major terrorist organizations both enable the drug trade and are financed in significant part by the revenues drugs provide. Attempting to segregate drugs and terrorism into distinct and severable threats is both politically unrealistic and militarily futile. Colombia urgently needs to establish the rule of law in its many regions that are presently ruled by lawless violence. A crucial component in this objective is a stronger, more effective security presence.

Today, the political/military situation in Colombia has reached a stalemate. Taken together, the FARC, ELN and AUC effectively control over 40% of Colombian territory. This stalemate works to the advantage of those groups, whose acts of terror and narcotics trafficking continue unabated even though the overall military contest remains inconclusive. Hence, this situation compounds all of Colombia's problems:

- It delegitimizes the democratic state.
- It undercuts any real possibility of negotiation with the guerrillas on better-than-surrender terms.
- It places a ceiling on what can be accomplished with the counternarcotics effort.
- It creates a security vacuum that is filled in part by the rightist paramilitaries. It is a vicious circle.

The Colombian State's weakness in many parts of the country leads many citizens to believe that the paramilitary groups are more effective in promoting security. In turn, these groups receive greater support and legitimacy, making the state's ability to fill the vacuum even more difficult.

- The activities of the paramilitaries, of course, also undercut political support for Colombia in the United States.

The United States cannot solve all of Colombia's problems with increased levels of aid, and given Colombia's human and capital resources, we need not do so. Currently, the government devotes approximately 3.5% of GDP to combating the narcoterrorists. Colombia must shoulder more of the burden by funding its security structure—meaning both military and police—at levels that are more appropriate for a wartime footing.

We are encouraged by President Pastrana's recent decision to increase the force structure by 10,000 soldiers and provide an additional \$110 million for military operations related to elimination of the FARC safehaven. But current funding for security forces is simply inadequate to meet the current threat, and Colombian forces are simply too small and poorly equipped to provide basic security to large areas of the country. At the end of the conflict in El Salvador, the military had 50 helicopters while Colombia, fifty times larger, has only roughly four times as many. The Colombian military has roughly an 8:1 soldier advantage over the narcoterrorist, an inadequate ratio if the military is to seize the initiative in the conflict.

The Colombian military's situation is partly due to the evolving nature of the threat, partly due to a lag in the Colombian public's learning curve, and partly due to lingering hope that numerous peace proposals would be successful.

As Ambassador Reich pointed out, after three years of FARC duplicity at the negotiating table, on 20 February 2002 President Pastrana eliminated the FARC safehaven. Frustrated at the FARC's lack of good faith, the Colombian public appears to be gaining a more realistic understanding of the security challenges their country faces. But Colombia's difficulty in providing for its own security is due in no small part to its inability to protect significant revenue-producing infrastructure such as oil pipelines, which leads us back to the imperative for expanded authorities that Ambassador Grossman has described.

EFFECTIVE SOVEREIGNTY AND BASIC SECURITY

If U.S. aims in Colombia are cast solely in terms of reducing the production and export of drugs to the United States, important aspects of the violence there and the inability of the government to respond effectively will be ignored. As a practical matter, we cannot view Colombia as a country in which we either adhere to a counterdrug program or slide unwittingly into a Vietnam-style counterinsurgency.

More realistically, we must pursue policies and fashion programs that permit Colombia to meet the challenge of the narcoterrorists so that U.S. forces are not called upon to do so. There is a strong moral and strategic impetus behind this support for one of the United States' oldest and most reliable hemispheric allies.

Virtually all experts concur that the problems of narcotrafficking and guerrilla violence are intertwined. Both the United States and the Government of Colombia hold that reducing drug exports can serve important political and security objectives by reducing drug-related income available to illegal armed groups. Nevertheless, though drug-related income is an important factor in sustaining insurgents and paramilitaries, it is doubtful that even effective counternarcotic operations in specific areas within Colombia can, on their own, be decisive in disabling illegal armed groups or forcing them to negotiate seriously for peace.

Continuing to link U.S. aid to Colombia to a narrow counternarcotics focus means that, by law, we must refrain from providing Colombia certain kinds of military assistance and intelligence support that could immediately strengthen the government's position throughout the country. Hundreds of attacks by the ELN and FARC have been directed at electrical, natural gas and oil infrastructure. The narcoterrorists' sabotage of oil pipelines alone has cost the Government of Colombia lost revenue on the order of \$500 million per year. The pipeline was bombed 170 times in 2001, spilling 2.9 million barrels of oil—eleven times the amount of the Exxon *Valdez*.

The Administration has proposed to Congress \$6 million in FY02 supplemental funding and \$98 million in FY03 Foreign Military Finance funding to train and equip vetted Colombian units to protect that country's most threatened piece of critical economic infrastructure—the first 170 kilometers of the Cano-Limon oil pipeline. This segment is the most often attacked. U.S. assistance and training will support two Colombian Army brigades, National Police and Marines operating in the area. These units through ground and air mobility will be in a better position to prevent and disrupt attacks on the pipeline and defend key facilities and vulnerable points such as pumping stations. These units will also send a message that the Colombian State is committed to defending its economic infrastructure—resources that provide sorely needed employment and revenue—from terrorist attacks.

Basic security throughout Colombia's national territory is the essential but missing ingredient. The Pastrana administration's *Plan Colombia* was an admirable start toward resolving Colombia's interrelated problems, of which the security component is only one part. But there can be no rule of law, economic development and new job creation, strengthening of human rights or any other noble goals, where there is no basic security.

Therefore, our policy in Colombia should augment traditional counterdrug programs with programs to help Colombia enhance basic security. A friendly democratic government in our hemisphere is struggling to preserve its sovereign authority under assault from extremists of both left and right. U.S. policy towards Colombia requires a bipartisan consensus at home for a long-term strategy aimed at strengthening Colombia's ability to enforce effective sovereignty and preserve democracy. The new and more explicit legal authorities that the Administration is proposing are intended to serve these goals.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS

The Administration is concerned, as are many Members of Congress, about human rights in Colombia. President Pastrana has instituted important reforms. The practices and procedures that the U.S. government has put in place, often at the behest of concerned Members of Congress, and the example set by the small number of our U.S. troops training Colombian forces, have also had an impact. Professionalism is, after all, what we teach. Human rights violations attributed to the armed forces dropped by 95% during the period of 1993–1998, to fewer than three percent of the total reported abuses.

Armed forces cooperation with the civilian court system in prosecuting human rights violations committed by military personnel has improved. Over 600 officers and noncommissioned officers have been relieved of duty under a 2000 Presidential decree that provides military commanders a legal means for removing personnel suspected of human rights violations and collusion with the paramilitaries. Officers have been dismissed for collaboration with or tolerance of paramilitary activities, while others face prosecution. The armed forces have demonstrated aggressiveness recently in seeking out and attacking paramilitary groups.

Indeed, as already stated, the problem of the paramilitaries is itself partly a function of the vacuum left by the weakness of the national government and the Colom-

bian military. By bolstering the democratic government and its effective assertion of national sovereignty, we weaken the paramilitaries.

COLOMBIANS MUST MAKE THE MAIN EFFORT

Although a policy cast in terms of basic security should enhance overall prospects for peace and for more effective counternarcotics, neither goal is assured without a firm and enduring commitment by the Colombian government and Colombian people to devote a greater share of their own national resources to the effort. The key principle should remain that the Colombian people bear the ultimate responsibility for their own security and must demonstrate their national will through a commitment of resources.

The Colombian military, by its own admission, is not optimally structured or organized to execute sustained operations. The Colombian military has greatly improved in many respects over the last several years—especially in the areas of tactical and operational effectiveness, increased professionalism, human rights training and awareness, and has realized a modest but sustained increase in force structure. But the military continues to suffer from limited resources, inadequate training practices, significant shortfalls in intelligence and air mobility, and lack of joint planning and operations. They need to better coordinate operations among the services and with the Colombian National Police. Adequate funding and restructuring of the military are essential if Colombia is to have continuing operational success against its national threats.

The adoption of *Plan Colombia* demonstrates that Colombia is moving forward aggressively, exercising its political will to address, and ultimately solve, domestic problems that have persisted for decades. The U.S. has an enormous stake in the success of this plan.

Victory in Colombia can only come—and U.S. interests in Colombia can best be served—once the Government of Colombia asserts effective sovereignty over its national territory. It is time for the United States to reinforce its commitment to Colombian democracy.

CONCLUSION

President Pastrana has asked for both international and U.S. support to address an internal problem that has international dimensions—fueled in part by our country's and the international demand for cocaine. It is time to move forward, in partnership between the Administration and Congress.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I again thank you for the opportunity to discuss these issues with you.

Mr. BALENGER. Thank you. General Speer.

**STATEMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL GARY D. SPEER, ACTING
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COM-
MAND**

Mr. SPEER. Mr. Chairman, Representative Menendez, and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to represent the United States Southern Command to discuss this important issue today, especially concerning Colombia. Mr. Chairman, thank you for leading the delegation to the AOR last week, especially to visit Colombia, to get a fresh look and a current assessment. Thanks to all the Members of the Committee for your support of the United States Southern Command and especially for your support of the men and women in uniform deployed around the world today.

Certainly this Committee knows that Latin America and the Caribbean is a region that is of increasing importance and significance to the United States because of demographics, trade, resources such as oil, and geographic proximity. It is also an area that has had tremendous progress in the last quarter of a century, and much of the credit for that progress in the transformation to a hemispheric community of democratic nations goes to the men and women of the U.S. military who served in the region, day in,

day out, working with their host nation counterparts, joint exercises and training, and the opportunities for foreign officers and noncommissioned officers to attend professional military education in the United States. And in each of these cases U.S. service members served as a role model for the proper conduct of a military in a democratic society, with a respect for the rule of law, human rights, and subordination to civil authority.

But as we look at the region today, many of these democracies are very fragile by cause of the challenges of instability and corruption due to drugs and arms trafficking, illegal migration, and other transnational threats, and certainly today, the concern with terrorism. In Southern Command, we have been focused on terrorism in Latin America for a long time, well before 11 September. As Chairman Hyde highlighted, we have been focused on the tri-border region of Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina, where there are terrorist supporters with links to Hamas, Hezbollah, and Al Gama'at in terms of financial support to these organizations. And certainly as we look at the region, no country is more challenged than Colombia as it faces the FARC, the ELN, and the illegal paramilitaries of the AUC, who exact terror on the population of Colombia, financing their activities through drugs, kidnapping, and extortion.

As mentioned, this is an area of critical importance, and Colombia is of critical importance. From a security perspective, I view Colombia as the linchpin in the Andean Ridge and for that reason even more importance. Certainly, President Pastrana's decision on 20 February to terminate the despeje, or the FARC safe haven, significantly changes the landscape in that country. The Colombia military very deliberately initiated operations to reclaim the population centers within the former despeje. Their operations were deliberate, well executed, with the intent of avoiding civilian casualties, and they did this very well. But the fact of life is the Colombian security forces lack the resources to reestablish a safe and secure environment throughout the country of Colombia.

Colombia is not just about a counterdrug operation. Colombia is about a fight for democracy because the fact is without a safe and secure environment all of the other aspects of Plan Colombia cannot take hold.

As we look to the region at large throughout Latin America, many of the security forces and militaries lack the resources and capabilities to protect their own borders against these transnational threats. In fact, for the last decade our foreign military financing alone has been insufficient to provide for the sustainment of the aircraft and other equipment that the United States has previously provided, much less to address any genuine needs for modernization or respond to any growing or evolving challenges from new threats. This is an area where we look to you, the Committee, for your continued support for our Southern Command as we go forward to try to address these challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean so that we do not sacrifice the gains of the past 25 years.

In the interest of time, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to your questions and thank you again for this opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Speer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL GARY D. SPEER, ACTING COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND

Mr. Chairman, Representative Menendez, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you to discuss United States Southern Command's role in assisting Colombia. The men and women of United States Southern Command deeply appreciate the hard work by the Members of this Committee and we thank you, and your colleagues in Congress, for your commitment and steadfast support.

I have served as the Acting Commander in Chief of United States Southern Command since October 1, 2001 when General Pace assumed the position of Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In the past ten months, I have traveled to Colombia eight times. I have met key leaders in Colombia and here in the United States, both military and civilian. I appreciate their challenges and am convinced that the Colombian military is led by experienced and principled officers.

I am grateful for the opportunity to provide an overview of the problems facing Colombia and its neighbors, and what we have done to date to address these threats and enhance security and stability, which are the underpinnings of economic growth and legitimate governance.

SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

During the past twenty-five years, nations of our hemisphere have made substantial progress toward achieving peace through democratically elected governments, economic development, and the subordination of the military to civilian authority. All countries, except for Cuba, have democratically elected governments. Without a clear or imminent external threat, Latin American and Caribbean nations essentially appear to be at peace with their neighbors.

Underlying this perception of tranquility are the multiple transnational threats of terrorism, drug and arms trafficking, illegal migration, and organized crime, all of which threaten the security and stability of the region. Some of our hemispheric neighbors are suffering from the effects of political instability, faltering economic growth, and institutional weakness. High unemployment, endemic poverty, corruption, and crime combined with the effects of terrorism, drug trafficking, and other illicit transnational activities challenge and threaten the legitimacy of many of these governments and consequently threaten U.S. hemispheric interests. Governments are feeling the strain of weak economies, rampant corruption, ineffective judicial systems, and growing discontent of the people as democratic and economic reforms fall short of expectations.

Transnational threats in the region are increasingly linked as they share common infrastructure, transit patterns, corrupting means, and illicit mechanisms. These threats transcend borders and seriously affect the security interests of the United States.

TERRORISM

Southern Command recognized a viable terrorist threat in Latin America long before September 11. If not further exposed and removed, that threat potentially poses a serious threat to both our national security and that of our neighbors. We in Southern Command have monitored terrorist activities for years with such incidents as the bombing of the Israeli Embassy and Jewish-Argentine Cultural Center in Argentina in 1992 and 1994 attributed to Hizballah.

Recently, international terrorist groups have turned to some Latin American countries as safe havens from which they sustain worldwide operations. As an example, the tri-border area of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay serves as a base of support for Islamic Radical Groups, such as Hizballah, HAMAS, and Al Gama'at al-Islamiyya. These organizations generate revenue through illicit activities that include drug and arms trafficking, counterfeiting, money laundering, forged travel documents, and even software and music piracy.

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army of Colombia (ELN) and the United Self Defense Group of Colombia (AUC) are all on the State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. The FARC has been implicated in kidnappings and attacks against United States citizens and interests, including the murder of three U.S. citizens in 1998. According to the Department of State's most recent "Patterns of Global Terrorism" report, 86 percent of all terrorist acts against U.S. interests throughout the world in 2000 occurred in Latin America, predominately in Colombia.

The recent bombing outside the U.S. Embassy in Peru preceding President Bush's visit is indicative that other domestic terrorist groups pose threats to the United

States elsewhere in the hemisphere. These include, but are not limited to, the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) in Peru and the Jama'at al Muslimeen (JAM) in Trinidad and Tobago.

DRUG TRAFFICKING

Illegal drugs inflict an enormous toll on the people and economy of the United States and our hemispheric neighbors, and appropriately, have often been characterized as a weapon of mass destruction. According to the latest Office of National Drug Control Policy figures, Americans spend more than \$64 billion on illegal drugs while drug abuse killed more than 19,000 Americans and accounted for \$160 billion in expenses and lost revenue. Most of the world's cocaine and a significant portion of the heroin entering the United States is produced in the Andean Region.

Drug trafficking persists as a corrosive threat to the democracy, stability, and prosperity of nations within the region, especially in the Andean Ridge, adversely affecting societies and economies as scarce resources are diverted to rehabilitation, interdiction, and crime prevention efforts. Drug trafficking generates violence, fosters crime, and corrupts public institutions. Increasingly, terrorist organizations support themselves through drug trafficking. This trend is particularly troubling in Colombia where we find clear connections between drug trafficking, guerrillas, and terrorist activities.

It is not only the drug producing countries that suffer. No country in this hemisphere through which drugs transit escapes the violence and corrupting influences of drug trafficking. Additionally, as traffickers exchange drugs for arms and services in the transit countries, transit nations are now becoming drug consumers as well.

ARMS TRAFFICKING

Although Latin America and the Caribbean spend less than any other region on legal arms purchases, illegal arms sales pose a significant threat to the stability of the region. Of particular concern is the rising trend in which Drug Trafficking Organizations exchange drugs for arms, which are then provided to terrorist organizations such as the FARC, ELN, and AUC in Colombia. Illegal arms originate from throughout the world and transit through the porous borders of Colombia's neighbors. Arms traffickers use a variety of land, maritime, and air routes that often mirror drug and human trafficking networks.

ILLEGAL MIGRATION

Latin America and the Caribbean are major avenues for worldwide illegal migration. Although not a problem directly tied to Colombia, illegal migration and human smuggling operations are linked to drugs and arms trafficking, corruption, organized crime, and the possibility for the movement of members of terrorist organizations.

According to the Census Bureau's latest figures, more than eight million illegal immigrants reside in the United States; nearly two million of them are from the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility. The United States Immigration and Naturalization Service estimates more than 300,000 illegal immigrants annually originate in, or transit through, Central American countries destined for the United States. Also, many Chinese illegal immigrants destined for the U.S. transit through Suriname, Ecuador and other countries in the hemisphere. Human trafficking is highly profitable, providing revenue of more than \$1 billion annually to smuggling organizations within the region. Moreover, human trafficking provides the potential means of entry into the U.S. for criminals and terrorists.

COLOMBIA

No other region is suffering the destabilizing effects of transnational threats more than the Andean Ridge countries. In Colombia, the FARC, ELN, and AUC have created an environment of instability in which the Government of Colombia does not control portions of the country. In the areas where military and police are not present and do not have control, there is lack of a safe and secure environment, which undermines the ability to govern and permits terrorism and crime to flourish.

The violence in Colombia remains a significant threat to the region as the combination and links among guerrillas, terrorists, drug-traffickers, and illegal self-defense forces have severely stressed the government's ability to exercise sovereignty and maintain security. The FARC and other illegal groups cross into neighboring countries at will. In addition, neighboring countries remain transshipment points for arms and drugs entering and exiting Colombia.

Colombia is critically important to the United States. With over 40 million people, it is the second oldest democracy in the hemisphere, and it is an important trading partner, notably for oil. More importantly, it is the linchpin of the Andean Region; as such, it is critical for the United States that Colombia re-establish a safe and secure environment within its borders and survive as an effective democracy. Venezuela, Panama, and Ecuador are certainly at risk to some degree based on what happens in Colombia.

The current political and security situation in Colombia is at a critical juncture. Notwithstanding the Government of Colombia's eleventh hour extension of the despeje, the FARC's "safe haven," on January 20 of this year, the FARC initiated a countrywide terror campaign with more than 120 attacks against the nation's infrastructure and cities. These attacks ultimately prompted President Pastrana to eliminate the despeje on February 20, and initiate operations to occupy the area. From a military perspective, it was the right move. The FARC used the despeje as a sanctuary to support their drug trafficking operations, launch terrorist attacks, and recruit and train their forces. Simply put, the FARC is a terrorist organization that conducts violent terrorist attacks to undermine the security and stability of Colombia, financed by its involvement in every aspect of drug cultivation, production and transportation, as well as by kidnapping and extortion.

The Colombian military immediately initiated operations to reoccupy the despeje, focusing on occupying population centers with deliberate operations to prevent civilian casualties. This strategy averted significant displacement of the population. In response, the FARC avoided confronting the military and has broken down into small elements, retreated into the jungle and rural areas, and concentrated its actions on terrorist attacks against the country's infrastructure.

While the March 10 Congressional elections were executed relatively problem-free, the weeks leading to the upcoming Presidential elections on May 26 will be particularly critical as the Colombian Military dedicates significant resources to ensure the security of the electoral process.

U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND'S SUPPORT TO PLAN COLOMBIA

We continue to execute the Department of Defense's counterdrug support to Plan Colombia, Colombia's national security plan. Colombia is just beginning the second year of this six-year plan. The initial phase of operations focused in the Putumayo and Caqueta Departments of Southern Colombia where approximately half of Colombia's coca cultivation takes place. In implementing U.S. Support to Plan Colombia initiated by the FY 2000 Emergency Supplemental, Southern Command has been responsible for training and equipping a Counter Narcotics Brigade, riverine units, fielding Blackhawk and Huey II helicopters, training pilots and crews, infrastructure upgrades, and providing counterdrug intelligence support. We are seeing positive results from our support.

COUNTER NARCOTICS BRIGADE

The Counter Narcotics Brigade (CN Brigade) headquarters and its three battalions are now fully trained and equipped. United States trainers performed staff and light infantry training for almost 2,300 troops. The brigade headquarters and the second battalion of the brigade completed training and began operations in December 2000; we completed training of the third battalion last May. We continue to provide sustainment training to the CN Brigade.

The CN Brigade is the best-trained and equipped unit in the Colombian Army. It has impressive results during drug interdiction operations by destroying coca processing labs, providing security to eradication operations, and seizing chemical precursors and coca leaf in Southern Colombia. Since operations began in December 2000, over 890 drug labs have been destroyed and 119 people detained for judicial processing. The CN Brigade has also provided the ground security for the spraying of 59,000 hectares of coca in the Putumayo and Caqueta regions. Colombia's spraying effort in Putumayo last year would not have been possible without the CN Brigade's aggressive ground support to spray aircraft.

In addition, indications are that the Colombian military's concerted interdiction efforts combined with aerial spraying are having an effect on the narcotraffickers. Cocaine labs are being established away from the Putumayo and Caqueta cultivation areas; in fact, large scale, industrial size labs were discovered in the former despeje. With the training and capabilities of the CN Brigade, no longer does the FARC own the military initiative in Putumayo and Caqueta Departments, but avoids head-on engagements against the Colombian military. This increased security in the coca growing areas affords a better environment for interdiction efforts by the CN Brigade and the Colombian National Police.

HELICOPTERS

Since December 2000, the United States has provided air mobility to the first CN Brigade using 33 UH-1Ns with a combination of Colombian and Department of State contracted pilots. The UH1N aircraft are based in Tolimaida with the Colombian Army Aviation Battalion and are forward deployed to Larandia for operations. Last year, the UH-1Ns flew over 10,000 flight hours in direct support of Joint Task Force South CN operations, moving over 26,700 soldiers and 261 tons of cargo. The current operational focus remains providing air mobility support for Joint Task Force South counterdrug missions in Colombia.

Our training and logistics programs are on track to provide greatly enhanced air mobility capability to the Colombian Army. All fourteen UH-60L Blackhawk helicopters procured under Plan Colombia for the Colombian military were delivered by December 2001. The first 6 of the 25 Plan Colombia Huey II aircraft arrived in March 2002. Under the current delivery schedule, we expect the remaining 19 Huey II helicopters to be delivered by the end of September 2002.

Department of Defense training programs specifically designed to fulfill the requirement for trained Colombian Army pilots, crew chiefs, and maintenance personnel for the Blackhawk and Huey II helicopters are currently underway and progressing well in Colombia and in the United States. In addition to training pilots, crew chiefs and maintenance personnel will also be trained.

This has been a real success story: Colombian Air Force Instructor Pilots under the quality control of an U.S. Army Technical Assistance Field Team are training Colombian Army pilots in the Blackhawk transition and the Initial Entry Rotary Wing (IERW) courses. The night vision training, advanced or readiness level progression training, and the Huey II transition are being executed through a DOD contract in Colombia. Crew chiefs are being trained in Spanish, both in the United States and Colombia. The various special aviation and avionics maintenance training is conducted in Army schools in the United States. The Plan Colombia Blackhawk pilot and crew training will be complete in July. The first IERW course is in progress and Huey II transition will commence this month with a projected completion of Colombian Army pilots and crews for the 25 Huey IIs by mid 2004. The long pole in the aviation training is the CONUS specialized maintenance training, which will last through 2003 due to the extensive technical courses and the limited throughput possible. As such, contractor logistics support will be required throughout this entire period.

RIVERINE CAPABILITY

For much of Colombia, the rivers are the highways. Consequently, the rivers are the only means of transportation and commercial communication. As a result, an integral part of our support to Colombia has been the training and equipping of the Colombian Riverine forces. The goal of the Riverine Forces is to permit the Colombian government to exercise sovereignty throughout the vast regions where other governmental entities are otherwise absent. Colombia's plan is to establish controls at critical river junctures along its borders and throughout the heartland of the country. The plan includes establishment of 58 riverine combat elements, with support structures, at these critical river nodes. The operational objective of the Riverine Forces is to establish control over the riverine transportation network and interdict illicit trafficking of precursor chemicals used in the production of cocaine.

To date five riverine battalions, composed of thirty riverine combat elements, have been deployed and are operating throughout Colombia. These riverine combat elements have successfully supported the operations of the first CN brigade in destroying riverside labs and by providing convoy security for building material used to construct the Tres Esquinas airbase. Furthermore, these riverine units have established the first continuous presence of the Colombian government in areas previously abandoned to control of narco-terrorists organizations. Continued support to complete the fielding of the remaining riverine combat elements and establishment of a self-sustaining training capability are high priorities in our strategy for the future.

ENGINEER PROJECTS

Extensive projects are underway in Larandia to support the CN Brigade and associated helicopters. They include helicopter pads, a fueling system, maintenance hangar and storage warehouse, operations building, control tower, and an ammo storage facility with arm/disarm pads. The first helicopter projects will be completed later this year, with the overall construction complete in 2003. Other projects at Larandia include additional barracks for both counter narcotics and aviation brigade

personnel, a counter narcotics brigade headquarters facility, and a supply warehouse. These support projects will be complete later this year also. At Tres Esquinas (a forward operating site in Southern Colombia), construction was recently completed on the riverine facilities, an A-37 ramp, and taxiway. The remaining projects at Tres Esquinas (runway extension and Schweizer hanger) are in progress with completions also scheduled for later this year. The riverine base at El Encanto (forward base in Southern Colombia) and the riverine maintenance facility at Nueva Antioquia are complete. However, the airfield runway improvements at Marandua remain unfunded; this airfield will be critical to supporting operations in Eastern Colombia. The military base and improvement projects, which we have funded and overseen, have effectively enabled the Colombian military to expand its influence over the coca growing areas of Putumayo and Caqueta.

Additionally, we continue to improve our infrastructure at the Forward Operating Location (FOL) in Manta, Ecuador. Last year, operations at the FOL ceased for six months while we made runway improvements. The current construction for living quarters and maintenance facilities will be completed in June 2002. The infrastructure upgrades for the FOL at Curacao are in progress, but Aruba remains unfunded. The FOLS are critical to our source zone counterdrug operations and provides coverage in the transit zone Pacific where we have seen the greatest increase in drug smuggling activity.

PROFESSIONALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

We have witnessed a steady improvement in the professionalism and respect for human rights and the rule of law by the Colombian military, accompanied by increased effectiveness in counterdrug operations. The increase in professionalism starts with the continued professional military education, the confidence gained by technical proficiency, and resources available for operations.

Our legal assistance projects in Colombia, which include developing a Judge Advocate General (JAG) school as well as legal and human rights reform, continue on track. We have worked closely with the Colombian military to establish and build a Military Penal Justice Corps. The initial JAG school courses began in February 2002 for 60 judge advocates and clerks in temporary facilities. The Department of State recently approved funding for construction of a permanent JAG facility, and we expect completion in July 2003.

In the area of human rights, United States Southern Command has supported Colombian efforts to extend human rights training throughout its ranks. Additionally, we sponsor opportunities for the continued exchange of information on human rights issues, such as: a recent Human Rights Seminar with 60 Colombian media and international representatives, bimonthly human rights roundtables involving representatives from various sectors of Colombian society, incorporating human rights in every training initiative, and advanced education programs. This summer, twenty students from the Armed Forces, National Police, Ministry of Defense, and Commanding General's office will receive specialty degrees in International Humanitarian Law.

I am convinced the military leadership in Colombia is firmly committed to human rights and is taking action on any reports of wrongdoing. They have suspended officers and noncommissioned officers for acts of wrongdoing and have stepped up their operations against illegal defense forces.

In fact, in a short period of time, the Colombian military has emerged as one of the most respected and trusted organizations in Colombian society. Fewer than three percent of complaints of human rights abuses last year were attributed to the Colombian Security Forces, down from a high of 60 percent just a few years ago. There have been zero allegations of human rights abuses against the U.S. trained counter narcotics drug brigade.

This is a success story that often gets overlooked. Colombia should publicize what the military is doing and take credit for the accomplishments they have attained. This progress reflects a strong and principled leadership and the genuine desire of the Colombian military to honor and promote democratic principles in their country.

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2002 ANDEAN COUNTERDRUG INITIATIVE

The Department of State's Andean Counterdrug Initiative is designed to sustain and expand programs funded by the FY 2000 emergency supplemental. It addresses potential production, processing, and distribution spillover due to successful Plan Colombia execution. Since the beginning of 2001, we have been working with the Department of State to help develop, prioritize, and validate requirements for partner nation militaries. In each case, although still counterdrug focused, we are seek-

ing to sustain the military contacts focused on professionalization of the armed forces and the specific challenges and security needs within available resources.

Approximately \$100 million of the Andean Counterdrug Initiative will be allocated to support the Colombian military. This funding will be used to sustain the capabilities initiated under the FY 2000 supplemental appropriation, particularly in the areas of training and aviation support for the first CN Brigade, riverine programs, and the Colombia military legal reform program.

SECOND COUNTER NARCOTICS BRIGADE

Based on the success of the first CN Brigade, the U.S. government is supporting Colombia's request to train and equip a second CN Brigade in FY 2003 for employment elsewhere within the country. The existing CN Brigade has been successful in forcing the drug traffickers to move their operations outside of the Putumayo and Caqueta departments. A second CD Brigade will enable the Colombians to attack the other main coca growing areas to the east of the Andean Ridge or elsewhere in the country.

Using the first CN Brigade as a baseline, we will profit from our experience in training and equipping the second CN Brigade. The second CN Brigade will be made up of approximately 1,700 troops. If approved, using U.S. Special Operations Forces, we could train one battalion per quarter, commencing with the second CN Brigade Staff. This training will continue to emphasize professionalism and human rights requirements. The equipment will include weapons, ammunition, and communications equipment. Additionally, the Department of State's FY 2003 request includes funding to continue sustainment training of the existing CN Brigade.

INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY STRATEGY

In addition to counterdrug assistance, the Administration has proposed to Congress \$98 million, for FY 2003, to help Colombia to enhance the training and equipping of units to protect the Caño Limon-Covenas oil pipeline, one of the most vulnerable elements of their economic infrastructure. The FARC and ELN are active in carrying out attacks against Colombia's energy infrastructure. Attacks on the Caño Limon-Covenas pipeline cost the Government of Colombia more than \$40 million per month in revenues when the pipeline is not operational. During the past year, the pipeline was offline for more than 266 days. In addition, the amount of oil spilled during these attacks is eleven times greater than the Exxon Valdez spill, creating significant environmental damage.

The Administration has included \$6 million in the FY 2002 Supplemental to begin the training. The first unit to be trained for this program will be the recently human rights vetted, Arauca-based Colombian Army 18th Brigade. Subsequent units to be trained for infrastructure security include the 5th Mobile Brigade, designated Colombian National Police units, and Colombian Marines. The Colombian units will also be equipped with weapons and ammunition, vehicles, night vision devices, and communications equipment, as well as a helicopter tactical lift capability for a company-sized quick reaction force.

If approved, this training will assist the Colombians to exert effective sovereignty in the Arauca Department, where these attacks primarily occur. Through a comprehensive strategy of reconnaissance and surveillance, offensive and quick reaction operations, the Colombian military will be better able to mitigate the debilitating economic and financial effects of constant attacks on critical infrastructure.

CHALLENGES

Despite extensive eradication in the source zone and successful interdiction in the transit zone, cocaine supply continues to exceed demand. Although Colombia and other partner nations are willing to work with us to counter the production and trafficking of illegal drugs, effective and sustainable counterdrug operations are beyond the capabilities of their thinly stretched security forces.

United States counterdrug assistance to security forces helps Colombia and other nations in the region develop more effective counterdrug capabilities; however, drug trafficking organizations have shown considerable flexibility in adjusting their operations in reaction to counterdrug efforts.

With Colombia's narcoterrorists increasingly supporting themselves through drug trafficking, it is increasingly difficult for the security forces to sustain a secure environment that allows democratic institutions to fully function, permits political, economic, and social reforms to take hold, and reduces the destabilizing spillover into neighboring countries.

In addition to combating the FARC and its current terror campaign, the Colombian Military must contend on a daily basis with the conventional and terrorist at-

tacks by the ELN and AUC, as well as the drug trafficking organizations. This requires not only the continuous conduct of military and counterdrug operations, but the protection of population centers, critical infrastructure to include electrical towers and power grids, communication towers and facilities, the oil pipelines, dams, roads and bridges. Also, the Colombian military must devote significant resources and manpower to secure the Presidential election process.

Although we have seen great progress through the military portion of the first year of Plan Colombia, the Colombian military still lacks the wherewithal to create a safe and secure environment in Colombia. As mentioned previously, fundamental security and stability are necessary for the Government of Colombia to remain a viable, legitimate government and for other supporting programs to succeed.

U.S. support to the Colombian military is currently restricted to support for counterdrug operations. We are further limited by restrictions on sharing non-counterdrug information with the Colombians. The Colombians are also limited in their use of U.S. provided counterdrug-funded equipment, such as the Plan Colombia helicopters. If enacted, the Administration's FY 2002 supplemental request to expand our authorities in Colombia will provide some relief by lifting these restrictions for United States funded equipment, assets, and programs for Colombia.

We support reinstating the Air Bridge Denial Program in Colombia and Peru as an effective means to interdict the flow of drugs, arms and contraband. In the past, this program was very successful in breaking down a critical network of conveyance for the drug traffickers. Furthermore, we know that arms traffickers smuggle weapons to the FARC by air. By incorporating the recommendations of the Beers and Busby reports, we can safely resume U.S. support to the air bridge denial operations and reinforce our commitment to partner nations.

As we look to the future, we need to ensure that our efforts are focused on fighting terrorism throughout this hemisphere and on preserving and stabilizing Colombia's democracy. The problem in Colombia is not just about drugs.

INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE AND RECONNAISSANCE (ISR)

Our global war on terrorism continues to reinforce the critical role that a comprehensive ISR posture plays in any operational environment, whether home-based or abroad. Secretary Rumsfeld noted in the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review that: "We cannot and will not know precisely where and when America's interests will be threatened . . ." His observation is particularly applicable to the Southern Command area of responsibility, where threats take many forms and are often ambiguous. These threats present a range of intelligence challenges—from tracking terrorist groups and drug trafficking organizations in Colombia to monitoring international criminal and terrorist activities throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

The restrictions placed on the use of certain collection assets exacerbate the constraints inherent to the limited availability of intelligence resources in our area of responsibility. Today, most intelligence assets allocated to Southern Command are funded from counterdrug appropriations. Therefore, the employment of these scarce assets is further restricted to supporting only counterdrug operations or force protection of those involved with counterdrug activities. Also, our access agreements on the Forward Operating Locations of Manta, Ecuador, Aruba and Curacao, and Comalapa, El Salvador restrict operations from the FOLs to counterdrug only.

Our ability to assist operations in Colombia is also limited by restrictions on sharing data. We are prohibited from providing intelligence that may be construed as counterinsurgency related. For the operator, it is very difficult to distinguish between the FARC as a drug trafficking organization and the FARC as a terrorist organization and the FARC as an insurgent organization. In my opinion, we have tried to impose artificial boundaries where one no longer exists.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the United States Southern Command remains committed to providing the assistance needed by Colombia and other partner nations in the region within Congressional authority. We continue to execute operations and activities to enhance the region's militaries, advance democracy, promote regional security, support hemispheric cooperation, foster economic opportunities, promote peace, sustain freedom, and encourage prosperity. Additionally, we will continue to prioritize these activities in areas that offer the greatest leverage for protecting and advancing United States regional and global interests.

We recognize the dangerous nature of hostile activities that threaten the stability, security, and economic development within these countries. We clearly recognize the existence of a terrorist threat within our hemisphere as profits from illicit drug traf-

ficking fuel terrorist activity that can ultimately have national security implications for the United States and the hemisphere. United States Southern Command will continue to seek every opportunity to resource, plan, and combat terrorism and other transnational threats within the region.

While Southern Command's priority since September 11 has been on the planning and coordination necessary to execute the global war on terrorism, everything we are doing in Colombia and in the region supports that end. Our efforts in Colombia are not only to fight drugs but also to save democracy in that country and promote security and stability in the Andean Region.

Although in the past few years the Colombian military has emerged as a much more capable and professional force, they lack the resources, manpower, airlift and mobility, to reestablish a safe and secure environment throughout the country.

Your continued support will help to ensure the stability of Colombia and safeguard U.S. national security interests throughout Latin America and the Caribbean against the transnational threats that concern us all. Thank you for providing me this opportunity to discuss these issues with you today. I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have at this time.

Mr. BALLENGER. Let me thank each of you. If it is suitable with the Members, we will limit our time to 5 minutes. I know we have a lot of questions that people would like to ask.

I would just like to ask one quick opening question that Congressman Paul brought up. I think, Secretary Rodman, you and I discussed a little bit the idea of the lack of, shall we say, financial commitment by the Government of Colombia in this particular area and the fact that if and when they could ever get their oil line to produce at full blast, there would be substantial financial aid to the Government of Colombia to move around, and also to boost their economy, which has been affected. Could you just add a little bit to that fact, if you would, please, sir?

Mr. RODMAN. Yes, sir. There is a vicious circle in Colombia. The FARC attacks the economy. This is the classical strategy of guerilla groups or terrorist groups, and the attacks on the economy weaken the government in its ability to not only pursue social ends but to support a military effort. The figure I have seen is that at least a half a billion a year in revenue to the government, and that may be a low estimate, is lost because of the disruption, the continuing disruption of the pipeline or the continual attacks on the oil pipeline.

The FARC attacks other elements of infrastructure. Recently, they have gone after electrical pylons. This is part of the burden that the government labors under, and it is a reason why, as I said, basic security is a precondition for anything that we want to help the Colombians do.

Mr. BALLENGER. Secretary Reich, is there some explanation that our government has received as to the original commitment from our European friends, who also face a substantial use of cocaine? The original commitment does not seem to be coming through, and I just was curious if you have got any knowledge along those lines as to what might be occurring.

Mr. REICH. Well, from the original commitment from the European countries for Plan Colombia we believe that they have obligated or disbursed close to \$600 million, short of \$600 million. That is less than what they were obligating themselves or had promised. However, we are still in year 3 of what is a 5-year plan, and we are told by our European friends that we can expect to see more, and we are looking forward to that because, as you correctly point

out, they are in this battle along with us, of course, and with the Colombians.

Mr. BALLENGER. I think that your statement just then is something that the people in the country need to know. Year 3 of a 5-year plan, and let me apologize for the Members of Congress because when we passed Plan Colombia, I think we argued here for quite some time as to how the money would be spent. Was it originally a 5-year plan, and we are only in the 3rd year?

Mr. REICH. Well, the Plan Colombia that President Pastrana designed was a 5-year plan. The difference arises from our use of the term "Plan Colombia." We see Plan Colombia as our effort to help Colombia. In effect, it was a plan that the Government of Colombia designed at the request of the then-Clinton Administration. For the first 2 years, as you know, the Congress did not appropriate hardly any money, if at all, for the Plan, and then it appropriated \$1.3 billion and another close to \$400 million from the Andean Regional Initiative for a total of about \$1.7 billion. You could say that that money was for the first 3-year commitment of our share of Plan Colombia.

Mr. BALLENGER. One more complaint, and I do not know specifically if I should save this for the second panel, but the pollution that is supposedly caused by our spraying, even though maybe the spraying sometimes is less effective than we had hoped, the comparison of that pollution to the atmosphere and to the Amazon Basin as compared to what the pollution that is created by making cocaine out of coca; do you have anything along those lines?

Mr. REICH. Yes, sir. I think it is very important to put everything in the proper context. First of all, I am not an expert in glyphosate and the other chemicals that go into either narcotics production or spraying, but from what I am told we are being very, very careful to make sure that the chemicals that we use to spray are not toxic to humans, and, in fact, they are chemicals used in the United States. Some of them are produced in Colombia under license, but they are chemicals that have been tested and proven safe in the United States.

But your point about pollution and environmental degradation is an excellent one because a lot of people have not focused on the fact that the narcotics traffickers against whom our programs are directed are much bigger polluters than we are or our Colombian allies. For example, the precursor chemicals that they use to manufacture cocaine are dumped in the rivers when they are finished with this process. We have been told by the Colombian government that they have estimated that just the chemicals alone that are dumped into the Colombian rivers are the equivalent of three Exxon Valdez supertanker spills. Their rivers are being killed by these chemicals being dumped by the narcotics traffickers.

To follow up on my colleague, Secretary Rodman's, comment on the pipeline and why it is so important for us to receive your support for our request, the pipeline that we are requesting \$98 million to protect has been bombed hundreds of times. Once again, the Government of Colombia estimates that the oil spilled from those bombing is equivalent to seven Exxon Valdez over 15 years. That is oil that spilled on the ground and has destroyed the environment. That is the environmental cost. The financial cost—Secretary

Rodman is correct—we estimate about \$40 million a month, close to \$500 million a year, of Colombian money that could have gone to health, education, nutrition, counternarcotics, all of the things that the Colombian government would spend its money on.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you. I see my time has expired. Congressman Menendez.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the panel for their testimony. I am going to try to make my questions crisp and concise. I hope you give me your answers crisp and concise so I can do as much as I can in these 5 minutes.

Secretary Reich, what is the Bush Administration's first and foremost goal and objective as it relates to U.S. policy to Colombia?

Mr. REICH. A free, democratic, safe Colombia that continues to be a good friend of the United States and a good friend of its neighbors that does not pose a threat.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Its second most significant goal and objective?

Mr. REICH. We want to eliminate the threat to our own people from terrorists and narcotics traffickers that are poisoning our population with their product and that could pose a threat from Colombia, were the situation to deteriorate further, to other countries in the region and to the United States because we are, after all, connected by land with that territory.

Mr. MENENDEZ. And since July of 2000, your testimony says, we have already provided \$1.7 billion. So how would you assess this stage in our assistance in terms of meeting those two goals and objectives?

Mr. REICH. Well, sir, the Government of Colombia is still in place. Everything is relative. Compared to what the situation was a few years ago, I think we are in better shape. We have a long way to go, and this is why we are here asking for additional authorities and additional funding from the Congress. But compared to where Colombia could have been today without the help of the United States and our allies in the region, I think we should look at the positives.

You have still a freely elected government, the government of President Pastrana, that is going to hold elections next month and cede power peacefully to another freely elected government. You have an armed force, which, thanks to our help and that of SOUTHCOM and other U.S. military entities, is much more capable of defending itself. You have an irony actually that to the extent that we have been successful in helping the Colombian military to defend itself and to take the battle to the guerrillas, whether they be FARC, ELN, or AUC, the guerillas have been forced to go on to attack civilian targets and to more traditional terrorist means. So there has been progress, but that progress sometimes in itself creates new challenges.

Mr. MENENDEZ. If our goal is to have a free, democratic, and safe Colombia exercising its sovereignty over its country, all of our resources seem to be geared strictly to the counterterrorism and military efforts associated therewith and narcotics eradication. When you do not have any sustainable development efforts here, when the Europeans fall far short from their obligations in this regard, how do we ultimately achieve the support of the Colombian people for their government and for this plan when we are not providing

virtually any significant assistance here for sustainable development? How do you create beyond a military exercise a safe and democratic Colombia without that? That is question number one.

And question number two: Do you believe that the Colombian armed forces are taking effective measures to sever links, access to military intelligence, and other forms of assistance that are at the command, battalion, and brigade levels with paramilitary groups, and are they executing outstanding orders for capture for members of such groups?

Mr. REICH. Your first question, sir, I believe that about 25 percent, and I can give you the exact figures after the testimony, about 25 percent of our assistance does go to nonmilitary, non-counternarcotics uses. The reason for this is, frankly, we are the world's leading military power, and the kind of help that they need in this area we can provide better than some of the other donors.

[The information referred to follows:]

ANSWER TO MR. MENENDEZ'S QUESTION SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO THE COMMITTEE AFTER THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Your first question, sir, about 36 percent of our FY 2002 assistance to Colombia does go to non-military, non-counternarcotics uses. The reason for this is, frankly, we are the world's leading military power, and the kind of help that they need in this area we can provide better than some of the other donors.

Mr. REICH. Second, the Government of Colombia itself is spending its contribution—let us not lose sight of the fact that of the 5- or 6-year plan—I said 5—I have been corrected—somebody said it was 6 years—of the multiyear plan of Plan Colombia the Government of Colombia committed to provide \$4.5 billion, of which they have provided about 60 percent, so they are pretty much on target. And most of that goes to nonmilitary, what you call sustainable development or basic human needs, economic development, building infrastructure, supporting democratic institutions, et cetera. We are helping with that a little bit. At the same time, most of the European money is also going for nonmilitary uses, so there is a balance there.

As far as whether the Colombian military is severing its links with the paramilitaries, we have indications that they are. They have attacked the AUC. In fact, our statistics show that they have captured or killed about 10 percent of what we estimate to be the military strength of the AUC. Now, can they do more? Of course, they can do more, just as they can do more against the FARC and the ELN if they have the proper resources.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I hope we will have a second round, and if we do not have a second round, we will submit questions for the record. Thank you.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some people describe our policies in Colombia as a slippery slope, and that may be true, but sometimes I think we are approaching a cliff on our involvement there.

In 1978, we had a grand announcement at Camp David accords for peace in the Middle East that since then has cost us \$300 billion, and now we are in the midst of chaos and war. There are a lot of people in this country that are not any more optimistic about

what is going to happen down in Colombia than they were and are about what happened in the Middle East. They have been fighting down there a long time, since 1964, when the civil war broke out. We are getting involved in a civil war, and to pan this off as something current dealing with terrorism, dealing with 9/11, I think, is just really, really a stretch.

I represent a rather modestly poor district in Texas. I have never had one individual come up and say, "You know, I really need to be further taxed because I like what you are doing in Colombia." But let me tell you, I get dozens and dozens of people saying, "What in thunder are you doing down in Colombia spending our money?" And they are very concerned, and they are not optimistic at all. And I do not see the moral justification. I do not see the constitutional justification for this, and this notion that we bunch this up in words of terrorism when we are dealing with civil factions and civil wars, I think, is a real careless definition of what terrorism is all about and what this world is facing today.

But I am wondering whether we might have an amendment to this bill that would deal with some equity in it. It was pointed out that if we could only get this oil running, it would help the government, and that would alleviate some of our financial burden. Well, that is a circuitous argument. But I was wondering since it is not only the government that is going to benefit down there if we keep the oil running, but it is Occidental Oil Company that is going to benefit. So we are down there. We are being the police force for Occidental. Now, if Occidental all of a sudden makes a lot more profits, do you think it would be proper—this is a question—do you think it would be proper for us to then precisely tax Occidental to reimburse us for going down there and securing their oil pipeline? I would like to have a comment, anybody.

Mr. RODMAN. I will start. The threat to the pipeline is more than a police problem that could be dealt with by private individuals. This is a problem of civil peace and law and order, basic security. I do not think it is something that can be dealt with other than by strengthening the Colombian government. What we are talking about is training the Colombian military to take on this task as part of their legitimate responsibility to protect that society. I think it goes way beyond the interests of a private company. It is revenue to the government that the government could use for its social programs. I would say that the American interest in it is for reasons of public policy and relations with a friendly government and our interest in the future of that country, and so that is why it is more than a matter of one oil company.

Mr. REICH. May I add something? I agree with that, and I would be happy to come to your district, if you invite me, and talk to your constituents and explain to them the importance of Colombia to the United States. Here is a country that has borders with Central America. To the north they have borders with Panama, to the east with Venezuela and Brazil, east and south, with Peru and Ecuador. If you look at a map of South America, I think you could call Colombia the keystone of South America, possibly the hemisphere because you can move almost in any direction into other very important strategic countries—Panama, Venezuela, Brazil—and down the Andes.

If for no other reason, I think we need to help the Colombian democracy defend itself from attacks from terrorists, terrorist groups and narcotraffickers, two elements that have attacked the United States in different ways. And I think supporting the Colombians to fight this fight is very much in our interest because, for one thing, it is not our men and women who are doing the fighting; it is the Colombian men and women. All they are asking of us is additional assistance. They are increasing the portion of their budget that is going to the military and to their defense, as they should. Other countries in the world, as we have discussed, are helping.

As far as the pipeline, the primary beneficiary of the pipeline is the Government of Colombia. It derives most of the income. And by the way, we are the consumers of a lot of that oil. To the extent that we can protect that pipeline and other infrastructure in Colombia, we might succeed in lowering the price of oil. Colombia is a major supplier of oil to the United States and has the potential to be even greater. So we are helping ourselves politically, strategically, economically, plus I think it is the right thing to do morally.

Mr. PAUL. We should not forget, though, that we started in Vietnam as being advisers, and soon we became fighters, and a lot of men lost their lives. Thank you.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you. To pursue the theme that was presented by my friend from Texas—and I will direct this to both Secretary Reich and Secretary Rodman—it is fine if we go down and protect the oil, but let us just talk about the current budget, the existing budget of the Colombian government. What is the allocation? What percentage is allocated to the defense of Colombia from the current existing budget if you have an answer? Could you compare that to what the percentage is in other Latin American countries?

Mr. RODMAN. First, I want to offer a point of information. I am told that Occidental does pay, reimburses the Colombian government for a lot of the expenses of protecting the pipeline. The problem is obviously it is not enough, and they need additional help. Now, Mr. Delahunt is asking about the percentage of GDP that Colombia devotes to defense.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Let us use that as a benchmark.

Mr. RODMAN. The figure that is usually given is about 3.5 percent of GDP, and—

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, it is interesting that my figures, and again, they must vary with yours, is around 2 percent.

Mr. RODMAN. Well, if you include the security function, I am told, and I think this is the figure I have heard generally used, that this is the average during the Pastrana period, and it, in fact, represents a major increase over the percentage of GDP from his predecessor's Administration.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I have no doubt that it represents an increase from previous Colombian governments. I guess what I am suggesting, and I think this was the point that Mr. Paul was making, and I also think that in his opening statement Mr. Menendez implicated this: What is the commitment on the part of the Colombian government to this particular defense? Secretary Reich.

Mr. REICH. Sir, if you are saying that the Colombian government should do more, I do not think you are going to get much argument from this side. I think they should do more, but they are in the process of doing more. Just recently, President Pastrana announced an increase of \$110 million for the military and an increase—

Mr. DELAHUNT. I understand that, and I respect the fact that President Pastrana has made a herculean effort to increase the commitment of the Colombian government to professionalize the Colombian military. But let us be very candid. We are looking at a situation where there is an election that is a month or two away. There will be a new President inaugurated and will assume office in September.

Mr. REICH. August 7th.

Mr. DELAHUNT. August 7th. I guess what I am suggesting is that there is, at least as I gauge it, an unease, and that is being kind, with the level of commitment by the Colombian government to this particular war. I think it was your testimony, Secretary Reich, where you talked about \$4.5 billion, and some 60 percent of that money has been appropriated and expended. It is my understanding that those are not new dollars. Those are not new dollars that were appropriated by the Colombian government, and many of us here in Congress who supported Plan Colombia supported it on the assumption that those were new dollars to address the fundamental social conditions that have given rise to decades of—you used the term “terror.”

I think, again, it was the Ranking Member who mentioned the period of “La Violencia.” Let us understand, and let us be honest and candid, that terror has reigned in Colombia since the late-1940s. This is not a new phenomenon. And to suggest that all of a sudden things have changed—the only thing that has changed is in the 1980s we saw the advent of the narcotrafficker and a rise in our consumption of cocaine and heroin coming in from those countries.

I guess what I am saying is I am not satisfied that there has been the kind of commitment from Colombian society, both in terms of the expenditure of their resources, as well as, and I am sure General Speer can address this, some of the restrictions that are placed on General Tapias in the military in terms of who is actually fighting the war for the Colombian people in Colombia.

Mr. SPEER. Mr. Chairman and Congressman, Thank you. Just a couple of points. Very often I think there is a great misconception that the \$1.3 billion FY 2000 supplemental was heavy on the military side. The reality is out of the \$1.3 billion for Plan Colombia in that supplemental only \$183 million went directly in support of the Colombian military.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, General, isn't it true that approximately a billion dollars went in support of military hardware such as helicopters?

Mr. SPEER. No, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. No?

Mr. SPEER. The helicopter program cost approximately \$328 million. That includes the equipment and training.

Mr. DELAHUNT. But that exceeds the statement that you just—go ahead.

Mr. SPEER. I did not finish. The first part, \$183 million approximately directly in support of training and equipping the Colombian military. An additional \$328 million in terms of the provision of the 33 UH-1 Novembers, 14 UH-60 Black Hawks, and 25 UE-2 helicopters, to include the training and sustainment for those programs. So out of the \$1.3 billion, \$510 million basically are in direct support of the Colombian military. There were other military-related programs, such as the money that went into the support of the FOL in Manta, Ecuador, Aruba, and Curacao. Also, the money that funds the U.S. intelligence collection platforms that basically operate to collect counternarcotics intelligence over Colombia, so that is over and above that, but—

Mr. DELAHUNT. I guess what I am questioning, General Speer, is the commitment of Colombian society in terms of new dollars to address—this was, I think, posed in different words by Mr. Menendez, but what is happening in terms of eliminating the fundamental conditions that have existed for far too long in Colombia that have given rise to the violence and armed conflict? What is happening on the social development side?

Mr. BALLENGER. I hate to say that your time ran out about 2½ minutes ago.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay.

Mr. BALLENGER. We will come back. Ms. Davis.

Ms. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Reich, I want to say thanks for coming by and visiting us today. The question I have for you, and you may not be able to answer it in this hearing, and I may have to get it in a classified, but could you help the Committee to understand what the role of the subcontractor is, such as Brown & Root, Professional Resources, Incorporated? What is their role inside of Colombia?

Mr. REICH. That program actually is managed by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement. If you do not mind, I would like to refer your question to my colleague, Randy Beers, to answer that.

Ms. DAVIS. That will be on the next panel. No?

Mr. REICH. Not today.

Ms. DAVIS. Okay. You are going to get back to me.

Mr. REICH. Yes. I will get back to you. General Speer has an answer to that.

Ms. DAVIS. Okay.

Mr. SPEER. In general, the Dynacorp contractor, which is the parent contractor that I think you are referring to, manages the counterdrug program for the Department of State inside Colombia. They have two large aspects of the program. First of all, they provide the funding for the contract pilots that do the Department of State-operated spray aircraft or the eradication aircraft. They also provide the funding for the pilots that fly the UH-1 Novembers, the 33 aircraft in support of the counterdrug brigade in the Putamayo and Caqueta departments. Derivatives of that also provide for the logistic support of both the fixed-wing aircraft that do the eradication as well as the UH-1 Novembers. There may be something beyond that, but those are the big pieces I am aware of.

Ms. DAVIS. So just eradication at this point that you know of.

Mr. SPEER. Eradication, and they also fly the UH-1 Novembers, which are the troop-support aircraft in support of the first counternarcotics brigade in Puatamayo and Caqueta. They operate out of Larandia, which is a base, and then do the maintenance in Tolemida.

Ms. DAVIS. If there is anything else, could you get back to me on that?

Mr. REICH. Yes, ma'am.

[The information referred to follows:]

ANSWER TO MS. DAVIS' QUESTION SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO THE COMMITTEE AFTER THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH

In general, U.S. civilian contractors are employed because they provide skills not available or in short supply in the military and civilian agencies or because they provide flexibility for short-term requirements. Civilian contractors are used in the U.S. Embassy Narcotics Affairs Section's counternarcotics programs for program management support, aircraft maintenance and logistics, and as pilots, for example. Subcontractors are used because they tend to have personnel available that specialize in fields useful for our programs and because it is easier to contract the firm to provide personnel than it is to recruit and contract each individual. We are not, however, using those particular firms in Colombia. Military Professional Resources, Inc. was involved in the Colombian military's professionalization effort, but I believe it has completed its contract.

Ms. DAVIS. General Speer, could you tell us what funding and manning needs you have for SOUTHCOM? Are you underfunded and undermanned?

Mr. SPEER. In terms of SOUTHCOM, we are in the process of undergoing an independent manpower survey of all of our requirements in terms of the total programs, not only at the headquarters but throughout the region. That is ongoing. Obviously, we initiated that program with an unbiased agency because we were trying to document what we thought was a requirement for additional resources, but we will see how that plays out.

Ms. DAVIS. And you will let us know what we can do.

Mr. REICH. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. DAVIS. Also, could you tell us about your level of coordination among the various agencies inside the Joint Interagency Task Force under SOUTHCOM?

Mr. SPEER. I am going to take that in two parts. First of all, for some time we have had the Joint Interagency Task Force East, which is the functional counternarcotics component at Key West, Florida. It is not only joint representing all services of the military but interagency as well. It is commanded by Rear Admiral David Belz, United States Coast Guard. It has permanent party members of DEA, Customs, and liaison with the FBI, in addition to the military. They actually plan and coordinate the counterdrug operations in the source zone in the transit zone predominantly from detection and monitoring and in support of interdiction to law enforcement.

On a larger context, within our headquarters in Miami we also have a joint interagency coordination group that looks at the broader aspect of transnational threats for Latin America at large, not only counterdrug but also the broad range of terrorism and everything related to it—arms trafficking, illegal migration—because we find that it is interlinked. All of these members are not directly assigned to the headquarters, but because of the proximity in Miami they work together.

Ms. DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. BALLENGER. I think probably the best thing we can do, we have got one 15-minute vote, and that was a 10-minute buzzer that just went off, and then we have got two 5-minute votes. So I think that probably we ought to take a break for about 25 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BALLENGER. Yes, sir.

Mr. PAYNE. Because I have a conflict coming back, if it is all right, I just want to ask one question.

Mr. BALLENGER. Yes.

Mr. PAYNE. If the gentleman from American Samoa would yield.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I gladly yield to the gentleman from New Jersey, and I will take my time later.

Mr. BALLENGER. I think I am going to go vote.

Mr. PAYNE. Okay. Thank you. I will be very brief. I have a number of questions, but I will only ask one. It has been brought to my attention lately, and this is because our government is so involved in Colombia, I think that we have a responsibility to try to do as much as we can—I have some questions about the defoliating, the spraying, and the impact that it may have on the people in the area. I have a question about the leading candidate for the presidency that seems to have support allegedly from some of the paramilitary groups.

However, the only question I will ask because of the time is that there is a growing concern on my part and many of us in the Congressional Black Caucus regarding the plight of the Afro-Colombians. As you know, about 25 percent of the population there are African-Colombians. In 1991 African-Colombians were finally given the right to title to their land, but since that time there has been a systematic attacking from paramilitaries, a specific situation on December 20th of 1996 on the Pacific Coast. Paramilitaries came in and shot people in the streets. The people appealed to the government, but the government did not respond. As a matter of fact, it is even alleged that in that particular incident some military craft from the government actually also participated.

I would just like to know has this been brought to the attention of our government. And secondly, I know there are tremendous numbers of human rights violations in Colombia, but this is a specifically growing problem, and I wonder whether that has surfaced at all in our diplomatic work.

Mr. BALLENGER. If I may interrupt just a second, I have just been told that we have to have someone to chair the meeting, and I am the only one in the room, and I have got three votes to make.

Mr. PAYNE. All right. It will take a minute, and then we can all go.

Mr. BALLENGER. Can anybody answer that in a minute?

Mr. REICH. Yes, sir. We will look into that, Mr. Payne. I have to tell you, I am not familiar with that particular incident in '96 that you mentioned, but our experience is that unfortunately the paramilitaries and the FARC and the ELN are equal-opportunity terrorists. They will kill anybody, regardless of their race, color, creed, national origin. We are dealing with a bunch of thugs, and we have to end their ability to do that.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you. I will follow up with your office in the future—okay?—

Mr. REICH. Yes, sir.

Mr. PAYNE [continuing]. And we can try to deal with that specifically. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BALLENGER. We will be in recess for about 20 minutes.

[Whereupon, at 11:35 a.m., a recess was taken.]

Mr. BALLENGER. If I may, gentlemen, we will call this back to order. One question I would like to ask real quickly is, we have been talking about how much of Colombia's GDP was spent on armed services. Have we got any number of how much we spend on our GDP?

Mr. RODMAN. It is over 3 percent. The figure I have seen is about 3.3.

Mr. BALLENGER. As compared to what was Colombia's?

Mr. RODMAN. 3.5.

Mr. BALLENGER. They out did us.

Mr. RODMAN. I have seen a figure that in this year it may be over 4 percent in Colombia, partly because of what President Pastrana added to the budget and partly because their economy has been in difficulty.

Mr. BALLENGER. Okay. I just wanted to get that point across. Congressman Faleomavaega.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to welcome our distinguished members of the panel. Their statements have been offered earlier this morning. I do have a couple of questions, and I hope they will help me out.

It was my privilege recently to travel with the Chairman to visit the countries of Colombia, Bolivia, and Grenada, and I have learned a lot. I think, Ambassador Reich, you had given an indication that the Administration fully supports the provisions of the ATPA treaty or agreement that is now pending before the Congress, especially in the Senate. I for one happen to be totally against the proposed provisions of the ATPA, and I wanted to know from the Administration's point of view if the Administration is willing to sacrifice the entire U.S. tuna industry by allowing the Andean countries to export duty-free canned tuna to the United States.

Mr. REICH. Well, sir, I guess if you put the question in that way, it would be difficult, but I do not think that certainly that is the intention of the Administration. We are still talking with the countries in the region about textiles and tuna, and there are some Members of Congress that have expressed concerns about textiles and tuna. We are not going to do anything that hurts our people, and at the same time we are here asking for additional resources to combat narcotics and terrorism in a part of the world that is under attack from those two scourges.

The President believes that extending the trade preferences to Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia will help those countries to complement the fight against narcotics and terrorism and the cost that they incur in those battles. I have to admit that I am not an expert in tuna, and it sounds from your question that you know a lot more than I do about it.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Well, Mr. Secretary, I want to share with you the fact that I happen to have the largest tuna canning facility in the world, and if we are to allow the Administration policy to carry this tuna policy over to the Andean countries, it will literally, literally destroy the U.S. tuna industry with the way it is now being proposed by the House.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that this has also been one of the major concerns for those states whose industry is primarily in the textiles. My understanding is that the ATPA agreement, as has been implemented for the last 10 years, has been very positive. In fact, even tuna was part of the agreement, for which there has been a lot of concessions given to that respect, both in textiles as well as tuna. The problem that I have is that with additional concessions given to the Andean countries, both in textiles and tuna, you are going to end up with thousands of more workers in the textile states, and this is the reason why you have the likes of Senator Hollings and Senator Helms totally opposed to the ATPA as it is now proposed by the House. Will the gentleman be in agreement with that concern?

Mr. REICH. Well, sir, as the Chairman knows, I grew up in North Carolina, so I have a great deal of respect for Mr. Ballenger and Senator Helms and for the textile industry. What I will do is I will take back those concerns to my colleagues who handle the economic and business issues, Assistant Secretary Wayne and Undersecretary Larson. But I am glad to hear you say that you think that the ATPA as it was contributed a great deal to the development of the region. That is our objective. Our objective is certainly not to harm any domestic industries.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I have written to Secretary Powell and expressed my concerns because now there is another development coming out on the tuna issue. The fact of the matter is that we have used tuna as our basic trade policy toward eradication of growing cocaine as a substitute crop or whatever the policy that we are trying to do. Now the countries like Thailand and the Philippines are complaining about the fact that why are we giving preferential trade to these Andean countries on tuna, and we are having the same problems in growing heroin and poppy up there among the Asian countries, and so they consider our policy as somewhat uneven and unfair. And I would really appreciate it if you can convey that message to the Administration and to the State Department, especially to Secretary Powell, that we have got a serious conflict here in terms of the tuna issue. I would appreciate it if you would do that.

Mr. REICH. I will.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. There were some questions raised earlier about investments in the oil industry in Colombia, and I would like to know what percentage of investments in the oil industry is from the United States.

Mr. REICH. Sir, I do not have the exact figures. There are quite a few American companies investing in oil in Colombia, but I do not know the percentages. There are also European companies.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Can you provide that for the record?

Mr. REICH. Yes, I can.

[The information referred to follows:]

ANSWER TO MR. FALEOMAVAEGA'S QUESTION SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO THE
COMMITTEE AFTER THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH

According to Ecopetrol, Colombia's state-owned oil company, as of 1999, roughly 45 percent of investment in the Colombian oil industry comes from the United States.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I think with what Mr. Menendez had expressed earlier and my concern, if our investment in the oil industry in Colombia is only 25 percent, then we should provide only 25 percent of the security as far as funding and allocating whatever it is that is necessary to make this a success. I do not see it as very fair policy if the European oil companies are going to be investing 75 percent of the entire industry, and we are paying for the security, and we are getting only 25 percent. I think that is a very unfair policy, and I would appreciate it if you can pursue that situation concerning the oil industry.

Mr. REICH. Okay. But I am not sure that I understand, or maybe we did not make ourselves clear. That particular pipeline is run by Occidental Petroleum, which is, of course, a U.S. company, the particular pipeline that we have requested money to train and equip, only train and equip, a brigade to protect that pipeline. So that is not for a European company.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. So you are saying that the U.S. builds the pipelines.

Mr. REICH. The pipeline is already there. The pipeline has been built.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Built by a U.S. company.

Mr. REICH. Built by a U.S. company.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. The oil drilling and the oil itself?

Mr. REICH. Well, the government derives royalties paid for by the company to the government for the extraction of this petroleum.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. My understanding is 85 percent of the royalty does go to the government. Would you think it fair somewhat that the government should contribute part of that 85 percent royalty to providing security for the pipeline?

Mr. REICH. Oh, yes, and they are. As I said, for example, in this brigade we are providing the helicopters, and we are providing the training. They are providing the troops and everything that goes along with it. I do not know if my colleagues want to add something to that, but this is very much an example of cooperation between ourselves and the Colombian government.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Of the 40 million population in Colombia how many are indigenous Indians?

Mr. REICH. It is a small number. Once again, I will have to look that up and bring it to you for the record. It is not a large number.

[The information referred to follows:]

ANSWER TO MR. FALEOMAVAEGA'S QUESTION SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO THE COM-
MITTEE AFTER THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH, ASSISTANT SEC-
RETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Colombia has an indigenous population of approximately 716,000 people; not quite two percent of the population.

Mr. BALENGER. Thank you for filling in, Congressman.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I will wait for my second round, Mr. Chair-
man.

Mr. BALLENGER. Okay. Before I go back to Congressman Delahunt, I will enter a couple of questions from Mr. Hyde for the record. The first is to Secretary Rodman. Your formal statement says that the FARC is not considered to have global reach. I would note that several FARC leaders were recently indicted for cocaine drug trafficking to here, which can reach into every home and community in America. We also have evidence that they have imported the IRA into Colombia for terrorist training and that they can and will pose a security threat to Americans and American interests in Colombia. Do you want to reconsider that statement about no global reach by the FARC in light of those factors?

Mr. RODMAN. I would like to give a considered response for the record, but I would want to say the following. It is true that we have not treated these terrorist groups as part of the global war on terrorism. The Administration considered this question and decided that Colombia should be treated in its own right. We certainly have the commitment that we have been discussing to support Colombia, but to treat the global war on terrorism, including in the supplemental request, treating that separately, we have the ongoing war that we all know, and that Colombia would not be treated in the same category. That is where we are.

Mr. BALLENGER. If you would like to make a further formal statement for Congressman Hyde, I would appreciate it.

Mr. RODMAN. I can do that.

Mr. BALLENGER. And then one more question for both Secretary Reich and General Speer. Could you comment on what you know about the IRA terrorist activities with the FARC in Colombia, and secondly, does not the fact that these global terrorist networks like the FARC and the IRA are helping each other in using Colombia and its drug proceeds to advance their illicit goals alarm you and help justify a change in the U.S. policy to cover terrorist threat as well as that from narcotics?

Mr. SPEER. Mr. Chairman, if I could take that.

Mr. BALLENGER. Sure.

Mr. SPEER. As I am sure you know from your trip, there are three IRA members that were arrested in Colombia who had been training with the FARC. And the indications are that the recent terrorist campaign throughout Colombia, certainly since 20 January, demonstrates some different techniques that were not previously used by the FARC, and the implication is that maybe these are techniques that the IRA actually provided in the training in the despeje.

If I could kind of go back to the question to Mr. Rodman, I am not sure about the definition of terms in terms of global reach versus nonglobal reach, but what I would like to make sure that we are all cognizant of is the FARC operates at will across the borders in Panama, Ecuador, and Venezuela. It moves back and forth uninhibited. The other thing, we have seen FARC activities, at least in terms of presence, in other countries within the region, and I can provide specifics in a classified form.

Mr. REICH. May I add something to that, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. BALLENGER. Sure.

Mr. REICH. I do not think a terrorist organization has to be of global reach in order to be a threat to us if it is in our own region.

All it has to be is a terrorist organization of regional reach. And as I said earlier, you can walk from here to there. So I think we need to pay a lot of attention to what goes on in Colombia and the spill-over effect on the entire region. That is why we are here. We are here to ask for your support for what we are trying to do in Colombia.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you. Mr. Delahunt, I think it is your time to go again.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary, you used some statistics in terms of the Colombians dealing with the AUC. I think you indicated that 10 percent of the AUC has either been captured or killed in the past year.

Mr. REICH. Our figures, the figures that I had for this testimony, indicated that the AUC has about 11,000 armed-combatant capability and that the Colombian military has taken out of action about a little over a thousand, or about 10 percent of that.

Mr. DELAHUNT. So about 1,100 have been either captured or killed in the course of the past year, 2 years.

Mr. REICH. Year or 2. I do not know the exact time period.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Maybe, General Speer, you can help with that.

Mr. SPEER. Sir, I cannot really confirm the specifics. What I can confirm is certainly over the last 18 months we have seen an increased number of combat actions where the Colombian military has initiated contact with the AUC.

Mr. DELAHUNT. How many of these actions have occurred?

Mr. SPEER. Sir, I can get you something for the record.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Just give me a range now, 20, 50?

Mr. SPEER. Say that again, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Between 20 and 50?

Mr. SPEER. Sir, I am sure if you go over the 18-month time span, it is closer to the 50 end of the spectrum, but I would prefer to give you something specific that I can back up in terms of data for the record.

Mr. DELAHUNT. In general, what you are you talking about in terms of time frame again?

Mr. SPEER. My observation is the last 18 months. To go further back than that, I really cannot. I think it is fair to say, General Tapias assesses the AUC at the current rate of growth as the most critical long-term threat to Colombia, although the FARC is certainly the near-term threat. And what we have seen is the Colombian military targeting and taking action against the AUC, and I am not sure that that was documented in the years past.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Are you aware, of course, of—I am sure Secretary Reich is—the conclusion by our own Department of State in terms of country reports about linkages between the paramilitary groups and the Colombian military?

Mr. SPEER. Sir, I have read that. I have also read the Human Rights Watch report. I have seen the allegations. The only evidence that I have seen that links the military to the AUC is what General Tapias has provided in terms of his discussion of where he has taken action against individuals within the ranks through the chain of command for collusion. Unfortunately, a lot of the allegations that are in these reports are rather dated, and I do not have anything current that would say that that is continuing. Now hav-

ing said that, I have got to be honest and tell you, I do not have U.S. military guys on the ground with Colombian units as they are out doing things.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, I am referring specifically, as Secretary Reich would know, to the official Department of State conclusions in terms of linkages that exist. And again, I want to be fair. General Tapias, whom I have great respect for, has made human rights a priority in terms of his efforts to professionalize the Colombian military. But having said that, when I hear from the Department of State that there are allegations that are credible, and I think much of what we all say are allegations as opposed to hard evidence, whatever the topic may be, that there appears to be credible evidence indicating that not much progress has been made in terms of delinking the paramilitaries and the Colombian military. Secretary Reich, I see you shaking your head.

Mr. REICH. Well, sir, I am not sure that I would agree with that statement. The figure that I gave you, first of all, is a snapshot taken at some time in the past during this 18-month period. As General Speer said, the fastest growing of the terrorist organizations is the AUC. It could be that at the time that there were 1,100 captured or killed, and they had 11,000, that was 10 percent, and maybe they have grown since then. We do know that the Colombian military are engaging with the AUC against the AUC, that they are severing the links with the paramilitaries. Certainly at the command levels and the higher echelons there are instances, we have been told, and I have been in Colombia, and I have talked to General Tapias—a number of State Department officials—in fact, on my trip alone General Speer went along. Undersecretary Grossman led the delegation. The Assistant Secretary for Democracy and Human Rights, Lorne Craner, went along. Randy Beers, Assistant Secretary for INL. We had quite a few high State Department officials there, and we emphasized to the President, the Vice President, the secretary of defense—

Mr. DELAHUNT. I have no doubt about the position of the Administration in terms of—

Mr. REICH. We see progress. We see progress.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And I understand, and like I hope I was clear, there has been an effort at the senior command level. However, the reality on the ground in terms of, you know, out in the various departments, according to the Department of State's country report—I am not referring to human rights groups; I am referring to the Department of State report—there is much to be concerned about. And clearly we are heading into a new era with a new Administration.

I had the chance to meet Mr. Uribe, and I have an open mind. However, you are aware that there have been reports regarding Mr. Uribe in major American periodicals such as Newsweek and alleged, and let me underscore "alleged" because I want to be fair to him, alleged history with paramilitary groups. I think these are matters of concern for all of us. Let me conclude with one question to Secretary Reich. And you have testified, but I just want to be clear in my mind, and I think that we are on the same page, but I think there has been an omission in terms of the language that has been submitted by the Administration in terms of what is be-

fore the Committee now. And this was just noted by a staffer and myself as we were going over the legislation.

Now, it would appear that you do support section 567 of the 2002 foreign appropriations bill, and if you do not have it in front of you, I would be happy to provide it to you. It is a section that says the State Department must certify that Colombians are meeting certain human rights conditions before we can give the Colombian military any money. And it is unclear. In fact, I have requested Committee staff to review it, and it would appear that section 567 is omitted.

I guess what I am saying is this was an omission, I presume, given your testimony, but it is not the intention of the State Department to cancel 567, and presumably you would welcome an amendment to the language that is before the Committee so that we can assure that those human rights conditions continue to apply.

Mr. REICH. Not being a lawyer, I would say let me take this back to the lawyers. At first glance, I would assume that it is an omission because as you said correctly in my testimony I referred to 567, and I do not think the Executive Branch—

Mr. DELAHUNT. I do not think you mentioned 567 as a section, but I think in your testimony you covered it. But I want to be clear in my mind, and I am sure many of the Members of the Committee also want to be clear. I know you have some staff sitting behind you there. Maybe they might have a ready response.

Mr. BALENGER. Call it sandbagging.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I just think we have got to clarify it.

Mr. REICH. I have an explanation. Of course, in the legislation whenever there is human rights language we abide by it. We make it a point and take it very seriously, as I said in my testimony, but specifically why this did not appear here, we will find out. But it was certainly not our intention to abrogate a part of the law. First of all, I do not think it is constitutional for us to do that.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am not suggesting, and again, I want to be clear, I do not think it was intentional, but it was an omission, but in the legislation that the Administration has put forth for review by this Committee there is an omission which one could conclude would abrogate the requirements under section 567. I know that I do not want that to happen, and I am sure you do not want it to happen. I just want to be clear about it. I will accept your statement.

Mr. REICH. If I may, Congressman, in my testimony in the summary I said under section 567 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 2002, the Secretary of State is required to certify as to the Government of Colombia's progress in meeting several human rights-related conditions. The Secretary takes very seriously his responsibilities under the Act, as do I.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And you do not want to change that at all.

Mr. REICH. No, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Great.

Mr. BALENGER. Would it be all right to let your Senior Member have a word?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Sure.

Mr. BALENGER. Go ahead.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Delahunt exercises good judgment every so often.

General, I want to ask you one quick question, and I will submit the rest for the record because I know you have been here quite a long period of time now unfortunately between votes and some other meetings that transpired. You said in your last statement in your conclusion: "Although in the past few years the Colombian military has emerged as a much more capable and professional force, they lack the resources, manpower, air lift mobility to reestablish a safe and secure environment throughout the country."

So I have three questions. What will it take, how long will it take, and what will it cost?

Mr. SPEER. You are probably not going to like the answer. The answer is I do not know.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Well, that is at least an honest answer. [Laughter.]

Mr. SPEER. I do not really know. For example, if you look at the professionalization, and I am talking about professionalization both in terms of leadership and in terms of technical capability, that we have seen over the last 4 years not only in the unit that we train but also in the Colombian military at large, they are on the right trend. If you did just a simple manpower drill and looked at the threat of the three insurgent groups collectively, and you were going to put enough force, and that is what your mission was, was to target those forces, they are still short manpower in order to do that. It is a tradeoff in terms of manpower versus mobility because, for example, if they have got the capability to move forces around, and that appears to be the Colombian military strategy that they are working toward, they have been on a program to increase the size of the armed forces by 10,000 soldiers, but that is not to create a new unit. They are going through some reorganization where they will create a mobile brigade inside each division with the intent of being able to use both fixed-wing mobility provided by C-130 aircraft and the helicopters, not only the ones we have provided but the ones they purchased, to include the MI-17's they have purchased, to be able to respond better.

One of the challenges for us in terms of trying to get to your specific question is that under current law and current U.S. policy our interaction with the Colombian military is focused on counterdrug, and we are talking about what it would take to do something beyond counterdrug.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Well, Mr. Chairman, I will not belabor what I am trying to get at here in my earlier questions and my subsequent question. I could get into ratio numbers of the Colombian military to guerrillas, but here is what I want to say to the Administration as the Ranking Democrat on this Committee, as someone who supported vigorously Plan Colombia today. One-point-seven billion dollars later, statements like this, which I appreciate the honesty of, I for one need answers as to parameters as to what is it going to take, how long is it going to take, what is it going to cost, and what are measurable objectives that we can have benchmarks on?

We are a couple of years into this process. From my view, I do not believe that we have had the commensurate success for what we have done. I do not expect success overnight, but I also do not believe that the progress that I think should be made has been made, and that in part is because I do not believe that the Colombians themselves have significantly moved in the direction they need to move. And while I have been supportive of this effort today, I will be reticent to continue to support it unless I get those types of answers and the nature of where we are headed as we move forward because you cannot continuously have a set of circumstances where you are spending large amounts of money without being able to tell constituencies what it is that you are measurably pursuing and what is the degree of success that you are having onto the two stated goals that you enunciated earlier, Mr. Secretary.

So I want to just wave my sabre early because it is not my desire to slay Plan Colombia or to do anything to necessarily impede the progress, but it is my desire to be part of some informed decision making as well as some legitimate markers here that we can have so we understand where we are headed forward, and I think I can elicit a significant amount of support in that effort if I chose to do so.

So I hope that we can continue the dialogue beyond the hearing and head it in that direction. So I appreciate the testimony and thank you.

Mr. BALENGER. The Secretary would like to say—

Mr. REICH. Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that Mr. Menendez's comments, as far as I am concerned, are very constructive, and this is why this process of hearings is so important to us because we come here, and we hear what your concerns are, and we will take them back. And if we are not making our case properly, then we have to do one of two things: Either make our case better or get another case. I think we are probably not making our case properly, and it has to do, if I may, with a question that Mr. Delahunt asked right before the recess, right before the vote that you all went to take, which is the historical context.

Let us keep in mind that for three quarters of President Pastrana's term in office there was a peace process going on. He gave it everything he could, and as Secretary Rodman mentioned, we supported it, and as Secretary Powell has mentioned and the President. We supported President Pastrana in that effort. It was not appropriate at that time for him to build up the military forces of Colombia to the point where the guerrillas could use it as an excuse to break the process. Actually, the guerrillas are the ones that broke the process because they violated the terms of engagement. They used the despeje, the demilitarized zone, to conduct operations to kidnap people, to carry out sabotage outside the area, to train—the IRA connection is one that I am very happy that my colleague, Ambassador Taylor, is going to come and testify on the 24th about—the international connections with the FARC. But since President Pastrana recognized that the guerrillas had ended, that the FARC had ended, the peace process on the 20th of January, or he announced on the 20th of January that he was not going to participate in it anymore, you have seen quite an increase in Colombia's commitment to the war. I mentioned the 110 additional

million dollars, 10,000 troops, the extension of military service from 18 months to 24 months so that they have more troops in combat in active duty for longer periods of time, and all of this since the 20th of January, which is when you could say that the war really began once again in Colombia.

Unfortunately, once again Mr. Delahunt is right. This has been going on for a long time. In fact, ironically, the anniversary just passed. The 9th of April 1948 is when Eliecer Gaitan, who was a presidential candidate, was assassinated in Bogota, and that led to riots and to this period, which from 1948 to 1952 cost 300,000 lives in Colombia, 300,000 lives, and only ended temporarily when General Rojas Pinilla took over, established a dictatorship. He was overthrown in 1958, and then the parties began to alternate power. Then after that the violence began again, not in the level of intensity of the period from 1948 to 1952.

We are dealing here with historical factors, cultural factors, political, economic, military, and our answer has to be commensurate with that, has to be proportional. I think we have the beginning of a more balanced policy. Congressman Menendez's point is correct. We have to have measurements. We have to be able to see when we are getting ahead of the curve. We cannot just keep throwing money at the problem, and we are not proposing that at all.

We think we have made some progress, and we think the Colombian military is responding to the training and the equipment and the mobility. We are asking for additional authorities in terms of intelligence sharing, which is very important, and I look forward to continuing to come back and consulting with you all to make this a successful policy so we can come up with that objective that I mentioned earlier, Mr. Menendez.

Mr. BALLENGER. I would like to thank all of the members of this panel—

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BALLENGER. They have got a time schedule that they have got to meet, and I think they have just about used up all of their time. So if you do not mind, we have got another panel coming up.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I thought we were going to have at least two rounds, but that is all right. I will submit mine.

Mr. BALLENGER. Okay. If you would, anybody that has other questions can submit them for the record, and we will try to get everybody to participate. I really would like to say that I think it has been a very constructive meeting, and, Eni, if you and I can solve the fish and textile problems, we might have something to go on. But in the meantime let me thank you all again for your valuable time that you spent here. I think it has been a very constructive discussion. And without further ado I would like to call on the second panel, if I may, and thank you again for participating.

Let me introduce you. First of all, Michael Shifter is the Vice President for Policy at the Inter-American Dialogue, a Washington-based forum for Western Hemisphere affairs. Since 1994 he has played a major role in shaping the Dialogue's agenda and has developed and implemented the organization's program strategy in the area of democratic governance and human rights, and he is an

author of Latin American issues and has taught Latin American politics at both Harvard and Georgetown.

Our second panelist is Adam Isacson, a Senior Associate at the Center for International Policy. He has coordinated that Center's demilitarization program since 1995. He came into the Center for International Policy after working on the Central American demilitarization with the Arias Foundation in San Jose, Costa Rica. He has been responsible for the Center's Colombian activity since 1997.

You are both welcome, and, Mr. Shifter, if you will proceed.

Mr. SHIFTER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this opportunity. I have a prepared statement. I would like to submit it for the record.

Mr. BALLENGER. Without objection.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL SHIFTER, VICE PRESIDENT FOR
POLICY, INTER-AMERICAN DIALOGUE**

Mr. SHIFTER. Thank you. I think that the starting point for any discussion on policy review or change in Colombia has to be to defend Colombia's democracy by strengthening its capacity and the authority of the government to protect its people. Right now it is not able to do so, and our objective should be to assist the Colombians to move in that direction.

We also have to have a better sense of the end game as we begin to reconsider policy options, and in my view the end game should be a political settlement, a political solution to the Colombian conflict. A military solution is not a viable one in my opinion, given the scale and the nature of the conflict that we are dealing with.

There is an understandable temptation to try to fit Colombia under the framework of the war against terrorism or the war against drugs. Drugs and terrorism are surely serious problems in Colombia, and both of them affect U.S. interests in significant ways, but both of these problems derive from a lack of authority or capacity of the Colombian state. A democracy at risk like Colombia cannot be a good partner for the United States in dealing with either of these two serious problems.

There are four steps I would like to advance in an attempt to reframe or refocus U.S.-Colombia policy. The first is the importance of engaging with the Colombians at the highest political levels of the U.S. government. High-level political engagement is essential. We do this in other parts of the world. I think we have not done enough of it in the case of Colombia.

There needs to be a joint strategy, a comprehensive strategy, developed with the Colombian government to try to have a clear sense of the end game and a strategy to pursue to reach that point. The political goal has to be paramount. Clearly, peace talks now have broken down. The time is not ripe, but we have to think ahead.

The second is a long-term effort to professionalize the military in Colombia. Previously our policy has been focused on drugs. That means providing training, equipment, helicopters to eradicate and interdict drugs. This is a piece of the problem, but it clearly does not deal directly with the fundamental core problem, which is institutional weakness on the part of the security forces. There should

be greater attention to professionalize both the police and the military so that they can protect their citizens.

The proposal to support the Colombians in fighting kidnapping is a positive and welcome step in a country where more than half of the world's kidnappings take place. However, all of this military assistance and support should target all of the groups outside the law—the FARC, the ELN, the AUC, and other criminal groups. It should include very strict conditions on human rights. The Colombians need to demonstrate their commitment to improving the human rights situation. And it also should have a clear eye and objective toward pursuing a political goal.

Our policy should not only focus on the security area, which is the most immediate and urgent question, but in the long-term development of institutional reform in Colombia. Judicial and social reform are absolutely critical, and these also should be contingent on the Colombians being prepared to do their share and pursue necessary reforms such as tax reform as well as greater enforcement of tax collection.

The drug problem is a global problem, not just a Colombia problem. There needs to be greater cooperation among all of the countries, the United States and other nations in the region, to try to deal with this problem together and also to reduce consumption and demand in the United States.

The United States has an enormous stake in what happens in Colombia. There are serious regional implications for continued deterioration of the situation, and if the United States does not engage now in a more constructive way, these problems are likely to fester, the situation may deteriorate and become harder to control down the road. I believe it is also important to seek common ground with the Europeans in dealing with the Colombian problem. I think there is greater opportunity to do so now than perhaps before and also with other Latin American countries which have not done their share, I think, in responding to the Colombian crisis. The United States could be a catalyst and mobilize support to obtain greater coordination among the neighbors. It is unlikely that there will be any optimistic, positive scenario unless the neighbors who are affected by this crisis become more concerned and more engaged.

Let me, if I can, just make one final point and say a word about the Colombians. Colombia is a country of enormous advantages and assets. This is not a question of nation building. This is a country with the longest democratic tradition in South America, the best economic performer for 40 years in Latin America until the mid-1990s. So this is a country that has not started from scratch. It is also not a civil war. This is a war against society. There are about 40,000 people who are armed and who are violent and who pose a serious threat, but the overwhelming majority of Colombians are committed and simply want to carry about their daily lives and live in peace.

The Colombians realize they have to take serious steps to confront the situation. They have been delayed in doing so but are beginning to do so now. They need time, and they need support. I think pressure from the United States is appropriate and welcome. More should have been done some time ago. But it also would be

a mistake to stand back, I think, and wait until the Colombians take the necessary steps to meet the kind of concerns that we have before becoming involved and engaged in a better way in pursuing a sensible course. I think we can push and work closely with the Colombians in a political way to move them in the right direction. That is our challenge, and there is too much at stake if we do not pursue that course. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Shifter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL SHIFTER, VICE PRESIDENT FOR POLICY, INTER-AMERICAN DIALOGUE

I very much appreciate your invitation to appear before the Subcommittee today to talk about US policy toward Colombia. This is precisely the right moment to ask hard questions, and engage in an open, public debate about where US policy is heading, and ought to be heading, to help Colombia deal with its multiple problems. Our interests and goals in Latin America's third largest country deserve serious discussion. That is why this hearing is so important.

Let me start with the question of what purpose we want to achieve in Colombia. The objective should be clear: we need to do all we can to defend Colombia's democracy by strengthening the government's capacity and authority to protect its citizens throughout its territory. Given the scale and nature of the conflict, a military solution is not a viable option. Our efforts should go toward helping the government reach a political solution to the country's deep, internal conflict. Colombia will only be able to deal effectively with its narcotics and terrorism problems if it moves in this direction.

By now, there is widespread agreement about the diagnosis of Colombia's crisis. The country is experiencing unprecedented lawlessness perpetrated by a host of violent actors. The problem is that violence and armed conflict exist because of the weakness and even absence of governance and effective authority in wide swaths of territory. There are three Colombian groups that appear on the State Department's list of terrorist organizations, all of which deserve the designation. These are the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN), and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). The first and third groups, in conflict with one another, should particularly concern us. They are formidable forces that have expanded most dramatically in recent years and, together, have an estimated 30,000 combatants.

The Colombian conflict has old, historic roots, but is so virulent now because the insurgent groups have developed a system of financing themselves through kidnapping, extortion, and taxing the drug trade. Narcotics is not the cause of terrorist criminal activity, but it does fuel it. Although the FARC and AUC are no doubt strengthened from the drug trade, these groups would continue to pose a threat to Colombia even if the drug problem were somehow resolved. Drugs, coca and heroin production, is an important element or dimension of a much more profound and complex problem. However, US policy toward Colombia until now has been narrowly focused on fighting drugs.

It is understandable why there is such a great temptation in the United States to fit Colombia under the framework of the war against drugs and, since September 11, the global campaign against terrorism. Drugs and terrorism are no doubt serious problems, and both affect US interests. But in the Colombia case, both of these problems derive from a lack of state authority, control and capacity. That is what needs most urgent attention to turn around the country's dramatic deterioration. That should be the focus and guiding purpose of US policy. A democracy at serious risk cannot be a very good partner of the United States in tackling any problem, including drugs and terrorism.

In concrete terms, what does this mean? First, the United States should engage actively and in a sustained way with the Colombian government to formulate a comprehensive joint strategy and end game to the conflict. High-level political attention should seek to support efforts aimed at forcing a negotiated political settlement. Until now, Colombia policy has been in the hands of operational policymakers. Peace talks have now broken down, and conditions are not ripe to move toward a settlement. Yet the political objective in Colombia must be paramount.

Second, to help shape the conditions that will make an eventual negotiation with all three of Colombia's terrorist groups more realistic and feasible, it is crucial for the United States to undertake a long-term effort aimed at professionalizing Colombia's security forces. Our objective should be to help Colombia develop a profes-

sional, modern military, and police capacity to maintain public order. At present, the security forces cannot effectively protect Colombia's citizens. The US security aid provided to Colombia until now has been focused on equipment and training for eradication and interdiction of drugs. That the administration and Congress are now looking to go beyond this narrow emphasis is welcome news. The proposal to help support Colombia's anti-kidnapping effort, for example, is eminently sensible in a country where more than half of the world's kidnappings take place. But a plan of military assistance needs to be explicit about the importance of Colombia's security forces targeting all groups operating outside of the law, concerns and conditions related to human rights, and a clear eye on the ultimate political objective outlined above. Whether one is considering the protection of an oil pipeline and other infrastructure, or the sharing of intelligence, it is critical to take into account such concerns. This would mean a significant and positive departure from what is now in place.

Third, although the security question in Colombia is most urgent, the United States government should make it clear that it is prepared to support the Colombian government over the longer-term on a wide range of badly needed reform efforts. Judicial and social reform particularly stand out. These may not be part of an eventual negotiation, but should be integral to an assistance package aimed at strengthening Colombia's key institutions. Such a commitment should be contingent on the Colombian government and business leaders demonstrating accountability and doing their share in contributing to such a rebuilding effort. Tax reform and greater enforcement, for example, should be part of such a deal.

Finally, the United States should improve current efforts to tackle the serious drug problem, not only in working with Colombia, but with our other partners in the region. This is a global problem, and the United States should seek to promote greater cooperation among the relevant countries in this hemisphere in an effort to reduce production and trafficking. The US government should give highest priority to supporting the region's legal economy; it can best do so by expanding the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA). A multilateral mechanism being developed in the Organization of American States is promising and deserves political support. To make an overall drug policy more effective, the US government needs to give greater attention to efforts aimed at reducing demand and consumption in the United States, as well as more vigorous law enforcement in this country.

The United States has an enormous stake in what happens in Colombia. This is not only because of the relentless, drug-fueled violence that is putting South America's oldest democracy at serious risk. It is also because of the potential for an even deeper crisis that affects the wider region. With the recent escalation of violence in Colombia, Peruvian, Venezuelan, Ecuadorian and Brazilian troops have been put on alert on their borders. Just a few weeks ago, there was a confrontation between the FARC and Brazilian soldiers. There is tremendous political tension and uncertainty in Venezuela, and troubling institutional fragility in Ecuador. This is a region that is nervous and on edge. At least some of the trends are ominous. I believe US engagement in the ways outlined here is critical precisely to avert a deteriorating situation that would, down the road, be even more difficult to control.

Finally, it's important to remember that Colombia has important assets and advantages to work with. It has a long, democratic tradition, and prizes elections. In the last century, it had only four years of military rule. Contrary to what is often said, the country is not experiencing a civil war, but rather a war against society. It is not politically divided. On the contrary, it is politically united around the common desire to lead normal lives, in peace. Unfortunately, some of the country's actors, who commit barbarous acts, are making it virtually impossible for the overwhelming majority of law-abiding Colombian citizens to fulfill that common desire. The US government should help them do so.

Thank you very much for this opportunity. I would be happy to clarify or expand on any of these points, or answer any questions you might have.

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Isacson.

STATEMENT OF ADAM ISACSON, SENIOR ASSOCIATE, CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Mr. ISACSON. Chairman Ballenger, Ranking Member Menendez, many thanks for inviting me to testify today. I will try to keep this brief, although there is so much to talk about. I have worked for the last 6 years at the Center for International Policy, and my work in just over the last 4 years has taken me to Colombia 15

times. On these trips I have come to know and like Colombia quite a bit and many Colombians in particular, and in this testimony I do not mean to bash Colombia at all, even if it may sound like it at some points. What I do hope to convey here, though, is two things really: First, that Colombia's conflict is deeply complicated, and it is going to require a lot of patience and creativity from Congress to help solve; second, that Colombia is not a country with a run-of-the-mill terrorist problem. It is a matter of degree bigger, and a mostly military aid program would have to be massive in order to have any impact on the conflict, and, in fact, it would be very likely to blow up in our faces.

Now, the Administration has asked Congress to broaden our military assistance mission in Colombia beyond counternarcotics. This is a major change, and this spring may be the last chance we get to debate a change like this. After now future debates are going to center not on whether we should be more involved in Colombia's war but on how deeply we should be involved, how much more money or advisers are needed.

Now, since 2000 the United States has given Colombia about \$1.35 billion in military and police assistance. Most of the aid to Colombia's army, as General Speer mentioned, adds up to about a 2,300-man, counternarcotics brigade and 75 helicopters or thereabouts. But remember, Colombia is the size of Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma combined. That is a lot of room for this amount of aid to spread out.

Let us think for a minute about how this might play out. If we brought in the mission of our aid beyond drugs, we are going to immediately dramatically increase the number of targets that these units and these helicopters can be employed against. We may find very soon that these assets are spread way too thin across so many targets. We are going to find ourselves turning down the majority of the Colombians' requests for their use. As guerrilla attacks continue all over the country, we are going to find that our helicopter units are, in fact, making little difference in the overall direction of the conflict. That is a very real risk.

Now, this in turn is going to generate enormous pressure over the next few years, perhaps as soon as next year, for substantial military aid increases: More helicopters, more training, more weapons, more units, perhaps more U.S. personnel acting as instructors or advisers. When that happens, when this pressure is felt, how will Congress respond? How much is going to be too much in Colombia? I think we would do very well to answer these questions now instead of later.

And I would add that it is a bit disingenuous to call the broader mission in Colombia "counterterrorism." That makes it sound, I do not know, like a relatively small effort. But Colombia is on a very different scale than the Philippines or Georgia or Yemen. Yeah, the FARC, the ELN, the AUC, they are all on the State Department's terrorist list, and they all commit terrorism, but these are bigger groups. Not only do they have long histories, but together they have about 40,000 members. They control territory. They even govern it sometimes in a very awful, crude way, but they do govern. They are organized as military forces well armed and equipped. They have intelligence capabilities, and as we have heard for years,

they earn hundreds of millions of dollars a year, a lot of it from the drug trade.

Call them terrorists if you like, but you cannot fight them as though there are a couple of hundred people in shadowy cells across the country. Confronting Colombia's groups would mean supporting a long and costly counterinsurgency campaign, probably many times larger than all of the aid we have given Colombia up to now.

Remember, too, that Colombia's army is small. When you take away the guys at the desk jobs, the guys protecting static infrastructure, you have 35,000 or 40,000 men who can be sent into battle, deployed in a mobile way. Colombia's military needs are just far too great for the United States to fill on its own. And worse—this has come up a few times—it is far from clear whether Colombia's leadership is quite yet committed to joining the United States in sharing the burden of a serious war effort. I will just repeat some of the statistics. First of all, current Colombian law excludes recruits with high school degrees from serving in combat units. You end up with the poor doing the lion's share of the fighting. According to the World Bank—you can see the chart there—Colombia is at the bottom of a list of selected countries. They only capture about 10 percent of the economy as taxes, and that is half of what the United States collects right now and much lower than the United States was during, say, World War II. The percent of the economy that goes to defense spending, according to Colombia's National Association of Financial Institutions—this is a figure that has been cited in the Colombian press a lot—is 1.97 percent of the economy. The 3.5 percent figure that the previous panel mentioned is when you include the police as well, who presumably are not going out and trying to defeat the guerrillas.

Now, worse, a lot of what is raised here ends up lost to corruption. The Berlin-based organization, Transparency International, has a so-called "corruption perceptions index" that ranks Colombia fiftieth on a list of 91 countries. Again, I am not trying to bash Colombia, but it is really important that we are aware of these facts and that we have considered what they mean before we really think about a change in strategy.

The Army War College, in a report last year, reminded us, "The history of counterinsurgency support teaches that for the ally in the field to win, the United States should not make the sacrifices for it. The sacrifices in this case must be borne by the people of Colombia."

I know I have about a minute left. I want to touch briefly on the topics of links between military and paramilitary, human rights conditions, and the oil pipeline, and then I will yield my time.

The military and the paramilitaries. Even if you could somehow get the Colombians into a good-sized fighting force, our aid could still have disastrous consequences if the ties between the military and the paramilitaries continue. It makes a lot of us sick to our stomach to think that our aid could indirectly benefit the paramilitaries who are killing the majority of noncombatant civilians in Colombia's war. The State Department's March 4th report reminds us that members of the security forces sometimes illegally collaborated with the paramilitaries. The U.N. High Commissioner

for Human Rights just released a report noting that in the past year the office continued receiving disturbing information about ties between the armed forces and the paramilitaries, and there is a list of some examples from that report in my written testimony. And I, myself, I was in Colombia in February and April, and I heard numerous testimonies from elected officials, ombudsmen, community leaders, and, of course, NGOs about continuing and even sometimes increasing collusion in places like Narino, Cauca, and Norte de Santander.

Keep in mind that the paramilitaries are the fastest-growing group right now—certainly the guerrillas have alienated a lot of people—and they are growing in support. They have grown from about 4,000 members in 1998 to something like 14,000 today, and their leaders say they aim to double in size over the next year. And like the FARC, keep in mind—I know I am running out of time—

Mr. BALLENGER. Could I just stop you?

Mr. ISACSON. Sure.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Isacson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ADAM ISACSON, SENIOR ASSOCIATE, CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Chairman Ballenger, Ranking Member Menendez, I thank you for the opportunity to testify before your subcommittee today on U.S. policy toward Colombia. This is a crucial moment in Colombia. A month and a half ago, three years of peace talks with the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) guerrillas broke down. A month and a half from now, Colombia will hold a very important presidential election.

This is also a crucial moment for the United States' policy toward Colombia. This year, the administration's 2003 Foreign Operations request asks Congress for significant amounts of non-drug military assistance for the first time since the Cold War, most of it equipment and training to help defend an oil pipeline. The emergency supplemental legislation also before Congress would go still further, allowing all previous narcotics-related military assistance—including the contents of the 2000 "Plan Colombia" aid package—to be used in a "unified campaign against narcotics trafficking, terrorist activities, and other threats to its national security."

Broadening our military assistance mission in Colombia beyond counter-narcotics is a significant change. This may be the last time we get to debate such a qualitative change; future debates will center not on whether we should be involved in Colombia's conflict, but *how deeply* we should be involved. It is important that Congress thoroughly consider the consequences of what it decides this year. My study of Colombia over the past few years has convinced me that these consequences could be very serious for both of our countries.

Why the focus on counter-narcotics?

The Center for International Policy has always been opposed to the United States' overwhelming focus on the drug issue in Colombia. It is obvious to all that Colombia's problems go well beyond narcotics, and we have argued for years that our emphasis on military responses and fumigation would do little more than push drug cultivation around the map of South America. (See table 1 at the end of this document.)

But I understand why past administrations chose to limit our military-assistance mission to the drug war—and it was more than just political expedience. On some level, our security planners were aware of the challenge Colombia's conflict presents and the commitment that taking on its armed groups would require.

Colombia is a big country, its illegal armed groups are large and well-funded from a variety of sources, and the roots of the conflict are old and complex. The military's small size and chronic human rights problems are symptoms of years of institutional neglect and lack of professionalization. The amount that what needs to be done is daunting, and anyone who promises a short-term solution is, quite simply, a fool.

Until now, U.S. policymakers thus decided to concentrate their aid resources where they thought they could make a difference—fighting drugs, which not only poison our citizens but fuel Colombia's conflict. CIP disagreed with the choice of con-

centrating resources on the military, which failed to address the reasons people grow drugs to begin with, and threatened to bring us closer to entanglement in the conflict. But as our resources have been limited to roughly half a billion dollars over each of the past few years, the broader idea of focusing on one aspect of Colombia's crisis made some strategic sense—even though we've seen virtually no impact on the drug trade so far.

Stretching U.S.-provided military assets—creating demand for more military aid

Since 2000, the United States has provided Colombia's about \$1.35 billion in military and police aid. (See table 2 at the end of this document.) Most of the aid to Colombia's army adds up to a 2,300-man counter-narcotics brigade and about 75 helicopters. This is perhaps enough, if not to eliminate the presence of armed groups, at least to alter the military balance in an area like Colombia's drug-infested Putumayo department, which is about the size of the state of Maryland.

But Colombia is the size of Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma combined. If we broaden the mission of our aid beyond drugs, we will dramatically increase the number of targets that these units and helicopters can be employed against. We may find very soon that these assets are spread way too thinly, and thus unable to respond to the majority of requests for their use. Armed groups will continue to attack military and civilian targets and infrastructure, and we will soon find that our assistance has made little difference in the overall direction of the conflict.

This will generate enormous pressure in out-years (perhaps as soon as 2003) for substantial military aid increases: more helicopters, more training, more weapons, more units. Perhaps more U.S. personnel acting as instructors and advisors. How will Congress respond to that pressure? How far are we willing to go in Colombia? Responsibility demands that we answer these questions now rather than later.

It is disingenuous to call a broader mission in Colombia "counter-terrorism." That makes it sound like a relatively small effort. But Colombia is not the Philippines, Georgia, or Yemen.

Certainly, the FARC, the smaller National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrillas, and the rightist paramilitaries of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) are all on the State Department's list of terrorist organizations, and all commit acts of terrorism. But these groups have been fighting for decades—some can even trace their origins as far back as 1948. Together, they have roughly 40,000 members. (See table 3 at the end of this document.) Unlike most terrorist groups, they control territory and even govern it, however crudely and brutally. They are organized as military forces, well-armed and equipped with extensive intelligence capabilities. They earn hundreds of millions of dollars per year in ill-gotten profits, much from the drug trade. The FARC has even proven able to carry out military-style attacks on army bases. By comparison, the Abu Sayyaf organization in the Philippines has only a few hundred members and is confined to parts of a small island.

Confronting Colombia's groups militarily would mean supporting a long and costly counter-insurgency campaign, many times larger than all military aid we have given Colombia so far. Calling it "counter-terrorism" and changing the purpose of past aid would be nothing more than a tiny first step.

Colombia's contribution

The small size of Colombia's armed forces increases the potential for U.S. over-commitment. Currently, the Colombian Army has about 150,000 members, but only about 40,000 of them can be deployed into battle. The rest are at desk jobs or tied down to guarding static infrastructure like pipelines and power lines.

This force would need to triple or quadruple in size to take on the insurgents effectively. In fact, a 1999 paper on Colombia from the U.S. Army War College argues, "Conventional wisdom holds that a successful counter-insurgency requires a ratio of 10 soldiers to 1 guerrilla. . . . Even if the army were to achieve the 10 to 1 force ratio, it might still not be enough to 'saturate' the country."¹ Colombia's defense needs are simply too great for U.S. aid alone to make a difference, and any attempt to fill the gap unilaterally could be disastrous.

Worse, it is far from clear whether Colombia's leadership—the ten percent that earn 42 times in a year what the bottom ten percent earn, or the three percent of landholders who control 70 percent of farmland—would be committed to joining the United States in sharing the burden of a serious war effort.

Current Colombian law excludes conscripts with high school degrees—meaning all but the poor—from service in combat units. The World Bank's figures show that Co-

¹ Gabriel Marcella, "Colombia's Three Wars: U.S. Strategy at the Crossroads," U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, March 5, 1999 < <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usassi/ssipubs/pubs99/3wars/3wars.pdf> >.

Colombians pay only 10.1 percent of GDP in taxes—half the U.S. figure and lower than most of Latin America; in the United States during World War II, taxes and war bonds ate up nearly 40 percent of GDP. (See table 4 at the end of this document.) Colombia's National Association of Financial Institutions (ANIF) reports that Colombia spends only 1.97 percent of GDP on defense, despite having been at war for decades. Worse, much of what is raised ends up lost to corruption. The "corruption perceptions index" maintained by Berlin-based Transparency International ranks Colombia 50th on a list of 91 countries.

As a 2001 U.S. Army War College report reminds us, "The history of counterinsurgency support teaches that for the ally in the field to win, the United States should not make the sacrifices for it. The sacrifices in this case must be borne by the people of Colombia."² At present, however, Colombia's will to sacrifice is in doubt.

The size of the effort needed and the El Salvador analogy

At first glance, the question of elite commitment and slowly escalating U.S. military aid may remind some of Vietnam during the Kennedy administration. The Vietnam analogy is inappropriate, however—it is difficult to imagine U.S. ground troops in Colombian jungles. But a costly and difficult military commitment is certainly a plausible outcome of the current strategy.

A more apt comparison, at least on a very basic level, may be the U.S. experience in El Salvador. In fact, many U.S. advocates of greater counter-terror / counterinsurgency aid to Colombia—such as the Rand Corporation, in a June 2001 report—hold up U.S. support for El Salvador in the 1980s as a possible model for Colombia.

However, these analysts' reading of El Salvador invariably neglects to recall that it took twelve years and nearly two billion dollars of military aid to achieve only a stalemate in El Salvador, after fighting killed 70,000 people and exiled over a million. Since Colombia has fifty-three times the area and eight times the population of El Salvador, the cost of a "successful" counter-insurgency campaign could be nightmarishly high, whether measured in dollars or lives.

Links between the military and paramilitaries

Even if Colombia's military could somehow be brought to the strength needed to secure all of the country's territory, U.S. aid would still have disastrous consequences if lingering ties between the armed forces and rightist paramilitaries continue to go unaddressed. It alarms and sickens many to think that our assistance could indirectly benefit a group that is responsible for the vast majority of Colombia's killings, disappearances and forced displacement of civilians.

Due to the Colombian military's well-documented ties to the paramilitaries, as well as the impunity enjoyed by officers credibly alleged to have been involved in abuses, the U.S. government was unable to certify that its aid recipients met a series of human rights conditions that Congress included in the 2000–2001 aid package law. (President Clinton chose to waive the conditions, as the law allowed, citing "the national security interest.") While an overdue and highly contested certification is likely soon, the State Department's March 4 human rights report reminds us that "members of the security forces sometimes illegally collaborated with paramilitary forces" throughout 2001.

Collusion between the Colombian military and the terrorists of the right is continuing. The following examples are taken from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' just-released report on Colombia, which notes that "the Office continued receiving disturbing information about ties between the armed forces and paramilitary groups" in 2001.

- Disciplinary and penal investigations are being carried out in the cases of the Chengue [January 2001] and Buga [October 2001] massacres, to establish the responsibility of armed forces members in the violent acts perpetrated by paramilitaries. Information collected by the Office indicates strong evidence of military responsibility by omission of duty.
- In the case of the Alto Naya massacre [in April 2001], both the Office and the Human Rights Ombudsman alerted authorities about the movement of an illegal armed group toward the zone. Despite that, the paramilitaries passed through various localities in the region during seven days, while Army commanders reported that only confrontations between irregular groups were taking place. The timely warnings were unable to stop the paramilitaries from

²Gabriel Marcella, Charles E. Wilhelm, Alvaro Valencia Tovar, Ricardo Arias Calderon, and Chris Marquis, *Plan Colombia: Some Differing Perspectives*, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College), June 2001 <<http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usassi/ssipubs/pubs2001/pcdiffer/pcdiffer.htm>>.

freely carrying out their violent campaign in Patio Bonito, Río Minas, el Playón and other Alto Naya communities.

- Numerous cases of paramilitary murders were perpetrated in urban areas. This was particularly the situation in various municipalities in eastern Antioquia department, such as San Carlos, and in Barrancabermeja. In this city, between October 9 and 20, four union members and a member of a non-governmental organization were victims of extrajudicial executions perpetrated by paramilitaries in the city's streets, despite a strong presence of the state security forces.
- The Office has received testimonies stating that during military operations, members of the Army threatened the civilian population, announcing the imminent arrival of the paramilitaries. The office received such information in relation with military operations that occurred in Arauca department in July.
- The armed forces still give promotions to military and police officers whose conduct is being investigated, disciplinarily or criminally, for human rights violations or paramilitary actions. These promotions send a contradictory message to civil society about how the state complies with its duties in regard to the fight against impunity.

In addition, during visits to Colombia in February and April, the Center for International Policy heard numerous testimonies from elected officials, ombudsmen, community leaders, and human rights defenders about continuing—and even increasing—military-paramilitary collusion, particularly blatant military and police tolerance of paramilitary activity, in Nariño, Cauca, and Norte de Santander departments.

The paramilitaries, who many tax-paying Colombians may view as a cheaper, quicker option than multiplying the size of their military, are getting stronger. They are the fastest-growing of Colombia's armed groups, increasing from about 4,000 in 1998 to about 14,000 today. They have made significant territorial gains, moving from traditional strongholds like northwestern Colombia and the Middle Magdalena region to town centers in many longtime guerrilla strongholds in southern Colombia and elsewhere. The paramilitaries also fund themselves through the drug trade, and not just because Colombia's drug lords are among their longtime benefactors. Like the guerrillas, the paramilitaries tax coca and heroin-poppy in areas where they are strong. The so-called "political director" of the AUC, the media-savvy Carlos Castaño, has admitted in interviews that his group gets about 70 percent of its funding from the drug trade.

Many are turning a blind eye to these drug links, though, as the guerrillas' behavior has increased the death squads' political acceptance. The candidate leading polls for the May presidential elections, hard-liner Alvaro Uribe, is promising to arm a million more civilians. On a February visit, I heard several reports of paramilitaries gathering townspeople and instructing them to vote for Uribe. While this does not mean that Uribe will foster the paramilitaries, the rightist groups' support must indicate a belief that he will go easy on them.

Human right conditions

Broadening the mission of U.S. assistance beyond counter-narcotics may mean allowing U.S. aid to be used all over the country, possibly including many areas where the military is frequently alleged to be colluding with paramilitaries. Under the "Leahy Law" human rights protections, U.S. personnel are checking the names of recipient-unit members against a database of known violators. The administration's supplemental appropriations request, as currently written, would keep the Leahy protections but would do away with the Colombia-specific language in the 2002 Foreign Operations Appropriations law, which were designed as a crucial safeguard against indirect U.S. support for paramilitaries. It is our belief that while the Leahy Law is an important tool, the additional conditions are well-tailored to the Colombian context and must be retained.

Oil pipeline

The supplemental appropriations request also would provide Colombia with \$6 million in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) assistance to begin training military units to protect the Caño Limón—Coveñas pipeline in northeastern Colombia. FARC and ELN guerrillas attacked the pipeline—whose oil belongs to a joint venture involving U.S.-based Occidental Petroleum—170 times in 2001. The administration's 2003 Foreign Operations Appropriations request includes another \$98 million in FMF for pipeline protection. This aid includes helicopters, training and equipment for Colombia's 18th Brigade, based in Arauca department on the Venezuelan border,

and a new 5th Mobile Brigade. The \$6 million in the supplemental merely seeks to “jump-start” this larger aid program.

The proposal raises questions about whether the additional assistance, which will include \$60 million for helicopters, will be able to bring an end to guerrilla attacks on the 400-mile-long pipeline. The guerrillas may adapt and begin to concentrate their attacks beyond the 18th Brigade’s jurisdiction (about the first 75 miles of the pipeline). If this happens, it is likely that Congress will be asked to provide still more FMF to protect the pipeline. Even in this one area there is plenty of room for escalation.

But the pipeline is just one strategic element, in one corner of Colombia. U.S. Ambassador Anne Patterson told Colombia’s *El Tiempo* newspaper in February that “There are more than 300 infrastructure sites that are strategic for the United States in Colombia.” Beyond subsidizing the security costs of a U.S. corporation, it is not clear why the administration has chosen to favor the Caño Limón pipeline over all others.

The \$98 million “Critical Infrastructure Brigade,” as the Bush administration aid proposals call it, would be protecting a pipeline that, when operational, pumps about 35 million barrels per year. This adds up to nearly \$3 per barrel in costs to U.S. taxpayers to protect a pipeline for which Occidental currently pays security costs of about 50 cents per barrel, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Meanwhile, since December 2001, the AUC’s “Eastern Plains Bloc” has moved north from Casanare department and begun systematically killing people in two towns about 100 miles to the southeast of the pipeline, Tame and Cravo Norte. (See Figure 1 map at the end of this document.) It is worth keeping an eye on the 18th Brigade’s response, if any, to the paramilitary offensive in Arauca. If there is no effort to respond, we may be seeing a preview of a very ugly situation to come as the paramilitaries move further north to the pipeline zone.

DOD vs. State

As noted in the April 7 *Washington Post*, some provisions in the supplemental appropriations request would allow the Defense Department to provide \$130 million in defense articles, services and training “in furtherance of the global war on terrorism, on such terms and conditions as the Secretary of Defense may determine.”

At least since passage of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (P.L. 87–195, beginning with 22 USC 2151), Congress has determined that military aid be managed by the State Department and funded through the Foreign Operations appropriation. (The main exception has been Section 1004 of the 1991 National Defense Authorization Act [P.L. 101–510], which allows the Pentagon to provide military aid for counter-narcotics.) Allowing the Defense Department to provide “defense articles, services and training” to other countries through its own budget would call into question this long-standing arrangement. Why does the terrorist threat require that aid be given outside the framework of the Foreign Assistance Act? Indeed, why do we have a Foreign Assistance Act if so much aid is being delivered under another authority?

Programs like Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) already exist to grant defense articles, services and training to other countries. These programs are directed by the State Department and overseen by both houses’ Foreign Operations Appropriations subcommittees. It is not clear why the administration’s request excludes the State Department and the subcommittees. Is minimizing oversight a motive?

Conclusion

While we welcome the implicit recognition that Colombia’s problems go beyond narcotics, we are concerned about intensifying our overwhelmingly military approach. Instead of embarking on what may be a long and painful counter-insurgency commitment, we must realize that Colombia’s guerrillas, however barbaric their actions, are ultimately just a symptom of their country’s deeper historic social and economic problems. Defeating the FARC without attacking these problems will do nothing to stop a future resurgence of equally brutal violence.

It is unlikely that a predominantly military approach can bring the security, governability and reform needed for a stable democracy to flourish in Colombia. Since the country is simply too large for the armed forces ever to maintain a permanent presence in all of its territory, military aid must be seen as a small piece of a much bigger puzzle. Not until Colombians are made to feel like stakeholders in a system managed by an accountable, responsive state will insurgency and criminality stop looking like attractive options.

A true “counter-terror” approach to Colombia would be only partly military. Among other things, the bulk of our aid must support the civilian part of Colombia’s

state, provide humanitarian aid to the displaced, help alleviate the economic desperation of Colombia's countryside, and protect human rights and anti-corruption reformers both inside and outside of government. At the same time, the full weight of our diplomacy must support all efforts to get peace talks restarted with the FARC and to facilitate a cease-fire agreement with the ELN.

While there is a role for Colombia's military, the international community must focus more strongly on professionalizing and strengthening Colombia's civilian state institutions. This could be made possible by increasing international support for peace negotiators, judges and prosecutors, human rights and anti-corruption activists, honest legislators, reformist police and military officers, muckraking journalists, and others who want to build a real, functioning democracy. Alternative development, infrastructure programs, and other state investment can create the conditions for a functioning legal economy in neglected rural areas. Drug-consuming countries must spend more money at home on efforts to reduce demand, which most studies indicate is most effectively achieved by offering treatment to addicts.

Our aid must seek to alleviate—not worsen—the insecurity, poverty and injustice that feed Colombia's violence. An overly militarized “sledgehammer” approach may only make the situation worse.

Thank you very much.

Figure 1. Andean Coca Cultivation

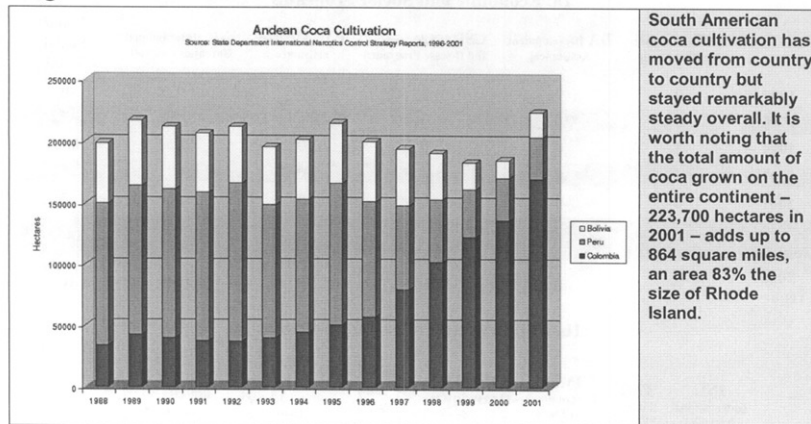


Table 1. All aid to Colombia since 1997

1a. Economic and Social Programs						
	ESF [Economic Support Fund]	DA [Development Assistance]	CSD [Child Survival and Disease Programs]	P.L. 480 food assistance	INC [International Narcotics Control]	Econ/Social Total
1997	0	0	0	0	0	0
1998	0	0.02	0	0	0.5	0.52
1999	3	0	0	0	5.75	8.75
2000	4	0	0	0	208	212
2001	0	0	0	0	5	5
2002 estimate	0	0	0	0	146.5	146.5
2003 request	0	0	0	0	164	164

1b. Military and Police Aid Programs									
	INC [International Narcotics Control]	FMF [Foreign Military Financing]	IMET [International Military Education and Training]	Emergency Drawdowns of counternarcotics assistance	"Section 1004" [Defense Department counternarcotics aid]	"Section 1033" [Defense Department riverine counternarcotics aid]	ONDCP discretionary funds	ATA [Anti-Terrorism Assistance]	Mil/Pol Total
1997	33.45	30	0	14.2	10.32	0	0.5	0	88.47
1998	56.5	0	0.89	41.1	11.78	2.17	0	0	112.44
1999	200.11	0.44	0.92	58	35.89	13.45	0	0	308.81
2000	686.43	0.4	0.9	0	90.60	7.23	0	0	785.56
2001	43	0.42	1.04	0	150.04	22.30	0	0	216.80
2002 estimate	252.5	0.42	1.18	0	84.99	4.00	0	0	343.09
2003 request	279	104	1.18	0	108.54	11.18	0	25	528.90

(Millions of dollars. Estimates, derived by averaging two previous years, are in italics. For links to source materials, see <http://ciponline.org/facts/co.htm>)

Table 2. Colombia's illegal armed groups

Group	Approximate size	No. of fronts	Leader	Annual income
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)	18,000 plus several thousand militia	About 70, plus mobile units	Pedro Antonio Marín, alias Manuel Marulanda alias "Tirofijo" ("Sureshot")	Estimates range from \$200 million to \$600 million
National Liberation Army (ELN)	3,500-4,000	41 fronts and eight urban commands	Nicolás Rodríguez alias "Gabino"	Less than \$100 million
United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC)	11,000-15,000	Seven affiliated regional paramilitary groups and ten regional "blocs"	Carlos Castaño (political leader), Salvatore Mancuso (military leader)	No good estimates exist; likely similar to FARC
Narcotics trafficking organizations	At least 4,000	162 gangs, most specializing in one aspect of drug production or trafficking	Decentralized	\$2 billion - \$5 billion

Figure 2. Tax collection in selected countries

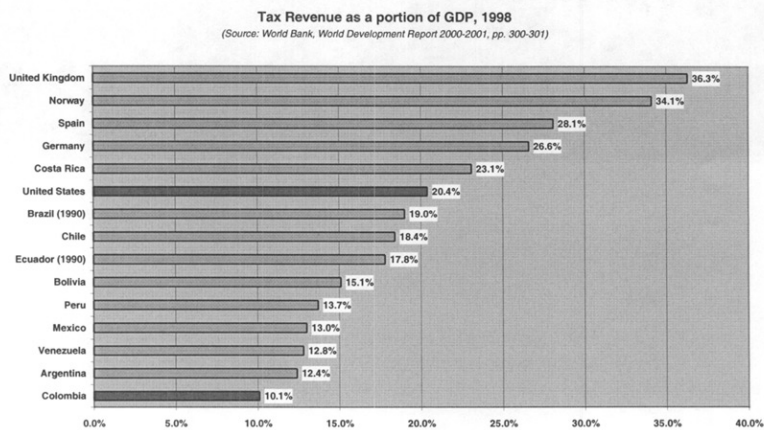
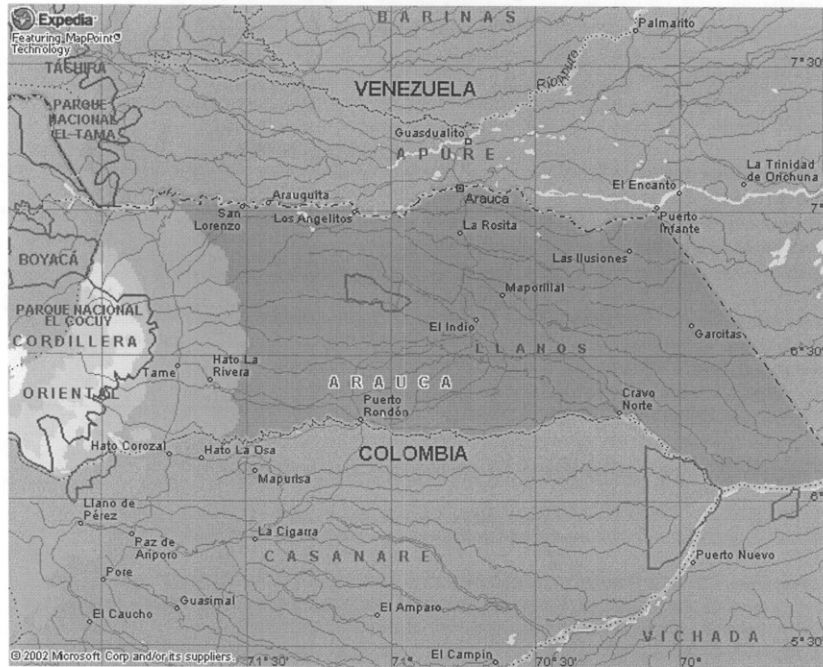


Figure 3. Map of Arauca, Colombia



Mr. BALLENGER. I have got a problem, a double problem. The First Lady of Argentina is upstairs with Henry Hyde.

Mr. ISACSON. Oh, no kidding.

Mr. BALLENGER. And Congressman Delahunt has a question he wanted to ask, and I hate to cut you off, but otherwise I am going to get in real hot water. It is up to you.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Maybe, Mr. Chairman, if you could quickly sum up, and I will yield my time to Mr. Delahunt so that he can ask his question, and then we could make our visit.

Mr. BALLENGER. I think, truthfully speaking, you all have both shown us what the problem is and maybe pointed us all in the direction that is going to be necessary, realizing that you do not have to worry about budgets and how many votes can we get from the Democrats and so forth and so on. But I understand completely what you are saying. I think the group of us here is almost as knowledgeable as you are on the question. So I would like to thank you for participating in this moment, and with that, then, I will turn it to my Democratic friends.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, in an attempt to expedite, I think that your testimony is extremely important, and I would hope, and maybe I can convince Mr. Menendez and Mr. Lantos, that the serious nature of what we are about to embark on really requires, I believe, an additional hearing with plenty of time scheduled at the Full Committee level because I do not know whether it was Mr. Isacson or Mr. Shifter that indicated at its very core this is a substantial

shift in policy. The future debate will no longer be about antinarcotics efforts done in cooperation with the Colombian government but to what degree should the United States involve itself in the violence in the conflict in Colombia.

I am not suggesting that I have reached a conclusion, but given the commitments that we are in the process of making all over the globe, whether it be in Georgia, and I am not referring to the state of Georgia, whether it be in Yemen, whether it be in the Philippines, whether it be in the Middle East, let me suggest, Mr. Chairman, I believe this is a very, very serious moment in terms of our policy in what direction we should go in.

I think it was Mr. Shifter that made the statement that there is no military solution to what is going on in Colombia. Is that a fair statement?

Mr. SHIFTER. That is correct.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, I would like to see a comprehensive rather than an incremental approach to this whole policy of the United States as it relates to Colombia. It ought to be described as how do we achieve peace to bring about stability to eliminate acts of terror against the civilian population there and alleviate the conditions that promote the drug trade that infects our neighborhoods. I think if we continue to do this on an incremental basis, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Menendez, I think we are making a bad error at this particular point in time.

And again, I believe in the right of the Colombian nation to defend itself. I find the actions of the various groups offensive, but the reality is, and again let me go back to history, this has been going on for decades in Colombia during Administrations ranging from Harry Truman to the current Administration. And it really deserves, I believe, a hard look, a thoughtful look, and an exhaustive look. And with that I will yield.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAHUNT. I will yield to my friend.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Just very briefly to say I am in total agreement with you, and I understand the nature of the conflict we have at present, and I will be advocating with you and Mr. Lantos that we have continuous hearings, Mr. Chairman. When we are going to make a major commitment of money as is being sought, and when we are taking somewhat of a policy turn that is significant, certainly the Committee has oversight jurisdiction and responsibility, and I hope that we will pursue that in the Subcommittee, and if not, we will urge to do it in the Full Committee. We look forward to working in that regard, and we will be happy to advocate with the gentlemen.

Mr. BALLENGER. Again, I would like to thank you gentlemen for, first of all, bearing with us as far as the first panel and also bearing with us on the fact that I have got a responsibility upstairs that my leader says I have got to meet. And the truth of the matter is I would agree with the two gentlemen here that this involvement is too important for us to just have this hearing and call it quits. So somewhere down the road we may have another hearing where we will start off with you all instead of having you suffer through the lengthy wait that you did.

Mr. ISACSON. It was worth it.

Mr. BALLENGER. Thank you very much. I have got to run upstairs.

Mr. ISACSON. Thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. BALLENGER. The meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Thank you Mr. Chairman for calling this important hearing and for allowing me to address the Committee regarding U.S. policy toward Colombia. I would also like to thank our panel testifying today for the proper emphasis they are placing on the crisis in Colombia.

Mr. Chairman, within our very own hemisphere an ally struggles daily with the scourge of terrorism. Plan Colombia and the Andean Regional Initiative properly seek to counteract the work of narco traffickers in the region, as evidenced last month in the indictments of three members of the FARC terrorists of Colombia for narco trafficking. However, it is clear—and has been clear—that a full response to the situation in Colombia requires counter-terrorism efforts, not just counter narcotics efforts.

Within Colombia itself we have three known terrorist organizations: the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN), and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). The Bush administration has classified these groups as terrorist organizations. They are engaged in no less than the murder and massacre of political opponents, kidnaping for ransom, and extortion. The FARC and ELN are Marxist groups that work with the Castro dictatorship and seek the overthrow of the elected democratic government.

The violent actions perpetrated by these groups do not in any way further the cause of peace within our Latin American neighbor, nor do they successfully further any political or ideological agenda. Attacking innocent men, women, and children serves only to continue the cycle of violence, to create an environment that no longer is sustainable for freedom of movement and free enterprise. Terrorist organization such as these share among themselves one damning characteristic: lack of respect for human life.

There is only one way to deal with terrorist organizations that fit the mold of these groups. They do not honor peace agreements no matter how attractive the details—they will not be reigned in by a “process.” In fact, it is clear that they use the “peace process” to strengthen their forces and advance their goal of overthrowing the government.

The war on terrorism truly is a global war. We must address the terrorism that exists within our own hemisphere and support Colombia with targeted assistance in its battle against these organizations. While emphasizing counter narcotics support for Colombia has been important, it is crucial that we expand our efforts to meet the reality of the threat facing decent, peace-loving Colombians, as well as the threat to the entire region.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE BY THE HONORABLE CASS BALLENGER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, AND RESPONSES

Question:

How do the three Foreign Terrorist Organizations in Colombia—the AUC, the ELN, and particularly the FARC—rank as threats to the United States on a worldwide scale?

Answer:

All three of the Foreign Terrorist Organizations in Colombia—the AUC, the FARC, and the ELN—represent a threat to the United States. The AUC and the FARC are heavily involved in illegal narcotics production and trafficking which pose grave threats to U.S. society. Approximately 85 percent of the cocaine entering the United States comes from Colombia. The terrorist organizations have also kidnapped and killed American citizens and have targeted U.S. economic interests through bombings of infrastructure (such as the Cano Limon oil pipeline) and extortion.

Question:

If the US Government has indicted Tomas Molina Caracas and Mono Jojoy for drug trafficking and other serious criminal offenses and has good information on their whereabouts, what specific steps can we be taking to locate, apprehend, and transport them to a US court?

Answer:

On March 18, Attorney General Ashcroft announced the indictment of Colombian national Tomas Molina Caracas, a commander of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and others. They are charged with conspiracy to import cocaine into the United States and to manufacture and distribute cocaine in Colombia with the intent of exporting it to the United States. As the Attorney General stated, all but one of the defendants are believed to be at large in Colombia. As indicated, the U.S. Embassy in Bogota has requested that the Colombian government seek Molina's arrest and subsequent extradition to the United States. The Department is prepared to make similar requests for other FARC officials who are, or may be, indicted.

Since January 1, 1998 through April 30, 2002, Colombia has surrendered a total of 56 fugitives to stand trial in the United States. Scores of others have been detained for purposes of extradition pending the necessary court proceedings. At this time, the level of cooperation in extradition matters is higher than ever.

Question:

Given increased evidence that FARC and AUC forces are being given refuge on the Venezuelan side of the border, has the USG officially requested assistance from the Venezuelan Government to arrest FARC and AUC personnel within Venezuela?

Answer:

We are aware of reports that the FARC has received material assistance from Venezuela. These reports have raised serious concerns about the Government of Venezuela's position toward the FARC, ELN, and AUC.

We have had very frank discussions with the Government of Venezuela about our concerns and warned that a failure to stem any flow of assistance from Venezuela would damage relations with the United States. We have been assured by the highest levels of the Venezuelan government that the Government of Venezuela is not providing refuge or other assistance to the FARC, and we, along with the rest of the hemisphere, will hold the Government of Venezuela to that statement.

In the wake of the collapse of Colombia's peace talks with the FARC, we have urged Venezuela to announce publicly its support of the Government of Colombia and to condemn the FARC's acts of terrorism.

Question:

Do non-governmental organizations in Colombia that receive funding from the U.S. government undergo any sort of vetting by our law enforcement and intelligence community to ensure that they do not have links to Foreign Terrorist Organizations?

Answer:

USAID is developing a procedure for reviewing all contractors and grantees on a worldwide basis for possible links to terrorist organizations and individuals.

USAID contracting officers have been instructed to ensure that all USAID contractors and grantees are aware of Executive Order 13224 (which says that U.S. Government agencies cannot provide funds to organizations that support terrorists) and of the names of the individuals and organizations designated thereunder.

Mission staff also note that USAID/Bogota only contracts with well-known and reputable private voluntary organizations (PVOs), NGOs, and contractors—most of them from the U.S. Although there are many sub-grants (well over 150 in the internally displaced person (IDP) program alone), grantees and contractors know that it is incumbent on them to vet their subcontractors to ensure they are working with groups that do not have terrorist linkages.

COLOMBIA: VOLUNTARY ERADICATION

Question:

How is the Colombian Government's voluntary eradication program proceeding, particularly in Putumayo, and including the first areas of Plan Colombia's focus?

Answer:

Plan Colombia was envisioned and has been implemented as a long-term effort. In that context, the U.S.-assisted alternative development program has been underway for almost one year and is making good progress under difficult circumstances.

The Colombian government's voluntary eradication program is moving slowly ahead. As of April 31, this program had provided assistance to approximately 12,500 families, and additional families will be receiving assistance in the months to come.

USAID is actively restructuring its alternative development strategy. A key part of this adjustment is the expansion of alternative development projects into adjacent departments, especially those where there are promising prospects for sustainable licit commercial activities. This is being undertaken because USAID assessments show there is little promise for legal income-generating activity in Putumayo and Caqueta due to poor soils and isolation from markets.

At the same time, we recognize that Putumayo coca growers need assistance when transitioning out of illicit cultivation. USAID alternative development will continue in Putumayo and Caqueta, but with an increasing focus on the creation of short-term employment opportunities. The objective is to provide temporary employment and income to rural residents changing over to legal crops and employment. Meanwhile, as of the end of April, USAID had provided alternative development assistance to 2,130 families in coca growing areas of southern Colombia who had agreed to eradicate their coca before receiving assistance. More than 3,000 families in Putumayo and Caqueta have signed onto these "early eradication" pacts and will receive USAID assistance through this project.

Through these programs, in excess of 1,800 hectares of coca have been eradicated and verified by alternative development workers, community leaders, and government officials from the National Alternative Development Program (PNDA). We are confident that the newly redesigned alternative development program for southern Colombia, if combined with sustained spraying, will allow us to meet our eradication objectives.

QUESTION FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH BY THE HONORABLE HENRY J. HYDE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AND RESPONSE

Question:

Could you please comment on what you know about IRA terrorist activities with the FARC in Colombia? Doesn't the fact that global terrorist networks like the FARC and the IRA are now helping each other and using their drug proceeds to advance their illicit goals alarm you and help to justify a change in US policy to cover the terrorist threat, as well as that from narcotics?

Answer:

The Administration has made it clear that we have no tolerance for any support for the FARC from the IRA. We were deeply disturbed last August when Colombian authorities detained three members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army who had allegedly provided explosives training to FARC members in the former demilitarized zone.

We are concerned about the potential of any relationship between the FARC and the IRA to affect stability in Colombia as well as U.S. interests there.

The three PIRA members detained last August are currently facing criminal proceedings in Colombia. We want to avoid any statements or actions that would disrupt or interfere with the Colombian judicial process. If the three men in question are proved to have provided explosives training to the FARC, we expect the Colombian judge will sentence these men in a manner commensurate with such a crime.

Our request for new legal authorities reflects our recognition that terrorism and narcotrafficking in Colombia are intertwined. We also understand that with the breakdown of the Government of Colombia's peace process with the FARC, Colombians face a heightened terrorist risk. The new authorities, which would allow U.S. assistance to Colombia, including assistance previously provided, to be used by the Government of Colombia in a "unified campaign against terrorist activities,

narcotrafficking and other threats to national authority,” would give us the flexibility to help Colombia deal with the narcoterrorist threat.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH BY THE HONORABLE ROBERT MENENDEZ, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND RESPONSES

THE US ROLE

Question:

Is the viability of the Colombian State under imminent threat?

Answer:

Colombia, Latin America’s oldest democracy, faces a serious threat from several well-financed terrorist groups, as well as transnational threats such as narcotics trafficking and international crime. These challenges are eroding Colombian’s democratic institutions and undermining what had once been one of Latin America’s most vibrant economies. Still, while in need of help, the Government of Colombia remains a viable, effective partner in the battle against narco-terrorism.

Statistically, Colombia is the world’s most terrorism-afflicted nation. In 2001, it suffered more terrorist abductions than were recorded in the rest of the world’s countries combined. The 16,000-member FARC is the world’s largest terrorist organization and perhaps its richest, thanks to drug and kidnapping revenues, while the 9,000 member United Defense Group of Colombia (AUC) is Latin America’s largest paramilitary terrorist organization. And the Government of Colombia has yet to come to terms with yet a third terrorist organization, the 4,000 member National Liberation Army, or ELN. All three groups are formally designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations by the Department of State.

Question:

Are we indispensable to this conflict? Is Colombia simply incapable of handling this on her own or without reduced assistance? Please explain.

Answer:

While the solution to Colombia’s problems can, and must, come from Colombia, the United States does have an essential role to play in supporting those efforts. Indeed, it is in our national interest to do so.

As a leading consumer of the illicit drugs that help fuel Colombia’s terrorist groups, the U.S. has a special responsibility in helping Colombia address the conflict.

The enormity of the task facing the Colombian people is staggering. Through their elected leaders, they are working to reform the nation’s political and legal systems, promote socio-economic development, encourage the protection of human rights and combat narco-trafficking, all the while living under constant terrorist threats from the FARC, AUC, and ELN.

THE COLOMBIAN ROLE

Question:

How would you evaluate the Colombian Government’s commitment to resolve its own crisis? Is their commitment of resources sufficient? Do they need to be doing more in any other areas? Are they spending enough on defense?

Answer:

The Colombian Government is unquestionably committed to resolving the crisis. President Pastrana’s long commitment to the peace process and his eventual decision, after much deliberation, to end it were born of that commitment. The Pastrana Administration has also taken steps to professionalize the armed forces, boosting the number of professional soldiers from 22,000 to 53,000 and acquiring new equipment. Under Plan Colombia, the Government of Colombia has spent approximately \$3 billion to date on social programs and institutional development.

Still, Colombia needs to do more. Colombia currently spends approximately 3.5% of GDP on security, a figure that is not sufficient for a country facing the security threat posed by Colombia’s terrorist groups. We have stressed in our meetings with senior Colombian Government officials that Colombia needs to increase the resources it devotes to security, and have also begun a dialogue with the leading presidential candidates on this issue.

Question:

Is the front runner in the Colombian presidential race, Alvaro Uribe, tied in any way to the paramilitary groups as some have alleged?

Answer:

While we are familiar with the allegations, we know of no such ties.

THE PEACE PROCESS

Question:

Are there any serious prospects for a renewal of the peace process with the FARC?

Answer:

We supported President Pastrana's peace process and would support future Colombian attempts at a peaceful resolution of that country's internal conflict. However, to date, the good will of the Colombian Government and the Colombian people has not been reciprocated by the FARC. Colombia's history and political culture indicate that its internal conflicts are more likely to end through some type of negotiation than through an outright military victory. Still, no peace process is likely to succeed until there is a sincere desire for peace on both sides.

Question:

Would you please tell us where things are between the government and the ELN?

Answer:

The Government of Colombia's peace talks with the ELN, which were renewed last December, continue to make progress, in marked contrast to the ruptured GOC-FARC negotiations. Unlike the FARC, the ELN has shown a willingness to engage in serious negotiations with the GOC.

Still, there is no guarantee that GOC-ELN talks will ultimately succeed. Significant differences remain on the terms of a cease-fire agreement and other key issues.

We support the Government of Colombia's talks with the ELN. A successful agreement would lessen the violence afflicting Colombia and put pressure on the FARC.

COLOMBIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CONFLICT

Question:

How much would you say that the Colombian people, and in particular political, business and other leaders really have a sense of ownership and responsibility over their nation's crisis? Are they willing to sacrifice to end the conflict?

Answer:

It has been suggested that Colombia's political and economic leadership lacks the commitment needed to address the country's crisis. While we believe that Colombians can and must do more to address their country's problems, the Government of Colombia is already taking steps to address its serious security, political and socio-economic problems. Since the mid-1990s, the Government of Colombia has boosted security spending to approximately 3.5% of GDP. Under President Pastrana, Colombia has modernized its Armed Forces, boosting the number of professional soldiers from 22,000 to 55,000, and has spent approximately \$3 billion on social programs, infrastructure and institutional development related to Plan Colombia.

Moreover, despite the special risks associated with leaders, many Colombians continue to participate and support the country's democratic institutions. Last year, 184 union leaders were assassinated, and 12 mayors were killed. The FARC is currently holding six Colombian Congressmen hostage, and recently kidnapped 12 departmental legislators. Still, Colombia held vibrant, competitive legislative elections in March, and the candidates in the presidential elections set for May 26 remain in the race. Similarly, in spite of the dangers, police and soldiers put on uniforms, journalists report, politicians speak, businessmen manage their affairs, and labor leaders strive for improved conditions. The Colombian people and its leaders are not afraid to make sacrifices to preserve democracy.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Question:

Would you give us an overview of where we are with alternative development efforts?

Answer:

The alternative development program in Colombia is just getting started. It is a \$222 million, 5-7 year program aimed at groups of farmers that want to eradicate coca and produce agro-industrial products or increase legal crop or livestock production.

Under the Early Eradication Program (EEP), USAID works with entire *Veredas* (townships) that elect to eradicate illegal crops in exchange for USAID support for the construction of small-scale infrastructure and food production activities. Thus far, more than 3,000 families have signed EEP agreements to eradicate coca and more than 1,800 hectares of coca have been eradicated and verified by representatives from the National Alternative Development Program (PNDA), NGOs and/or Community Verification Committees.

USAID also plans to fund construction of larger infrastructure projects to provide alternative employment for farmers and to strengthen the cohesion of rural communities and their capacity to resist drug trafficking in the future.

USAID also provides support for the Government's National Alternative Development Program (PNDA) that has signed coca eradication pacts with approximately 31,000 farm families. The PNDA pact program has been slow getting started due to security, logistical, institutional, and design problems, but it is making some progress. PNDA has provided assistance to approximately 12,000 farm families to date. Additional families will receive assistance in the future. Under the terms of the pacts, families that receive "emergency assistance" have up to one year after they begin to receive assistance to eradicate their coca. We understand that no coca has been eradicated thus far under the GOC pacts.

Question:

How could Alternative Development ultimately work over the long-term given the huge gap between what farmers can make selling coca and any contemplated substitute crops? Please be specific in terms of economic analysis.

Answer:

There are no legal crops that will provide farmers with incomes that are equal to the amounts they earn from illicit crops.

The Alternative Development Program is supposed to help farmers who voluntarily eradicate drug crops, but it is not required to, or even supposed to, replace all of the illicit income that farmers earn from drug crops.

The alternative development program works in concert with forced eradication and interdiction programs that increase the risks and reduce the profits from illegal crops.

After farmers determine that illicit crops are too risky or too unprofitable for them to continue production, the alternative development program helps them transition from cultivation of illicit crops to legal farming or alternate employment.

Question:

Can you tell us how much arable land there is in Colombia and its bordering nations that can be potentially used to absorb the growth of eradicated areas?

Answer:

There are millions of hectares in Colombia and its bordering nations that could potentially be used to produce coca.

Most of the Amazon Basin covering large areas of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, and Bolivia could potentially be used for coca production.

Research on optimal conditions for illicit crop production suggests that narco-traffickers prefer to grow coca and other illicit crops in isolated areas where they will not be disturbed by legal or other national government authorities.

Areas like southern Colombia that have limited road and river transportation, minimal infrastructure, no national government presence, and a supply of agricultural labor are ideal for production of illicit crops.

COLOMBIA: COCA ERADICATION

Question:

Last year, you established eradication goals of reducing illicit coca production by 30 percent in Colombia by 2002.

How did we do?

Answer:

Eradication goals established for Colombia were to: 1) halt expansion of coca cultivation by end of 2000, and 2) to reduce the coca crop by 30 percent by the end

of 2002. The UNDCP and the Government of Colombia have concluded that there was a reduction in coca cultivation from 2000 to 2001. On the other hand, the CIA's Crime and Narcotics Center (CNC) estimates that coca cultivation rose in Colombia—by 25 percent. Our answer to your question for the record on coca estimates provides additional details on the methodologies and technologies used to arrive at those estimates. The discrepancy makes it difficult to judge whether we have successfully reached our goal of capping production in 2001.

COLOMBIA: COCA CULTIVATION FIGURES

Question:

I understand that the US Government and the UN Drug-Control Program (UNDCP) don't quite agree on the number of hectares in Colombia under coca cultivation. (UNDCP believes coca cultivation decreased 11.3% from 2000 to 2001, while the USG believes that the figures remained constant).

Would you clarify this for us?

Answer:

Yes, there is a discrepancy in the Colombian coca cultivation estimates for 2001. The UNDCP completed its estimate on November 1, 2001 and detected 145,000 hectares of coca cultivation, a decrease of 11.3 percent over the previous year. The Government of Colombia started with that UNDCP figure and factored in the coca eradicated during November and December, arriving at a year-end figure of 136,000 hectares or a 17 percent reduction. The Embassy in Bogotá and the Office of Aviation in the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL/A) concluded that there was a 13 percent reduction in the Colombian coca crop to approximately 142,000 hectares at the end of 2001. Finally, the CIA's Crime and Narcotics Center (CNC) estimated that coca cultivation increased in Colombia by 25 percent from 2000 levels to 170,000 hectares of coca.

The main reason for the discrepancies is that each of the entities mentioned above uses a different methodology and different technology to estimate coca cultivation in Colombia. The various systems have strengths and weaknesses. Time lag between imagery collection and analysis is also problematic, because during any period studied, crops could have been eradicated or new crops could have appeared. Compounding that, there is a time lag between collection, analysis, and dissemination of results.

INL/A uses an airborne multispectral digital imaging system (MDIS), which identifies crop type by measuring differences in reflected solar energy. Limited resources, however, do not permit nationwide MDIS imaging of every possible growing area. To supplement its analysis, Embassy Bogotá and INL/A compared MDIS imagery of the most important cultivation zones to satellite and aerial census data collected by the Colombian National Police.

Meanwhile, the CNC uses national technical means and statistical sampling methods to extrapolate national cultivation estimates. As a result, CNC techniques have repeatedly yielded markedly different calculations of the amount of coca being grown in Colombia.

The Department of State shares your concern about these data discrepancies on coca cultivation in Colombia. We now await the findings and recommendations of an ONDCP-sponsored independent team of experts tasked with analyzing the gap between the State and CNC estimates and recommending ways to overcome this discrepancy.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Question:

Could you give us an update on efforts both by we and the Colombians on the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced?

Answer:

United States' programs for IDPs in Colombia are designed to provide immediate humanitarian relief as well as to assist those persons who cannot return to their homes. Short-term help for IDPs is provided by the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, while the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provides mid- to longer-term assistance for health, education and shelter to better assist the displaced to reintegrate into the economic, social and political life of the country. We have assisted approximately 300,000 IDPs to date.

These efforts support and complement the vital and courageous humanitarian work of many international organizations, international and Colombian NGOs, and,

of course, the Government of Colombia. We do not have a full accounting of every IDP who benefits from these efforts, which include medical, food, and housing assistance as well as education and counseling. However, we can report that, since mid-2001, USAID and PRM, working through and with non-governmental organizations and international agencies, have provided assistance to over 400,000 victims of the internal conflict.

NEW AUTHORITIES IN THE FY 2002 SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST

Question:

Would you elaborate beyond your prepared and given remarks on the different ways US assistance specifically will be used to take on this unified threat referred to by the Administration and in your comments?

Answer:

This proposal recognizes the desirability of having more flexibility than we have had to counter the unified "cross-cutting" threat posed by groups that use narcotics trafficking to fund their terrorist and criminal activities.

This would allow, for example, equipment provided by INCLE funds to be used for counter-terrorism as well as counternarcotics. At this point, the broader authorities would primarily involve use of 72 U.S.-provided helicopters and assistance by the fully vetted, U.S.-trained and equipped counternarcotics brigade.

We will, of course, continue to follow the provisions of the Foreign Operations bill limiting U.S. civilian and military personnel in Colombia and requiring human rights vetting of all Colombian military units receiving U.S. assistance.

Moreover, we remain committed to robust counternarcotics programs in Colombia and will bear that commitment in mind as we work out details regarding the possible use of INCLE-funded equipment for counter-terrorist missions.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Question:

Please compare the Colombian Government and armed forces respect for human rights with last year?

Answer:

Although both we and the Government of Colombia recognize that more needs to be done, the Government of Colombia and the Colombian Armed Forces continue to make progress with regard to the human rights situation in Colombia. The military high command, under the leadership of Defense Minister Bell and Armed Forces Commander General Tapias, has stated repeatedly that it will not tolerate collaboration between military personnel and paramilitary groups.

A leading non governmental organization, the Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ), using data from the Center for Investigations and Popular Research (CINEP) from June 2000 to June 2001, attributed 3 percent of civilian victims and persons killed outside of combat to state security forces, compared with 3.5 percent in 1999-2000. Similar to the year before, there were no credible allegations of human rights abuses on the part of U.S. trained or equipped counterdrug forces in 2001.

As the Department noted in its recent human rights certification report, the Colombian Armed Forces are active and essential participants in the Government of Colombia's Coordination Center for the Fight Against Illegal Self Defense Groups, a high-level, inter-agency body that meets regularly to coordinate the strategy against paramilitaries. Arrests, combat operations and intelligence activities by the Colombian Armed Forces against paramilitaries rose sharply in 2001. According to Colombian authorities, the Government of Colombia captured 992 paramilitaries (590 captured by the Armed Forces) in 2001, compared to a total of 312 (167 by Armed Forces) in 2000. State security services killed in combat 116 paramilitaries (96 killed by members of the Armed Forces) during 2001, compared to 92 (72 by Armed Forces) in 2000. The total of 1,108 paramilitaries captured or killed by Colombian authorities in 2001 represented at least 10 percent of the paramilitaries' estimated force of 8,000-11,000 combatants.

Question:

Please comment on the commitment of the Armed Forces of Colombia at all levels to respect for human rights?

Answer:

During the Pastrana Administration there has been a steady improvement in Colombian Armed Forces' cooperation with civilian authorities in the investigation, prosecution, and punishment in civilian courts of military personnel credibly alleged

to have committed gross violations of human rights or to have aided and abetted paramilitary groups. The military high command, under the leadership of Defense Minister Bell and Armed Forces Commander General Tapias, has also stated repeatedly that it will not tolerate collaboration between military personnel and paramilitary groups.

The Colombian military leadership has issued guidance to the Colombian military to address the problem of former service members who join the AUC while maintaining their connections with active duty soldiers. The Colombian military is seeking to identify former career soldiers with ties to illegal armed groups and their active duty contacts, and has expressly prohibited the access of such individuals to military facilities. The Armed Forces have also increased base security and force protection measures to deter unauthorized contacts between active duty personnel and criminal elements such as paramilitaries.

The Colombian Armed Forces are active and essential participants in the Government of Colombia's Coordination Center for the Fight Against Illegal Self Defense Groups, a high-level, inter-agency body that meets regularly to coordinate the strategy against paramilitaries. Arrests, combat operations and intelligence activities by the Colombian Armed Forces against paramilitaries rose sharply in 2001. According to Colombian authorities, the Colombian Armed Forces captured 590 paramilitaries in 2001 and killed 96.

However, both we and the Government of Colombia recognize that the protection of human rights in Colombia needs improvement. We continue to receive credible reports of collusion between paramilitaries and some elements of the Colombia military. We are committed to continuing to work with the Government of Colombia on concrete measures it should take to make further progress in improving the human rights performance of its Armed Forces.

Question:

Please comment on the human rights records of the illegal groups in Colombia.

Answer:

The majority of human rights violations in Colombia continue to be committed by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC).

The Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ) reported 161 massacres during January-September 2001, of which 102 were attributed to paramilitaries. The Colombian Commission of Jurists reported that guerrillas were responsible for 458 political killings and the paramilitaries for 1,929 in the period from June 2000 to June 2001.

According to the Free Country Foundation (Fundacion Pais Libre), 3,041 persons, or 8 persons per day, were kidnapped during 2001. Paramilitary groups kidnapped 9 percent of these persons. Guerrilla groups were responsible for 63 percent of the kidnappings. Criminals kidnapped 10 percent. An estimated 205 minors were in captivity as of October 2001.

The use of child soldiers by guerrillas and paramilitaries is common. The government estimates that both paramilitary groups and guerrillas use approximately 6,000 children as combatants.

The Secretary of State designated the leading paramilitary group (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia or AUC) as a "Foreign Terrorist Organization" (FTO) under U.S. law on September 10, enabling us to take steps to prevent the travel to the U.S. by individuals affiliated with that group and to prohibit any fundraising activities by the group in the U.S. The Secretary had previously designated the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) as FTOs.

NEW PENTAGON SECURITY ASSISTANCE REQUEST

Question:

I understand that the Pentagon is seeking over \$100 million in international security assistance that would not be subject to State Department oversight. Would you both comment on the need for security assistance at the Pentagon that is not subject to State Department oversight? Is this wise?

Answer:

The primary responsibility of the Secretary of State for foreign assistance, and in particular for security assistance, is well established. These authorities have consistently served the U.S. well. They do not bear revision, absent a clear and compelling purpose.

REGIONAL SPILLOVER

Question:

Could you update us on the Andean Regional Initiative efforts from last year? How is this affecting Colombia's proximate neighbors?

Answer:

Efforts under the Andean Regional Initiative (ARI) have not reached a significant level yet as ARI funds only recently became available. Moreover, many of the funds provided for Colombia under ARI are subject to congressional holds.

However, there has been considerable progress made with the funds from the FY 2000 supplemental for Plan Colombia without triggering any adverse spillover effects in the region.

In Colombia, U.S. efforts included:

- Eradication operations sprayed 84,000 hectares in 2001.
- Training and equipping the first counternarcotics brigade, which supported the spray operations and destroyed 818 base laboratories and 21 HCL laboratories, without any credible allegations of human rights abuses by brigade personnel.
- Extradition of 23 Colombian nationals to the U.S. in 2001, an unprecedented level of cooperation.
- A program through Colombia's Ministry of the Interior that provided protection to 1,676 threatened Colombian human rights workers, labor activists, and journalists.
- An Early Warning System that has issued 106 alerts to warn Colombian authorities of potential massacres or other human rights abuses.
- Assistance to 300,000 persons displaced by violence since mid-2001.
- 18 Casas de Justicia to provide cost-effective legal services to Colombians who have not previously enjoyed real access to the country's judicial system.
- On-going effort to set up a Casa de Justicia in San Vicente de Caguan, the main urban area in the former demilitarized zone.
- A program to help municipalities completed six Social Investment Fund projects in southern Colombia.

While all of Colombia's neighbors are affected by generalized violence and narcotics trafficking originating in Colombia, there is little evidence of spillover of drugs or violence resulting from increased counternarcotics activities in Colombia. Still, we remain vigilant to the threat. While there has been some migration of Colombians into neighboring countries, Plan Colombia counternarcotics operations have not so far resulted in increased cross-border violence or refugee flows. Little, if any, coca cultivation has migrated to Ecuador, as local farmers are well aware of the GOE's zero-tolerance policy toward drug cultivation. While there are some indications of resurgent cultivation in both Peru and Bolivia, both may be the result of domestic pressures. This is the reason that we are increasing our support for the countries of the region.

COLOMBIAN ARMED FORCES

Question:

The Armed Services have been criticized for not requiring their high school graduates to engage in combat. What progress has been made to date in eliminating the restriction from combat of bachilleres or high school graduates?

Answer:

With the intensification of the internal armed conflict, the need for increased professionalization of the Army, and the desire to do away with unequal burden sharing within Colombian society, the Pastrana government has begun to radically reduce the number of drafted "bachilleres" in service, while also seeking longer-term reform of military conscription.

Although efforts to obtain Congressional repeal of the "bachilleres" combat exemption have failed, the GOC has reduced the number of "bachilleres" from over 42,000 in 1998 to approximately 2,500 today. The Government of Colombia plans to do away with "bachilleres" altogether as part of the move towards an all-professional force.

Question:

Have you got a sense of how many armed services personnel now guarding infrastructure would be freed up upon the establishment of the pipeline brigades?

Answer:

None. The 18th Brigade, which is deployed to a number of bases in Arauca province, is responsible for providing general security in the area and for protecting the pipeline. These two missions are interrelated. The concept of operations for pipeline protection calls for the 18th Brigade to exercise effective control over a broad area by making better use of intelligence to identify threats and by constant foot, vehicle and air patrols to establish a credible and effective state security presence where none now exists. The pipeline is too long to be protected by static defenses. The number of soldiers devoted to the general security/pipeline protection mission will increase rather than decrease under our proposal. Just as attacks against the pipeline should fall, so will depredations by the FARC, ELN and AUC against the civilian population of Arauca province.

Question:

How does the Colombian Armed Forces measure up as a professional fighting force? How are they doing on the battlefield?

Answer:

The Colombian military has increased in size, quality, and professionalism since President Pastrana took office in 1998. Prior to that time, large FARC units routinely moved through the countryside, attacking and even over-running remote army bases. Now, thanks to the forward-leaning leadership of the commander of the armed forces, General Tapias, and the commander of the army, General Mora, the Colombian military has proved itself capable of initiating aggressive battlefield operations against the FARC, the ELN, and the AUC.

The Colombian military now possesses an increased airlift capability in the form of US-provided helicopters, this capability has allowed the army to extend its influence into areas of the country previously held by the FARC. The Colombian Air Force has effectively employed additional assets to move troops and provide them with close air support—critical capabilities for disrupting large-scale FARC operations. Other force multipliers such as effective communications, actionable intelligence, and joint coordination have improved, but require continued development to enhance tactical effectiveness. US training has aided in the professionalization of the Colombian armed forces, including on the subject of respect for human rights.

Still, the Colombian military is still too small to accomplish the daunting task of bringing peace to such a large country. Some observers suggest Colombia needs to double the size of its military to successfully contend with the multiple challenges of the FARC, ELN, and AUC. The military still does not have sufficient airlift capability to transport soldiers simultaneously to multiple sites in a timely fashion. International aid can only go so far in meeting these needs; it will be up to the Colombians themselves to devote the resources required to meet these goals.

In addition, some military commanders still operate with a “bunker mentality,” refusing to leave their secure bases for fear of taking losses to personnel or equipment. Other commanders limit their movements to large unit maneuvers. It is our hope that increases in training, personnel, and equipment will raise the commanders’ confidence and experience to the point where they will be able to use all appropriate tactical options.

Question:

Do you yourself, based on your experience with the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of Colombia, believe that the Armed Forces as an institution and its leadership, at all levels is committed indeed to respect the human rights of Colombian citizens?

Answer:

Yes. During the Pastrana Administration there has been a steady improvement in Colombian Armed Forces’ cooperation with civilian authorities in the investigation, prosecution, and punishment in civilian courts of military personnel credibly alleged to have committed gross violations of human rights or to have aided and abetted paramilitary groups. The military high command, under the leadership of Defense Minister Bell and Armed Forces Commander General Tapias, has also stated repeatedly that it will not tolerate collaboration between military personnel and paramilitary groups.

In meetings with senior Colombian civilian and military officials, U.S. officials regularly stress the need for Colombia to improve its human rights performance.

During my visit to Bogotá last February with Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Marc Grossman, we emphasized to President Pastrana and General Tapias that the Colombian military must take additional actions to sever any links between military personnel and paramilitary forces. We also met with the leading presidential candidates and made clear our expectation that they too be fully committed to improving respect for human rights.

The Colombian military leadership has issued guidance to the Colombian military to address the problem of former service members who join the AUC while maintaining their connections with active duty soldiers. The Colombian military is seeking to identify former career soldiers with ties to illegal armed groups and their active duty contacts, and has expressly restricted the access of such individuals to military facilities. The Armed Forces have also increased base security and force protection measures to deter unauthorized contacts between active duty personnel and terrorist elements such as paramilitaries.

The Colombian Armed Forces are active and essential participants in the Government of Colombia's Coordination Center for the Fight Against Illegal Self Defense Groups, a high-level, inter-agency body that meets regularly to coordinate the strategy against paramilitaries. Arrests, combat operations and intelligence activities by the Colombian Armed Forces against paramilitaries rose sharply in 2001. According to Colombian authorities, the Colombian Armed Forces captured 590 paramilitaries in 2001 and killed 96. Still, we continue to receive credible allegations of military-paramilitary collusion.

Both we and the Government of Colombia recognize that the protection of human rights in Colombia needs further improvement. Human rights are central to our policy in Colombia, and we are committed to continuing to work with the Government of Colombia on concrete measures it should take to make further progress in improving the human rights performance of its Armed Forces.

SELF-DEFENSE GROUPS/PARAMILITARIES

Question:

Is there an institutional link between the Armed Forces of Colombia and the paramilitaries?

Answer:

The GOC and the Colombian military High Command have shown a commitment to severing links between the military and the paramilitaries. The armed forces, as an institution, recognizes the danger of the paramilitaries and has no institutional links with paramilitary units. However, credible allegations of individual military personnel colluding with paramilitaries continue, with some members of the security forces collaborating with, or tolerating, the paramilitaries' illegal activities. Clearly, more still needs to be done to address the issue of impunity for military personnel engaged in such actions.

Question:

The Armed Forces have made promises in terms of cracking down on paramilitary violence. How are they doing?

Answer:

They have made significant progress, but more remains to be done. Arrests, combat operations and intelligence activities by the Colombian Armed Forces against paramilitaries rose sharply in 2001. According to Colombian authorities, the Government of Colombia captured 992 paramilitaries in 2001, compared to a total of 312 in 2000. State security services killed 116 paramilitaries during 2001, compared to 92 in 2000. The total of 1108 paramilitary personnel captured or killed by Colombian authorities in 2001 represented 10 percent of the paramilitaries estimated force of 11,000 combatants and demonstrates progress on ending paramilitary collaboration.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO THE HONORABLE OTTO J. REICH BY THE HONORABLE DONALD M. PAYNE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND RESPONSES

COLOMBIA: EXECUTIVE ORDER 12114

Question:

Executive Order (EO) 12114 requires that Federal agencies do environmental assessments on overseas actions that could have negative impacts on the environment.

The idea behind the order is to carry out the intent of the National Environmental Policy Act overseas. The State Department issued regulations pursuant to EO 12114 that outline State Department policy. Did the State Department comply with its own regulations and EO 12114 regarding the illicit crop aerial eradication? If so, please forward to the committee a copy of any environmental assessment or environmental impact statement done by the State Department and all related documents. If not, why did the State Department not comply with EO 12114 and State Department implementing instructions? If not, will State Department comply?

Answer:

E.O. 12114 requires assessment of environmental impacts outside the United States in limited circumstances, i.e., when approving major federal actions significantly affecting the environment of the global commons outside the jurisdiction of any nation; or major federal actions significantly affecting the environment of a foreign nation not participating with the United States and not otherwise involved in the action; or major federal actions that provide products or projects which are *prohibited or strictly regulated* in the United States based on toxic effects that create a serious public health risk, or based on the need to protect the environment from radioactive substances; or major federal actions which significantly affect natural or ecological resources of global importance designated for protection by the President.

The aerial eradication of illicit crops is a Government of Colombia program, carried out in Colombian territory under the authorization of sovereign Colombian laws. It does not affect the global commons outside the jurisdiction of any nation. It is not a U.S. government-managed program undertaken on foreign soil without the involvement of the foreign nation. The U.S. role in this program is secondary. Through the Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, the U.S. assists Colombia with training, contractor support, financial assistance, and technical and scientific advice for the spray program.

The only herbicide used by the eradication program is glyphosate, one of the most widely used agricultural chemicals in the world. Glyphosate has been registered for unrestricted sale and use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) since 1974 and its environmental impacts have been the focus of exhaustive study by capable, peer reviewed scientific entities. Cosmo-Flux 411F, a surfactant that is the only other chemical used in the spray mixture, is approved for use with herbicides in Colombia and is registered by Colombia's Institute of Agriculture and Husbandry (ICA) under the lowest toxicological risk category. EPA determined in September 2001 that all of the ingredients in Cosmo-Flux 411F are exempt under 40 CFR 180.1001 from the requirement of tolerances when used in pesticides; applied to food, feeds, and livestock.

As such, this program does not qualify as a project producing an emission or effluent which is prohibited or strictly regulated by Federal law in the United States because its toxic effects on the environment create a serious public health risk. Finally, the program does not significantly affect resources designated for protection by the President.

For these and other reasons, EO 12114 and the Department of State procedures implementing it do not require the preparation of environment assessment documentation in this case.

ATTACKS ON RIO SUCIO

Question:

It has been alleged that General Rito Alejo del Rio supported and tolerated this attack Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Washington Office on Latin America in their Human Rights Briefing paper issued on February 5, 2002 discussed the del Rio case. The current Attorney general in Colombia, Mr. Luis Osorio dismissed the director of the Human Rights unit of the Prosecutor's office, Mr. Pedro Diaz along with two other attorneys who had worked on the case. Fearing for his life, Pedro Diaz sought political asylum in the United States. Everything about this case seems to indicate that there is not the political will in Colombia to seriously prosecute those credibly alleged to have violated human rights.

What is the status of this case? And why should the American people finance a military and government that apparently is not serious about human rights for everybody?

Answer:

It is our understanding that the case of Rito Alejo del Río is under investigation in the Prosecutor General's Office (Fiscalia.)

The Government of Colombia is committed to improving the human rights situation in Colombia. During the Pastrana Administration there has been a steady im-

provement in Colombian Armed Forces' cooperation with civilian authorities in the investigation, prosecution, and punishment in civilian courts of military personnel credibly alleged to have committed gross violations of human rights or to have aided and abetted paramilitary groups. The military high command, under the leadership of Defense Minister Bell and Armed Forces Commander General Tapias, has also stated repeatedly that it will not tolerate collaboration between military personnel and paramilitary groups.

This progress enabled the Secretary of State to determine and to certify that the Colombian Armed Forces are meeting the statutory criteria related to human rights and ties to paramilitary groups required under section 567 of the Kenneth M. Ludden Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2002 (P.L. 107-115). These conditions are that: the Colombian Armed Forces is suspending military officers credibly alleged to have committed gross violations of human rights or to have aided or abetted paramilitary groups; is cooperating with civilian prosecutors and judicial authorities in prosecuting and punishing in civilian courts such members; and is taking effective measures to sever links with paramilitary groups and to execute outstanding orders for capture of members of such groups.

QUESTIONS BY THE HONORABLE CASS BALLENGER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, DIRECTED TO THE HONORABLE PETER W. RODMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, AND RESPONSES

EXPANDED AUTHORITIES

Question:

Will the expanded authorities permit the United States to help identify, locate and arrest leaders of Colombian FTOs who have been indicted in the U.S.?

Answer:

Yes, by expanding the current counternarcotics authorities the United States will have better opportunity to support the identification, location, and apprehension of Colombian terrorists and other criminals. Additionally, DOD assistance and training of the Colombian security forces will enhance their ability to do these activities on their own.

FY2002 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST

Question:

Does the latest FY2002 Department of Defense request for supplemental counter-terrorism appropriations include any of the following items:

- a. Funding for ongoing support of the Colombian Judge Advocate General and human rights training components.*
- b. Funding for ongoing support and deployment of SOUTHCOM Intelligence Surveillance & Reconnaissance (ISR) assets.*
- c. Funding for sustainment and retention of trained personnel in the Colombian CN Brigade.*
- d. Reprogramming of \$20 million in DoD/Counter-drug funds to enhance CT force protection measures for USG personnel in Colombia from the U.S. government undergo any sort of vetting by our law enforcement and intelligence community to ensure they do not have links to Foreign Terrorist Organizations?*

Answer:

The FY2002 Department of Defense supplemental for counter-terrorism appropriations does not contain a request for Colombia programs.

QUESTION BY THE HONORABLE HENRY J. HYDE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, DIRECTED TO THE HONORABLE PETER W. RODMAN, AND RESPONSE

GLOBAL REACH OF THE FARC

Question:

Your formal statement says that the FARC is not considered to have global reach. I would note that several FARC leaders were recently indicted for drug trafficking to the United States, which can reach into every home and community in America. We also have evidence they have imported the IRA into Colombia for terrorist training, that can and will pose a security threat to Americans and American interests in Colombia. Do these factors influence your position that the FARC does not have global reach?

Answer:

Colombia has not been designated as a target in the global war on terrorism at this time, as Colombian terrorist groups are active primarily in Colombia itself. I agree the FARC has been influenced by other terrorist organizations such as the Irish Republican Army. In addition to threatening Colombian democracy, these groups jeopardize regional stability and have engaged in repeated attacks against American citizens and property in Colombia. Consequently, the President has requested significant funding to support Colombian counter-terrorist operations in his FY 03 budget and will continue to review U.S. policy concerning Colombia, although we do not foresee a requirement to introduce U.S. combat forces.

QUESTIONS BY THE HONORABLE ROBERT MENENDEZ, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DIRECTED TO THE HONORABLE PETER W. RODMAN, AND RESPONSES

NEW AUTHORITIES IN THE FY 2002 SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST

Question:

Would you elaborate beyond your prepared and given remarks on the different ways U.S. assistance specifically will be used to take on this unified threat referred to by the Administration and in your comments?

Answer:

In my prepared and summary statements, I mentioned that our current support to Colombia is too narrowly focused and restricted to supporting only counterdrug operations. We are restricted from sharing non-counterdrug information, and the Colombians are limited in how they may deploy U.S. provided and funded counterdrug equipment. New authorities would allow for greater intelligence sharing between the U.S. and Colombia and the use of U.S. supplied equipment by the Colombian security forces against narcoterrorists, including the FARC, ELN, and AUC, whether or not the objective of such operations is counternarcotics. These new authorities, in addition to approval of FY 02 and 03 FMF assistance, would also allow the U.S. to provide training and equipment to Colombian units that will protect a critical portion of the Cano-Limon pipeline.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Question:

Please compare the Colombian Government and its armed forces respect for human rights with last year.

Answer:

In general, the Government of Colombia and the Armed Forces have demonstrated a commitment to progress on human rights issues. The sharp decrease in allegations of human rights abuses by military personnel in recent years is the most dramatic evidence of that commitment. The Colombians have worked closely and cooperatively with us in creating human rights training programs for the Armed Forces and in setting up an effective human rights vetting mechanism to screen candidates for training and other assistance. The Colombian Ministry of Defense reports that 0.4% of the human rights abuses were committed by the Armed Forces in 2001 as compared to 1.6% in 2000.

Question:

Please comment on the commitment of the Armed Forces of Colombia at all levels to respect for human rights.

Answer:

As an institution, the Armed Forces of Colombia respects its citizen's human rights. At the highest levels, respect for human rights is a consistent theme publicly and privately emphasized by both civilian and military leadership. However, members of the Armed Forces are occasionally implicated in human rights violations—as is common, unfortunately, in any armed conflict. However, the human rights performance of the Colombian Armed Forces has improved dramatically in recent years. As recently as five years ago, nearly half of the human rights abuses were alleged to have been committed by military personnel. Now that figure is below 1%. Of the complaints filed against members of the armed forces, only a small fraction are found to have sufficient merit to lead to disciplinary action or criminal proceedings. When abuses do occur, the military and civilian justice systems have been increasingly responsive.

Question:

Please comment on the human rights records of the illegal groups in Colombia.

Answer:

The record of Colombia's three illegal groups is very poor. While the FARC and AUC are often known to trade places as the country's "worst" human rights abusers, all three groups commit significant numbers of human rights abuses to support their agendas. Violence and instability in rural areas have contributed to between 275,000 and 347,000 civilians displaced from their homes during 2001. In recent years, the U.S. Department of State, Human Rights Non-Governmental Organizations, and the Colombian military generally agree that, the AUC has become the worst offender of human rights. The Colombian Minister of Defense reported the paramilitary forces were responsible for the deaths of over 1,015 civilians during the period of January to November 2001.

NEW PENTAGON SECURITY ASSISTANCE REQUEST

I understand that the Pentagon is seeking over \$100 million in international security assistance that would not be subject to State Department oversight.

Question:

Would you both comment on the need for security assistance at the Pentagon that is not subject to State Department oversight? Is this wise?

Answer:

The Administration is seeking the authority to transfer a total of \$100 million in funds from existing accounts to support foreign governments. The resources provided under this new transfer authority would be consistent with authority provided in P.L. 107-117, in that reimbursements would be for direct support provided to U.S. military operations or troops.

The use of transfer authority to reimburse a foreign government will be considered in the context of the ongoing U.S. bilateral relationships and regional interests. To assure our national security interests are appropriately promoted and protected, the Secretary of Defense will fully consult with the Secretary of State on the reimbursement requirements.

Beginning in October, the Government of Pakistan provided American troops engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom with critical goods, support and services including base access, fuel, transportation, and force protection.

The Department of Defense did not have necessary legal agreements in place nor the general authority to compensate the Government of Pakistan for this vital support. The Department of State had the authority to provide compensation, but did not have the resources to fulfill DoD's requirements. An Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement was not concluded until February 2002.

To meet some of the interim funding requirements, the House of Representatives added language to the FY 2002 Department of Defense Appropriations Act providing \$100 million for "payments for logistical and military support provided, or to be provided, to U.S. military operations in connection with Operation Enduring Freedom." The Secretary of Defense was provided with full and exclusive "discretion" to determine the amounts that were to be provided to Pakistan and Jordan. (Section 304, PL 107-117)

With agreements now in place, the Administration is seeking \$420 million to reimburse Pakistan, and Jordan for additional services and goods provided. These funds could also be made available to reimburse governments with which the Department of Defense has concluded the appropriate agreements.

However, as the global war on terrorism expands to new fronts, it is not certain the U.S. will have necessary legal agreements in place with potential coalition partners that would allow for compensation or reimbursement for goods, services and support made available to American troops and military operations. With this uncertainty as to the next fronts in the war, transfer authority is being requested to meet potential reimbursement requirements that would be needed to support the U.S. effort.

REGIONAL SPILLOVER

Question:

Could you update us on the Andean Regional Initiative efforts from last year? How is this affecting Colombia's proximate neighbors?

Answer:

The effects of "spillover" from Plan Colombia have not materialized to the degree expected by many of Colombia's neighboring countries. Ecuador, which is very preoccupied with the effects of Plan Colombia, admits that over 90% of the displaced Colombians who cross into Ecuador eventually return to Colombia. Colombia and its neighbors have all increased their border security forces to some extent, and these efforts have helped to minimize the effects of spillover. Regardless, all countries in the region continue to analyze both the successes and failures of Plan Colombia and how this effects transnational threats.

COLOMBIAN ARMED SERVICES

Question:

The Armed Services have been criticized for not requiring their high school graduates to engage in combat.

—What progress has been made to date in eliminating the restriction from combat of bachilleres or high school graduates?

Answer:

The Colombian military has unilaterally taken measures to reduce the "bachilleres"—those exempt from combat—within the Armed Forces. They have reduced the number from the tens of thousands to approximately 2500 as of February 2002. The number fluctuates slightly based on individual circumstances in each individual case. The Colombian law that exempts high school graduates from combat remains on the books. Colombian elected officials have not had the political courage to overturn the law. An attempt to repeal the law was initiated in 2001 but was defeated in the Colombian Congress.

Question:

Have you got a sense of how many armed services personnel now guarding infrastructure would be freed up upon the establishment of the pipeline brigades?

Answer:

The idea that military forces would be "freed up" is somewhat incorrect as military units would be committed to infrastructure security efforts. Rather, it would make units more effective in providing security in their areas of responsibilities. Also, these are not "pipeline brigades," but would be a combination of specialized Colombian infrastructure protection units—which they have already begun to form and some of which are fully operational—and units enhanced by U.S. training and equipment. These units will result in greater security for Colombian national infrastructure that has a critical impact on the security of the Colombian economy. The most prominent example and first priority is the petroleum pipeline, against which the portion which resides in Arauca Department. This portion has been attacked more than 1000 times since it opened in 1986.

Question:

How do the Colombian Armed Forces measure up as a professional fighting force? How are they doing on the battlefield?

Answer:

The Colombian Armed Forces have greatly improved their professionalism and combat capacity over the past four years. The Pastrana government provided re-

sources for a modernization and professionalization effort that is now beginning to bear fruit on the battlefield. Under the current military leadership, Armed Forces Commander General Fernando Tapias has taken the Colombian military through a long process of improvement as a combat force. He has done this despite having insufficient resources necessary to cover such a large country. He also faces the challenges of three illegal armed groups well armed through drug trafficking profits and difficult terrain. This is not the same Colombian military as four years ago. It is a more aggressive force on the battlefield, a force more willing to pursue the insurgents far from the military bases of support. But it is still one struggling to transform into a more joint warfighting force. One significant result of a more capable Colombian military force has been the absence of the FARC engaging Colombian military units to on the battlefield, electing instead to revert back to small-scale operations targeting and destroying key infrastructure nodes.

Question:

Do you yourself, based on your experience with the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of Colombia, believe that the Armed Forces as an institution and its leadership, at all levels, is committed in deed to respecting the human rights of Colombian citizens.

Answer:

Yes. The Colombian military has made significant progress towards improving its human rights record during the past four years. Under the current civilian and military leadership of the Armed Forces and the military services, the Colombian military has reduced human rights abuses attributed to the military to a small fraction of those committed in an intense internal terrorist/insurgent driven war. The Colombian military has responded to new-world realities and international concerns. It is important that the international community recognizes these improvements and continues to assist the Colombian military in maintaining this high level of improvement. This would ease Colombian government, particularly military, concerns that the goal posts are constantly being moved and that they will never receive the appropriate recognition for their efforts.

SELF-DEFENSE GROUPS/PARAMILITARIES

Question:

Is there an institutional link between the Armed Forces of Colombia and the paramilitaries?

Answer:

Clearly there have been and continue to be instances of Colombian armed forces aiding and abetting paramilitary operations or, more frequently, failing to act aggressively to prevent or respond to such operations. However, it is clear that President Pastrana, Defense Minister Bell, Armed Forces Commander Tapias, the service commanders, and other senior military leaders genuinely oppose and regularly condemn such collaboration.

Question:

The Armed Forces have made promises in terms of cracking down on paramilitary violence. How are they doing?

Answer:

While the Colombian armed forces have undoubtedly not succeeded in completely curbing the activities of the "self-defense forces," they have not been idle with respect to conducting operations against these groups. In 2000, security force operations against the paramilitaries resulted in 313 arrests and 92 killed in combat and in 2001, 992 were arrested and another 116 were killed. The 1,108 paramilitaries either captured or killed in 2001 represent a 270 percent increase over the previous year and are estimated to be approximately 10 percent of the paramilitary's force structure.

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QUESTION. Is it true that the FARC and ELN forcibly recruit children to fight in their ranks? Does the AUC also engage in the forced recruitment of children?

Answer: Yes, the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN), and AUC all forcibly recruit children into their ranks by threatening them, or by retaliating against their families if they resist, or desert.

According to the Colombian Army, at least 7,000 children between the ages of 11 and 17 are in the ranks of illegal groups with the FARC recruiting the largest number, followed by the ELN, then the AUC. There is no specific breakdown of the numbers for each illegal group; however, the Colombian Ombudsman office estimates that, depending on the front, up to 70 percent of guerillas are between 13 and 17.

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QUESTION. How has U.S. training and engagement with Colombia's armed forces contributed to the Colombian Army's respect for human rights and professionalization?

Answer: We have witnessed a steady improvement in the professionalism and respect for human rights and the rule of law by the Colombian military, accompanied by increased effectiveness in counterdrug operations. The increase in professionalism starts with the continued professional military education, the confidence gained by technical proficiency, and resources available for operations.

U.S. Southern Command works to foster respect for the rule of law, human rights, civilian control of the military, and support for democratic ideals through robust legal reform and human rights engagement programs. We annually coordinate and direct numerous military-to-military Human Rights engagement activities. Our specific goals include the development of a thorough understanding of Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law, as well as the inclusion of military lawyers in the planning and execution of military operations.

We have seen the positive results from our efforts and have witnessed a steady improvement in the professionalism and respect for human rights on the part of the Colombian military. Under the auspices of the Plan Colombia Supplemental, the Colombian Ministry of Defense has spearheaded numerous activities that have enhanced the Colombian military's understanding of human rights and international humanitarian law principles, and facilitated the integration of human rights

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principles in the planning and execution of military operations and at every level of professional military education. These activities include a Military Instructor's Course and a Human Rights Specialty Course. This May, thirty-five students from the Armed Forces, National Police, Ministry of Defense, and Commanding General's office are currently receiving specialty degrees from the Human Rights Specialty Course and the next class will start in June of this year. In November of last year, U.S. Southern Command, the U.S. Embassy, and the Colombian Ministry of Defense, sponsored human rights seminars intended to bridge the gap that exists between the Colombian armed forces, the media, and civil society. Additionally, the Colombian Ministry of Defense has sponsored bimonthly human rights roundtables designed to increase mutual understanding among all parties and conducted with participants from the Colombian security forces (CSF), non-governmental organizations, and civil authorities. Overall, the number of service members trained by the COLMOD in human rights and international humanitarian law principles has increased from 29,429 in 1998 to 119,349 by 31 Dec 01. In a short period of time, the Colombian military has emerged as one of the most respected and trusted organizations in Colombian society. Less than three percent of complaints of human rights abuses last year were attributed to the Colombian Security Forces, down from a high of 60 percent just a few years ago. The Colombian military has also aggressively stepped up operations against guerrillas and illegal self-defense forces. According to COLMIL, in 2001, the Colombian military captured or killed

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686 illegal self-defense force members, a significant increase over the
year 2000. Such progress reflects a strong and principled leadership
and the genuine desire of the Colombian military to honor and promote
democratic principles in their country.

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QUESTION. Why is Colombia (unlike the Philippines, Yemen, Georgia, Nepal, Kazakhstan, and many other locations) NOT part of the Global War on Terrorism (based on NSC guidance to the Congress)?

Answer: This policy question would be more appropriately directed to others. However, from United States Southern Command's perspective, the FARC is a significant terrorist organization in the region and we can certainly substantiate regional impact if not global reach.

Colombian terrorist groups are included when we consider terrorism across the United States Southern Command area of responsibility. The FARC has demonstrated the capability and intent to conduct terrorist and drug trafficking activities regionally and pose a significant regional threat. [deleted]

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