

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 11877 01 OF 05 271748Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-01	INR-05	SS-01	OIC-02	CIAE-00
	EB-01	H-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-01	HA-09
	L-03	LAB-04	CTME-00	TRSE-00	PM-01	PA-01	OMB-01
	STR-18	SIL-01	INM-01	INRE-00	CG-00	RP-10	USIE-00
	JUSE-00	DEAE-00	FBIE-00	SP-01	SR-01	PRS-01	OIG-01
	SCT-03	P-02	/090 W				

-----374276 271800Z /40

O 271753Z JUL 90
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7574
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LIMA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
SECDEF WASHDC

SECTION 01 OF 05 BOGOTA 11877

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PHUM, SNAR, KJUS, CO
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA -- WIDESPREAD
ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSES BY THE ARMY

REF: A) BOGOTA 7045 B) BOGOTA 8026 C) BOGOTA 9151
D) BOGOTA 10045 E) BOGOTA 3705 F) BOGOTA 10662

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. A NUMBER OF RECENT INVESTIGATIONS CARRIED
OUT BY COLOMBIA'S PROCURADURIA, AN INDEPENDENT
WATCHDOG AGENCY, HAVE EMBARRASSED THE COLOMBIAN ARMED
FORCES BY LINKING A NUMBER OF JUNIOR AND MID-RANKING
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 11877 01 OF 05 271748Z

ARMY OFFICERS TO SEVERAL RECENT INCIDENTS OF GRIEVOUS
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. MOREOVER, THE EMBASSY HAS
LEARNED THAT, IN THE NEAR FUTURE, THE PROCURADURIA IS
LIKELY TO CHARGE ARMY OFFICERS WITH INVOLVEMENT IN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: MELVIN E SINN
DATE/CASE ID: 29 APR 2005 200501166

ADDITIONAL RECENT INCIDENTS OF VIOLATIONS. [REDACTED]

B1

[REDACTED] SAYS THAT ABUSES IN THE MILITARY REFLECT THE ACTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN AND ARE NOT THE RESULT OF A HIGH LEVEL CONSPIRACY. MOREOVER, SENIOR MILITARY OFFICIALS SAY THEY ARE AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND HAVE ISSUED ORDERS THAT THEIR SUBORDINATES IN THE FIELD DO SO. NEVERTHELESS, THE PROCURADURIA'S ALLEGATIONS OF MILITARY ABUSES HAVE LEAD TO A SHARP DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THIS WATCHDOG INSTITUTION AND THE ARMY. THE SHARPLY INCREASED NUMBER OF OFFICIAL ABUSES UNCOVERED BY THE PROCURADURIA REFLECTS A CONSIDERABLE STRENGTHENING IN RECENT MONTHS OF THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION'S CAPACITY TO INVESTIGATE HUMAN RIGHTS CASES AND PUNISH VIOLATORS, NOT NECESARILY AN INCREASE IN SUCH ABUSES THEMSELVES. END SUMMARY.

RECENT EMBARRASMENTS

3. IN RECENT MONTHS THE COLOMBIAN PROCURADURIA HAS FOUND STRONG EVIDENCE LINKING MEMBERS OF THE ARMY TO A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT INSTANCES OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES. IN THE COLOMBIAN SYSTEM THE PROCURADURIA IS AN INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT INSTITUTION CHARGED WITH INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS OF GOVERNMENT ABUSES AND WITH ADMINISTRATIVELY SANCTIONING OFFICIALS FOUND TO HAVE ACTED IMPROPERLY. [REDACTED]

B1

[REDACTED] RECENTLY TOLD POLOFF THAT,

[REDACTED]

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 11877 01 OF 05 271748Z

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, HIS OFFICE, WHICH HANDLES ONLY THE MOST SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS, HAS FILED ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES AGAINST GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN SOME 30 CASES OF RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. AFTER CONSIDERING THE ARGUEMENTS PRESENTED BY THOSE ACCUSED [REDACTED] HIMSELF WILL DECIDE WHETHER TO FIND THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED INNOCENT OR GUILTY. (UNDER THE COLOMBIAN SYSTEM THE PROCURADURIA CAN NOT BRING CRIMINAL CHARGES AND THE MAXIMUM PUNISHMENT IT CAN IMPOSE IS DISMISSAL FROM GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT. THE COURTS THEMSELVES, HOWEVER, CAN USE EVIDENCE GATHERED BY THE PROCURADURIA TO SUPPORT CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS. SEE REF E FOR MORE ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE PROCURADURIA.) ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] MOST OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES FILED IN

B1

B1

UNCLASSIFIED

THESE 30 CASES, AND THE MOST SERIOUS OF THE CHARGES, ARE AGAINST MEMBERS OF THE ARMY.

4. THE MOST PROMINENT OF THE CASES HAVE ALREADY BEEN NOTED IN EMBASSY REPORTING. IN MAY THE PROCURADURIA CHARGED TWO OFFICERS WITH DERELICTION OF DUTY FOR FAILING TO IMPEDE THE MOVEMENT OF ARMED INDIVIDUALS WHO KIDNAPPED SOME 42 PEASANTS IN THE URABA REGION IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR (REF A). ACCORDING TO EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY PROVIDED TO THE PROCURADURIA SEVERAL MILITARY MEN ALSO TOOK PART DIRECTLY IN THESE KILLINGS, ALTHOUGH THE WITNESSES WERE UNABLE TO IDENTIFY SPECIFIC OFFICERS OR ENLISTED MEN. ALSO IN MAY, ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES WERE FILED AGAINST FOUR OFFICERS, INCLUDING A COLONEL, FOR ALLEGEDLY TORTURING 16 LABOR UNION ACTIVISTS (REF B). IN JUNE THE HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE CHARGED 11 MEMBERS OF THE ARMY WITH THE APRIL EXTRA-JUDICIAL EXECUTIONS OF SEVERAL RURAL RESIDENTS IN PUERTO VALDIVIA, ANTIOQUIA DEPARTMENT (REF C). LATER THAT SAME MONTH A JUDGE ASKED THE

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

PAGE 04

BOGOTA 11877 01 OF 05 271748Z

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED



NNNN



PAGE 01 BOGOTA 11877 02 OF 05 271749Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-01	INR-05	SS-01	OIC-02	CIAE-00
	EB-01	H-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-01	HA-09
	L-03	LAB-04	CTME-00	TRSE-00	PM-01	PA-01	OMB-01
	STR-18	SIL-01	INM-01	INRE-00	CG-00	RP-10	USIE-00
	JUSE-00	DEAE-00	FBIE-00	SP-01	SR-01	PRS-01	OIG-01
	SCT-03	P-02	/090 W				

-----374314 271800Z /40

O 271753Z JUL 90
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7575
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LIMA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
SECDEF WASHDC



SECTION 02 OF 05 BOGOTA 11877

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

UNCLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PHUM, SNAR, KJUS, CO
 SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA -- WIDESPREAD
 PROCURADURIA TO INVESTIGATE THE ESCAPE OF AN ARMY
 LIEUTENANT FROM AN ARMY BASE WHERE HE WAS BEING
 DETAINED (REF F). SHORTLY AFTER THE ESCAPE THE
 LIEUTENANT WAS CONVICTED OF PARTICIPATING IN A JANUARY
 1989 MASSACRE OF JUDICIAL OFFICIALS.

THE TRUJILLO KILLINGS

5. IN REF D WE REPORTED THAT THE PROCURADURIA'S
 OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS HAD UNCOVERED STRONG
 EVIDENCE LINKING MEMBERS OF THE ARMY AND POLICE TO A
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 11877 02 OF 05 271749Z

NUMBER OF DISAPPEARANCES AND MURDERS WHICH TOOK PLACE
 EARLIER THIS YEAR IN TRUJILLO, VALLE DE CAUCA
 DEPARTMENT. DURING A RECENT MEETING THE

[REDACTED] TOLD US THAT HE HAD ORDERED
 DISCIPLINARY CHARGES FILED AGAINST ARMY MAJOR ALIRIO
 ANTONIO URUENA AND THREE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL
 POLICE FOR THEIR ALLEGED PARTICIPATION IN SOME 20 OF
 THE KILLINGS.

B1

6. ACCORDING [REDACTED] THE KEY WITNESS IN THE CASE
 WAS DANIEL ARCILA CARDONA, A CIVILIAN ARMY INFORMANT
 WHO, AFTER APPARENTLY PARTICIPATING IN THE MURDERS,
 HAD A CHANGE OF HEART. ARCILA CONFESSED WHAT HE KNEW
 ABOUT THE KILLINGS TO DAS CHIEF MIGUEL MAZA MARQUEZ.
 MAZA FOUND THE CONFESSION CREDIBLE AND DIRECTED THE
 WITNESS TO THE PROCURADURIA. AN INTERNAL PROCURADURIA
 DOCUMENT DETAILING THE INSTITUTION'S INVESTIGATION
 INTO THESE KILLINGS, A COPY OF WHICH WE HAVE OBTAINED
 FROM A SOURCE NOT CONNECTED WITH THE PROCURADURIA,
 CITES THE TESTIMONY OF MORE THAN A DOZEN WITNESSES
 WHICH TENDS TO SUPPORT THAT OF ARCILA.

B1

7. ACCORDING TO ARCILA, MAJOR ALIRIO ANTONIO URENA,
 THE MILITARY MAN WHO FACES CHARGES, PERSONALLY
 DIRECTED THE TORTURE OF 11 DETAINEES AND THEIR
 SUBSEQUENT EXECUTION. THE KILLINGS WERE CARRIED OUT
 BY CUTTING OFF THE LIMBS AND HEADS OF THE STILL LIVING
 VICTIMS WITH A CHAIN SAW. THE INTERNAL PROCURADURIA
 REPORT MAINTAINS THAT MAJOR URENA ACTED AS PART OF AN
 ARMED "SELF DEFENSE" GROUP WHICH WAS HEADED BY TWO

LOCAL RANCHERS--DIEGO MONTOYA AND HENRY LOAIZA--WHO ARE ALSO NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS. IT GOES ON TO ASSERT CATEGORICALLY THAT ADDITIONAL ARMY "OFFICERS AND

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 11877 02 OF 05 271749Z

NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS" WERE INVOLVED IN THE TRUJILLO KILLINGS, ALTHOUGH THEY CAN NOT YET BE IDENTIFIED. THE RASH OF KILLINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES IN TRUJILLO BEGAN SHORTLY AFTER SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE ARMY DIED IN A GUERRILLA AMBUSH IN THE AREA. MANY OF THE TRUJILLO VICTIMS WERE APPARENTLY SUSPECTED OF SUPPORTING LEFT-WING GUERRILLA GROUPS OPERATING IN THE AREA.

MORE INVESTIGATIONS UNDERWAY

8. THE PROCURADURIA IS CURRENTLY CONDUCTING A NUMBER OF INVESTIGATIONS WHICH ARE LIKELY TO FURTHER EMBARRASS THE ARMED FORCES. WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THREE DIFFERENT SOURCES-

[REDACTED]

(WHICH, IN COOPERATION WITH THE PROCURADURIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE, INVESTIGATES THE MOST SENSITIVE CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS), OF AN APPARENT JUNE 7 INCIDENT OF EXTRA-JUDICIAL EXECUTIONS. THE MILITARY REPORTED TO THE PRESS THAT, ON THAT DATE, IT KILLED 9 GUERRILLAS IN COMBAT IN EL RAMAL, SANTANDER DEPARTMENT. THE INVESTIGATION BY INSTRUCCION CRIMINAL AND THE PROCURADURIA STRONGLY SUGGESTS, HOWEVER, THAT THE NINE WERE EXECUTED BY THE ARMY AND THEN DRESSED IN MILITARY FATIGUES. A MILITARY JUDGE WHO ARRIVED ON THE SCENE APPARENTLY REALIZED THAT THERE WERE NO BULLET HOLES IN THE MILITARY UNIFORMS TO MATCH THE WOUNDS IN THE VICTIMS' BODIES, AND ORDERED THE UNIFORMS BURNED. ACCORDING TO THE PRIVATE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP, ALL OF THE VICTIMS WERE MEMBERS OF THE SAME FAMILY AND ONE OF THEM, SAID BY THE ARMY TO HAVE BEEN A GUERRILLA, WAS 87 YEARS OLD.

[REDACTED]

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 11877 02 OF 05 271749Z

UNCLASSIFIED

9. INDIVIDUAL ARMY OFFICERS MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE JULY 4 DISAPPEARANCE OF ALIRIO DE JESUS PEDRAZA, A PROMINENT LEFT-WING HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER. HIS DISAPPEARANCE, WHICH WAS UNUSUAL BECAUSE

[REDACTED]

NNNN

[REDACTED]

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 11877 03 OF 05 271749Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-01	INR-05	SS-01	OIC-02	CIAE-00
	EB-01	H-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-01	HA-09
	L-03	LAB-04	CTME-00	TRSE-00	PM-01	PA-01	OMB-01
	STR-18	SIL-01	INM-01	INRE-00	CG-00	RP-10	USIE-00
	JUSE-00	DEAE-00	FBIE-00	SP-01	SR-01	PRS-01	OIG-01
	SCT-03	P-02	/090 W				

-----374320 271800Z /40 38

O 271753Z JUL 90
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7576
 INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY LIMA
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
 SECDEF WASHDC

[REDACTED] SECTION 03 OF 05 BOGOTA 11877

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PHUM, SNAR, KJUS, CO
 SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA -- WIDESPREAD
 IT OCCURRED IN BOGOTA, RATHER THAN IN A REMOTE RURAL
 AREA, HAS GENERATED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST AMONG
 INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS. WITHOUT GOING INTO
 DETAIL, [REDACTED] TOLD US THAT THERE
 IS SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE LINKING MEMBERS OF THE ARMY TO
 THIS DISAPPEARANCE, ALTHOUGH THE WATCHDOG INSTITUTION
 HAS NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO IDENTIFY SPECIFIC OFFICERS OR
 ENLISTED MEN. [REDACTED] BELIEVES PEDRAZA IS ALMOST
 CERTAINLY DEAD.

B1

B1

10. THE PROCURADURIA IS ALSO INVESTIGATING THREE

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 11877 03 OF 05 271749Z

INCIDENTS THIS YEAR IN WHICH THE ARMED FORCES
 REPORTEDLY BOMBED OR BOMBARDED TOWNS IN THE
 MUNICIPALITIES OF YONDO IN ANTIOQUIA DEPARTMENT,
 MESETAS IN META DEPARTMENT, AND BECERRIL, IN THE
 PERIJA MOUNTAINS OF CESAR DEPARTMENT. THE AVAILABLE
 EVIDENCE STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT SOME OR ALL OF THESE

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

BOMBARDMENTS OR BOMBINGS TOOK PLACE, OFTEN FROM HELICOPTERS OR AERIAL GUNSHIPS, BUT THE INDEPENDENT AGENCY IS TRYING TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE TARGETING OF CIVILIANS WAS DELIBERATE OR AN UNINTENDED RESULT OF COMBAT WITH THE GUERRILLAS. [REDACTED] SAYS THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER U.S. GOVERNMENT PROVIDED AIRCRAFT WERE INVOLVED IN THESE INCIDENTS, NOTING THAT IT IS DIFFICULT FOR UNTRAINED GROUND OBSERVERS TO ACCURATELY IDENTIFY ATTACKING AIRCRAFT.

B1

MILITARY-PROCURADURIA FRICTION

11. THE PROCURADURIA'S AGGRESSIVE INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES HAS CHILLED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE INDEPENDENT CIVILIAN AGENCY. [REDACTED] IS CERTAIN THAT ABUSES COMMITTED BY THE MILITARY ARE LARGELY THE RESULT OF INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS ACTING ON THEIR OWN--THERE IS NO HIGH LEVEL ARMY CONSPIRACY TO VIOLATE HUMAN RIGHTS. SENIOR MILITARY MEN, [REDACTED]

B1

[REDACTED] HAVE PROMISED COOPERATION WITH [REDACTED] OFFICE AND ISSUED WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS TO THE FIELD ORDERING THAT HUMAN RIGHTS BE RESPECTED. MOREOVER, THEY HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT THEY ARE NOW TAKING SPECIAL CARE TO AVOID INNOCENT CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN AERIAL STRAFINGS AND BOMBINGS.

B1

B1

B1

B1

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 11877 03 OF 05 271749Z

NEVERTHELESS, THE PROCURADURIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS MEET CONSIDERABLE RESISTANCE FROM MIDDLE AND LOWER RANKING OFFICERS. [REDACTED] COMPLAINS THAT THESE OFFICERS SEE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST SPECIFIC MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY AS AN ATTACK ON THE INSTITUTION AS A WHOLE. MOST OFFICERS MOVE INSTINCTIVELY TO DEFEND THEIR COLLEAGUES, REGARDLESS OF THE EVIDENCE AGAINST THEM.

B1

12. THE MOST SERIOUS CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND THE PROCURADURIA OCCURRED DURING THE INVESTIGATION OF THE VALDIVIA KILLINGS (REF C). ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] A TEAM OF INVESTIGATORS, WHICH INCLUDED MEMBERS OF THE PROCURADURIA, WAS REPEATEDLY WARNED BY THE LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDER NOT TO VENTURE INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE, SUPPOSEDLY BECAUSE OF THE POOR LOCAL

B1

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY SITUATION. THE TEAM IGNORED THE WARNINGS, BUT WAS FORCED TO RETREAT WHEN SEVERAL MILITARY HELICOPTERS OPENED FIRE IN THEIR IMMEDIATE VICINITY IN WHAT THE TEAM MEMBERS INTERPRETED AS A BLATANT INTIMIDATION ATTEMPT. IN ANOTHER APPARENT ATTEMPT TO FRIGHTEN OFF THE PROCURADURIA, AN ARMY OFFICER MADE A SHOW OF PHOTOGRAPHING MEMBERS OF THE INVESTIGATING TEAM. PROCURADOR GENERAL ALFONSO GOMEZ MENDEZ PROTESTED THESE INCIDENTS TO SENIOR MILITARY OFFICIALS.

13. A LESS SINISTER BUT MORE DIRECT CHALLENGE TO THE PROCURADURIA OCCURRED DURING A MID-JULY PUBLIC FORUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

[REDACTED] A RETIRED ARMY COLONEL APPARENTLY STILL EMPLOYED BY THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE UNEXPECTEDLY ROSE FROM THE AUDIENCE TO VIOLENTLY DENOUNCE [REDACTED] AND THE PROCURADURIA. [REDACTED] RESPONDED SHARPLY, NOTING THAT HIS OFFICE HAS BROUGHT CHARGES AGAINST SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS, NOT AGAINST THE ARMY AS AN

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

B1

B1

B1

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 11877 03 OF 05 271749Z

INSTITUTION.

14. [REDACTED] TOLD US THAT HE IS CONCERNED THAT INDIVIDUALS UPSET WITH HIS HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES MAY

B1

UNCLASSIFIED

[REDACTED]

NNNN

[REDACTED]

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 11877 04 OF 05 271750Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-01	INR-05	SS-01	OIC-02	CIAE-00
	EB-01	H-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-01	HA-09
	L-03	LAB-04	CTME-00	TRSE-00	PM-01	PA-01	OMB-01
	STR-18	SIL-01	INM-01	INRE-00	CG-00	RP-10	USIE-00
	JUSE-00	DEAE-00	FBIE-00	SP-01	SR-01	PRS-01	OIG-01
	SCT-03	P-02	/090 W				

-----374331 271801Z /40

O 271753Z JUL 90
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7577
 INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY LIMA
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
 SECDEF WASHDC

[REDACTED]

SECTION 04 OF 05 BOGOTA 11877

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PHUM, SNAR, KJUS, CO

UNCLASSIFIED

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA -- WIDESPREAD
TRY TO KILL HIM. HE HAS RECEIVED THREATS AND HIS
FRIENDS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT HE CHANGE JOBS. A
KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCE RECENTLY TOLD US THAT PABLO
GONZALEZ, HEAD OF THE PROCURADURIA'S OFFICE OF SPECIAL
INVESTIGATIONS, AND PROCURADOR GENERAL GOMEZ HAVE BEEN
HEAVILY THREATENED IN RECENT MONTHS.

THE PROCURADURIA AND THE POLICE

15. THE PROCURADURIA HAS MUCH BETTER RELATIONS WITH
THE NATIONAL POLICE AND WITH DAS, A QUASI-POLICE
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 11877 04 OF 05 271750Z

AGENCY, THAN IT DOES WITH THE ARMED FORCES. ALTHOUGH
ITS MEMBERS ARE HARDLY IMMUNE FROM COMMITTING SERIOUS
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, [REDACTED] THAT THE POLICE
TEND TO BE LESS INVOLVED IN SUCH VIOLATIONS THAN THE
ARMY. DAS IS DESCRIBED AS HAVING THE BEST HUMAN
RIGHTS RECORD OF ANY OF THE SECURITY FORCES, ALTHOUGH
ITS EMPLOYEES ARE ALSO SOMETIMES INVOLVED IN SPECIFIC
INSTANCES OF ABUSES. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] HOWEVER,
SENIOR COMMANDERS OF THE POLICE AND DAS UNDERSTAND THE
NEED TO DISCIPLINE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS--THEY DO NOT
SEE ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSES BY MEMBERS OF THEIR
INSTITUTION AS AN ATTACK ON THE INSTITUTIONS THEMSELVES.

B1

B1

16. THE POLICE AND DAS HAVE ALWAYS WORKED CLOSELY
WITH CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND HAVE LONG BEEN
SUBJECT TO INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT BY THE PROCURADURIA.
THEY ARE THEREFORE MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE WITH
CIVILIANS INVESTIGATING THE CONDUCT OF THEIR EMPLOYEES
THAN ARE THE ARMED FORCES. UNTIL SEVERAL YEARS AGO
THE PROCURADOR DELEGATE FOR THE ARMED FORCES, WHO
HEADS WHAT HAD BEEN THE ONLY OFFICE IN THE
PROCURADURIA WITH JURISDICTION TO INVESTIGATE THE
MILITARY, WAS ALWAYS AN ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY OFFICER.
AS A RESULT, THE MILITARY WAS LARGELY IMMUNE TO
EFFECTIVE CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT.

17. THE NATIONAL POLICE, [REDACTED] HAVE
AN APPARENTLY EFFECTIVE INTERNAL MECHANISM FOR
DISCIPLINING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS. UNDER THIS
MECHANISM MEMBERS OF THE POLICE WHO FACE INTERNAL
ACCUSATIONS OF IMPROPER CONDUCT ARE SUPPOSED TO BE
TEMPORARILY REMOVED FROM THEIR JOBS UNTIL THE

B1

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

ALLEGATIONS HAVE BEEN RESOLVED. THE MILITARY ALSO

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 11877 04 OF 05 271750Z

SAYS IT HAS AN INTERNAL MECHANISM FOR PUNISHING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSERS, BUT [REDACTED] REQUESTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS HAVE GONE UNANSWERED.

OUTLOOK

18. IRONICALLY, THE INCREASING NUMBER OF RECENT REPORTS OF MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN GRAVE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IS AT LEAST A PARTIAL REFLECTION OF SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS WHICH HAS BEEN MADE ON THE LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS FRONT. FOR YEARS VIRTUALLY ALL HUMAN RIGHTS CASES REMAINED UNRESOLVED, AND MANY ABUSES NEVER CAME TO PUBLIC ATTENTION. NOW, THANKS TO RECENT STEPS TAKEN TO STRENGTHEN THE PROCURADURIA (SEE REF E), AND THE APPOINTMENT OF TWO AGGRESSIVE YOUNG LAWYERS TO HEAD THE INSTITUTION'S OFFICES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED. MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY FORCES WHO PARTICIPATE IN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS MAY NOW FACE PUBLIC HUMILIATION, DESTRUCTION OF THEIR CAREERS, AND, IN SOME CASES, END UP IN JAIL. OVER THE COMING MONTHS WE EXPECT THE NUMBER OF ACCUSATIONS OF OFFICIAL HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES TO GROW AS WITNESSES WHO PREVIOUSLY WOULD HAVE REMAINED SILENT COME TO THE REALIZATION THAT THEIR TESTIMONY MAY NOW HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.

19. MANY OF THE ABUSES COMMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMY HAVE COME IN THE COURSE OF OPERATIONS BY ARMED PARA-MILITARY GROUPS IN WHICH ARMY OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN HAVE PARTICIPATED. LINKS BETWEEN RURAL BASED MILITARY UNITS AND LOCAL PARA-MILITARY GROUPS ARE CLEARLY MUCH LESS NOW THAN THEY WERE IN THE RECENT PAST, HOWEVER. OVER THE PAST YEAR THE ARMY ITSELF HAS [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 11877 04 OF 05 271750Z

MOVED TO REMOVE FROM ITS RANKS OFFICERS WITH THE MOST

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

NOTORIOUS CONNECTIONS WITH THE PARA-MILITARIES. IT
HAS BEEN EXTREMELY RELUCTANT, HOWEVER, TO DISCIPLINE
OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN FOR SPECIFIC RIGHTS

[REDACTED]

NNNN

[REDACTED]

PAGE 01
ACTION ARA-01

BOGOTA 11877 05 OF 05 271750Z

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

INFO LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-01	INR-05	SS-01	OIC-02	CIAE-00
EB-01	H-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-01	HA-09
L-03	LAB-04	CTME-00	TRSE-00	PM-01	PA-01	OMB-01
STR-18	SIL-01	INM-01	INRE-00	CG-00	RP-10	USIE-00
JUSE-00	DEAE-00	FBIE-00	SP-01	SR-01	PRS-01	OIG-01
SCT-03	P-02	/090 W				

-----374341 271801Z /40

O 271753Z JUL 90
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7578
 INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY LIMA
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
 SECDEF WASHDC

SECTION 05 OF 05 BOGOTA 11877

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PHUM, SNAR, KJUS, CO
 SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA -- WIDESPREAD VIOLATIONS. MOREOVER, MANY ARMY OFFICERS CONTINUE TO DISCOUNT VIRTUALLY ALL ALLEGATIONS OF MILITARY ABUSES AS PART OF A LEFTIST INSPIRED PLOT TO DISCREDIT THE MILITARY AS AN INSTITUTION.

20. A KEY WEAKNESS OF THE PROCURADURIA IS THAT ITS EFFECTIVENESS IS DEPENDENT ON THE COMMITMENT AND CAPABILITIES OF THE PROCURADOR GENERAL, WHO HAS COMPLETE LIBERTY TO HIRE AND FIRE SUBORDINATE EMPLOYEES. INCUMBENT PROCURADOR ALFONSO GOMEZ MENDEZ, A STAUNCH PROPONENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS HAS SAID HE WILL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 11877 05 OF 05 271750Z

NOT ACCEPT REELECTION WHEN HIS TERM EXPIRES THIS AUGUST (HE WILL LIKELY REMAIN IN OFFICE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS UNTIL HIS YET TO BE CHOSEN REPLACEMENT TAKES OVER, HOWEVER). IT IS BY NO MEANS CLEAR IF THE NEXT PROCURADOR GENERAL WILL SHARE GOMEZ'S INTEGRITY, COURAGE, AND COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS.

21. REGARDLESS OF THE CAPABILITIES OF THE NEXT

UNCLASSIFIED

PROCURADOR GENERAL, THE PROCURADURIA CAN NOT TAKE ON THE ARMY BY ITSELF--IT WILL NEED STRONG SUPPORT FROM THE INCOMING GAVIRIA ADMINISTRATION. [REDACTED] RECENTLY WITH THE PRESIDENT-ELECT AND CAME AWAY CONCERNED THAT THE NEW COMMANDER IN CHIEF IS EAGER TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION WITH THE MILITARY. WE ARE NOT CERTAIN [REDACTED] CONCERNS ARE WELL FOUNDED--GAVIRIA'S ADVISORS HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY VIEW HUMAN RIGHTS AS A KEY ISSUE. MOREOVER, AS MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT IN THE BARCO ADMINISTRATION GAVIRIA LAUNCHED A COURAGEOUS PUBLIC ATTACK AGAINST THE PARA-MILITARY GROUPS, WHICH WERE THEN OPERATING IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH MANY LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDERS.

B1

B1

THE EMBASSY'S ROLE

22. WE WILL CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE TO HIGH RANKING OFFICERS IN THE ARMED FORCES AND NATIONAL POLICE THE IMPORTANCE WE PLACE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE LINK BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONTINUING USG ASSISTANCE TO THE MILITARY AND POLICE. WE WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE OUR CONCERN TO TOP ADVISORS OF PRESIDENT ELECT GAVIRIA. WE BELIEVE THAT U.S. MILITARY OFFICERS ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MESSENGERS TO CONVEY TO THE OFFICER CORPS OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMY THE TRUE GRAVITY

[REDACTED]

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 11877 05 OF 05 271750Z

OF THIS ISSUE. IN TWO RECENT MEETINGS WITH TOP COLOMBIAN OFFICERS THE DEFENSE ATTACHE HAS EXPRESSED USG CONCERN ABOUT ALLEGATIONS OF MILITARY ABUSES IN GENERAL AND SPECIFICALLY ABOUT ALLEGATIONS THAT MILITARY AIRCRAFT, SOME OF WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY THE USG, HAVE ATTACKED CIVILIAN TOWNS. THE COLOMBIAN OFFICERS CLAIMED TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROMISED TO GET BACK TO US WITH MORE INFORMATION ON THESE REPORTED INCIDENTS.

MCNAMARA

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED



NNNN

UNCLASSIFIED