



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Press Statement

Richard Boucher, Spokesman

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Redesignation of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia as a Foreign Terrorist Organization

Today, September 10, 2003, the State Department is announcing the redesignation of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, commonly known as the AUC, as a foreign terrorist organization under U.S. law. That organization was first designated two years ago.

The group, also referred to as autodefensas or paramilitaries, has continued its terrorist activities during the past two years. It has committed numerous killings and abductions in order to terrorize and intimidate Colombian citizens and government officials. The group's terrorism has continued after its December, 2002 declaration of a cease-fire. We support the efforts of the Government of Colombia to combat terrorism, and hope that the peace negotiations now underway result in the complete termination of terrorist activity by the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia.

This redesignation of this group, published today in the Federal Register, keeps the current number of foreign terrorist organizations at 36. Although the Department reviews designated groups every two years, the Secretary of State is authorized to make new designations at any time, or to revoke a designation at any time if the circumstances have changed in such a manner as to warrant revocation, or if the national security of the United States warrants a revocation, under the procedures set forth in the relevant statute.

The effect of the redesignation is that it remains illegal for U.S. persons or persons subject to the jurisdiction of the United States knowingly to provide material support or resources to the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia; requires U.S. financial institutions to continue to take "blocking action" against the group's funds, and to report those funds to the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control; and maintains the inadmissibility to the United States of representatives and certain members of the group.

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