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MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA NACIONAL

DESPACHO DEL MINISTRO

Bogota, D.C., 27 NOV 2001

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The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld,

As never before the Western Hemisphere faces a threat posed by transnational crime to our regional security environment and political stability. In these critical times cooperation and coordination between our countries become the most valuable tool to deter and neutralize these security concerns.

As a symbol of this cooperative relationship, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHISC), through its different programs and courses, promotes democratic values and enhances the culture of respect of human rights and mutual cooperation among the armed forces of the Hemisphere. It also gives military, police and civilian personnel, the opportunity to meet and work closely with their counterparts of other North, Central and South American countries, in the discussion and development of new models and perspectives of hemispheric security and the changing role of the armed forces and defense ministries in the new century.

The presence of Colombian officials in the WHISC, has strengthen our bilateral civil and military relationships and have facilitated the coordination and inter-operability between the Armed Forces of our countries.

For all these reasons, I sincerely hope that the Institute can continue with its important work with the support of your Government and your people.

Best regards,


GUSTAVO BELL LEMUS
Minister of National Defense

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