

**Statement of
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Before the
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Peace Corps, Narcotics, and Terrorism**

Chairman Chafee and members of the Subcommittee. It is a pleasure for me to appear here today to testify on the narcotics crisis in Colombia. We in DEA believe that the international trafficking organizations based in Colombia who smuggle their illegal drugs into our country pose a formidable challenge to the national security of the United States. DEA is proud to play a key role in the U.S. Government's long-range strategy to assist Colombia in the counterdrug effort.

DEA is well aware that Colombia not only faces a drug trafficking crisis, but also is torn by an economic crisis and a generations-long civil conflict. There are, to be sure, regional and hemispheric concerns for stability rising from the current situation in Colombia. There is a wide range of witnesses here today who can, taken together, give you a broad picture. I am here to comment on the law enforcement aspects of dealing with international drug trafficking organizations operating in Colombia.

We have the highest confidence in the observations and conclusions we will share with you today. When DEA operates in foreign posts, we work within the legal systems of our host nations, of course in accord with U.S. law, and in cooperation with our host nation police agency counterparts. During our investigations, in partnership with our host nation counterparts, we gather and collect a wide range of information, including drug intelligence, on the trafficking organizations, which we target

1. DEA TARGETS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

DEA's mission, in Colombia as in other foreign postings, is to target the most powerful international drug syndicates that operate around the world, supplying drugs to American communities, and employing thousands of individuals to transport and distribute drugs. The most significant international drug syndicates operating today are far more powerful and violent than any organized criminal groups that we have experienced in American law enforcement. Today's major international organized crime drug syndicates are simply this new century's versions of traditional organized crime mobsters U.S. law enforcement officials have fought since the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Unlike traditional organized crime, however, these new criminals operate on a global scale.

Members of international groups headquartered in Colombia and Mexico today have at their disposal the most sophisticated communications technology as well as faxes, internet, and other communications equipment. Additionally, they have in their arsenal; aircraft, radar-equipped aircraft, weapons and an army of workers who oversee the drug business from its raw beginnings in South American jungles to the urban areas and core city locations within the United States. All of this modern technology and these vast resources enable the leaders of international criminal groups to build organizations which - together with their surrogates operating within the United

States -- reach into the heartland of America. The leaders in Colombia and Mexico, by creating organizations that carry out the work of transporting drugs into the United States and franchising others to distribute drugs, themselves try to remain beyond the reach of American justice. The traffickers also have the financial resources necessary to corrupt law enforcement, military, and political officials in order to create a relatively safe haven for themselves in the countries in which they make their headquarters.

As complex as these communications arrangements of organized crime groups are, U.S. law enforcement agencies have been able to exploit their communications by using court-approved telephone interceptions. With the top leadership of these organizations in hiding beyond the immediate reach of U.S. law enforcement, we have directed our resources at their organizational structure, and their transportation and distribution elements in the United States.

We have been able to identify, indict, and in many cases arrest, international drug traffickers because the very feature of their operations which makes them most formidable -- the ability to exercise effective command and control over a far-flung criminal enterprise -- is the feature that law enforcement can use against them, turning their strength into a weakness. However, it must be noted that the spread of encryption technology threatens to remove this essential investigative tool from our arsenal, and poses, in our view, a threat to the national security of the United States because it will hamper law enforcement efforts to protect our citizens from drug trafficking organizations operating abroad.

The international drug syndicates headquartered in Colombia, and operating through Mexico and the Caribbean, control both the sources and the flow of drugs into the United States. The vast majority of the cocaine entering the United States continues to come from the source countries of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. Virtually all of the heroin produced in Colombia is destined for the U.S. market. In fact, Colombia has over the past five years become the leading source of heroin in the United States. Recent statistical data indicate that as much as 75% of the heroin seized and analyzed by Federal authorities in the United States is of Colombian origin. For the past two decades - up to recent years - crime groups from Colombia ruled the drug trade with an iron fist, increasing their profit margin by controlling the entire continuum of the cocaine market. Their control ranged from the coca leaf and cocaine base production in Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia, to the cocaine hydrochloride (HCl) production and processing centers in Colombia, to the wholesale distribution of cocaine on the streets of the United States.

Colombian traffickers continue to import cocaine base from the jungles of Bolivia and Peru, but in ever decreasing amounts. Coca leaf production has increased dramatically within Colombia itself, however the traffickers move the cocaine to the large cocaine HCl conversion laboratories in southern Colombia. The vast majority of the cocaine base and cocaine HCl destined for the United States is produced in these laboratories. Many of these activities take place in the southern rain forests and eastern lowlands of Colombia. Most of the coca cultivation in Colombia occurs in the Departments of Guaviare, Caqueta, and Putumayo. This cultivation occurs in areas where there is limited, if any, government control or presence. Cocaine conversion laboratories range from smaller "family" operations to much larger facilities, employing dozens of workers. Once the cocaine HCl is manufactured, it is either shipped via maritime vessels or aircraft to traffickers in Mexico, or shipped through the Caribbean corridor, including the Bahamas Island chain, to U.S. entry points in Puerto Rico, Miami, and New York.

Over half of the cocaine entering the United States continues to come from Colombia through Mexico and across U.S. border points of entry. Most of this cocaine enters the United States in privately-owned vehicles and commercial trucks. There is new evidence that indicates a few traffickers in Mexico have gone directly to sources of cocaine in Bolivia and Peru in order to circumvent Colombian middlemen.

Drug trafficking in the Caribbean is overwhelmingly influenced by Colombian organized criminal groups. The Caribbean had long been a favorite smuggling route used by the Cali and Medellin crime groups to smuggle cocaine to the United States. During the late 1970s and the 1980s, drug lords from Medellin and Cali, Colombia established a labyrinth of smuggling routes throughout the central Caribbean, including Haiti, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamian Island chain to South Florida, using a variety of smuggling techniques to transfer their cocaine to U. S. markets. Smuggling scenarios included airdrops of 500-700 kilograms in the Bahamian Island chain and off the coast of Puerto Rico, mid-ocean boat-to-boat transfers of 500 to 2,000 kilograms, and the commercial shipment of multi-tons of cocaine through the port of Miami.

2. CURRENT COLOMBIAN DRUG TRAFFICKING GROUPS

Colombian drug trafficking groups are no longer the monolithic organizations they were over most of the past two decades. After Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela and his confederates in the Cali Cartel were brought to justice by Colombian authorities in 1995, new groups from the North Valle del Cauca began vying for control of the lucrative markets on the United States East Coast, previously dominated by Rodriguez Orejuela. Experienced traffickers who have been active for years--but worked in the shadow of the Cali drug lords-- have proven adept at seizing opportunities to increase their role in the drug trade. Many of these organizations began to re-activate traditional trafficking routes in the Caribbean to move their product to market.

DEA's focus on the Cali organization's command and control functions in the U.S. enabled us to build formidable cases against the Cali leaders, which allowed our Colombian counterparts to accomplish the almost unimaginable-- the arrest and incarceration of the entire infrastructure of the most powerful crime group in history. Although the incarceration of Cali traffickers may continue to direct a portion of their operation from prison they are no longer able to maintain control over this once monolithic giant. Now, the independent groups of traffickers from the Northern Valle del Cauca have replaced the highly structured, centrally controlled business operations of the Cali Cartel. These new groups tend to be smaller and less monolithic, however, they continue to rely on fear and violence to expand and control their trafficking empires.

DEA has identified the major organizations based on the northern coast of Colombia that have deployed command and control cells in the Caribbean Basin to funnel tons of cocaine to the United States each year. Colombian managers, who have been dispatched to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, operate these command and control centers and are responsible for overseeing drug trafficking in the region. These groups are also directing networks of transporters that oversee the importation, storage, exportation, and wholesale distribution of cocaine destined for the continental United States.

In addition to trafficking their own cocaine, organizations operating out of Colombia supply almost all of the cocaine to the Mexican crime syndicates. The Mexican organizations purchase cocaine, as well as accepting cocaine in payment for services, from Colombian groups. This change in the manner in which business is conducted is also driven by the new trafficking groups in Colombia,

who have chosen to return to the Caribbean in order to move their cocaine to the United States.

Mexican organized crime syndicates now control the wholesale distribution of cocaine in the western half and the Midwest of the United States. Moreover, the Colombians have franchised to criminals from the Dominican Republic a portion of the mid-level wholesale cocaine and heroin trade on the East Coast of the U.S. The Colombian groups remain, however, in control of the sources of supply. The Dominican trafficking groups, already firmly entrenched as low-level cocaine and heroin wholesalers in the larger northeastern cities, were uniquely placed to assume a far more significant role in this multi-billion-dollar business.

The Dominican traffickers operating in the U.S., and not the Colombians, are now the ones subject to arrest, while the top level Colombians control the organization with sophisticated telecommunications. This change in operations reduces profits somewhat for the syndicate leaders. It succeeds, however, also in reducing their exposure to U.S. law enforcement. When arrested, the Dominicans will have little damaging information that can be used against their Colombian masters. Reducing their exposure, together with sophisticated communications, puts the Colombian bosses closer to their goal of operating from a political, legal, and electronic sanctuary. Colombian drug traffickers' efforts to reduce their exposure is clearly linked to the 1997 change in Colombian constitutional law which, once again, exposes the Colombians to extradition to the United States for drug crimes.

Colombia has always been the world's number one producer of finished cocaine HCl. Colombia now also has the dubious honor of also being the world's largest producer of cocaine base. These changing dynamics highlight the fact that Colombian cocaine trafficking organizations continue to dominate the international cocaine trade. Over the past several years, Colombian coca cultivation and cocaine production have been increasing dramatically.

Net cultivation in 1998 was 101,800 hectares, yielding an estimated 437,500 MT of leaf - equal to 435 MT of cocaine base. New data obtained from DEA's Operation BREAKTHROUGH has since been used by the CIA Crime and Narcotics Center (CNC) to recalculate how much cocaine may have been produced in 1998 from Colombia's domestic coca crop. Much of the difference is because DEA has recently provided new data based on re-calculation of alkaloid content, crop yield, and lab efficiency in Colombia.

For the above reasons, in official figures released earlier this month, the CNC now estimates Colombia's potential cocaine production in 1998 at 435 metric tons, compared to the previously announced 1998 estimate of 165 metric tons. As also announced, using the updated cocaine production formula based on the new Operation Breakthrough results, the CNC now estimates Colombia's potential 1999 cocaine production from Colombia's domestic coca crop to be 520 metric tons, based on cultivation of 122,900 hectares of coca.

In historical perspective, in 1989 Colombia had 42,400 hectares net cultivation in coca, after eradicating 640 hectares, and produced 33,900 MT of leaf. Although there was no official estimate for that year, a comparable amount of leaf would yield slightly over 65 MT of HCl. It may appear from these statistics that Colombian production of HCl has increased from 65 MT to over 435 MT in ten years. We must bear in mind, however, that the 1989 estimate and the 1998 or 1999 numbers are based on different calculations, methodology, and levels of confidence. We

have, so far, worked the new formula backward in time only as far as 1995. The ten year increase might not, therefore, be quite as dramatic as it appears. Net Coca cultivation was about 50,000 hectares in 1995, and has doubled since then - at the same time as net cultivation decreased in Bolivia and Peru. Interdiction programs like Peru's operation AIRBRIDGE, which denied Peruvian airspace to traffickers flying cocaine base into Colombia, forced traffickers to utilize alternative routes and methods - such as using better communications security during their flights, flying from closer to the Peruvian border and through Brazilian airspace, and using riverine routes. The Colombian traffickers also sought to become more self-sufficient by increasing cocaine base production within Colombia itself, to offset the decline in base previously brought in from Peru and Bolivia.

3. COLOMBIAN CRIME GROUPS IN THE U.S.

Colombian cocaine trafficking groups in the U.S. -- consisting of mid-level traffickers answering to the bosses in Colombia -- continue to be organized around compartmented "cells" that operate within a given geographic area. Some cells specialize in a particular facet of the drug trade, such as cocaine transport, storage, wholesale distribution, or money laundering. Each cell, which may be comprised of 10 or more employees, operates with little or no knowledge about the membership in, or drug operations of, other cells.

The head of each cell reports to a higher manager who is responsible for the overall management of several cells. The regional director, in turn, reports directly to one of the drug lords of a particular organization or their designee based in Colombia. A rigid top-down command and control structure is characteristic of these groups. Trusted lieutenants of the organization in the U.S. have discretion in the day-to-day operations, but ultimate authority rests with the leadership in Colombia.

Upper echelon and management levels of these cells are normally comprised of family members or long-time close associates who can be trusted by the Colombian drug lords -- because their family members remain in Colombia as hostages to the cell members' good behavior -- to handle their day-to-day drug operations in the United States. The trusted personal nature of these organizations makes it that much harder to penetrate the organizations with confidential sources. That difficulty with penetration makes intercepting criminal telephone calls all the more vital. They report back to Colombia via cell phone, fax and other communications methods. Colombian drug traffickers continually employ a variety of counter-surveillance techniques and tactics, such as fake drug transactions, using telephones they suspect are monitored, limited-time use of cloned cell phones (frequently a week or less), limited use of pagers (from 2 to 4 weeks), and use of calling cards. The top level managers of these Colombian organizations increasingly use sophisticated communications, posing a severe challenge to law enforcement's ability to conduct effective investigations.

4. INSURGENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE DRUG TRADE

There continues to be deep concern in DEA, as in the rest of the Administration and in the Congress, about the connection between the FARC and other groups in Colombia and the drug trade. The Colombian government is now engaged in responding to this challenge. DEA will continue to closely monitor the situation.

An alliance of convenience between guerillas and traffickers is nothing new. Since the 1970s, drug traffickers based in Colombia have made temporary alliances of convenience with leftist guerillas, or with right wing groups. In each case, this has been done to secure protection for the drug interests. At other times, the drug traffickers have financed their own private armies to provide security services. Some insurgent and paramilitary groups have, in fact, become little more than bands of well-armed thugs selling their services to drug traffickers.

The presence of the insurgents in Colombia's eastern lowlands and southern rainforest--the country's primary coca cultivation and cocaine processing regions--hinders the Colombian Government's ability to conduct counterdrug operations. The frequent ground fire sustained by Colombian National Police eradication aircraft operating in insurgent occupied areas shows the extent to which some insurgent units will go to protect the economic interests of their "local constituents" (i.e., coca farmers and drug traffickers). Likewise, insurgent attacks continue to pose a threat to CNP personnel, supported by the DEA conducting operations, against clandestine labs. Some insurgent units raise funds through extortion or by protecting laboratory operations. In return for cash payments, or possibly in exchange for weapons, the insurgents protect cocaine laboratories in southern Colombia.

The most recent DEA reporting indicates that some FARC units in southern Colombia are indeed directly involved in drug trafficking activities, such as controlling local cocaine base markets. Some insurgent units have assisted drug trafficking groups in transporting and storing cocaine and marijuana within Colombia. In particular, some insurgent units protect clandestine airstrips in southern Colombia. There remains, however, no information that any FARC or ELN units have established international transportation, wholesale distribution, or drug money laundering networks in the United States or Europe. Northern and central Colombia continues to be the primary base of operations for paramilitary groups. Recent reporting, however, indicates that paramilitary groups have become more active in southern Colombia.

Most of these paramilitary groups do not appear to be directly involved in any significant coca, opium poppy, or marijuana cultivation. Paramilitary leader Carlos Castano has recently admitted, however, that his group receives payments - similar to the taxes levied by the FARC -- from coca growers in southern Colombia to protect them from guerrillas, according to press reporting.

Several paramilitary groups also raise funds through extortion, or by protecting laboratory operations in northern and central Colombia. The Carlos Castano organization, and possibly other paramilitary groups, appear to be directly involved in processing cocaine. At least one of these paramilitary groups appears to be involved in exporting cocaine from Colombia.

5. LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Colombian National Police is a major law enforcement organization with a long and honored tradition of integrity. Under the direct command of General Rosso Jose Serrano, the CNP has become recognized for its dedication, patriotism and commitment to integrity. The CNP has introduced fundamental changes in the force in order to make it a thoroughly modern and efficient institution within the context of Colombia and the international community.

General Serrano has been an effective advocate on behalf of the thousands of loyal and dedicated Colombian National Police officers within the ranks. He has encouraged their

motivation, even in the face of the tragic losses of over 900 fellow police officers in the last three years alone. The fact that the CNP, and other members of Colombia's law enforcement community, were able and willing to pursue operations against the drug underworld is a testament to their professionalism and dedication.

All of the top Cali drug lords either have been captured by the CNP, have died, were killed, or have surrendered to Colombian authorities. These unprecedented drug law enforcement successes were the culmination of years of investigative efforts by the CNP, with active support from DEA. Unfortunately, Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela and his associates, who comprised the most powerful international organized crime group in history initially received shamefully short sentences for their crimes. In January 1997, Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela was sentenced to 10 years in prison on drug trafficking charges. As a result of Colombia's lenient sentencing laws, however, Gilberto may serve only five years. Miguel, originally sentenced to 9 years, was later sentenced to 21 years on Colombian charges based on evidence supplied by the United States Government in the Tampa, Florida, evidence-sharing case. Miguel is expected to serve less than 13 years in prison. The Colombian judicial system must be strengthened so that the traffickers, once convicted, are sentenced to terms commensurate with their crimes.

The CNP continues to pursue significant drug investigations in cooperation with the DEA. The CNP is also aggressively pursuing significant counterdrug operations against cocaine processing laboratories, transportation networks, and trafficker command and control elements. We expect these operations will result in prosecutions in both Colombia and the United States.

On October 13, 1999, the CNP, the Colombian Prosecutor General's Office, DEA, the U.S. Attorney's Office and Department of Justice Criminal Division carried out OPERATION MILLENIUM. MILLENIUM was a long-term, complex investigation targeting the inner workings of several of the most important international drug trafficking organizations operating in Colombia and Mexico, and smuggling their product into the United States. This operation resulted in the indictment and arrest of one of the former leaders of the Medellin drug cartel, Fabio Ochoa-Vasquez along with 30 other extremely significant defendants. Operation MILLENIUM effectively targeted major cocaine suppliers who had been responsible for shipping vast quantities of cocaine from Colombia through Mexico into the United States. MILLENIUM targeted drug kingpin Alejandro Bernal-Madrigal, who, by his own admission, had been smuggling 30 tons, or 500 million dosage units, of cocaine into the United States every month. U.S. law enforcement authorities seized more than 13,000 kilograms of cocaine during the last two weeks of August alone.

The U.S. Government has requested extradition of all 31 defendants. The criminal acts for which they were arrested all took place after December 17, 1997, the effective date of Colombian legislation allowing for renewed extradition of Colombian nationals. It has long been the case that the greatest fear of these major traffickers is that they could face extradition to the U.S., efficient trials, and conviction to terms commensurate with the enormity of their crimes.

Once the extraditions to the United States of the MILLENIUM targets is completed, that operation will be the most successful and significant drug enforcement event since the elimination of the Medellin cartel. Operation MILLENIUM would simply not have been possible without the dedicated cooperation of the CNP and the Colombian Prosecutor General's Office.

6. OVERVIEW OF PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMS:

Due to the precarious and ever-changing dynamics of the cocaine trade in South America, the DEA Bogota Country Office (BCO), in conjunction with the United States Embassy in Colombia, developed strategies to identify, investigate and dismantle major drug trafficking organizations. The DEA South American Regional Plan (SARP) and the United States Mission Performance Plan (MPP) are the primary strategies developed by the BCO and U.S. Embassy in Colombia to direct and guide DEA and U.S. counter-drug efforts in Colombia. In essence, the SARP and the MPP prioritize targeting the significant drug trafficking organizations operating throughout Colombia. The SARP and MPP are the foundation of the BCO Work Plan. Essentially, the BCO Work Plan is based on the premise that the organizations controlling the manufacture and transportation of cocaine HCl are the most vulnerable elements of the drug trafficking organizations. As such, the BCO directs available resources at these factions in an effort to identify and ultimately immobilize them.

Based upon the BCO Work Plan, the BCO will enhance resources in the area known as the Colombian Source Zone. This is an area southeast of the Andes mountains characterized by few roads, no rail transportation, very little commercial air traffic, many clandestine airstrips and an extensive river system linking this area to Peru, Brazil and Venezuela. The BCO and United States Country Team believe that by augmenting resources in the Colombian Source Zone, the amount of cocaine HCl available for transportation to the United States will be significantly reduced.

As in the past, the BCO will continue to direct assets and resources at the command and control structures of major drug trafficking organizations operating throughout Colombia. These organizations operate primarily northwest of the Andes Mountains and throughout major Colombian cities. These organizations also control transportation of cocaine HCl from the Colombian Transit Zone (that area adjacent to both Colombian coasts) to the United States, as well as other countries, for eventual distribution.

As alluded to earlier, the BCO has noted a significant increase in seizures of Colombian heroin, both in Colombia and the United States. The BCO will strengthen its resources dedicated to targeting the organizations controlling the manufacture and transportation of heroin from Colombia to the United States.

All BCO programs, in one form or another, will focus on the identification and immobilization of major drug trafficking organizations operating throughout Colombia. To further augment these objectives, programs such as the Andean Initiative, Sensitive Investigations Unit, and Intelligence Collection will be the primary support for the BCO's enforcement efforts. These programs will be further enhanced through the Information Analysis/Operations Center (IA/OC). All programs targeting major drug trafficking organizations will be in conjunction with the United States Embassy counterdrug strategy and the MPP.

Furthermore, the Sensitive Investigation Units, Heroin Task Force, Operation Selva Verde and other units such as the Comando Especial del Ejercito will be tasked to initiate significant investigations targeting the command and control structure of the major drug trafficking organizations. These units will target organizations operating in the Colombian Source Zone and other areas of Colombia. The units will be encouraged to work simultaneously with DEA domestic offices in coordinated transnational investigations targeting all aspects of these organizations so

as to maximize both the effect and the return on the investment. In addition, the BCO will continue to enhance and promote host nation and regional counterdrug cooperation throughout the area.

To attain each of the goals set forth in the 2000 SARP, it is the BCO's conviction that joint investigations between Colombian and U.S. authorities will garner the most significant and damaging results against international drug trafficking organizations. As revealed in Operation Millennium, such endeavors require extensive coordination among a myriad of agencies, both in Colombia and the United States, respectively. Given this, the BCO is continuing to break new ground in this area and believes several significant investigations will result from this continued cooperation.

7. CONCLUSION: HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

By way of conclusion, we can and should continue to identify and build cases against the leaders of the new criminal groups from Colombia. These criminals have already moved to make our task more difficult by withdrawing from positions of vulnerability and maintaining a much lower profile than their predecessors. A number of initiatives hold particular promise for success:

- The U.S. Embassy's Information Analysis/Operations Center (IA/OC) will be increasingly utilized to coordinate and analyze tactical information regarding the activities of drug trafficking groups active in the Colombian territories south and east of the Andes Mountains. The IAOC is comprised of personnel from the DEA Bogota Country Office and the U.S. Military's Tactical Analysis Team. Support and staffing also are provided by the Defense Attaché Office and the State Department. Furthermore, the IA/OC will remain instrumental in the continuance of DEA's support for the host nation communications intercept program, which provides intelligence about the organizations controlling the manufacture and movement of cocaine. This organization should be the focal point for counterdrug intelligence and law enforcement cooperation in Colombia.
- The special program of vetted units, funded by the U.S. Congress under the Vetted Unit Initiative, will make it possible to convert existing partially vetted units of the CNP into fully vetted teams. These teams of investigators will work closely with DEA and will conduct high level drug investigations in Colombia and the region without fear of compromise. This program is, by far, our most important investigative tool.
- We intend to carry out even more of the cutting-edge, sophisticated investigations like MILLENIUM, as part of a joint DoJ Criminal Division/DEA bilateral case initiative with our Colombian counterparts. Such operations benefit from the closest possible cooperation between the DEA and CNP. These investigations will continue to lead to the dismantling of major portions of the most significant drug trafficking organizations operating in Colombia today. Operation Millennium successfully targeted traffickers who had previously operated without fear of capture or prosecution in the United States, believing that only their low-level operatives were at risk. These operations effectively demonstrated that even the highest level traffickers based in foreign countries can not manage drug operations inside the United States with impunity. Operation Millennium was made possible by direct support from the governments of Colombia and Mexico, in addition to collaborative efforts between the DEA and foreign law enforcement agencies. These operations underscore the importance of cooperation among international drug law enforcement agencies.

- DEA will continue to work closely with specially trained and vetted Colombian task force units to develop joint cases, such as Operation Millennium. Plan Colombia provides for specific support for these types of initiatives, including training and support for a counter narcotics task force and an anti-money laundering and asset forfeiture task force. We look forward to supporting these training programs and then working with our Colombian counterparts in the day-to-day investigative work, which leads to successful cases.
- DEA supports Plan Colombia. DEA will continue to work closely with specially trained and "vetted" Colombian law enforcement units, other Colombian law enforcement agencies and Colombian prosecutors to initiate joint investigations such as Operation Millennium.
- Colombia faces dramatic challenges to the rule of law, many of which are directly related to drug trafficking. Plan Colombia addresses many of these elements. The support to multilateral investigations, counter drug units and money laundering sections of the Justice Initiative portion of Plan Colombia can support DEA, Colombian National Police, DAS and Colombian Prosecutors efforts to fight drug trafficking in Colombia.

Other sections of the Justice Initiative of Plan Colombia can provide indirect support to DEA, Colombian National Police, DAS and Colombian Prosecutors efforts to investigate major Colombian Drug Trafficking Organizations. These sections include support to money laundering and asset forfeiture, training for police prosecutors and judges, security for victim and witnesses, prison assistance and procedural and legislative reforms to the Colombian legal system.

The DEA remains committed to our primary goal of targeting and arresting the most significant drug traffickers in the world today. In particular, we will continue to work with our partners in Colombia -- and throughout the world --- to improve our cooperative efforts against international drug smuggling. The ultimate test of success will come when we bring to justice the drug lords who control their vast empires of crime which bring misery to the nations in which they operate. They must be arrested, tried and convicted, and sentenced in their own countries to prison terms commensurate with their crimes, or, as appropriate, extradited to the United States to face justice in U.S. courts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee today. I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have.