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TITLE: SUBJECT: GOC ANNOUNCES IMMEDIATE STEPS TO PROTECT JUDGES

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SOURCE: STATE

DOCNO: BOGOTA 11640

TEXT:

TAGS: KJUS, PGOV, SNAR, CO

SUBJECT: GOC ANNOUNCES IMMEDIATE STEPS TO PROTECT JUDGES

RELEASED IN PART B3 CIA  
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REFS: (A) BOGOTA 11413 (B) BOGOTA 11412

1. (U) IN THE WAKE OF THE BLOODY ASSASSINATION OF A MEDELLIN JUDGE, WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY A STRIKE BY 20,000 JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES (REF B), THE GOC ANNOUNCED IMMEDIATE STEPS TO BETTER PROTECT JUDGES INVOLVED IN DANGEROUS CASES. THE ANNOUNCEMENT CAME AFTER MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AND OF TOP GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES UNION ON AUGUST 1. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE THE SAME DAY, DAS (GOC INVESTIGATIVE AGENCY) DIRECTOR GENERAL MAZA MARQUEZ AND OTHERS ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATE STEPS, WHICH ARE TO BE COMPLEMENTED BY MEDIUM AND LONG TERM MEASURES:

-- JUDGES OF PUBLIC ORDER (THE CORPS OF THIRTY JUDGES INVESTIGATING CASES INVOLVING NARCOS AND GUERRILLAS) AND OTHER THREATENED JUDGES WILL BE ALLOWED TO MOVE THEIR OFFICES IMMEDIATELY TO POLICE OR DAS STATIONS FOR BETTER PROTECTION.

-- THE GOC WILL SEEK TO MOVE JUDGES WHO ARE CURRENTLY UNDER DEATH THREAT TO OFFICES IN BOGOTA.

-- THE GOC WILL FURNISH SPECIAL PROTECTIVE HOUSING TO JUDGES AND THEIR FAMILIES.

-- IN COORDINATION WITH JUDICIAL OFFICES, THE GOC WILL SEEK TO NAME ONLY "RIGOROUSLY SELECTED" JUDGES TO "SPECIAL CASES" (READ CASES INVOLVING NARCOS). THESE JUDGES WILL BE SUPPORTED BY A NEW TEAM OF CRIMINAL

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior  
Reviewer

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INVESTIGATORS.

-- THE GOC WILL SEEK TO OBTAIN ARMORED CARS AND MORE BODYGUARDS FOR THREATENED JUDGES.

2. (U) IN RESPONSE TO THE NEW PROPOSALS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES' UNION, ANTONIO SUAREZ NINO, ANNOUNCED THAT THE STRIKE OF JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES WAS LIFTED AS OF 8:00 AM AUGUST 2. HE CALLED THE GOC PROPOSALS "GOOD," AND SAID THE UNION WOULD STUDY THEM. THE STRIKE HAD BEEN CALLED TO PROTEST THE LACK OF PROTECTION FOR JUDGES IN THE WAKE OF THE ASSASSINATION OF MEDELLIN JUDGE MARIA HELENA DIAZ, WHO HAD TAKEN OVER CASES INVOLVING NARCOS PABLO ESCOBAR AND JOSE GONZALO RODRIGUEZ GACHA FROM ANOTHER JUDGE WHO HAS SINCE FLED THE COUNTRY. THAT JUDGE'S FATHER WAS GUNNED DOWN MAY 4 (BOGOTA 6695) WHEN THE NARCOS WERE UNABLE TO GET HER. THE STRIKE WAS CALLED 95 PERCENT EFFECTIVE BY THE PRESS. IN BOGOTA, HOWEVER, MOST JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES WORKED PARTIAL DAYS. IN MEDELLIN, THOUSANDS OF JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES REPORTEDLY MARCHED IN SILENT PROTEST ON THE AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 1.

3. (U) MEANWHILE, THE SELF-NAMED "EXTRADITABLES" TOOK RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE "EXECUTION" OF JUDGE DIAZ. (NOTE: THIS GROUP OF KILLERS IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN CREATED IN 1982 BY NARCOTRAFFICKER CARLOS LEHDER.) IN A LETTER TO THE JUDICIAL UNION, WHICH WAS RELEASED TO THE PRESS, THE EXTRADITABLES REPEATED THAT THEY CONSIDERED EXTRADITION AND "ARBITRARY SEARCHES AGAINST OUR FAMILIES ...UNACCEPTABLE." THEY SAID THAT THEY WANTED PEACE (I.E. THAT THE GOC SHOULD LEAVE THEM ALONE TO CONDUCT THEIR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING BUSINESS) AND HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFULLY REQUESTING DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT SINCE 1984. THE GROUP SAID IT ACTED IN THE DEFENSE OF ITS FAMILIES, ITS RIGHTS, ITS LIBERTY, AND ITS LIVES. "WE ARE READY TO CONFRONT THE TRAITORS AND SELL-OUTS" (I.E. JUDGES AND ANYONE ELSE WHO ACT AGAINST THEIR INTERESTS).

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4. (C) COMMENT: THE PROPOSALS ANNOUNCED SO FAR REFLECT THINKING THE GOC PICKED UP AT RECENT MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON AND BOGOTA ON JUDICIAL PROTECTION. THE NEW MINSITER OF JUSTICE WAS AN ATTENTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THE BOGOTA MEETING. IN A MEETING WITH US EARLIER IN THE WEEK SHE ASKED FOR HELP. SHE ALSO GAVE INDICATIONS THAT WHAT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED SO FAR IN PART OF A MORE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. SEPTEL WILL REPORT FURTHER  
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BOGOTA 11640

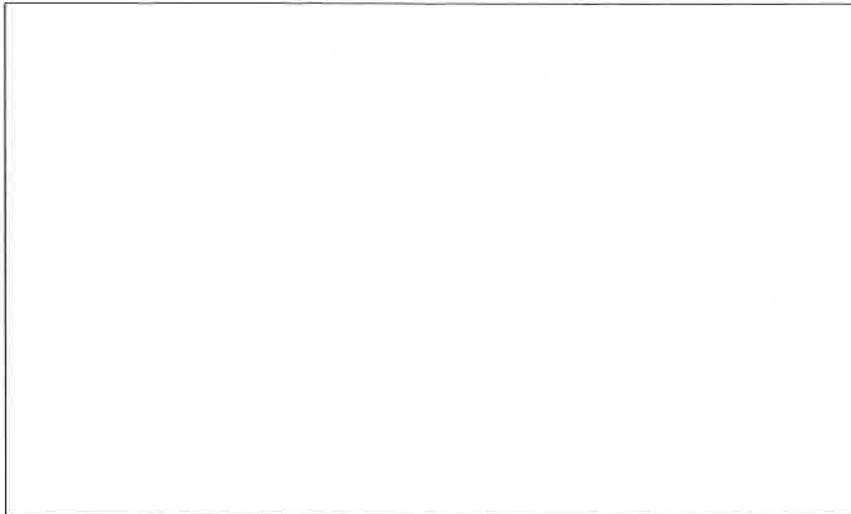
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E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
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DISCUSSIONS WE ARE HAVING WITH HER AND HER SUBORDINATES  
OUTLINING THEIR SPECIFIC REQUESTS.

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