

REPUBLICA DE COLOMBIA



MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA NACIONAL
DESPACHO

200 FEB 27 11 58

197

Bogotá, D.C., February 17, 2003

1728

The Honorable
DONALD RUMSFELD
Secretary of Defense
Washington, D.C.

SECDEF CABLES DISTRIBUTION	
SECDEF	/
SPLASST	/
EXECSEC	/
DEPSECDEF	/
CAD	/
CCD	/
USDP	/
CABLECH	
FILE	

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld

It was a pleasure to meet with you in Washington last week, as well as to have had the opportunity to discuss the issues that affect our nations' security.

As Colombia's Minister of Defense, I feel privileged to have been your counterpart in this highly valuable exchange of views and feel confident it will help to bring our two countries closer together. Thank you for your valuable time and the attention you devoted to our meeting.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the U.S.-Colombia Bilateral Working Group team for your warm reception and attentive service. I know how hard organizing such a complex event might be and your staff was able to do an exceptional job.

There is much that Colombia is doing in order to guarantee the rule of law and eliminate the terrorist organizations that operate in our country. As I mentioned during our meeting, the Government of Colombia has drafted the National Defense and Democratic Security Policy, which is enclosed.

As presented in our meeting The Colombian National Defense Policy has three main objectives within the framework of defending the rights and liberties of all people in Colombia:

- To capture the main leaders of the FARC, ELN and the AUC and promote demobilization of recruits.
- To completely eradicate illegal cultivation of coca, as well as to end the crime and threat to democracy that drug trafficking produces, as this is the means by which the terrorists finance as much as 60% of their operations.
- To end kidnapping and extortion in Colombia both of which are gross violations of individual rights and liberty and which help fund terrorism.

Although I know these objectives are ambitious, I believe that they are attainable. The Colombian military and police institutions have started to take the necessary measures to better face the challenges presented by the reality of an offensive strategy to combat the multi-dimensional threat posed by these narcoterrorists. These measures include

Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
Av. Eldorado Cra. 52 CAN
Teléfonos: 2000170-2000163
Fax 2000163
Bogotá D.C.

U02535 /03

FEB. 26 2003 09:01PM P01

PHONE NO. : 2213655

FROM : MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA

REPUBLICA DE COLOMBIA



1728

MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA NACIONAL
DESPACHO

increasing the size and mobility of our forces, the, centralization of military purchases within the Ministry of Defense, creating concrete metrics of performance to be used to gauge success.

In addition we are working hard to enhance our intelligence and counterintelligence capabilities by improving the technical means for gathering intelligence as well as its strategic use.

The support of the United States has been crucial in the professionalization and improvement of the Colombian Public Forces, as well as our Judicial system.

It is my sincere belief that both our countries will continue to benefit from our close bilateral relations, specially now that both our nations face many of the same preoccupations regarding terrorism, regional stability and transnational crime.

As I had the opportunity to inform you, we have embarked upon an aggressive campaign to formalize training and intelligence cooperation not only with our neighboring countries, but also with several member countries of the European Union and Israel. Still, we will need your continued cooperation, particularly in the areas of counter-terrorism, intelligence, training, and counter-narcotics.

Furthermore, the Government of Colombia is completely committed to the protection of human rights not only as means to protect our civilian population from the internal conflict, but also as means to enhance and improve our people's sense of well being which is a fundamental promise of democracy.

I don't want to miss this opportunity to invite you and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to visit our country, where we can deepen and enhance our bilateral relationship.

With my very best wishes to you and your staff, and with my warmest personal regards,

MARTA LUCÍA RAMÍREZ DE RINCÓN
 Minister of National Defense

Ministerio de Defensa Nacional
 Av. El Dorado Cra. 52 CAN
 Teléfono: 2860170-2860163
 Fax: 2860163
 Bogotá D.C.

Feb. 26 2003 08:02PM P02

PHONE NO. : 2213653

FROM : MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA: