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FOR: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

FROM: Marshall Billingslea, PDASD(SO/LIC) *MJB/ 7/10/03*

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SUBJECT: *(S)* Recent Successes against the Colombian FARC

- General Hill's effort in Colombia is beginning to yield dividends. The enhanced train-and-equip effort has now been underway for roughly a year.
- Colombia now has several specialized, U.S. SOF-trained commando units that are conducting counter-terrorist operations.
- These units conduct the kind of ^{(b)(1),1.4(c)} [redacted] ^{(b)(1),1.4(c)} [redacted] and small unit direct action necessary to pursue HVTs.
- Since January 1, 2003, President Uribe's team, and the special commando units, have killed 543 FARC, captured 1,063, and induced the defection/desertion of 300 through an amnesty program.
- In contrast, during the last two years of the Pastrana government, only 780 FARC were killed, with few captured and few defections. The FARC was gaining ground.
- Perhaps more importantly, the HVT effort is taking its toll on FARC senior leadership. 15 mid- and high-level FARC leaders have been killed, and 44 captured.
- Both we and the Colombians can do more. Intensification of the ^{(b)(1),1.4(a)} [redacted] ^{(b)(1),1.4(a)} [redacted] with U.S. help, is key to inducing defections (such as the FARC Finance Chief) and may prove what breaks the back of the FARC.
- SOUTHCOM also continues to refine the Colombian process for taking ^{(b)(1),1.4(c)} [redacted] and getting it to the field in time to act.
- Finally, I note that we still have not had a breakthrough on the DoD-contractors who are being held hostage. There is, however, a significant, ongoing effort underway to find and free our people.

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