

1 January 1997

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SUBJECT: Peru Internal Threat (U)

1. (U) Purpose. To provide the CINC with an assessment of the internal threat to Peru.

2. [REDACTED] Summary. Terrorism poses the most serious internal threat to Peru. Both Sendero Luminoso and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement continue to attack the government, although counterinsurgent efforts have considerably weakened both groups. Narcotraffickers also threaten Peruvian stability through graft and violence.

3. (U) Terrorism / Insurgency.

[REDACTED] Peru has two insurgencies: Sendero Luminoso (SL) and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA). Government counterinsurgent groups have considerably weakened both groups, but both remain capable of staging attacks. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Sendero poses the most serious threat due to its dedication, larger size, and long term strategy.

[REDACTED] Sendero Luminoso. SL is a Maoist revolutionary group that has been seeking to destroy the Peruvian state since 1980. Its goal is to rid Peru of all non-Indian influence and establish a communist utopia. SL follows a dual political and military strategy. It attempts to overwhelm the Peruvian state by patiently building political support and organizations in the countryside and gradually surrounding the cities. In tandem, it attacks institutions and leaders to weaken the state and make its political goals easier to achieve. Although SL operated extensively throughout Peru for much of the 1980s and early 1990s, the 1992 capture of SL founder Abimael Guzman and the Government of Peru's (GOP) counterinsurgency campaign have considerably weakened it. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Significantly, SL is more discriminat- ing now in its use of violence, apparently having learned the political cost of its terror campaign of the late 1980s and early 1990s. In Sep 96, for example, a 60-guerrilla column temporarily seized the Huallaga Valley town of Aucayacu, but refrained from executing the town's leaders as it would have five years ago.

[REDACTED] The Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement. The MRTA is a Cuban- inspired, Marxist-Leninist group whose goal is to overthrow the Peruvian government. It emerged in 1982 after several Marxist-Leninist groups united. [REDACTED]

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It is now estimated to have less than 300 members. In Dec 95, the MRTA planned an attack on Peru's Congress, but police raided their safehouse and arrested the responsible cell. On 17 Dec 96, the MRTA seized the Japanese Ambassador's residence and approximately 500 hostages, many of whom were foreign diplomats and senior Peruvian officials, including the foreign minister. Seven Americans were also held. The audacious attack reflected considerable planning, but may prove to be the climax for MRTA, which appears to want to become a legitimate political group.

4. (U) Narcotrafficking.

a. [REDACTED] Narcotraffickers do not directly threaten Peru's survival, but they do undermine the government's legitimacy by corrupting security forces and legal institutions. [REDACTED]

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b. [REDACTED] Peru is a source zone country; most of the world's coca leaves are grown there. Colombian narcotraffickers dominate the export of coca and employ Peruvian narcotraffickers for local services. Trafficking groups are highly organized, generally well-disciplined, well-armed and well-funded. Consequently, they are able to bribe police and military officials [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]