



2550 M Street NW  
Washington DC 20037  
(202) 457-6000

Facsimile (202) 457-6315

## MEMORANDUM

Privileged and confidential  
attorney work product

---

**To:** Embassy of Venezuela  
**From:** Patton Boggs  
**Date:** February 12, 2004  
**Subject:** Colombia Strategy

---

Recent events have emphasized the importance of early finalization of a coherent and finely tuned strategy for dealing with the "Colombia issues" and the widely held misperceptions which persist in the minds of some leaders in the U.S. Administration, the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Military. These misconceptions, and those seeking to perpetuate them, present significant impediments to the normalization of relations between the U. S. and Venezuela. An aggressive and carefully formulated response strategy will be a key element of successful representation in the coming year.

### Anatomy of the Issue

The Colombia issues are perhaps the most important subset of a pattern of allegations conceived, advanced and perpetuated by the opposition-controlled Venezuelan Media (and supported by sympathizers on the political right in the U.S., Colombia and elsewhere) to the effect that Venezuela is supporting terrorists in Latin America, refusing to cooperate with U.S. supported counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism efforts and otherwise impeding the "War on Terrorism". That "war", of course, is an ultimate U.S. priority and a primary driving force of U.S. foreign policy.

The U.S. is deeply invested in "Plan Colombia" - a drug interdiction effort which, since September 11, has been re-christened as an effort to combat "narco-terrorism" or, in some instances, simply terrorism. Insurgents in Colombia are often on the left, and the present Government is to the right. Unlike Venezuela, substantial Colombian economic interests are heavily dependent on the drug trade. Thus, it is not surprising that the Colombia issues have been at the leading edge of an effort to tar Venezuela with an image as a Terrorist Harbinger and a non-cooperator in the War on Terrorism, particularly with respect to the "Plan Colombia" Aspects. The precise allegations, as outlined in the defeated Senate version of H.R. 2673 - the 2004 Omnibus Appropriations bill - are that:

1. Venezuela has failed to cooperate in the U.S. supported efforts of the Colombian Government to interdict drugs and suppress narco-terrorism; and
2. Venezuela has supported or assisted groups designated as terrorist organizations in Colombia.

Though these allegations were withdrawn prior to the legislation's final passage in the House, the Conference Report does request a State Department ninety day study and report on both issues. It thus seems likely that satisfactory conclusions will be essential if continued improvement in the bilateral relationship is to be achieved.

**Venezuela's Position** - Venezuela denies that it has either failed to cooperate in U.S. Colombia drug interdiction and counter-terrorism efforts or supported any Colombian terrorist organizations. (The specific elements of Venezuelan policy are outlined in more detail in Attachment 1).

**Strategy Elements** - Our strategy for dealing with these key policy issues focuses directly on the State Department study called for by the Appropriations Committees' Conference Report and seeks to use that study as a departure point for constructive dialog. The strategy includes four basic elements:

1. A Clear Statement of Venezuela's Position regarding the Colombia Issues (Attachment 1);
2. Documentation of Past and Continuing Efforts to Cooperate on Drug Interdiction Matters (Attachment 2);
3. Documented Rebuttal of Public Allegations of Activities Supporting Groups designated as terrorists in Colombia (Attachment 3);
4. A Process for Effectively Presenting Venezuela's position to key decision makers in the Congress and appropriate Agencies (Attachment 4).

The attachments to this memo outline these elements in detail.

## ATTACHMENT 1

### *Venezuela's Policy Regarding Colombia*

1. Venezuela's primary concerns are the Integrity of its Borders and the Safety of its People -- including its military personnel. Venezuela is the country whose citizens and territory have been most adversely impacted by kidnappings, killings and military engagements on or near the border. The Country has committed extensive resources and National Guard Forces to the control of this border. However, the tactical and strategic challenges of completely policing a 1,400 mile border with difficult terrain and heavy cover must be acknowledged and understood.
2. Venezuela is taking and will continue to take all reasonable steps to deny entry into its territory by any irregular armed forces and will take all reasonable actions to interdict the use of its territory for staging, supply or logistical purposes or for drug marketing or transport.
3. Venezuela has cooperated and will continue to cooperate with Colombian authorities in furtherance of the peace process, in the seizure of drugs and the arrest of drug traffickers, in the prevention and ending of kidnappings, in the capture or killing of hostile forces in its territory, in the interdiction of supply lines and in the policing of the border. Venezuela would welcome a similar level of effort and cooperation from the Colombian side.
4. Venezuela is willing to implement enhanced cooperation activities and to enhance its own efforts to the extent that such enhancements are consistent with the objectives of maintaining Border Integrity and the Safety of Venezuelan People, consistent with Venezuela's sovereign status and national policy and achievable within the limits of available resources. A dialog on this matter would be welcomed.
5. Venezuela emphasizes that policy makers who sincerely wish to fairly assess "the Colombian issues" must take care to discount reports fostered by hostile Colombian and Venezuelan media who see confrontation between the U.S. and Venezuela over Plan Colombia issues as a mechanism for destabilizing the Chavez administration and impeding progressive political forces throughout Latin America. Assertions need to be tested and facts confirmed before opinions are developed.
6. Venezuela believes that the relationship between Venezuela and Colombia is a bilateral matter between these two countries. In that relationship, Venezuela is guided by the policies and positions of the United Nations and the Organization of American States regarding the legitimacy of the present Government of Colombia and the peaceful and constructive resolution of disputes.

## ATTACHMENT 2

### *Documentation of Venezuelan Cooperation in U.S./Colombia Drug Interdiction Efforts*

The Country's commitment to eliminating drug trade is clear and undivided. Unlike a number of other Latin American countries, Venezuela is not a site of significant drug production and no legitimate sector of the Venezuelan economy depends on drug trafficking for employment or as a revenue source. Thus, although Venezuela is not a direct participant in Plan Colombia and receives no funding or assistance for its efforts in this connection, and despite false impressions fostered by hostile media to the effect that Venezuela may provide assistance to Colombian guerillas and may be a less than willing participant in efforts to curtail drug traffic, the facts clearly demonstrate that Venezuela has been an extremely effective force in interdicting drug traffic and combating terrorism in areas subject to its jurisdiction. Venezuela's security policies, doctrine, and organizational structure set a clear delineation between combatants (e.g., armed guerillas) which constitute military threats, and drug trafficking and terrorist threats. The first category is under the cognizance of the military; the second is handled by police and law enforcement entities. The following are examples of Venezuela's Initiatives, Programs and Progress.

#### Initiatives and Programs

1. Development of improved joint procedures for surveillance and disposition of air, ground, and waterborne (river, sea) suspicious and illicit traffic.
2. Continuation and enhancement of the Venezuelan Air Force training program with the 140<sup>th</sup> Air National Guard Squadron (Puerto Rico).
3. Increased operational employment and development of location strategies for surface radar coverage of border areas in the South and West.
4. Continuing participation in the Caribbean Radar Network (U.S. Southern Command) despite severely needed capabilities in Venezuelan radars owing to maintenance and modification/upgrade.
5. Policy of sharing of all airspace tracking and other surveillance information with the U.S. (JPAT and U.S. Southern Command) and other regional partners.
6. Procurement of C-26 aircraft, further appropriation for upgrades in radar and in night vision, navigation, and communications capabilities.
7. Upgrade programs for other CN and AT aircraft (OV-10; Cougar and Super Puma helicopters) to enhance night operation and navigation capabilities.
8. Increased tempo and effectiveness of airspace tracking and interception of suspicious and illicit traffic.
9. Increased tempo and effectiveness of anti-drug seizure operations.

10. Passage of the Anti-terrorism law.
11. Improvement and expansion of border operations (Colombia) by designating operational theaters and by assigning in July 2003, two Special Operations Brigades within them.
12. Appropriations of approximately \$10 million for upgrades in equipment and installations for Anti-terrorism forces.
13. Intensified operations by the Anti-Extortion and Anti-Kidnapping Group (part of Regional Command Number 3).

**Bilateral Programs: Colombia**

1. Continual joint air defense operations within both the RRCC (Caribbean Radar Network) and COMBIFRON (Colombia Bi-national Boundary Committee).
2. Mutual advanced warning and continual exchange of information in the identification and disposition of suspicious air traffic.

**Bilateral Programs: United States**

Operations in virtually all facets of air defense to include: advanced warning, ongoing exchange of information and data, and disposition of suspicious and illicit traffic.

**Bilateral Exercises/Operations: Brazil**

Since 2000, two "VenBras" Operations have been conducted, with a third scheduled for 2004. These operations are conducted with the Brazilian Air Defense Command, and provide training and practice in tracking of airspace transgressions, intercept procedures, and exchange of information.

**Regional Programs**

1. Current and active participation with the Committee on the Control of Illicit flights, COVI (Illicit Flights Committee), SICOFAA (American Air Forces Cooperating System).
2. Continuous exchange of information.
3. Promotion and advocacy of bi-lateral agreements and pacts (RRCC and COMBIFRON).
4. Active participation with the Anti-Drugs United Committee, Interdiction Subcommittee (2000, 2001).
5. Ongoing exchange of information regarding the latest operational modes of illicit flights and related strategies for preventing and stopping such flights.
6. Development of agreements with Brazil on procedures for information exchange.

7. Planning for combined exercises/operations with Brazil, Argentina, and Chile.

Venezuelan authorities have been successful in curtailing drug traffic, thwarting kidnapping (and other types of terrorism) and capturing and delivering terrorists to justice fully substantiate this factual demonstration.

### **Results and Progress**

1. Enhanced procedures to provide current updates on the regional airspace areas where illicit flights are concentrated.
2. Establishment of critical control areas for illicit flights in Venezuelan airspace.
3. Detection, analysis, recording of changes and patterns in flight paths and maneuvers, and development of tactics to counter the changes.
4. Continual update in joint procedures for unauthorized flights and for anti-drug and anti-terrorism operational procedures.
5. Improved joint and combined training on employment and interoperability of weapons and equipment.
6. Periodic review and revision of bi-national agreements and pacts.
7. Establishment of doctrinal joint procedures for the nation-to-nation transfer of tracking information on illicit flights and other traffic.
8. Establishment of coordinated combined schedules for Venezuelan, U.S., and Colombian interceptors.
9. Facilitation and promotion of regional and international coordination and integration of security interests and procedures.
10. More robust border protection for both Colombia and Venezuela.
11. Enhanced effectiveness of aircraft (OV-10, C-26, Super Puma) surveillance and overall operational capability.
12. Enhanced regional radar coverage and surveillance.
13. Increased effectiveness, interceptions of illicit air traffic (see attached chart).
14. Excellent record of illicit traffic identification for JPAT.
15. Increased seizures of drugs (see list on next page).
16. Increased seizures of base chemicals and related materials (see list on next page).

**RELEVANT DRUG SEIZURES OPERATIONS CONDUCTED  
BY THE VENEZUELA NATIONAL GUARD IN 2003**

1. March 1, 2003 – **Operation Guajira** – Municipality of Mara, State of Zulia: seizure of 1.413 kilograms of cocaine.
2. March 7 and 11, 2003 – **Operation North Coast** – State of Sucre: seizure of 5.489 kilograms of cocaine and 99 kilograms of marihuana.
3. November 10, 2003 – **Operation UNARE** – Municipality of Cumana, State of Sucre: seizure of 4.250 kilograms of cocaine. Prior to this operation, a Special Brigade encountered an armed group in San José de la Gardona linked to drug trafficking. Seven civilian Colombia nationals died and a lot of long range weapons were seized.
4. November 14, 2003 – **Operation South of the Lake** – Municipality of El Guayabo, State of Zulia: seizure of 734 kilograms of marihuana.
5. November 21, 2003 – **Operation UNARE** – Municipality of Cumana, State of Sucre: seizure of 2.697 kilograms of cocaine, linked to the November 10<sup>th</sup> operation.
6. November 29, 2003 – **Operation CARORA** – Municipality of Carora, State of Lara: seizure of 1.413 kilograms of cocaine.
7. December 27, 2003 – **Operation Dignity** – Municipality of José María Semprum, State of Zulia: in the joint operations deployed after the attack of a military patrol assigned to the Tres Bocas Post of the DF-32, where four members of the National Guard were killed, a nursery was found in a sector east of this Municipality adjacent to the border with Colombia, where 6,000 coca plants were destroyed.

**TOTAL OF DRUGS SEIZED BY THE NATIONAL GUARD  
FROM JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2003**

<u>Drug</u>	<u>Quantity (KGS)</u>	<u>Liquid Cocaine</u>	<u>Ecstasy</u>	<u>Liquid Ecstasy</u>	<u>Detained</u>
Cocaine	21,307,585	9.980 liters	61,972 pills	198 liters	Venezuelans: 388
Marihuana	4,240,452				Foreigners: 153
Heroin	363,764				Undocumented: 26
Bazooko	39,140				
Crack	340				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>25,951,281</b>	<b>9.980 liters</b>	<b>61,972 pills</b>	<b>198 liters</b>	<b>567</b>

**TOTAL OF CHEMICAL PRODUCTS SEIZED BY THE NATIONAL GUARD  
FROM JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2003**

<u>Description</u>	<u>Liters or Kilograms</u>
Ammonia	26.400,000 Liters
Pearl Urea	776,700,000 Kilograms
Thinner	80.441,790 Liters
Solvent	1.950,000 Liters
Butylene Glycol	69.810,000 Liters
White Gasoline	58.890,000 Liters
Ethyl Acetate	6.240,000 Liters
Solin	55.380,000 Liters
Toluene	62.790,000 Liters
Butylene Acetate	14.235,000 Liters
Varsol	48.360,000 Liters
Methane	26.130,000 Liters
Isopropyl Alcohol	10.335,000 Liters
Xylene	18.915,000 Liters
Acetone	34.905,000 Liters
Industrial Alcohol	1.560,000 Liters

### ATTACHMENT 3

#### Documented Rebuttal of Allegations of Support for Terrorist Groups

As we have often noted, significant sectors of the Venezuelan media are controlled by the former Venezuelan elite. Since President Chavez' election, these media have sought to destabilize the Chavez Government through unsubstantiated and exaggerated allegations to the effect that President Chavez supports terrorists and facilitates drug traffic and is seeking to promote Cuban style socialism throughout Latin America. These allegations, though clearly unjustified, have found particularly open ears among the privileged classes in other Latin Countries, which perceive Venezuela's open democratic style of government as a threat to continuation of privileged status. Additionally, unlike Venezuela, Colombia is a country which is the site of significant drug production with significant sectors of its economy dependent on illicit drug traffic. These well funded and influential interests have tended to support media coverage, patterned on that of the opposition controlled Venezuelan media, portraying President Chavez as an external threat and supporter of the Leftist Guerrilla, thus diverting attention from the effort to address the Colombian drug trafficking issue and introducing ambivalence into the Plan Columbia focus. The result has been a cabal of opposition Venezuelan and Colombian media promoting a series of "false alarms" concerning Venezuela's non-cooperation in drug interdiction and its support for terrorism. Though these "alarms" are demonstrably false, they have left a general impression, among those who give credence to this sensationalist media coverage and fail to test these assertions and confirm their factual basis, that Venezuela is somehow complicit in terrorism or drug trafficking. As the following dissection of the more sensational reported events will demonstrate, the press allegations are irresponsible and untrue.

#### 1. THE GRANNOBLES CASE:

##### Allegations:

The Venezuelan newspaper *El Universal* reported in March of 2001 that the Government of Venezuela had transported to Cuba a guerrilla member of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) named German Briceño Suarez, a.k.a. Grannobles, brother of "el Mono Jojoy", one of the principal leaders of the organization. Both the Colombian and Venezuelan media provided sensational coverage of these allegations, implying an illicit conspiracy to permit the escape of a terrorist prisoner.

##### Facts:

A severely injured young guerrilla member named Carlos Buenahora, of the National Liberation Army (ELN), was airlifted from Colombia via Venezuela to Cuba, at the request of the International Red Cross, with the full concurrence and collaboration of the three governments involved, and in accordance with prevailing International Humanitarian Laws. Despite this later clarification, many still believe in the false allegations that Venezuela had spirited to Havana one the most notorious leaders of the FARC, who had been accused of murdering three American anthropology students in Colombia.

2. *THE BALLESTAS CASE:*

Allegations:

In March of 2001, there was a media sensation based on a video, taken by the Colombian police and leaked to the Colombian media on the eve of a visit to Bogotá by the Venezuelan Foreign Minister, that showed the arrest in Caracas of a Colombian guerrilla member of the ELN named Jose Maria Ballestas, who was accused of kidnapping a plane in Colombia. Media coverage suggested that the Chavez administration was somehow harboring Ballestas and implied an illicit link between Venezuela and the Colombian guerrilla.

Facts:

The capture was the result of effective collaboration between the Venezuelan and Colombian police forces. The Venezuelan government processed Ballestas for the crimes committed in its territory. After completing his jail sentence in Venezuela, Ballestas, as previously agreed by both nations, was turned over to Colombian authorities.

3. *THE BOLTON CASE:*

Allegations:

Colombian Security Forces (DAS) staged an appearance, resulting in extensive media coverage, by a captured paramilitary group member who had participated in the kidnapping of a Venezuelan Businessman. In this appearance the kidnapper alleged that the kidnapping had been "masterminded" by President Chavez.

Facts:

Venezuelan entrepreneur Richard Boulton was kidnapped by Colombian paramilitary groups in Venezuela in May of 2001. Faced with an outcry of disapproval in both nations and internationally, Carlos Castaño, leader of the paramilitary group known as the United Self Defenses of Colombia (Auto defensas Unidas de Colombia), publicly demanded his release, which took place on July 15, after the victim's family paid a large ransom. No one has ever suggested a rationale for, or provided any credible evidence in support of, an allegation that President Chavez should have become somehow involved with a Colombian rightist paramilitary group in connection with the kidnapping of a Venezuelan citizen. The genesis of this media event is still in question and the facts are still murky. The only real conclusion here is that in Colombia it may be convenient to blame President Chavez for all failures, including unpopular kidnappings.

4. *THE SERNA ALZATE CASE:*

Allegations:

In September of 2001, shortly before a scheduled official visit by president Chavez to Bogota, there was widespread media coverage throughout the Andean region of a video showing an individual who was purportedly a protocol aide to President Chavez and an "investigation" concluding that the man, Diego Fernando Serna Alzate, was a dangerous member of the FARC guerrillas, and that his intentions had been to murder President Pastrana, and then candidate for the presidency Uribe. In the video, Serrano discusses his alleged history as a FARC member and alleges complicity with President Chavez' security escorts during his visit to Bogota in May of 2001, in connection with the assassination plans.

Facts:

Despite the seriousness of these allegations and the extensive and long lasting media coverage (The story ran for months in the media of both countries) the issue was never investigated to conclusion. Alzate has left the scene and no evidence has ever been presented of any connection between him and either President Chavez or his Security forces. We have concluded that this event, like some others, was staged and that there was no truth to any of the sensational allegations presented in the matter.

5. *THE BOYER CASE:*

Allegations:

A man named Moises Boyer allegedly gave himself up to Colombian intelligence agencies posing as a former member of Venezuela's armed forces and former pilot of President Chavez. His story was published in the weekly journal *El Espectador* on August 19, 2003. The most serious charge alleged that a leader of FARC named Raul Reyes had been transported to Venezuela for medical treatment on instructions from Venezuela's Vice President Jose Vicente Rangel.

Facts:

After both Colombian and Venezuelan opposition controlled media joined in the frenzy of accusations and allegations, it came to light that Boyer was neither a member of the armed forces of Venezuela or an airplane pilot, and that the entire tale was a fabrication.

The director of *El Espectador* later admitted that the information had been provided to the weekly by Colombian military intelligence and that the Colombian military remained absolutely silent throughout the fracas. Although the weekly later accepted its responsibility for the false stories and apologized to its readers, the powerful Colombian TV station RCN simply allotted a few seconds to report that Colombian security forces had ended the whole affair by deporting Boyer.

**6. THE US NEWS & WORLD REPORT INCIDENT:**

**Allegations:**

In the October 6, 2003 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*, an article entitled "Terror Close to Home" professed established links between Venezuela's democratic government and Colombian guerillas and certain international terrorist organizations. The article, written by Linda Robinson, claimed that President Chavez is "flirting with terrorism" and cited "unnamed US government sources" that claimed the Venezuelan Government is providing identity cards to Arab radicals, who could then use these identity documents to enter the US and carry out terrorist attacks. The article further alleged that the Chavez administration has been hosting Cubans to enable their support and operation inside Venezuela's paramilitary and intelligence apparatus.

**Facts:**

General Benjamin R. Mixon, the Director of Operations of the Pentagon's US Southern Command (SouthCom), dismissed reports that suggested a linkage between the Chavez government and Colombian guerrillas. He also rejected the article's accounts that the Venezuelan government is providing assistance to Arab terrorists from the Middle East and other terrorist organizations. In an interview conducted by *The Miami Herald*, published on October 9, 2003, Gen. Mixon stated, "I have no reason to believe that." General Mixon in his current assignment would be well aware of any such activity involving the international terrorism community, particularly in consideration of his recent post as Deputy Chief of US troops in Afghanistan.

Bernardo Alvarez, Venezuelan Ambassador to the United States, sent a letter on October 6<sup>th</sup>, to the editors of the *U.S. News and World Report* in response to the article denouncing the editorial decision to make such serious allegations without citing sources or offering any concrete, verifiable proof.

In his letter, Ambassador Alvarez wrote that "By reporting unproven allegations as facts and ignoring contrary evidence, Linda Robinson's October 6th article portrayed Venezuela in a manner so misleading that it undermined the credibility of *U.S. News and World Report*."

Indeed, Venezuela has signed a number of hemispheric and international anti-terrorism conventions and treaties, including the OAS Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism, which many other nations – including the United States – have not signed to date.

Purported linkages between Cuban nationals' involvement with Venezuela's paramilitary and intelligence community are also unfounded. In fact, it has been well documented and verified that Cuban nationals are in Venezuela to provide critically needed medical expertise and strengthen Venezuela's health care services regionally and to provide agricultural development and instructional services to benefit the wellbeing of Venezuelan citizenry.

## ATTACHMENT 4

### Communications and Implementation Strategy

Ultimately, the success of these efforts to document cooperation, rebut allegations of support for terrorists, and, to the extent appropriate, enhance cooperation with Colombian and U.S. counter-terrorism and drug interdiction efforts will depend on the effectiveness of our efforts to communicate and "sell" the message that:

1. Venezuela has cooperated with Colombia and the United States in drug interdiction efforts;
2. Venezuela has not supported organizations classified as terrorists in Colombia; and
3. Venezuela is open to the idea of enhanced coordination and cooperation if it can be structured in ways which are consistent with the Country's sovereign status and national interests.

This message is responsive to the concerns which gave rise to the language in the Omnibus Appropriations Conference Report. Our objective is to respond to the Report's request in a way which results in: 1) a report to the Committee concluding that Venezuela has cooperated in drug interdiction and has not supported terrorism; and 2) a situation going forward in which similar misperceptions will not arise or be considered credible in the future. Achievement of the objective will depend on two factors: 1) ability to select and make contact with appropriate targets for the message; and 2) the credibility, efficiency and continuity of our communication effort.

Two points need to be made at the outset: First, all discussions during this period will play against a background of pervasive concern over the status of the signature count – the spokespersons should be armed with up to date information on status and the Chavez Administration's commitment to constitutional process; Second, most of those with whom we will be dealing will be more concerned with the future than the past. Better future communications will go a long way toward resolution of past problems.

With respect to the Congress, we recommend continuation of the process followed to date of providing one on one briefings for members and/or staff consistent with the priorities set out above. To the extent that progress by this method is unsatisfactory, we can try a larger staff briefing at a hill location.

With respect to the Agencies and the Military, we suggest that the Colombian Issues be placed on the Agenda for the promised Bilateral Committee Meeting. If the meeting can be firmly scheduled, it should provide a driving force for establishment of clear lines of communication. If that is not feasible, we might get the same result from a scheduled visit by the Interior Minister or a comparable official. In any case, our near-term objective is the establishment of effective two way communications between appropriate points of contact in all of the cognizant agencies. What is needed is informal and adequate two-way information exchange. We need to know what U.S. concerns are before we read about them in Newsweek and they need to know about incidents early and accurately before the opposition has the opportunity to spin the story. Clear, reliable and timely information, delivered to the right place, can meet these needs.

**Target Selection:**

There are four primary target areas for this effort: 1) the Congress, which requested the Report, will probably be consulted during the course of its preparation and will receive it, 2) the State Department,<sup>1</sup> which will prepare the report and be a primary point of contact going forward, 3) the Drug Interdiction Establishment (the Drug Enforcement Administration and Bureau of International Narcotics Law Enforcement) which will provide substantial input for the report and be a primary point of contact going forward regarding drug interdiction issues; and 4) the Department of Defense and the Military, which are closely tied into the drug interdiction effort and will be the primary point of contact for Southern Hemisphere military affairs, including paramilitary and Guerrilla issues. Specific Points of Contact within each of these areas include:

1. **Congress** - Congresspersons and staff to be contacted on this issue include both those we have talked to and believe to be generally supportive and those who are either engaged with this issue or in a position to exert significant influence over it. The second category, which probably should be emphasized, includes the following:

A. **Senate Foreign Relations Committee**

- Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) Chairman
- Senator Joseph Biden(D-DE) Ranking Member
  - Majority Staff Director: Ken Myers
  - Minority Staff Director: Antony Blinken

B. **Senate Western Hemisphere Peace Corps and Narcotics Affairs Sub-Committee of the Foreign Relations Committee**

- Senator Norm Coleman, (R-MN) Chairman
- Senator Chris Dodd, (D-CT) Ranking Member
  - Majority Staff Director: Carl Meacham
  - Minority Staff Director: Janice O'Connell

C. **Senate International Operations and Terrorism Subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee**

- Senator John Sununu (R-NH)
- Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL)
  - Majority Prof. Staff Member: Patrick Garvey
  - Minority Prof. Staff Member: Pete Contostaubs

---

<sup>1</sup> Consistent with advice and strategy to date we anticipate continuing the Department, rather than the White House, as the primary point of contact with the Administration.

**D. Senate Foreign Operations Appropriations Sub-Committee**

- Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
- Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT)
  - Majority Clerk: Paul Grove
  - Minority Clerk: Tim Reiser

**E. House International Relations Committee**

- Congressman Henry Hyde (R-IL)
- Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA)
  - Majority Staff Director: Tom Mooney
  - Minority Staff Director: Robert King

**F. House Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the International Relations Committee**

- Congressman Cass Ballenger (R-NC)
- Congressman Robert Menendez (D-NJ)
  - Majority Staff Director: Caleb McCarry
  - Minority Prof. Staff Member: Pedro Pablo Kuczynski

**G. House International Terrorism nonproliferation and Human Rights Subcommittee of the International Relations Committee**

- Congressman Elton Gallegly (R-CA)
- Congressman Brad Sherman (D-CA)
  - Majority Staff Director: Richard Mereu
  - Minority Staff Director: Don McDonald

**H. House Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Appropriations Subcommittee**

- Congressman Jim Kolbe (R-AZ)
- Congresswoman Nita Lowey (D-NY)
  - Majority Clerk: Charlie Flickner
  - Minority Clerk: Mark Murray

**I. Senate Financial Management, the Budget and International Security, Subcommittee of the Governmental Affairs Committee**

- Senator Peter Fitzgerald (R-IL) Chairman
- Senator Daniel Akaka (D-HI) Ranking Member

- Majority Staff Director: Mike Russell
- Minority Staff Director: Richard Kessler

**J. House National Security Emerging Threats and International Relations Subcommittee of the Government Reform Committee**

- Congressman Christopher Shays (R-CT) Chairman
- Majority Staff Director: Larry Halloran
- Minority Staff Director: Phil Schiliro

**K. House Criminal Justice Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee of the Government Reform Committee**

- Congressman Mark Souder (R-IN) Chairman
- Congressman Elijah Cummings (D-MD) Ranking Member
- Majority Staff Director: Marc Wheat
- Minority Staff Director: Phil Schiliro

**L. House Intelligence and Counter-terrorism Subcommittee of the Select Committee on Homeland Security**

- Congressman James Gibbons (R-NV) Chairman
- Congressman James Langevin (D-RI) Ranking Members
- Majority Staff Director: John Gannon
- Minority Staff Director: Steven Cash

**M. House Homeland Security Appropriation Subcommittee**

- Congressman Harold Rogers (R-KY) Chairman
- Congressman Martin Olav Sabo (D-MN) Ranking Member
- Majority Clerk: Michelle Mrdeza
- Minority Prof Staff: Beverly Pheto

**N. Senate Terrorism Technology and Homeland Security Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee**

- Senator Jon Kyl (R-AZ) Chairman
- Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) Ranking Member
- Majority Chief Counsel: Stephen Higgins
- Minority Staff Director: David Hantman

**O. Senate Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee**

- |                               |                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| • Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS) | Chairman        |
| • Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV)  | Ranking Member  |
| • Majority Clerk:             | Rebecca Davies  |
| • Minority Clerk:             | Charles Kieffer |

Friends, potential friends and supporters to be briefed would include:

1. The Boston Group.
2. Texas Delegation.
3. Oklahoma Delegation.
4. Hispanic Caucus.
5. Congressmen and Congressional Staffers who have taken Congressional Delegation trips to Venezuela.

Others who are not necessarily friends and supporters but who have objected to the level of military support and comparative absence of economic and social programs or support for human rights in this proposal include Reps McGovern, Ike Skelton, and John Tierney (McGovern and Skelton cosponsored an amendment that would have cut military spending for Plan Colombia by \$100 million).

2. State Department – We need to find out, of course, who is specifically tasked with report preparation and provide them with information. Additionally, we expect that Ambassador Alvarez will want to keep in touch with Mr. Noriega, his staff, and the Andes desk officer. Outgoing Ambassador Shapiro may be a useful point of contact, and John Maisto, though outside the Department, needs to be kept armed with the most current information. We know that the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry will be kept fully involved and will regularly brief the new Ambassador and his staff.

3. Drug Enforcement Administration

Matin Pracht, Chief of International Operations  
Paul Abosamra, Country Attaché, U.S. Embassy

Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) (State Department)

Robert B. Charles, Assistant Secretary  
Thomas Martin, Director, The Americas Program

4. Department of Defense

Steve Justus, Head, Washington, DC Field Office, U.S. Southern Command

Brigadier General Michael Lehnert, USMC, Chief of Staff, U.S. Southern Command

Roger Pardo-Maurer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs

Colonel Clark Lynn, U.S. Army, DOD Exchange Officer, WHA, U.S. Department of State

**Conclusion and Prognosis**

It seems likely to us that widespread misconceptions in the United States about Venezuela's activities concerning Colombia are largely the result of effective propaganda efforts by groups with interests opposed to those of Venezuela and the lack of understanding and information on the part of U.S. Officials. To the extent that the lack of credible and reliable information can be remedied, the level of misunderstanding can be reduced to an acceptable level. We believe that end can be accomplished with an aggressive but carefully focused effort along the lines outlined above.