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TITLE: SUBJECT: GAVIRIA'S FIRST YEAR: BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE

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SUBJECT: GAVIRIA'S FIRST YEAR: BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE

REF: A) BOGOTA 8903; B) BOGOTA 11190;

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: GAVIRIA'S FIRST-YEAR ACHIEVEMENTS WOULD BE THE ENVY OF ANY HEAD OF GOVERNMENT. HIS NEW CONSTITUTION CONTAINS MUCH-NEEDED JUDICIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL REFORMS AND WAS WRITTEN BY A BROAD CROSS SECTION OF COLOMBIAN SOCIETY IN A NEW CLIMATE OF POLITICAL PLURALISM. HIS PLEA-BARGAINING DECREES HAVE ABATED NARCO-TERRORISM, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY. JUDICIAL REFORM AND ECONOMIC MODERNIZATION, TWO CAMPAIGN CORNERSTONES, ARE OFF TO GOOD STARTS.

3. BUT THE POLICIES AIMED AT CREATING A KINDER, GENTLER COLOMBIA ALSO CARRY GREAT RISKS. PAINFUL ECONOMIC REFORMS COULD WEAKEN HIS MANDATE AND SLOW HIS MOMENTUM. HIS GREATEST GAMBLE, NEGOTIATING THE SURRENDER OF ESCOBAR AND THE OCHOAS, COULD COMPROMISE COLOMBIA'S SOVEREIGNTY AND ITS CREDIBILITY ABROAD IF NOT MANAGED SUCCESSFULLY. IT IS THE KIND OF GAMBLE GAVIRIA BELIEVES WILL SUCCEED, AND SO FAR HE HAS BEATEN THE ODDS. END SUMMARY.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE

REVIEW AUTHORITY: James Cooper, Senior Reviewer

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4. GAVIRIA USED HIS FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE TO BUILD THE FOUNDATIONS FOR FUNDAMENTAL REFORM IN COLOMBIA, AND IN THAT HE SUCCEEDED ADMIRABLY. IF THE NEW CONSTITUTION BELONGS TO ANYONE, IT BELONGS TO CESAR GAVIRIA, IN BOTH CONTENT AND PROCESS. HE PROMOTED THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (CA) AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, AND RESISTED STRONG LIBERAL PARTY PRESSURE TO INTERVENE IN ITS DECISION TO REVOKE THE CONGRESS' MANDATE.

5. THE NEW CONSTITUTION MAY NOT BE RADICAL IN SUBSTANCE, BUT THE CA PROCESS WAS POLITICALLY EARTH-SHAKING. THE PARTICIPATION OF EX-GUERRILLAS, EVANGELICALS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ALONGSIDE LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES IS UNPRECEDENTED IN MODERN COLOMBIAN POLITICS (REF A). A MORE POLITICALLY TOLERANT COLOMBIA IS ONE OF GAVIRIA'S PERSONAL GOALS, AND HE IS PARTICULARLY PROUD OF THE CA'S PLURALISTIC LEGACY.

BUILDING CONSENSUS

6. ALONG WITH INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS FOR CHANGE, GAVIRIA WISELY USED THE FIRST YEAR TO BOOST HIS POPULAR MANDATE. COMPARED TO THE 47 PERCENT VOTE WITH WHICH HE WAS ELECTED, POLLS NOW AWARD HIM A 74 PERCENT APPROVAL RATING.

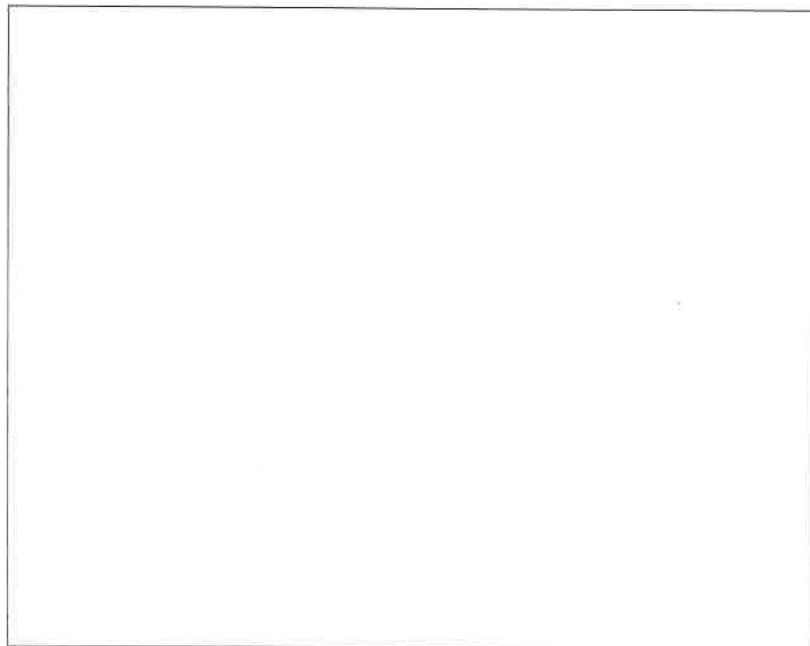
7. EDITORIALS MARKING HIS FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE WERE ALMOST UNANIMOUS IN PRAISE, AND EVEN HIS TRADITIONAL OPPONENTS ARE LOATH TO CRITICIZE HIM. ARCH-RIVAL CONSERVATIVES GIVE HIM A 69 PERCENT APPROVAL RATING, AND AD/M-19 MEMBERS RATE HIM ONLY SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN HIS OWN LIBERALS (79 PERCENT FROM THE LIBERALS, VERSUS 75 FROM THE AD/M-19).

8. GAVIRIA'S POPULARITY IS NOT ACCIDENTAL, BUT THE RESULT OF DELIBERATE POLICY. GAVIRIA'S MANDATE WAS CONSECRATED IN VIOLENCE, A CANDIDACY BORN AT LUIS CARLOS GALAN'S FUNERAL. BY CONFRONTING NARCO TERRORISM, WHICH

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WAS ALREADY SUBSTANTIALLY DIMINISHED IN ANY EVENT, WITH HIS PLEA-BARGAINING DECREES RIGHT AFTER HIS INAUGURATION, GAVIRIA WON THE GRATITUDE OF A VIOLENCE-WEARY NATION.



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"I'VE GOT ESCOBAR RIGHT WHERE HE WANTS ME"

10. BY FAR THE BIGGEST RISK GAVIRIA HAS UNDERTAKEN IN HIS FIRST YEAR IS THE NEGOTIATED SURRENDER OF DRUG KINGPINS PABLO ESCOBAR AND THE OCHOA BROTHERS. FOLLOWING THE ALL-OUT GOC OFFENSIVE THAT ENDED IN A VIOLENT STALEMATE WITH THE NARCOS, GAVIRIA FELT THAT ENTICING ESCOBAR AND OTHER NARCOS TO SURRENDER WAS THE ONLY WAY TO DEFEAT THEM.

11. GAVIRIA EXPECTS RAPID REFORMS IN COLOMBIA'S JUDICIAL SYSTEM, CONTINUED GOC PRESSURE ON THE NARCOS (INCLUDING THE CALI CARTEL) AND REORGANIZATION OF THE PRISON SYSTEM WILL ERODE ESCOBAR'S ABILITY TO CONTROL EVENTS. GAVIRIA HOPES ESCOBAR, WHO AT THIS POINT SEES THE ENVIGADO RETREAT AS HIS BEST HOPE OF STAYING ALIVE,

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WILL FIND HIMSELF LESS ABLE TO MANEUVER AS TIME PASSES.

12. IF ESCOBAR WALKS OUT OF ENVIGADO, OR MANAGES TO MANIPULATE THE TRIAL PROCESS AND RECEIVE A LIGHT SENTENCE, GAVIRIA WILL BE JUDGED TO HAVE SOLD THE INTEGRITY OF COLOMBIAN JUSTICE FOR AN EXPEDITIOUS AND ILLUSORY PEACE WITH THE NARCOS. THE RESULT COULD BE A RETURN TO NARCO-TRAFFICKING IMPUNITY, AND A DARK FUTURE FOR COLOMBIA. GAVIRIA IS AWARE OF THE ABOVE, AND DETERMINED TO AVOID IT.

TAKING ON CALI

13. GAVIRIA (AND FOR THAT MATTER, MOST OF COLOMBIA) LEARNED PAINFULLY THE CONSEQUENCES OF A LAISSEZ FAIRE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE NARCOTICS CARTELS AND DOES NOT INTEND TO REPEAT THE ERRORS OF HIS PREDECESSORS. HE IS SINCERE IN HIS INTENTIONS TO GO AFTER THE CALI TRAFFICKERS. THIS SAME MOTIVATION DRIVES THE CONTINUED OFFENSIVE AGAINST TRAFFICKER LABS AND INSTALLATIONS. RECORD-BREAKING COCAINE SEIZURES AND COSTLY ANTI-NARCOTICS OPERATIONS BY THE SECURITY FORCES ARE NOT THE ACTIONS OF A GOVERNMENT THAT HAS THROWN IN THE TOWEL IN THE DRUG WAR. BUT HE KNOWS THE EFFORT IS FAR FROM OVER AND THAT CALI AND OTHER NARCOS WILL NOT EASILY BE CONTROLLED.

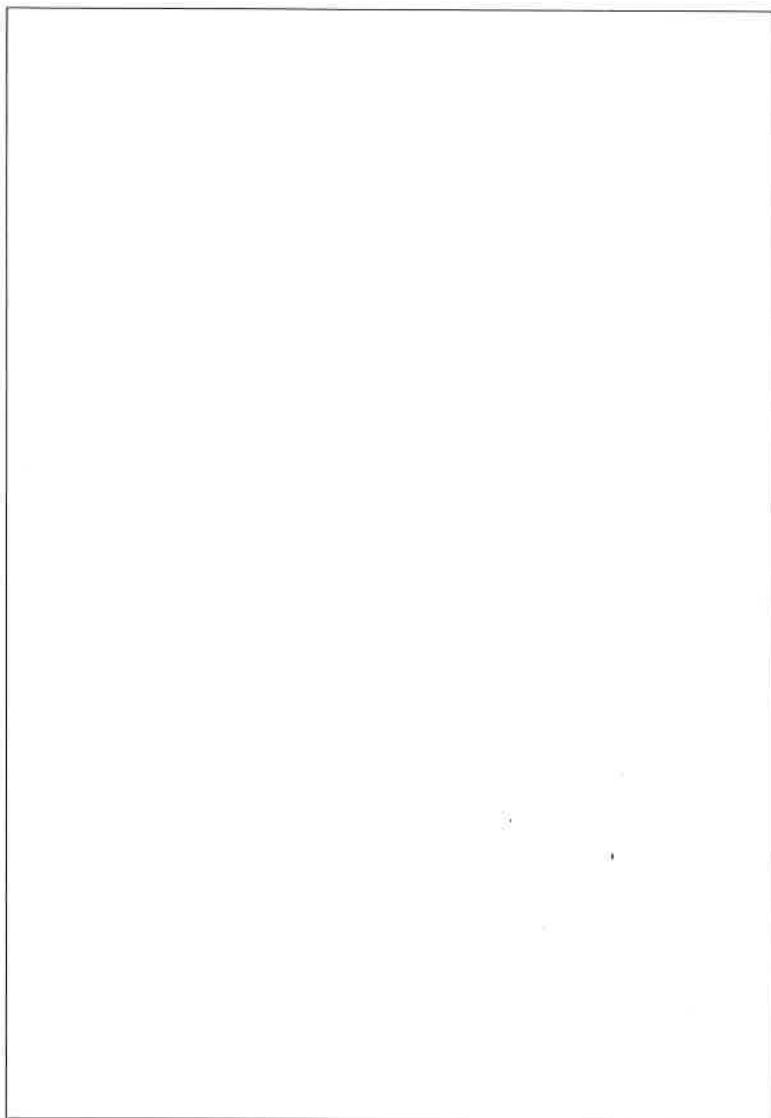
COLOMBIAN JUSTICE -- A LONG ROAD AHEAD

14. GAVIRIA (AND WE) REMAINS CONVINCED THAT A FUNCTIONING JUDICIAL SYSTEM IS THE KEY TO ENDING CRIMINAL IMPUNITY, INCLUDING NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. SINCE THEIR CREATION IN JANUARY, THE PUBLIC ORDER COURTS HAVE HANDED DOWN 187 CONVICTIONS AND 42 ACQUITTALS, AN IMPRESSIVE RECORD COMPARED TO THE WOEFULLY INEFFECTIVE PREVIOUS SYSTEM. THE NEW CONSTITUTION'S CREATION OF AN PROSECUTOR GENERAL AND A PROSECUTORIAL SYSTEM ARE HOPEFUL SIGNS.

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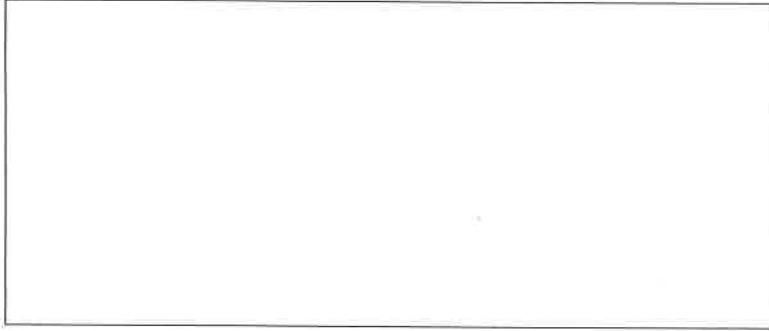
15. BUT THE RADICAL AND RAPID CHANGE HAS LEFT LOOSE ENDS AND MANY QUESTIONS UNANSWERED, PARTICULARLY CONCERNING THE SENTENCING OF THOSE, LIKE ESCOBAR, WHO SURRENDERED UNDER THE PLEA-BARGAINING DECREES. FOLLOWING THROUGH ON JUDICIAL REFORM, HIS NUMBER ONE CAMPAIGN PROMISE, WILL BE GAVIRIA'S MOST IMPORTANT AND DIFFICULT TASK IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS.



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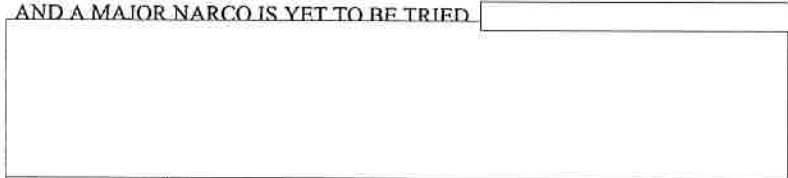
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A GOOD BEGINNING; BUT ONLY A BEGINNING

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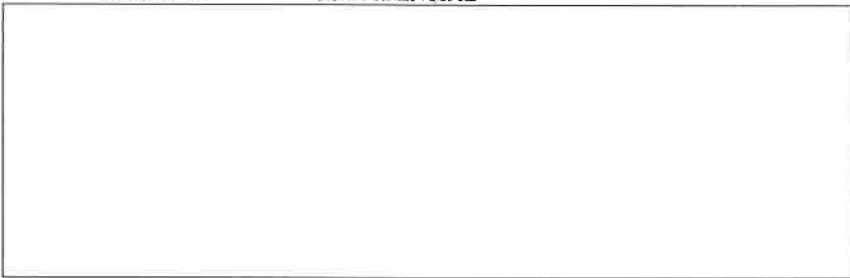
20. EVEN AFTER A YEAR OF SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS, MANY OF GAVIRIA'S POLITICAL REFORMS ARE STILL ON PAPER, OR IN A START-UP PHASE. JUDICIAL REFORM HAS A LONG WAY TO GO, AND A MAJOR NARCO IS YET TO BE TRIED.



AN ESCOBAR OR OCHOA ESCAPE COULD MAKE A MOCKERY OF GAVIRIA'S ANTI-NARCOTICS POLICIES AND BEGIN A NEW ROUND OF TRAFFICKER VIOLENCE IN COLOMBIA.

21. HAVING SET THE STAGE FOR THE PROFOUND CHANGE, GAVIRIA'S CHALLENGE OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS WILL BE TO CONSOLIDATE THE REFORMS MADE AND CONCRETIZE THOSE STILL ON THE DRAWING BOARD. THE BOLD INITIATIVES OF THE FIRST YEAR HAVE ENCOURAGED HIM AND HIS YOUNG TEAM OF ADVISORS. WE CAN EXPECT MORE OF THE SAME.
MCNAMARA

END OF MESSAGE CONFIDENTIAL

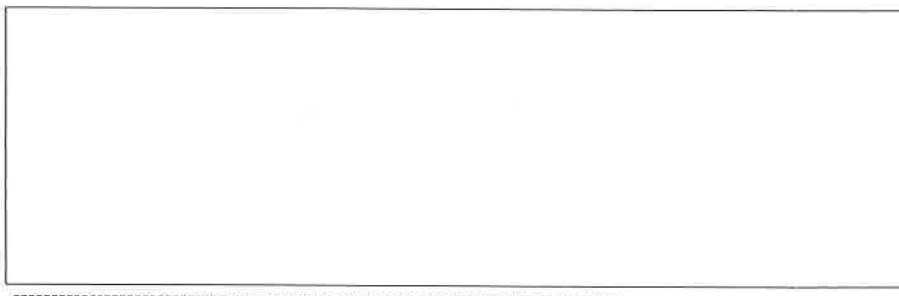


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