



## U.S. Policy and Colombia

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Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the invitation to discuss Plan Colombia and the State Department's continued efforts during this critical time in Colombia's history. Plan Colombia, complemented by our regional efforts in the Andes, represents a significant investment by the American people and Congress to fight the flow of drugs responsible for ending thousands of young lives each year in America, to fight powerful and entrenched terrorists in this Hemisphere, and to protect democratic rule across the Andean region.

The success in Colombia over the last few years would not have been possible without the strong leadership of President Uribe who took office in August 2002. His administration has taken an aggressive stand against narcoterrorism, which enables our Colombia programs to work. It is my pleasure to be able to testify before you today, with my colleagues [Roger Noriega](#), Karen Tandy, and Director Walters; in a sound bite, you have given us the power to make a difference, and this investment in our national security is paying off.

Generally, Congress has a right to look not only for sound policy, and well-managed implementation, but also for a measurable return on the American people's investment. While measuring the shift of tectonic plates can be difficult, I believe we are seeing real -- and one may hope lasting -- change. In short, your investment is paying off in numerous ways: First, drug cultivation in Colombia is down for the second straight year. Second, despite the recent tragic killings in Norte de Santander, violent crime and terrorist acts are down and falling. Third, respect for the rule of law is expanding and measurably putting down tap roots in new places. Fourth, we are providing meaningful, often innovative, alternatives to poverty-level farmers.

The Andean Counterdrug Initiative (ACI), as you all know better than I, is a multi-front effort that does not begin and end with counternarcotics. It is our robust effort -- yours as much as ours -- at creating a sustainable, regional, deep-seated and democratically faithful alternative to the destruction and terror -- on personal, national, and hemispheric levels -- that comes from drug trafficking and drug-funded terror. In short, what we do in places like Colombia has a direct effect here, in the United States. Our policy and our commitment aim to wipe out narcoterrorists, and help Colombia seize their assets, strengthen Colombia's institutions and increase legitimate economic opportunities for those who wish to live free from drugs and terror. Central to the larger Andean Counterdrug Initiative is restoring, preserving and sustaining the rule of law, in cities, towns, and the countryside.

Congress empowered the State Department, and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) in particular, with this task. We work closely with the Colombian Government and agencies across the U.S. Government (USG) in this effort. Let me be clear -- when I say "we" today, I am not only referring to the various actors in our government, but also in the Colombian Government. Because, in our solid commitment, we make progress possible. As today's hearing illustrates, coordination is a priority for all of us. Strong Congressional support will also be critical for reaching the endgame. And what is the endgame? A hemisphere in which drug-funded terrorism, and corruption of struggling democracies by drug traffickers, drug violence and drug abuse from the streets of Bogotá to the streets of Baltimore, are reduced dramatically. A hemisphere in which drugs and the costs they impose are not gone -- but are reduced to such a degree that their influence is *de minimis*, or nearly so.

### Management of the Andean Counterdrug Initiative

As Assistant Secretary of INL, I have put a premium on management of these programs. INL is working with Congress, OMB, GAO, the State Department IG's office, and others in the Executive Branch to ensure that accountability is front-and-center; that American taxpayer dollars are well and consistently husbanded. For example, INL is working closely with the State Department's Bureau of Resource Management, and with OMB, to develop accurate outcome measures during the OMB-led Program Assessment Rating Tool process. We aim to make our programs models of performance-based management.

As custodian of these dollars, I have also been methodically pursuing a top-to-bottom program review of diverse INL programming. Within the past nine months, our initiatives have included putting sizable penalties in government contracts, moving from cost-plus to performance contracts, tying contract bonus justifications to performance, and adding new performance measures. We have also worked toward a strategic plan for and proper capitalization of the INL Air Wing. Added oversight is intended to ensure that tax dollars directed to Colombia, a total of \$463 million in Fiscal Year 2004, and other INL accounts are focused, well-administered, and effective. They must be making gains in yardage -- or hectarage -- a reality, palpably helping to stop drug production and drug-funded terrorism before those twin menaces arrive on U.S. soil, before they can do violence in our schools, communities, states or nation.

To implement policy and programs in support of the Colombian Government, INL works closely with the U.S. embassy in Bogotá. The Ambassador and his Country Team, with senior representatives from all key USG agencies involved in counternarcotics, have a standing working group chaired by the Ambassador. It meets at least weekly. It acts as a forum for exchanging strategic and tactical intelligence, as well as coordinating programs with the Colombian Government. When needed, this group also ensures that there is no conflict between counternarcotics and counterterrorism missions. Finally, the Ambassador also chairs regular implementation meetings.

Each section of the Country Team, whether it is the Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) of INL, the U.S. Military Group of DOD, USAID, DOJ or DEA, has substantial USG direct hire and contract personnel assigned in-country to advise and train counterpart Colombian personnel, as well as to oversee the use and maintenance of USG-provided equipment (helicopters, communications, vehicles, buildings, etc.). The Country Team is tasked with providing information to assist the interagency community in Washington. This information relates to funding, training, equipment requirements, and political and economic events bearing on conduct of USG-support for Colombian counternarcotics efforts. These efforts now result in a mission program and bureau performance plan.

INL also works closely with the Defense Department on training programs for the Colombian Counterdrug Brigade and helicopter pilot training. We work with the Department of Justice on Administration of Justice programs, with DEA on law enforcement intelligence and interdiction, and USAID in areas such as strengthening democratic governance and alternative development. By way of example, in addition to funding, coordination and oversight, within the last year, the Department of State and USAID established a Joint Policy Council, which has, among others, working groups on security and stability assistance. The group also addresses regional issues in the Western Hemisphere and seeks regularly to assess and increase coordination on Colombia

programs and the Andean Counterdrug Initiative. Complementing this, INL works with the Department of Homeland Security, intelligence community, ONDCP, and other USG entities on these programs. I believe that these relationships are vital to -- and largely responsible for -- the marked progress that is being recorded by the Andean Counterdrug effort, especially in Colombia.

### **Counternarcotics Achievements in Colombia**

The bird's eye view on the Andean Counterdrug Initiative, and Colombia in particular, is encouraging. The commitment of Congress and the effective implementation of our programs are paying off. Drug production is down in Colombia; traffickers are being arrested and extradited and their proceeds are being taken; drug seizures are up; legitimate jobs are being created; Colombian institutions are stronger; and the rule of law expanded.

### **Eradication**

In 2003, INL and the Colombians, working closely together, sprayed 127,000 hectares of the coca crop at 91.5 percent effectiveness, for a net of 116,000 hectares of coca eradicated. At the same time, alternative development programs in Colombia resulted in the manual eradication of an additional 8,441 hectares. Similarly, we sprayed 2,821 hectares of opium poppy while 1,009 hectares were manually eradicated. In 2002, these efforts reduced coca cultivation by 15 percent, and, in 2003, by 21 percent -- for a double-digit decline for the second straight year -- a first time accomplishment. The 113,850 hectares under cultivation this year represents a 33 percent reduction from the peak-growing year in 2001 when 169,800 hectares of coca were under illicit cultivation. Riding on the success of Colombia reductions, Andean production of coca dropped for the second straight year -- this time by 16 percent.

The Colombian Government, with USG support, is also making similar progress on opium poppy. In 2003, the Colombian Government reduced opium poppy cultivation by more than 10 percent, building on the success in 2002, which had resulted in a 25 percent reduction in cultivation. These efforts have reduced Colombia's opium poppy by 33 percent, or from 6,540 hectares in 2001 -- to 4,900 in 2002 -- to 4,400 in 2003. With Colombian heroin victimizing children from Florida to Illinois, New York and Maine to points West, we must make its eradication a priority.

This year our spray goal for coca and opium poppy is ambitious: 130,000 hectares of coca and all opium poppy growing in 2004. To date, we are ahead of schedule on both of these eradication milestones. As of June 16, we have sprayed over 61,000 hectares of coca and 1,600 hectares of poppy. Because opium poppy is an annual flower, all of last year's remaining 4,400 hectares of poppy died last year and have already been replaced by new crops. We have worked out this spray program in full coordination with the Colombian police and armed forces.

Our aerial eradication fleet presently consists of seven OV-10's, five AT-802's, and four T-65's. Despite recent setbacks, additional aircraft will soon be arriving: one OV-10 in June, two AT-802s in September, and two OV-10s in November. Foremost among my concerns is security for our air fleet and pilots - who put their lives on the line every time they undertake a spray mission.

In 2003, INL aircraft took more than 380 hits, and we lost 4 planes. To date this year, we have lost one aircraft in Colombia, but have only taken 79 hits as compared to 142 hits for the same period in 2003. These ground-fire hits are now at the lowest levels in nearly two years. This reduction is a reflection of our improved planning, changing tactics, increased intelligence coordination, and protective measures that make sure each spray mission is as safe as humanly possible.

In fact, coordination and cooperation between Colombian law enforcement and military elements have also significantly improved in response to events in 2003. That said, as we are progressively successful on the eradication front, new threats may emerge. Currently, the Operational Readiness rate of U.S.-supported Colombian security forces' aircraft is higher than most comparable U.S. Department of Defense OR rates. We need to keep these OR rates high on our aircraft so that we can continue at this pace.

We take environmental concerns very seriously and have sought to be very responsive to members of Congress and non-governmental organizations who have understandably expressed concern about the effects of aerial eradication on human health and the environment. As you all know, we provide environmental certifications to the Congress. To date, all toxicology tests show that the herbicide mixture used in spraying, in the manner it is being used, does not pose any unreasonable risks of adverse effects for humans or the environment. The accuracy with which the herbicide is applied makes negligible any damage to licit crops grown separately from narcotic crops.

We have increased efforts to track reported health complaints and to investigate any possible connection between spraying of illicit crops and damages alleged in such occasional complaints. We have initiated what amounts to a farmer's "hot line," a channel for any complaints and way to compensate farmers who can demonstrate any harm to health of legal crops caused by spraying. This well-publicized initiative has, as expected, spurred interest. As of May 31, 2004, the Embassy has received a cumulative total of nearly 4,700 complaints. Because the overwhelming majority of the complaints are caused by events unrelated to spraying, NAS Bogotá has only been required so far to compensate 10 persons. Simply put, when investigations verify that a farmer's allegations are true, we compensate them. In most cases, the allegations are false.

Last month, when Colombia's major newspaper *El Tiempo* published an article that quoted farmers alleging that their alternative development crops might have been sprayed, we set up a verification mission with people from the Colombian Government. This involved the Complaints Committee and others involved in checking out these claims. Bottom line -- the article was grossly inaccurate. Due to prompt response from our Embassy, the Colombian Government's manager of the alternative development program immediately sent NAS Bogotá a letter thanking them for the verification and assistance.

### **Alternative Development**

Consolidating gains and sustaining progress requires that those who grow coca or opium poppy be not only discouraged from involvement in the drug trade, but encourage to enter legitimate markets. Accordingly, done right, alternative development complements interdiction and eradication programs by increasing legal economic opportunities for former producers of coca and poppy. These USAID programs, initially concentrated in Putumayo and Caqueta, areas of Colombia's densest coca cultivation, have expanded into other departments with high incidence or threat of coca cultivation. This year, INL-coordinated efforts have already supported more than 7,000 hectares of legal crops, for a cumulative total of 45,000 hectares since 2000. These activities have benefited more than 34,000 families and resulted in the manual eradication of 22,000 hectares of illicit crops. These numbers are not insignificant; they corroborate a sea change or tipping point in the overall effort.

But alternative development is more than alternative crops. Such activities improve Colombia's rural infrastructure so that licit crops can be transported and marketed. The ripple effect means new sharing of technologies, processing, credit, and marketing assistance to legitimate producer associations. Last quarter alone, 188 infrastructure projects were completed for a cumulative total of 835 since 2001. This includes more than 90 schools, 40 water systems, 80 municipal buildings -- ranging from homes for the elderly to business centers and community centers. Projects completed also included 195 sewage drains and 35 roads. In addition, as one more indication of democracy and legitimate, accountable businesses are taking root, more than 20 citizen oversight committees were formed last quarter, for a cumulative total of 212.

USAID-sponsored alternative development projects in Putumayo and elsewhere are reinforcing the core functions and values that underpin Colombia's increasingly civil society. Program beneficiaries are uniting and forming associations to ensure progress achieved continues after USAID funding has ended. The Association "Building a Future," for instance, comprised of 14 small farmer organizations, representing 388 families from Mocoa, recently gained national attention when they were invited to speak at a forum in Bucaramanga sponsored by the influential Colombian non-governmental organization, *Planeta Paz*. The President of the Association, Libardo Martinez, when speaking with other local leaders, stressed the importance of community work and organization. According to Martinez, "...the Putumayo experience has become the reference point for progress for the other departments and for the rest of the world." Colombians are increasingly proud of the future they are creating, using rule of law and the legitimate economy as a pivot point.

### **Interdiction**

Interdiction efforts are central to the continuing and measurable success of Plan Colombia. We work closely with Colombia's armed forces and the police. As a result, Colombian forces reported seizures of 145 metric tons of cocaine and coca base in 2003. If sold on U.S. streets, we estimate an additional 1.75 billion dollars would have reached drug traffickers and the narcoterrorism they support. Since President Uribe took office in August 2002, Colombian forces have seized nearly 1,200 kilograms of heroin. INL has worked hand-in-glove with DEA, including support to DEA's Operation Firewall, a maritime interdiction effort off the North coast of Colombia. In addition, we support the DEA Heroin Task Force in Bogotá, made up of over 50 DEA and Colombian National Police officials, that targets heroin trafficking organizations, especially those with regional and international implications.

Another good news story seldom written or talked about is Colombia's effective Air Bridge Denial program (ABD). This program was re-started in August 2003 and is proving to be a highly effective deterrent. Since its resumption, the program has sorted thousands of flights, and forced down and/or destroyed over 26 suspected narcotics trafficking aircraft. As of March 1, 2004, the Colombian Air Force and its regional partners had seized roughly a metric ton of illicit drugs through the ABD program. Countless are the flights deterred, deflected or delayed. In 2003, the program resulted in 6.9 metric tons of drugs seized regionally. But the key here is not the number of planes destroyed. To be clear: Our goal is to effectively deter the use of Colombian airspace by traffickers, while protecting civil aviation. Nine months into the program, narcotics trafficking patterns are beginning to measurably change in response to the Colombian Air Force effort. Building on success, we need to establish at least one, and perhaps two, new forward operating locations to cover new areas used by traffickers.

### **Other Success in Colombia**

I would be remiss if I did not point out other equally important achievements. Recently, the Colombian law enforcement authorities, in cooperation with the United States, Canada, and Mexico completed investigations resulting in charging the leaders and members of two international criminal organizations from Colombia with violations of U.S. laws. The first, *Operation White Dollar*, targeted the financial service providers working in the black market peso exchange scheme, who facilitate international narcotics trafficking. The second, resulted in the charging of the leadership and major players in the Norte Valle cartel with racketeering offenses. The defendants are charged with engaging in a racketeering organization responsible for shipping tonnage quantities of cocaine to the U.S. with furthering the work of the organization by murdering witnesses, and threatening and corrupting members of the Colombian Congress and more. In both cases, the defendants are being sought for extradition to the U.S. These are two examples of the fact that we are hitting the traffickers and their accomplices hard.

As we are undermining the narcotics industry, we are methodically, unremittently and decisively extending democracy and strengthening security throughout Colombia's national territory. We are truly witnessing, I believe, the "tip" of a national and perhaps regional tipping point. We have helped fund the establishment of police in 158 municipalities, many of which had not seen any government or security presence in literally decades. As a result of the Colombian Government's "police reinsertion program," for the first time in the recorded history of Colombia, there is now a state presence in all 1,098 of Colombia's municipalities. This is an enormous step forward for the people of Colombia and their democratically elected government. As John Locke might say, where there is security and a stable social compact, people will abide the law and mix their labor with the land in a legitimate, lasting way. Due in very large measure to the foresight of this body -- the U.S. Congress -- in creating, funding and nurturing this pivotal first phase of what was once called Plan Colombia, and now the Andean Counterdrug Initiative, we are seeing real success.

Other developments underscore that we are making unprecedented -- but not yet institutionalized -- progress: In 2003, Colombia's murder rate dropped by 20 percent, to its lowest figure since 1986. Also in 2003, kidnapping declined by 39 percent from 2002. Finally, forced displacements of persons were cut by 49 percent -- a decline for the first time since 1999.

### **Training of Colombian Nationals**

High among our priorities is training Colombians so that they may bear increasing responsibility for programs. This is the natural evolution of programs -- a successful seeding and supporting a widening democracy and the rule of law. Accordingly, INL has developed a growing cadre of Colombian professionals to replace USG contractors in flying and maintaining aircraft assets. We have trained 99 pilots and 154 mechanics and crew chiefs since 1999, meeting our own initial training objectives. Due to the increasing size of INL's Air Wing since training targets were first created, we have updated our goals to reduce the number of personnel contracted by the USG involved in operation or maintenance of helicopters. We have recently submitted to Congress a plan entitled *Training of Colombian Nationals for Helicopter Operations and Maintenance Programs*, which will reduce the number of contractor pilots and maintenance personnel in half -- from 394 in 2004 to 195 by 2007. We further plan to reduce the contractor presence to 56 by 2009 and 25 by 2010, respectively. In short, as we fight to impose on ourselves real and meaningful management reforms, and move the ball upfield for the American people on both counternarcotics and counterterrorism, we are also cognizant of the need to make the goals more ambitious.

### **Democratic Institution Building and The Rule of Law**

To improve the rule of law, USG projects also have assisted the Government of Colombia in establishing 37 Justice Houses (*casas de justicia*), which increase access to justice for poor Colombians. Make no mistake: this is not a small victory or goal -- it is at the very heart, in our view, of sustainable progress and U.S. support. So far, these *casas de justicia* have handled over 2.2 million cases, easing the burden on the over-taxed, inefficient judicial system. Remarkably, the Department of Justice and USAID "Administration of Justice" initiatives have also established 30 new Oral Trial courtrooms and trained over 10,000 lawyers, judges and public defenders in new oral legal procedures designed to reduce impunity and quicken the judicial process. The new accusatorial criminal justice system will be open to public scrutiny and is expected to be more efficient and effective, and thus more worthy of public confidence. Similarly, a so-called "Early Warning System" is up and running. This system monitors potential conditions that might trigger human rights violations in order to provide warning of impending threats. In addition, 11 new mobile satellite units of the national human rights unit have been arrayed around Colombia to provide a more immediate response to allegations of human rights violations in the most remote areas of the country. Together, these projects are creating a civil and human rights protection infrastructure -- a climate of respect -- so that the Colombian Government may be able to prevent or be more responsive to human rights violations.

Also on human rights, the overall Colombian Government "protection program" has been expanded to include reliable protection for mayors, local human

rights officials, council members, municipal human rights workers, medical missions, journalists, and former mayors. This is -- as all of you know -- another sea change. In the second quarter of FY 2004, more than 200 individuals received protection measures for a cumulative total of nearly 3,500. During this quarter, six additional offices are in the process of being armored, for a cumulative total of 83 offices protected as of June 2004. Further, a professional police corps has been trained and equipped to protect judicial personnel, witnesses, and government officials. By providing protection to these individuals and offices, we are playing an increasingly important role in ensuring the ability of Colombia's leaders, including human rights defenders and local officials, to conduct their activities in as secure an environment as possible. With our feet on the ground -- but no absence of effort, we are of the view that if conditions for advancement are sustained, the legitimate economy and democracy will grow; build it, and they will come.

Through the office of the Vice President, we are also working with Colombia's local authorities to design and implement Departmental Human Rights Plans. Participatory Planning Workshops have been held already in Cartagena, Bogotá, Cali, Valle del Cauca and Santander de Quilichao. Municipal and departmental planning teams participated in each one of these workshops through a strategic planning exercise.

This is a mosaic -- a team effort, both between the United States and Colombia, but also among bureaus and agencies. Besides assisting in placing police around the country, we are funding other initiatives that extend security throughout Colombia's territory. For example, on March 31, the National Police launched a new country-wide initiative called Departamentos y Municipios Seguros, supported by USAID through Georgetown University's Colombia Program. The program is aimed at strengthening President Uribe's Democratic Security Policy through a complementary strategy of security plans oriented at the prevention of violence and criminal acts, and implemented by mayors and governors in coordination with the Colombian National Police.

In Colombia, INL also funds a key program, the "Culture of Lawfulness" -- a public school-based program that teaches ethics to thousands of children in junior high school. If we can help mold these young people, we can help foster a civic belief that drugs and corruption are wrong. Again, this is a measure of progress. Cultural education and trust in a stable, drug-free future will take time.

Finally, we provide emergency and longer-term assistance to so-called "Vulnerable Groups," particularly Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). This assistance, administered by the State Department's Bureau for Population, Migration, and Refugees and USAID, includes food, shelter, psychosocial assistance, physical and mental health services, community strengthening, income and employment generation, urban assistance (shelter, water and sanitation) education, and the rehabilitation of ex-child combatants. It also strengthens the Colombian agency responsible for IDP coordination, protection and border monitoring. Working with a municipal focus, the program runs more than 300 projects in 25 departments and 200 municipalities throughout the country.

Last quarter, IDP programs collectively aided more than 190,000 persons for a cumulative total of over 1.6 million persons since 2001. During the same time period, more than 3,800 jobs were created for IDPs and other vulnerable persons, such as youth at risk of displacement or recruitment by illegal armed combatants. To date, IDP programs have provided vocational and skill development training for more than 21,000 IDPs and created over 52,000 jobs, (primarily micro-enterprise, cottage industry, and small farmer activity). Equally important, access to education was increased during the last quarter for more than 29,000 displaced and other vulnerable children for a cumulative total of 163,900. Finally, more than 700 families who were willing and able to safely return to their original communities, were assisted last quarter, for a cumulative total of 18,090 families, or over 90,000 individuals since 2001. The IDP Program also assisted nearly 350 additional child ex-combatants during the last quarter. By providing viable life and employment options, the program discourages families from taking up cultivation of illicit crops.

### **Concluding Remarks**

We all know the facts, but they bear repeating -- because the U.S. Congress has been in the lead on these understandings. Drugs, violence and crime undermine democracy, rule of law, and the stability required for economic development. The drug trade continues to kill our citizens -- nearly 21,000 Americans last year, most of whom are unwitting children. The bulk of the drugs arriving in the United States come from Colombia. Let me be bold, unforgivingly clear and unambiguous on another point: The drug trade funds terrorists and violent criminal groups in the Hemisphere and elsewhere. If we want these evils to stop, we must be resolved to halt them now and on foreign soil. For, if we do not, we will most assuredly see them again -- on our own doorsteps and street corners. Violence on our television screens against our friends and allies to the south is difficult to bear; but violence in our very midst imposes a burden far heavier on our hearts and lives. INL, and others here today, are determined to hit these threats hard.

Plan Colombia, the centerpiece of our Andean Counterdrug Initiative (ACI) program, is producing results and many success stories. INL's efforts in Colombia have helped reduce drug cultivation in Colombia in 2002 and 2003, after nearly a decade of consecutive increases, increased the effectiveness and coverage of drug interdiction programs, strengthened the presence of the state, the rule of law and the judiciary's ability to prosecute, put traffickers behind bars in the U.S., seized their illegally-gained assets, and expanded economic opportunities for the poor. We continue to build upon our eradication, interdiction, and alternative development results and will stand by the Colombian Government in its efforts to topple the drug cartels as it delivers a lasting blow to narco-terrorists.

In short, we need to consolidate our gains and sustain this pace. In FY 2005, our counternarcotics programs in Colombia and the six other countries encompassed by the ACI will continue to pursue vigorous eradication and interdiction efforts to disrupt and destroy the production and transport of drugs destined for U.S. and other markets. Our request will sustain funding for programs that build strong government institutions capable of detecting, arresting and prosecuting processors and traffickers as well as the terrorists that thrive with them. We intend to increasingly turn over responsibilities to host nations, including counternarcotics training, and operation and maintenance.

On balance, the USG and the Colombians are on track to dismantle narco-terrorist organizations by seizing their current and future assets in all manners possible. We will face challenges in the coming years that, if not addressed aggressively, have the potential to reverse some of these gains. In particular, the undetermined outcome of Colombia's peace process will affect our operations. We must also keep up our support for other allies in the Andes to make sure that the Colombian criminal organizations do not export their processing methods to other countries.

Our basic goals remain: Eliminate the cultivation of drugs, break up narcoterrorist groups by disrupting their routes and seizing their profits, and provide real alternatives to those caught in the illegal trade. As we all know, sustained support for President Uribe's unprecedented efforts is essential. Here is -- I will say it -- one of the most courageous leaders in the modern history of this hemisphere. I appreciate this Committee's strong commitment to our efforts and look forward to exchanging views on how to carry this effort into the future.

Let me close by offering you this assurance: I am making sure that our assets are being used in the most effective manner and that performance criteria for projects are strengthened in order to better measure results. INL continues to make progress in combating illegal drug production, through partnerships with our foreign allies and with the many federal agencies involved in these efforts. We are committed to fight the scourge of narco-trafficking and narcoterrorism in our hemisphere. Full stop.

Thank you.

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