

cc. [REDACTED]  
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ORIGIN ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-10	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AMAD-01	ACQ-01	INL-01
	OASY-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	L-01	ADS-00	M-00	NSAE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	CIO-00	SP-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-09	G-00	/028R		

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SOURCE: KODAKA.110154  
 DRAFTED BY: ARA/AND:DMALCZEWSKI:DM1 -- 04/07/97 7-4173 SEARAAND 2  
 APPROVED BY: ARA:PFROMERO  
 DRL:ARABBY ARA/AND:DPASSAGE  
 DESIRED DISTRIBUTION:  
 ARA, PM, INL

-----AEE6A8 112200Z /38

O R 112156Z APR 97  
 FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
 TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE  
 INFO NSC WASHDC 9148  
 SECDEF WASHDC 4773  
 CIA WASHDC 0222

[REDACTED] STATE 068233

E.O. 12958: DECL: 4/7/02  
 TAGS: PGOV, MARR, PREL, CO  
 SUBJECT: BEDOYA CALL FOR MILITIA

REF: BOGOTA 3072

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1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY ARA PDAS PETER F. ROMERO. REASON SECTION 1.5 (D).
2. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. SEE PARA. 6.
3. (C) COMMANDER OF MILITARY FORCES (AND ACTING MINISTER OF DEFENSE) BEDOYA'S APRIL 1 CALL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF

n/a  
[REDACTED] AL

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L. MILLS  
 DATE/CASE ID: 22 MAY 2001 200004409

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n/a

NATIONAL MILITIAS IS A POSSIBLE INDICATION OF BEDOYA'S FRUSTRATION WITH THE INCREASED INSTABILITY IN COLOMBIA, OCCASIONED BY GROWING GUERRILLA, PARAMILITARY, NARCO AND COMMON CRIMINAL VIOLENCE. HOWEVER, ESTABLISHING YET ANOTHER SET OF ARMED COMBATANTS WOULD, IF EXPERIENCE IS ANY GUIDE, BRING A HOST OF MORE FLAGRANT HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES. THESE MILITIAS WOULD LIKELY HAVE EVEN LESS TRAINING THAN MILITARY CONSCRIPTS, AND THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE EVEN LESS CONTROL AND AUTHORITY OVER THEM. DEPARTMENT SINCERELY HOPES THAT THE BEDOYA PROPOSAL DOES NOT PROSPER.

4. (U) OTHER COUNTRIES, NOTABLY EL SALVADOR AND GUATEMALA, HAVE EXPERIMENTED WITH MILITIAS, WITH CLEAR AND UNEQUIVOCALLY NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON FUNDAMENTAL RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. COLOMBIA HAS A VERY RECENT EXAMPLE IN ITS CONVIVIR PROGRAM. AS STATED IN OUR 1996 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT, IN 1994 THE GOC INITIATED A PROGRAM TO ORGANIZE AND REGISTER LEGAL CIVILIAN DEFENSE COOPERATIVES TO PROVIDE COUNTERINSURGENCY INTELLIGENCE TO LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDERS. ALTHOUGH INTENDED TO BE UNARMED, A NUMBER OF CONVIVIRS BY MID-1996 HAD GOC AUTHORIZATION TO CARRY ARMS. BY YEAR'S END, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAD RECEIVED

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THE FIRST CITIZEN COMPLAINTS THAT SOME OF THESE GROUPS HAD EXCEEDED THEIR AUTHORITY AND WERE ACTING AS VIGILANTES.

5. (U) COLOMBIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMAN'S 1996 REPORT TO CONGRESS REITERATED HIS OPPOSITION TO THE CONVIVIR PROGRAM. CITING THE GOVERNMENT'S INABILITY TO CONTROL SUCH GROUPS IN PAST ADMINISTRATIONS, THE OMBUDSMAN EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE CONVIVIR COOPERATIVES WOULD LACK ACCOUNTABILITY. OTHER GOVERNMENT HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORS EXPRESSED SIMILAR CONCERNS.

6. (C) WHILE BEDOYA'S CALL SPRUNG FROM FRUSTRATION ABOUT A DETERIORATING SECURITY SITUATION THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, ARMED MILITARY GROUPS ARE NOT THE ANSWER. ACTION REQUEST: AMBASSADOR SHOULD WHEN APPROPRIATE RELAY TO BEDOYA OUR SKEPTICISM OF THIS CONCEPT.  
ALBRIGHT

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