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### Advance Questions for Lieutenant General Bantz J. Craddock, USA Nominee for Commander, United States Southern Command

#### Defense Reforms

Almost two decades have passed since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms. You have had an opportunity to observe the implementation and impact of those reforms, particularly in your assignments as the Assistant Deputy Director for Strategy, J-5, on the Joint Staff and Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense.

**Question:** Do you support full implementation of these defense reforms?

**Answer:** Yes I do.

**Question:** What is your view of the extent to which these defense reforms have been implemented, particularly in the U.S. Army?

**Answer:** The Defense Authorization Act of 1986 accelerated the integration and synchronization of all our military's capabilities to fight and win all of our wars decisively. The legislation strengthened the authority of civilian control over the armed forces while at the same time provided the Combatant Commander the authority and flexibility to perform his mission. More specifically, the Goldwater-Nichols reforms have improved military operations by the not only the Army, but the Air Force, Navy and Marines.

**Question:** What do you consider to be the most important aspects of these defense reforms?

**Answer:** I believe the most important aspect of these reforms is the expansion of the Combatant Commander's responsibilities. The Goldwater-Nichols Act revised the authority of the regional Combatant Commander and clearly defined his responsibilities.

These changes simplified the chain of command and improved the planning and execution of assigned missions during times of crises. While providing for more efficient use of DoD resources these reforms have also resulted in far more effective joint military activities and operations.

The goals of the Congress in enacting these defense reforms, as reflected in section 3 of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act, can be summarized as strengthening civilian control; improving military advice; placing clear responsibility on the combatant commanders for the accomplishment of their missions; ensuring the

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**authority of the combatant commanders is commensurate with their responsibility; increasing attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning; providing for more efficient use of defense resources; and enhancing the effectiveness of military operations and improving the management and administration of the Department of Defense.**

**Question: Do you agree with these goals?**

**Answer:** Yes, I completely agree with these goals.

**Question: Do you believe that legislative proposals to amend Goldwater-Nichols may be appropriate? If so, what areas do you think it might be appropriate to address in these proposals?**

**Answer:** The Center for Strategic and International Studies has conducted a study which is under review by the Department of Defense with the intent of strengthening Goldwater-Nichols. This study provides options for change including actions taken within the department, those requiring interagency coordination and those requiring statutory change.

### Duties

**Question: What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, U. S. Southern Command?**

**Answer:** The Commander of U.S. Southern Command is assigned the geographical area of responsibility (AOR) and reports directly to the Secretary of Defense. The Commander is responsible for U.S. military forces assigned to the AOR - which includes 30 countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The duties and functions of a combatant commander include, but are not limited to: prescribing the chain of command, including authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training and logistics; organizing commands and forces and employing them within his command as necessary to carry out the Command's assigned missions; and assigning command functions to subordinate commanders.

**Question: What background and experience do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?**

**Answer:** I am indeed honored by the President's nomination to be the Commander of U.S. Southern Command. Over the last several years, I have served in both Joint and Army assignments involved in planning and the actual conduct of operations, and while not in the U.S. Southern Command's geographical area, are similar to many of the operations and activities

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found in Latin America today. While serving as the Senior Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, I have had the opportunity to observe and participate in international, interagency, Joint and Combined strategy and policy formulation across the spectrum of conflict. As the Commanding General of the 1st Infantry Division of the U.S. Army in Europe, I deployed forces to Kosovo in support of the U.S. European Command. Prior to that assignment, as a Brigadier General and Assistant Division Commander of that same Division, I commanded Joint Task Forces in Macedonia and Kosovo, both commands providing enormous insights into the challenges associated with coalition, combined and joint operations.

While assigned to the Joint Staff as the Assistant Deputy Director for Strategy and Policy, J5, I gained great understanding of the interagency process and the relationships between the office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs, the Joint Staff, and the Combatant Commanders. The privilege of commanding U.S. forces, from platoon through division level, to include in combat in Desert Storm, has provided me the keen perspectives on training, caring for, and leading the superb men and women of our Armed Forces.

These assignments have provided me a strong foundation and a diversity of experiences that will serve me well if confirmed as the Commander of U.S. Southern Command.

**Question: Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform the duties of the Commander, U. S. Southern Command?**

**Answer:** If confirmed, I will engage with the governments and militaries of partner nations to fully understand the complex issues in this region. Further, I will work closely with key officials and personnel within the Executive and Legislative branches of the U.S. government to analyze and address these complex issues.

### Relationships

**Section 162(b) of title 10, United States Code, provides that the chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense and from the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commands. Other sections of law and traditional practice, however, establish important relationships outside the chain of command.**

**Question: Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Commander, U.S. Southern Command to the following offices:**

#### **The Secretary of Defense**

**Answer:** The Commander is responsible to the President and the Secretary of Defense for accomplishing the military missions assigned to him and exercises command authority over

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forces assigned to the Combatant Commander as directed by the Secretary of Defense. The Combatant Commander has the obligation to promptly inform the Secretary of Defense on accountable matters within his regional or functional AOR.

### **The Deputy Secretary of Defense**

**Answer:** The Deputy Secretary of Defense is the second ranking senior official within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. On those matters delegated by the Secretary to his Deputy Secretary, the Commander coordinates and exchanges information with the Deputy Secretary. In practice, responsibility for significant matters has been so delegated to the Deputy Secretary, which requires direct communication on a regular basis between the Combatant Commander and the Deputy Secretary.

### **The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy**

**Answer:** There is no direct command relationship between the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Combatant Commander. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy coordinates and exchanges information with Department of Defense components such as Combatant Commanders.

### **The Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence**

**Answer:** There is no direct command relationship between the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and the Combatant Commander. The Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and the Combatant Commander coordinate and exchange information regularly.

### **The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs**

**Answer:** A direct command relationship does not exist between the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and the Combatant Commander. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs works with the Combatant Commander on mutual issues of concern.

### **The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense**

**Answer:** There is no direct command relationship between the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and the Combatant Commander. The Assistant Secretary of Defense works closely with all Department of Defense components, to include Combatant Commanders.

### **The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

**Answer:** The Chairman is not in the direct chain of command from the President and Secretary

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of Defense to the Commander and has no command authority over the Combatant Commander. However, the Chairman is the principal military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense and a key conduit between the Combatant Commander, Interagency and Service Chiefs. Communications to the Combatant Commanders from the President or the Secretary of Defense are transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Combatant Commander keeps the Chairman and his staff advised of accountable matters and critical issues that affect his unified command.

### **The Secretaries of the Military Departments**

**Answer:** The Secretaries of Military Departments are responsible for administration and support of forces that are assigned to unified and specified commands. Additionally, at Guantanamo Bay Cuba, U.S. Southern Command provides support to the Secretary of the Navy in his role as the Department of Defense's executive agent for the Combatant Status Review Tribunals.

### **The Chiefs of Staff of the Services**

**Answer:** As advisors to the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense, and as the senior uniformed leaders of their respective Services, the Service Chiefs play a critical role in transforming their Services' force structure and capabilities – an issue of high interest to the Combatant Commander. The Combatant Commander must rely upon the Service Chiefs to provide properly equipped and capable forces to accomplish missions in his assigned AOR.

### **The other combatant commanders**

**Answer:** Formal relationships between the Combatant Commanders are based upon operational plans. The plans lay out clearly the roles of the Commanders as “supporting” or “supported.” These planned relationships mandate close coordination in peacetime and training.

### **U. S. Chiefs of Mission within the U. S. Southern Command area of responsibility**

**Answer:** There is no command relationship between the Chiefs of Mission and the Commander. However, the Commander coordinates and exchanges information with Chiefs of Mission on matters of common interest, to include assessments, military operations and engagement efforts with foreign defense officials.

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### **Major Challenges**

**Question: In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Commander, U.S. Southern Command?**

**Answer:** Currently, all 30 of the countries in the U.S. Southern Command AOR are led by democratically elected leaders, many of whom are faced with threats that are undermining the security and stability of their nations. These threats include: 1) terrorism, 2) transnational threats and 3) the challenges of supporting partner nations in their efforts to deal with the threats they face.

**Question: If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?**

**Answer:** If confirmed, I intend to ensure that U.S. Southern Command's "Theater Strategy" incorporates as a central theme the collective security of our partner nations. I will foster improved security relationships to promote regional solutions to shared regional challenges. I will ensure prioritization of security activities to areas that offer the greatest leverage for protecting and advancing U.S. regional and global interests. Further, I will continue to promote military-to-military contacts to enhance the professionalism of the region's militaries. Finally, I will work diligently to ensure our military efforts are fully coordinated and synchronized with other U.S. government agencies.

### **Most Serious Problems**

**Question: What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Commander, U. S. Southern Command?**

**Answer:** Dealing with weak states whose transition to a democratic form of government is not satisfying the economic and social expectations of the citizens. Narcoterrorism, drug-funded gangs, kidnapping and crime combine to make Latin America the world's most violent region as measured by homicides. It is imperative to remain active in assisting countries to maintain stability, promote prosperity and enhance regional cooperation in this area of significant strategic importance to the U.S.

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**Question: If confirmed, what management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems?**

**Answer:** If confirmed, I will immediately conduct a thorough assessment to build upon and modify where necessary current initiatives and programs that effectively address these challenges. I will work through established Department of Defense venues and processes and continue to engage the Congress for appropriate resources and support to the region.

### Panama Canal

**It has been several years since the United States turned operation of the Panama Canal over to the Panamanian Government.**

**Question: What is the current political and economic situation in Panama?**

**Answer:** Economically, Panama's economy grew 4.1% in 2003 and is expected to exceed 4% again in 2004. The current government, although plagued by alleged ineffectiveness and corruption, remains politically stable. But there are enormous social challenges. The new President-elect, Martin Torrijos, assumes office on September 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. Hopefully his strong mandate will aid his administration in fighting corruption, addressing the high level of public debt, reducing unemployment and tackling widespread poverty.

**Question: To what extent does the Panamanian government attempt to interdict the drug flow out of South America through Panama?**

**Answer:** Despite limited capabilities, the Government of Panama continues to demonstrate its willingness to combat drug trafficking and improve efforts to interdict the drug flow from South America. The Panamanian Air Service (SAN) and Maritime Service (SMN) are actively engaged in disrupting the flow of illicit drugs through their sovereign territory. Since 2003, the SMN has supported U.S. sponsored multilateral counterdrug operations. This has significantly improved the mutual coordination and independent cooperation between the Colombian Navy and the SMN.

**Question: What is your assessment of how Panama is protecting and maintaining the Panama Canal?**

**Answer:** Following the turnover of the Panama Canal in 1999, the Government of Panama formed the Panama Canal Authority (PCA) to oversee its operation. The PCA's efforts to date have been remarkable, exceeding expectations by improving efficiency, security and safety while simultaneously increasing its tonnage, and profitability. A very professional and dedicated workforce, overseen by an experienced and competent management structure, operates the Panama Canal. Panamanians understand how critical the canal is to their economy and take their

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enormous responsibility in the context of global commerce very seriously. The Government of Panama and the Panama Canal Authority have achieved a high level of efficiency and security and continually strive to improve.

Last year, Southern Command sponsored PANAMAX, an exercise designed to focus on the defense of the Panama Canal against terrorism. PANAMAX has become an annual endeavor in which a growing number of countries participate. This year, we expect the participation of nine partner nations to secure both the Pacific and Caribbean approaches to the Canal.

**Question: How vulnerable is the Panama Canal to attack by terrorists, and what would be the consequences of an attack to U. S. national security interests?**

**Answer:** The foundation of the Canal is a watershed that is formed by man-made lakes and dams, but relies on the natural rainfall in the region to maintain water levels necessary for Canal operations. It is dependent on a series of man-made locks, a large labor force, electrical power, telecommunications, oil, maintenance, and security to ensure its continued operation 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Because of its complexity, and because it must remain open to cargo and shipping from all over the world, there will always be some risk that its many infrastructure systems and facilities are vulnerable to sabotage or terrorist attack. The only way to eliminate risk altogether would be to shut it down. Therefore, it is important to assess risks from the security, economic, and safety standpoints and apply protections and/or mitigations where feasible. Even more important, is the need to build redundancy in infrastructures, provide for adequate response to incidents, and ensure the capability of effective recovery, if required.

The Panama Canal is the most important infrastructure in Southern Command's Area of Responsibility. The Canal is of significant economic importance to the world and critical to the people of Panama. Two-thirds of the goods that transit the canal are coming from or going to U.S. ports. Disruption of Canal operations could create a significant impact on global commerce as well as the U.S. economy.

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### Role of U.S. Southern Command

**If confirmed as the Commander of the U. S. Southern Command, you will be responsible for all military operations in that region. These include the Department's counter-narcotics efforts in the source nations and transit zone, detainee and interrogation operations at Guantanamo Bay, security of the Panama Canal, and enhancing relationships between the military personnel of the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean in order to instill democratic values in the military organizations of the region. If confirmed, you will face the challenge of pursuing these missions at a time when there appears to be movement away from democracy in some nations, and increasing instability in other nations.**

**Question: If confirmed, what will be your highest priorities and what actions would you propose to counter the growing threat to democracy in the region?**

**Answer:** If confirmed, my highest priorities will be to: 1) continue to prosecute the War on Terrorism in the AOR; 2) enhance regional security cooperation to counter transnational threats; 3) closely coordinate Southern Command's efforts with the interagency in assisting partner nations' efforts to address the threats they face in maintaining effective democracies.

### Stability of the Region

**Instability in one nation in the U. S. Southern Command area of responsibility has often "spilled over" into neighboring countries. An example is Colombia where insurgents have used the neighboring countries of Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama to escape detection. These groups have even engaged in illegal activities in those countries, such as kidnapping for ransom.**

**Question: What additional actions can be taken to improve regional cooperation and coordination to avoid this "spillover" effect?**

**Answer:** It may help to first clarify terminology – the terms "insurgents" or "guerrillas" are less applicable today than in the past. I believe the term "narco-terrorists" is more appropriate, given the fact that the center of gravity for these groups is the incredible financial support they get from illicit drug trafficking, which motivates them to protect and manage the entire process of growing, processing, and trafficking illicit drugs.

Southern Command, through its Theater Security Cooperation Strategy (TSC), seeks to build and/or improve defense relationships and partner nation (PN) capabilities, including interoperability, and promote regional cooperation to meet the variety of transnational challenges

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that confront the region. I will build on General Hill's successes in changing the TSC model from a bilateral approach to a multilateral scheme, which encourages neighbors to work together as much as they work with the United States. This approach will minimize the narco-terrorists' ability to use borders between countries as seams for illicit activities.

### **Counter-Narcotics--Overall Importance and Effort**

**Each year the Department of Defense spends several hundred million dollars for counter-narcotics programs. These programs range from outreach programs to teach children the dangers of drugs, to assistance to foreign governments to interdict the flow of drugs through their territory. Despite the expenditure of these funds and the several billion dollars that the Federal government spends for this purpose each year, the flow of drugs into the United States and the price of drugs on the street have not been significantly reduced, and countries such as Colombia and Peru face tremendous internal security challenges. This has led many to question the effectiveness and focus of our counter-narcotics programs.**

**Question: How should we measure the success of each of the Department's counter-narcotics programs?**

**Answer:** Success should be measured by performance and results of mutually supportive eradication, interdiction and demand reduction operations and programs.

**Question: Do you believe that the current programs that the Department is pursuing are the most effective for the region or should we focus the Department's efforts elsewhere?**

**Answer:** Department of Defense programs are designed to enhance Partner Nations existing capabilities and create new capabilities to combat narco-trafficking within the region. Colombia is the center of gravity and the largest cultivator, processor and exporter of narcotics in the region. Increasingly, terrorist organizations fund their activities through drug trafficking. This trend is particularly troubling in Colombia where there are clear connections between drug traffickers and Department of State designated Terrorist Organizations (FARC, ELN, AUC). Supporting the Government of Colombia's efforts to defeat illicit narco-trafficking also directly supports the Global War on Terror. There are concerns that coca cultivation in Peru may also fund terrorist organizations, and coca cultivation remains problematic in Bolivia. Success in Colombia is of marginal value if illicit narco-trafficking migrates to other countries within the region. Consequently, it is important to build upon our past efforts and ensure an approach that addresses the regional situation.

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**Question: Compared to other missions that you would be responsible for as Commander, U.S. Southern Command, if confirmed, where would you rank counter-narcotics in terms of its contribution to our national security and the ability of the Department of Defense to make a meaningful contribution?**

**Answer:** Narco-terrorism is one of the fundamental contributors to the problems within the region. Democratic instability, corruption, and radical populism present significant threats to security throughout the region, and narco-trafficking directly contributes to all of these threats. There is also a problem of fundraising for international terrorist organizations. Southern Command's detection and monitoring role helps keep illicit drugs from reaching U.S. markets and attacks a primary funding source for international terrorists. Counter-narcotics operations, therefore, contribute significantly to U.S. national security.

### Forward Operating Locations

**One of the elements of the regional counter-narcotics strategy is the United States Southern Command's establishment of forward operating locations (FOLs) in the source and transit zone. There is some concern that the Department has not deployed sufficient aircraft and other resources to these FOLs to justify sustainment costs and continued improvements. There is also concern that after U. S. investment of several million dollars on these facilities, the host nations will restrict our use of these facilities.**

**Question: What is the role that these FOLs play in the Department's counter-drug efforts?**

**Answer:** Forward Operating Locations (FOLs) compensated for the loss of coverage that was previously provided by operations conducted from Howard Air Force Base (AFB), Panama. The previous term, FOLs, was subsequently changed to Cooperative Security Location (CSL) to better reflect U.S. Southern Command's relationship with partner nations in the establishment and operation of these sites.

**Question: Does current use justify the costs of sustaining these locations?**

**Answer:** Yes, the current use justifies the costs of sustaining these CSLs. CSLs play a significant role in stemming the flow of illicit narcotics to the U.S. CSLs are essential to the D&M missions, which result in significant endgame operations.

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**Question: What assurance do we have from host nations that these locations will continue to be available to us, and under what conditions?**

**Answer:** The agreement of cooperation with Ecuador is valid through 2009; the U.S. government's agreements with the Netherlands and El Salvador are valid through 2010. Current relations between the U.S. and all of these nations are favorable. Southern Command fully expects the agreements to be renewed before the current agreements expire. The agreements of cooperation for the use of the CSLs were specifically written to foster cooperative efforts to counter illicit drug trafficking.

### Andean Region

**Internal political dynamics and lack of effective border control have resulted in the potential for a significant increase in drug production and trafficking in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador.**

**Question: What do you think the U. S. military can or should do to prevent such developments?**

**Answer:** Our security cooperation objectives support our overall policy objectives in a holistic approach. Southern Command needs to ensure a regional approach that directly contributes to Partner Nation cooperation and capability to defeat narco-terrorism. Programs in Colombia have proven effective; however, limited resources hamper our ability to approach the problem regionally.

A very small U.S. military training unit in Bolivia has demonstrated significant improvement in their forces and the successful development of a national antiterrorism force, while expanding Southern Command's opportunities to promote human rights training and awareness. Both Peru and Ecuador have porous borders along southern Colombia, the major cultivation area of coca. Training should focus on professionalization of their respective military forces, strengthening border security, information/intelligence gathering as well as analytical capabilities, and integration of forces from different services.

All of these training efforts would be infused with respect for human rights to ensure compliance with U.S. statutes.

### Colombia: Human Rights

**When the U. S. began providing increased support through Plan Colombia for Colombia's efforts to significantly reduce or eliminate narco-terrorists operating in their**

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country, much concern was expressed about human rights abuses that the Colombian military forces had committed.

**Question: What is your assessment of the record of the Colombian military with regard to respect for human rights over the past three years?**

**Answer:** The Colombian military is the second most respected institution in Colombia today – first is the Catholic Church. The overall record of the Colombian military on human rights is positive. The Colombian government and military leadership have established a comprehensive human rights and international humanitarian law program. Every officer and soldier receives mandatory human rights training. Every military unit down to the battalion level has a human rights office responsible for providing human rights training, advising the unit commander on human rights issues, and tracking any credible allegations of human rights abuses against a member of the unit. Every member of every unit the U.S. military trains is vetted for human rights violations.

The Colombian military program includes partnerships with civil society groups, universities, and international organizations to collaborate on strengthening their human rights programs. In the past three years, human rights groups have accused these forces of committing less than 5 percent of gross human rights violations in country, a percentage far less than those of the 1980s and early 1990s. Another indicator of success is the fact that approximately 75 percent of the FARC, ELN, and AUC who demobilized—about 3,000 people—surrendered to military units, which they would not do if they thought that their human rights would be violated.

**Question: What progress has been made in reducing the links between Colombian military units and commanders, and paramilitary organizations that have had a record of human rights abuses?**

**Answer:** The Colombian military understands that illegal armed groups (IAGs), including the AUC forces, are an impediment to security and, ultimately, to peace in the country. While there is room for improvement in severing the Colombian military's links to the AUC, progress has been made in the areas of prosecution and censure of military officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and enlisted personnel with such ties. The Colombian government and the military have also instituted a variety of policies designed to fight collusion between government security forces and illegal armed groups. Prior to the peace process currently underway, the Colombian military actively pursued and engaged illegal armed groups, increasing the numbers of AUC killed in action or arrested. In part, it was this pressure that helped bring the AUC to the negotiating table.

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**Question: What more remains to be done and how would you approach the issue of respect for human rights in the Colombian military?**

**Answer:** The Colombian military has made significant advances on human rights and has conducted its operations against terrorist violence in accordance with human rights and international humanitarian law principles. Without security, the full exercise of human rights cannot be guaranteed. Colleagues in the human rights community are concerned that the balance in Colombia will tilt too far toward the guarantee of security at the expense of political and civil liberties. I understand this concern.

If confirmed, I will continue to help the Colombian military strengthen its judicial system and encourage prosecution of military members credibly accused of committing crimes or human rights violations. I will support further strengthening of human rights training programs, while at the same time encouraging the Colombian military to play a greater role in regional military human rights initiatives. Additionally, I will ensure that Southern Command continues its human rights policies throughout the region as a key component of Theater Security Cooperation.

### **Colombia: Force Protection**

**Plan Colombia and related efforts will involve the continued deployment of a number of U. S. service members and civilians to the region.**

**Question: What measures are being taken to ensure the protection of U. S. military and civilian personnel in the country in the case that they become targets of the insurgents, or narco-traffickers?**

**Answer:** U.S. military personnel are only permitted to operate from secure locations. The U.S. Military Group (USMILGP) Commander, who also serves as the U.S. Defense Representative, is charged with certifying the security of these locations prior to any deployment of U.S. personnel. In addition to the protection afforded by the Colombian Military, U.S. forces receive threat updates and antiterrorism training prior to deployment. The USMILGP Commander possesses the means to contact deployed units at any time to provide early warning or additional Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection guidance as necessary, and can initiate coordinated actions with the Colombian Military to safeguard U.S. Department of Defense personnel (evacuation, etc.). U.S. Department of Defense personnel usually do not leave the safety of the Colombian Military base. Standard rules of engagement are in effect for all U.S. DoD forces operating in Colombia, including the right of self-defense.

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**Question: What legal protections, if any, are provided for civilian contractors captured or accused of criminal behavior in Colombia?**

**Answer:** The U.S. government does not have any agreement with the Government of Colombia that provides legal status protection for civilian contractors from Colombian laws. If civilian contractors violate Colombian laws, they are subject to prosecution by Colombian authorities. I would note that U.S. military personnel deployed in Colombia are routinely afforded legal status protection with the approval of the Colombian Armed Forces Commander under the Military Missions Agreement of 1974.

As for the legal protections of civilian contractors captured by IAGs in Colombia, they are not prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions since the IAGs are narco-terrorist organizations and not party to the Geneva Conventions. The three U.S. civilian contractors currently held by the FARC are considered hostages illegally held by these narco-terrorists since February 2003.

### Colombia

**Recent reporting from Colombia indicates improved military performance by the Colombian Armed Forces in pursuing the narco-terrorist groups, and an increased willingness and commitment by the Government of Colombia to decisively address the terrorist insurgency in their country.**

**Question: Please outline your views regarding the current situation in Colombia focusing upon:**

**(1) the current military and political situation in Colombia;**

**Answer:** The Colombian military is becoming a professional and competent force, subordinate to civilian leadership, respectful of human rights and mindful of the rule of law. Under their national security strategy, the military has undertaken an ambitious new combat offensive to retake their national territory. The determination and progress demonstrated by the military to bring security, stability and the rule of law to the nation make the likelihood of a negotiated end-state greater than anytime in recent history.

President Uribe has provided much of the momentum for this window of opportunity. It is important to note that his efforts are resoundingly backed by the Colombian people, as demonstrated not only by his public approval ratings, but those of the armed forces. He has ensured much-needed political support for the Colombian military's efforts against illegal armed groups. His determination to make substantial progress in Colombia's war against narco-terrorism is admirable and is just what Colombia needs. He is taking the fight to the FARC, is making a concerted effort to achieve peace and demobilize the AUC, and is engaged in

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preliminary peace talks with the ELN. Since his inauguration in 2002, President Uribe has significantly enhanced security force capabilities, restored state presence to every municipality, and mobilized the citizenry to support state efforts.

### **(2) the ability of the Colombian military to regain control of its territory; and**

**Answer:** The Government of Colombia has demonstrated an unprecedented ability to extend presence and rule of law throughout its sovereign territory. Recent military operations are being executed on a scale and duration far beyond previous efforts. This is largely attributable to the political will of the current administration and the level of training and professionalism of the Colombian military.

### **(3) ongoing DOD programs, including the request to increase the U. S. troop cap to 800 military personnel and 600 contractor personnel, to assist the Colombian government in its counter-narcotics/terrorism efforts specifically, and its military training and military professionalism in general.**

**Answer:** As stated earlier, Colombia's security forces are undertaking an ambitious new combat offensive to retake their national territory. U.S. military and developmental assistance, diplomatic support and training are helping the Government of Colombia achieve this goal.

Having the authority to increase personnel levels to 800 military and 600 civilian contractors, consistent with our own operations and personnel tempo and the success of the Colombian military, will add flexibility which enables the U.S. to methodically provide trainers, technical assistance and maximize every opportunity.

## Venezuela

**With the upcoming referendum on President Chavez' leadership, politics in Venezuela remains volatile.**

**Question: Please describe the U. S. - Venezuelan military relationship.**

**Answer:** Southern Command maintains a current policy of fostering institutional ties with the Venezuelan military. This policy includes training and seminar activities in Venezuela, attendance at Professional Military Education (PME) training and conferences, invitations to regional exercises in which it has traditionally participated, and Traditional Commander Activities (TCA) by Venezuelan military members and government officials to the U.S.

The military relationship between the United States military and the Venezuelan military is at a historical low point. Despite Southern Command's efforts to maintain institutional ties with the

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Venezuelan military, pressure from President Chavez and his senior leadership has reduced our security cooperation activities with Venezuela to a minimum. Venezuela has recently cancelled planned participation in numerous Southern Command sponsored exercises. The Venezuelan military sends very few PME students to the U.S., has reduced the number of guest instructors it has in the U.S., and declined to participate in TCA Venezuela since January 2004. The U.S. Military Group moved from its offices on Venezuelan military bases to the U.S. embassy due to a request from the Venezuelan Minister of Defense. This negative trend in our relationship will probably not change in the near future.

**Question: What, if any, aspect of this relationship do you believe should be altered?**

**Answer:** I believe it is in the interest of the United States to maintain institutional ties with the Venezuelan military. We cannot influence them if we detach from them, but our engagement must be consistent with U.S. policy.

### Intelligence Requirements

**U.S. Southern Command has often reported reduced readiness levels of its intelligence capabilities because of the lack of airborne assets to adequately execute the counter-narcotics detection and monitoring mission. Part of the reason is the competition for assets with other theaters of operations.**

**Question: In your view, does U. S. Southern Command have adequate intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets available to it to accomplish its missions?**

**Answer:** While most commanders would prefer to have unlimited resources, the Department of Defense has mechanisms in place to continuously evaluate threats to U.S. security and assign assets consistent with Global Force Management procedures.

Southern Command has stated their requirements through the Integrated Priority List, which requires an integrated mixture of airborne, maritime and ground systems capable of detecting, monitoring and collecting intelligence. I have every confidence Southern Command will be awarded additional assets consistent with global threats to U.S. national security where the threats warrant these assets. Meanwhile, Southern Command will continue to optimize the assets assigned and work with both the Department of Defense and Congress to ensure our requirements are known.

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### WHINSEC

**Question: What is the relationship between U. S. Southern Command and the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC)?**

**Answer:** Although U.S. Southern Command is clearly a stakeholder, there is no formal command relationship between the U.S. Southern Command and WHINSEC. WHINSEC is directly subordinate to the Commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center (CAC). CAC Commander has oversight responsibility for WHINSEC and will ensure WHINSEC curriculum is in accordance with the intent of Congress, Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Army and U.S. Southern Command's Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) Plan. The Commander, U.S. Army Infantry Center and Fort Benning provide base operations support to WHINSEC as a U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) school. WHINSEC provides education and training to students from countries in the U.S. Southern Command's AOR.

**Question: What more, if anything, does WHINSEC need to do to emphasize human rights in its curriculum?**

**Answer:** WHINSEC is extremely proactive in the issue of human rights training. They have modified their curriculum to include historical case studies of human rights violations where students discuss what went wrong and ways violations could have been prevented. The cases reviewed include: My Lai, Srebrenitza, El Mozote (El Salvador), and the Jesuit Murders (El Salvador). Additionally, WHINSEC conducts a Human Rights instructor course, which this year has the highest-ever number of graduates.

**Question: In your view, how can WHINSEC improve its outreach efforts to individuals or groups interested in their activities?**

**Answer:** Since WHINSEC does not work for U.S. Southern Command, this question may best be reserved for the Department of the Army. We continue to rely upon WHINSEC as an educational institution to provide quality education to foreign military personnel from countries in our AOR.

## UNCLASSIFIED

### Detainee and Interrogation Operations

**U.S. Southern Command has been given significant responsibility for managing detainee and interrogation operations in the Global War on Terrorism, and is responsible for these operations at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.**

**Question: What is U. S. Southern Command's overall role in managing detainee and interrogation operations, not only at Guantanamo Bay, but in the larger Global War on Terrorism?**

**Answer:** U.S. Southern Command provides command, control and coordination that enables Joint Task Force (JTF)-Guantanamo to conduct detention and interrogation operations. These operations are to collect intelligence in support of the Global War on Terrorism. They also support law enforcement in conducting war crimes investigations. U.S. Southern Command through JTF-Guantanamo also supports the conduct of military tribunals. Additionally, JTF-Guantanamo conducts detainee screening operations, as requested, through the employment of Mobile Detainee Review and Screening Teams.

### Haiti

**Haiti continues to experience turmoil and instability.**

**Question: What is the current military, economic, and political situation in Haiti, including the role of the UN multinational peacekeeping force and the U. S. military?**

**Answer:** Unquestionably, the current situation in Haiti is more stable than it was in February of this year. The U.S. Southern Command-led Multinational Interim Force-Haiti did a tremendous job stabilizing the tenuous situation and providing a smooth transition to the United Nations Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH) under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1542 which authorizes the United Nations, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter (Peace Enforcement), to ensure a secure and stable environment for the constitutional and political process in Haiti to take place. The partner nations in Southern Command's AOR should be applauded for actively supporting the MINUSTAH. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Uruguay have forces on the ground in MINUSTAH, with Brazil as the lead country. Several other countries plan to deploy forces in the near future.

Haiti does not currently have a military, and security functions are accomplished by the Haitian National Police (HNP). The U.S. government is awaiting a decision from the Haitian Government to transform the HNP into a Haitian Defense Force. In coordination with U.S. Government initiatives, and in synchronization with United Nations activities, the U.S. military maintains a role in the continued transition in Haiti through security cooperation activities.

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The current political situation in Haiti is relatively stable, with MINUSTAH lending credence to the political process, which is being conducted in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Haiti. While Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, the country's economic situation is improving. However, a viable economy from foreign investment is dependent upon the continued stability of the political situation.

**Question: What trends are apparent with regard to the potential for any mass migration of Haitians to the U. S. mainland?**

**Answer:** There are no recent indications of a potential mass migration of Haitians to the U.S.

**Question: What role, if any, does Haiti play in the transshipment of drugs en route to the United States, and what capabilities does the Government of Haiti have to disrupt these illegal activities?**

**Answer:** Under the failing Aristide government, Haiti was a key transshipment point for drugs entering the U.S. due to its proximity, endemic political corruption, and extreme poverty. Current and future security operations will need to concentrate on this vulnerability in order for Haiti to cease being a haven for international drug traffickers.

The Government of Haiti has a very limited capability to deal with sophisticated drug trafficking organizations. Prime Minister Latortue has publicly stated the importance of disrupting the illicit drug trade in Haiti. Latortue has cooperated with U.S. efforts to arrest Haitian drug traffickers and attempted to increase counterdrug cooperation between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

### Congressional Oversight

**In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.**

**Question: Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?**

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question: Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?**

**Answer:** Yes.

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**Question: Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Commander, U. S. Southern Command?**

**Answer: Yes.**

**Question: Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?**

**Answer: Yes.**