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	ACQ-01	CA-02	CCO-00	CG-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	CTME-00
	INL-01	DEAE-00	DINT-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00
	EB-00	OIGO-01	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	H-01	IMMC-01	IM-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	IO-00	JUSE-00	L-01	ADS-00
	MMP-00	M-00	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03	OIC-02
	OIS-01	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 008609

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TAGS: PHUM, PTER, SNAR, PREL, PGOV, PINS, PINR, CO

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SUBJECT: COLOMBIAN PARAMILITARIES SIGN THEIR OWN "PRE-ACCORDS"

REF: BOGOTA 8181

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR CURTIS W. KAMMAN. REASONS 1.5(B&D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: CARLOS CASTANO AND MORE THAN A DOZEN OTHER SENIOR PARAMILITARY LEADERS SIGNED JULY 26 A SURPRISE AGREEMENT WITH MEMBERS OF THE COLOMBIAN STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY: COMMITTING THEMSELVES TO THE SEARCH FOR NATIONAL PEACE, PROMISING TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AS THE WAR GOES ON, AND LAYING OUT ELEMENTS OF AN AGENDA THEY WILL SEEK TO PURSUE IN ANY PEACE TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT. COMING WEEKS AFTER A SIMILAR AGREEMENT BY THE ELN GUERRILLAS, THE PARAS' MOTIVATIONS ARE CLEAR: TO ENHANCE THEIR OWN POLITICAL STANDING IN THE COUNTRY AND TO SECURE A SEPARATE TABLE FOR THEMSELVES DURING ANTICIPATED GOVERNMENT PEACE TALKS WITH THE ELN AND FARC GUERRILLAS. END SUMMARY.

THE PARAS "GO POLITICAL"

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2. (U) COLOMBIA'S PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE TAKEN A BIG STEP TOWARDS OBTAINING POLITICAL STATUS -- AND A SMALL STEP ALONG THE ROAD TO PEACE IN COLOMBIA. ON JULY 26-27, MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL (NPC) AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM CIVIL

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SOCIETY MET IN SECRET WITH CARLOS CASTANO, THE OUTLAWED LEADER OF THE UNITED SELF-DEFENSE FORCES OF COLOMBIA ("AUC"), AND AUC'S GENERAL STAFF, COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS REGIONAL PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS FROM ACROSS COLOMBIA. (THE DELEGATES FIRST TRAVELED TO MONTERIA, CORDOBA, VIA COLOMBIAN AIR FORCE PLANE, AND THEN DROVE THREE HOURS INTO THE "NUDO DE PARAMILLO" MOUNTAINS, WHERE CASTANO AND THE AUC MAINTAIN THEIR NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS.)

3. (U) AT THE CONCLUSION OF A FULL DAY OF DISCUSSIONS, THE AUC

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AND NPC MEMBERS SIGNED AN AGREEMENT IN WHICH THEY JOINTLY DECLARED THE INITIATION OF A PEACE PROCESS WITH THE AUC, LAID OUT "RULES OF WAR" THAT THE AUC COMMITS TO FOLLOW IN PURSUIT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW, AND ITEMIZED A "MINIMUM AGENDA" FOR PEACE TALKS BETWEEN THE AUC AND THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

4. (U) ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, THE MEETINGS REPORTEDLY WERE MOST TENSE WHEN HERNANDO HERNANDEZ, PRESIDENT OF THE LEFT-WING "USO" OIL WORKERS' UNION (BASED IN BARRANCABERMEJA, THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE ELN AND ITS STRONGEST URBAN BASE TODAY), ARGUED THAT EVEN WHILE THE USO OFTEN WAS IN AGREEMENT "WITH" POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE ELN, THAT DID NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT USO WAS "OF" THE ELN. CARLOS CASTANO REPORTEDLY BROKE THE ICE BY SUBSEQUENTLY ANNOUNCING THAT, OUT OF HIS RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW, HE WAS RESCINDING THE ORDER WHICH HERETOFORE HAD DECLARED HERNANDEZ A "MILITARY OBJECTIVE" OF THE AUC.

WHAT THE ACCORD ENTAILS

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5. (U) THE AGREEMENT FORMALLY ESTABLISHES THE AUC'S COMMITMENT TO THE SEARCH FOR PEACE BASED ON MUTUAL TOLERANCE AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW. THE PARAS CALL FOR A SEPARATE PEACE TALKS TABLE FOR THEMSELVES, RECOGNIZE THAT A CONTINUING SERIES OF PARTIAL AGREEMENTS IS MORE LIKELY TO YIELD PIECE THAN A SINGLE ALL-INCLUSIVE AGREEMENT, AND COMMIT THEMSELVES TO NOT WALKING AWAY FROM THE TABLE "ONCE THE DIALOGUE HAS BEGUN." THE PARAS ALSO PUBLICLY COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO A NUMBER OF STEPS TO AVOID INVOLVING THE CIVILIAN POPULATION IN THE CONFLICT (INCLUDING PROMINENTLY: NO ATTACKS ON NON-COMBATANTS, NO GENERATION OF FORCED DISPLACEMENTS, NO FORCED RECRUITMENTS (AND IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF ALL UNDERAGE RECRUITMENT), HONORING SELF-DECLARED NEUTRAL "COMMUNITIES OF PEACE", AND RESPECTING PEOPLE AND EVENTS ADVANCING THE PEACE PROCESS). THE PARAS ALSO PROMISED NOT TO IMPEDE THE ENTRANCE OF FOOD OR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO CIVILIAN POPULATIONS AND PROMISED TO RESPECT THE EFFORTS OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS. FINALLY, THE AUC COMMITTED TO UNDERTAKE STEPS TO ENSURE THAT ALL

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PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS ABIDE BY THESE COMMITMENTS AND AGREED TO WORK WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE NPC TO VERIFY THESE AGREEMENTS.

6. (U) THE AGREEMENT CALLS FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS MEMBERS OF A "MINIMUM AGENDA" FOR ANY AUC DIALOGUE WITH THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT:

- DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL REFORMS;
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;
- SOCIAL, JUDICIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORMS;
- THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES IN A STATE OF LAW;
- TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION AND DECENTRALIZATION (OF POWER);

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-- THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT;
-- OIL AND HYDROCARBONS POLICY.

COMMENTS

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7. (C) THIS "NUDO DE PARAMILLO" AGREEMENT WITH THE AUC PARAMILITARIES FOLLOWS CLOSE ON THE HEELS OF THE "HEAVEN'S GATE" AGREEMENT SIGNED IN GERMANY WITH THE ELN GUERRILLAS (REFTEL). IN BOTH CASES, CIVIL SOCIETY AND ELEMENTS OF THE NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF THE POLITICAL VACUUM WHICH CURRENTLY EXISTS IN BOGOTA, AS SAMPER AND HIS TEAM ARE ALREADY "CHECKING OUT" AND THE "PASTRANISTAS" HAVE YET TO FORMALLY ARRIVE. THIS SHOULD ACTUALLY PROVIDE PASTRANA WITH SOME FLEXIBILITY, HOWEVER, AFTER HIS AUGUST 7 INAUGURATION, HOLDING THE PARAS AND GUERRILLAS TO THEIR WORDS WHEN IT SUITS HIS PURPOSES WHILE NOTING THAT HIS NEW GOVERNMENT HAS SIGNED NO COMMITMENTS WITH ANYBODY.

8. (C) WHILE PARTS OF THE AGREEMENT WILL INEVITABLY BE VIOLATED BY ELEMENTS OF THE PARAS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE PARAS HAVE FORMALLY COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO "IN NO WAY IMPEDE THE REALIZATION OF MEETINGS, FORA, WORKSHOPS OR SEMINARS ON PEACE." IN DOING SO, CASTANO AND COMPANY ARE FORMALIZING INFORMAL AGREEMENTS MADE HERETOFORE, THAT PERSONS INVOLVED IN EFFORTS LIKE THE EMBASSY-SPONSORED "CARTAGENA CONFERENCE" -- SUCH AS HERNANDO HERNANDEZ -- ARE HENCEFORTH "OFF-
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LIMITS". THE REASON FOR THIS IS OBVIOUS: THE PARAS WILL INSIST
ON SIMILAR SECURITY GUARANTEES FOR THEMSELVES AS THEY CONTINUE TO
PURSUE THEIR TRANSFORMATION INTO POLITICAL ACTORS LEGITIMATELY
DESERVING A PLACE AT THE TABLE.

BIO NOTES

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9. (U) THE PARAMILITARY SIGNERS OF THE "NUDO DE PARAMILLO"
AGREEMENT ARE:
CARLOS CASTANO GIL, CESAR MARIN, SANTANDER LOZADA AND JOSE
ALFREDO BERRIO (REPRESENTING THE "AUTODEFENSAS CAMPESINAS DE
CORDOBA Y URABA"); "VOTALON" AND CESAR SALAZAR (OF THE
"AUTODEFENSAS DE PUERTO BOYACA"); RAMON ISAZA AND "TENIENTE
GONZALEZ" (OF THE "AUTODEFENSAS DE RAMON ISAZA"); CLODOMIRO
AGAMES AND EULICES MENDOZA (OF THE "AUTODEFENSAS DEL LLANO");
CAMILO AURELIO MORANTES AND FRANCISCO TABARES (OF THE
"AUTODEFENSAS DE SANTANDER Y SUR DEL CESAR"); DANIEL SANTOS AND
CARLOS CASTRO (OF THE "AUTODEFENSAS DEL CASANARE"); AND PEDRO
TULIO MORENO AND LUIS EDUARDO CIFUENTES (OF THE "AUTODEFENSAS DE
CUNDINAMARCA").

10. (U) THE NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL AND CIVIL SOCIETY SIGNERS
ARE: JOSE FERNANDO CASTRO CAICEDO (NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS
OMBUDSMAN); LUIS EDUARDO GARZON (PRESIDENT OF THE "CUT"
FEDERATION OF LABOR UNIONS (AND COMMUNIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE
MEMBER)); HERNANDO HERNANDEZ (PRESIDENT OF THE "USO" OIL WORKERS'
LABOR UNION); EUGENIO MARULANDA (PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF HIGHWAY TRANSPORT COMPANIES, "COLFECAR"); SAMUEL
MORENO (SENATOR); SABAS PRETEL (PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL
FEDERATION OF BUSINESSMEN, "FENALCO"); AUGUSTO RAMIREZ OCAMPO
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(MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CONCILIATION COMMISSION); ALEJO VARGAS
(VICE RECTOR OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY); AND, JORGE VISBAL
MARTELO (PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CATTLE RANCHERS,
"FEDEGAN").

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