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FY 2009 FOREIGN ASSISTANCE GOALS

United States foreign assistance supports Colombia in its efforts to strengthen its democratic and increasingly secure society. United States Government (USG) social and economic aid seeks to foster legal economic opportunities, increase state presence and basic services, provide humanitarian assistance to those most affected by internal violence, protect human rights, strengthen the rule of law, and support the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. U.S. programs are especially focused on disadvantaged groups including Afro-Colombians, indigenous peoples, and women, as well as Colombia's poorest members of society. USG security assistance combats drug trafficking and terrorism through provision of training, equipment, and technical assistance in an effort to consolidate peace and security. Foreign assistance to Colombia has a direct impact on the United States and its citizens. Counternarcotics programs have successfully kept illegal drugs off U.S. streets, and saved American lives. Economic development, justice, and social assistance help both United States and Colombian individuals and businesses to be more prosperous and secure.

The United States and Colombia have a strong common interest in maintaining the gains achieved to date which have reduced narco-trafficking activity and supported the establishment of a more stable environment in which all citizens benefit from a more transparent democracy with access to social services, economic opportunities, and a Government that respects human rights. Colombia is one of the largest recipients of USG foreign assistance, and an important partner of the United States. Under Plan Colombia and its follow-on programs, the USG has provided more than \$6 billion in assistance, including more than \$1 billion in economic and social assistance. This assistance, since 2000, combined with Colombia's growing commitment of people and funding, has produced one of the most impressive success stories of the past decade. By every measurable trend – economy, trade, development, drugs, security, terrorism, human rights, rule of law, violence, and kidnappings – Colombia is a better country and partner than it was 10 years ago. However, challenges remain, particularly in addressing human rights concerns.

U.S. foreign assistance priorities in FY 2009 were increasingly guided by the Colombia Strategic Development Initiative, an inter-agency USG plan to support the Government of Colombia (GOC)'s National Consolidation Plan to expand state presence to key priority zones that are drivers

of coca cultivation and trafficking, and were previously controlled by illegal armed groups. This initiative is a logical progression from Plan Colombia and emphasizes the need to integrate security, counternarcotics, rule of law, and development projects through the following four broad categories: Peace and Security, Governing Justly and Democratically, Investing in People, and Economic Growth. The USG plan includes assisting Colombia to assume increasing operational and funding responsibility for these joint programs, and to make continued progress towards a secure, democratic, and prosperous society. The goal in FY 2009 was to help Colombia consolidate the progress made from joint efforts over the last decade.

HIGHLIGHTS BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

Peace and Security

Funding for this objective is focused on the reduction of narcotics production and trafficking, and helping Colombia to end the decades-long internal conflict that has been fueled by the profits derived from the drug trade. This includes funding to support programs for demobilization and reintegration; counterterrorism, stabilization operations, and security reform; counternarcotics and alternative development; and rule of law and law enforcement reform efforts.

The GOC continues to make significant progress in its vigorous fight against the production and trafficking of illicit drugs. Citing record coca eradication during 2008, the USG and the United Nations (UN) separately reported significant declines in cocaine production potential and coca cultivation in Colombia in 2008. The USG found that cultivation in 2008 was down 29 percent compared to 2007, from 167,000 to 119,000 hectares. Crediting sustained aerial eradication and increased manual eradication operations in 2008, it also reported a decline in pure cocaine production potential of 39 percent, from 485 metric tons (MT) in 2007 to 295 MT in 2008. Because of different methodologies, the USG and UN numbers differ, but the broad trends tracked are similar.

In 2009, the GOC continued its aggressive interdiction and eradication programs and maintained a strong extradition record for persons charged with crimes in the United States. Colombia seized over 175 MT of cocaine and cocaine base, and eradicated approximately 158,000 hectares of illicit coca crops during 2009. Nevertheless, because of funding constraints for both aerial and manual eradication, overall production potential and cultivation figures can be expected to increase, compared with 2008.

Demobilization and reintegration processes are designed to motivate members of illegal armed groups to give up the conflict and become productive members of society, as well as provide support to the victims of their violence. Funding for these activities focuses on processing and monitoring of demobilized individuals, verification and monitoring of the process, reconciliation and reparations to victims, and the social and economic reintegration of the demobilized into society. In FY 2009, USG assistance:

- Supported the Ministry of Defense's Demobilization Program to promote desertion from the ranks of the Colombian illegal armed groups, which resulted in the demobilization of 2,800 members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN), and other smaller armed groups

- Helped demobilized individuals turn over or provide information which led to the decommissioning of 533 weapons, 379,500 rounds of ammunition, 2,876 anti-personnel mines, 7,375 grenades, 182 mortars, 11 rockets, and 22,808 kilograms of explosives
- Funded programs that supported the transformation from military to civilian status of nearly 4,500 ex-combatants and armed belligerents, including over 300 children
- Supported the Justice and Peace Law process by providing legal and psychological assistance to over 23,000 victims of Colombian illegal armed groups

The long-term success of all USG programs in Colombia depends on the ability of the GOC successfully to dismantle the FARC, ELN, and other illegal armed groups. Counterterrorism, stabilization operations, and security sector reforms focus on this objective by targeting the military units that are taking back territorial control from the illegal armed groups, and increasing the professionalism and field operational capability of the Colombian Military. FY 2009 U.S. assistance also responded to human rights concerns by including human rights training for military and civilian officials and commanders. Additionally, USG humanitarian demining assistance addressed the landmine problem in Colombia. As of FY 2009, Colombia was among the nations with the highest numbers of landmine victims. In FY 2009, USG assistance:

- Supported the training of over 900 Colombian military personnel in strategies for maintaining territorial integrity, capability to conduct and sustain counter-narcoterrorist operations, intelligence collection and analysis, and protection of national infrastructure
- Supported the GOC and Colombian military in implementing an aggressive plan to train over 500 military and civilian officials and commanders on human rights, rules of engagement that meet international standards to abolish extrajudicial executions, conduct effective investigations, case processing, and adjudication
- Trained and equipped three additional Colombian humanitarian demining platoons in emergency demining operations. This will bring the total of USG equipped and trained humanitarian demining platoons to 10, strengthening the GOC's capability successfully to clear mines and improvised explosive devices placed by the FARC in the Montes de Maria, Antioquia, and Nariño/Putumayo regions

An estimated 88 percent of the cocaine and 60 percent of the heroin seized in the United States comes from Colombia. The normal problems associated with narcotrafficking are compounded in Colombia due to the lack of economic opportunity and the presence of various illegal armed groups. This is why the USG strategy for combating the narcotrafficking problem includes an element dedicated to alternative development, and is closely coordinated with other security assistance. In FY 2009, USG assistance funded:

- A robust interdiction program that led to the seizure of 44,700 kilos of illicit narcotics seized by Colombian authorities, and prevented hundreds of tons of cocaine and heroin from reaching the United States
- Alternative development programs targeting communities vulnerable to coca production, benefiting over 80,000 families and creating nearly 110,000 full-time equivalent jobs

Significant law enforcement funding went to support rural policing or *Carabineros*, the Colombian Rural Police who go into an area, secure, and hold it, while the political, social, economic,

governmental, bilateral, and international programs begin functioning in the area. Considerable effort is expended in ensuring that the activities of the *Carabineros* coincide with U.S. developmental and social projects. This holistic approach increases the chance of sustainable development and prosperity, and decreases the chances of the local population participating in illegal activities. In FY 2009, USG assistance:

- Helped train over 6,000 Colombian law enforcement officers
- Implemented over 500 programs to enhance Colombian police management
- Supported the *Carabiniro* Program, which seized over seven MTs of cocaine, destroyed 170 hydrochloric acid and base labs, and captured over 1,600 criminals

Governing Justly and Democratically

FY 2009 U.S. foreign assistance for this objective includes funding for justice, human rights, and governance programs. Technical assistance and training is provided to modernize the criminal justice system and improve access to justice for all Colombians; to promote and protect human rights through an integrated prevention, protection, and response program; to strengthen state presence and build confidence in governance in recovered areas through increased involvement and public oversight of public investment and processes; to strengthen and modernize the Colombian labor movement; and to strengthen political parties while reinforcing the GOC's ability to implement policies and activities in support of peace in and throughout Colombia. In FY 2009, USG assistance:

- Strengthened access to justice by supporting the inauguration of six new Justice Houses, bringing the nationwide total to 64 – of which 59 were established with USG support; the USG leveraged \$1,245,000 from the GOC towards the construction of these houses
- Improved the effectiveness of the Criminal Procedure Code by training over 11,600 prosecutors, judges, police investigators, forensic experts, and protection personnel, as well as 473 public defenders, 1,159 private defense attorneys, and magistrates, and 1,468 law students
- Strengthened human rights by supporting key independent oversight institutions, including the National Ombudsman's Early Warning System, which issued 34 alerts that generated 19 GOC responses, thereby preventing numerous human rights violations
- Trained 1,527 GOC personnel on human rights issues, and strengthened the ability of the National Police to prevent human rights violations
- Supported a network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which provided legal and psychosocial support to 2,053 victims and provided grants to an additional 31 NGOs to promote human rights
- Launched a new trade union strengthening program, which increased the capacity of unions better to represent workers in the evolving labor and economic environments resulting from increased economic reintegration and institutional reform

- Began a new Political Parties and Elections Program, which includes a special focus on strengthening electoral processes in anticipation of the 2010 presidential and congressional elections
- Supported the multi-party Afro-Colombian Congressional Caucus that passed legislation in three departments to strengthen the engagement of Afro-Colombians in local government decision-making processes, and promoted public policies that benefit the socio-economic, political, and cultural needs of this population

Investing in People

The primary focus of FY 2009 assistance for this objective went towards assisting the large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Colombia. This assistance provided economic and social assistance to persons displaced by civil strife and violence, to youth at risk of recruitment by illegal armed groups, and to the communities in which they reside. There is a strong emphasis on policy and institutional strengthening to assist the GOC to reintegrate IDPs into mainstream society, and decrease the marginalization of vulnerable groups such as Afro-Colombians and the indigenous. As of mid-2009, more than 2.3 million IDPs were included in the GOC's official registry (although some NGOs maintain that the GOC numbers are undercounted), and more than 250,000 had filed claims with the justice system as victims of major conflict crimes. A disproportionate number of IDPs continue to be Afro-Colombian and indigenous. In FY 2009, USG assistance:

- Provided social services to over 350,000 internally displaced and vulnerable persons
- Enhanced the administrative, planning, and implementation capacity of the state to meet its commitments and of civil society to perform its watchdog role
- Directly targeted Afro-Colombians and indigenous populations by implementing a \$15 million income-generation initiative on the Pacific Coast
- Developed mine victim associations and medical services in rural outreach sites through a grant to the Colombian Center for Integrated Rehabilitation. Hundreds of people received medical and advocacy services and dozens joined the network of associations that facilitate economic independence and personal empowerment.
- Through the Colombian Countermine Campaign, supported the training of mine-risk education facilitators who reached out to 13 municipalities in Antioquia and resulted in the training of over 2,000 individuals, many of whom were children

Economic Growth

Colombia's economic growth in FY 2009 is likely to be just over one percent. Although low, due primarily to the global economic downturn, this rate compares favorably to other countries in the region, and is a testament to Colombia's solid macroeconomic fundamentals and improved security situation. Colombia continues to be an important U.S. trading partner. Funding for this objective is focused on microfinance and financial sector reform, labor, land reform, and the environment. In FY 2009, USG assistance:

- Funded training to several financial institutions to expand microcredit, savings, and insurance to underserved populations. In particular, the Banco Agrario received training on communal bank methodologies to implement a pilot project to expand microcredit services in remote areas of the country aimed at the Afro-Colombian population. The

technical assistance helped the participating financial institutions improve credit productivity, reduce the time to get a loan, simplify documentation, and establish new financial products, such as rural credit and lower non-performing loans, by reducing default risk and strengthening risk management.

- Supported the Ministry of Social Protection in strengthening a new labor inspection system
- Supported an evaluation of inconsistencies between Colombian law and International Labor Organization standards. The evaluation made recommendations for significant legal changes to facilitate labor union activities on collective bargaining in the public sector, strikes in public services, and the role of second and third degree unions.
- Provided technical support to GOC to improve land tenure legal processes, promote restitution of lands abandoned due to forced displacement, utilize productive lands in the process of asset seizure, and develop income-generating activities in collective territories through the reduction of transaction costs to formalize rights over rural areas
- Provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Environment on its policy directive that regulates commercial reforestation to include the creation of conservation incentives in natural forests
- Helped the Ministry of Environment develop its payment program for environmental services for people living in conservation areas and forests. The USG also hosted a conference on marine environmental protection for Colombian law-enforcement agencies in September.