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HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH/AMERICAS

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WASHINGTON OFFICE ON LATIN AMERICA (WOLA)

Washington, D.C., September 6, 1996

Anthony Lake
National Security Advisor
The White House
Washington, D.C.

RELEASED IN FULL

Fax: 456-2883

Dear Mr. Lake,

We write to express our concern over allegations that the United States government has for many years engaged in an intelligence relationship with a former Peruvian army officer, Vladimiro Montesinos, and with the National Intelligence Service (SIN) he effectively controls. The perception in Lima that Montesinos is supported by the United States has contributed to his power and ability to act beyond the reach of the law. Given the lessons learned from the Intelligence Oversight Board's investigation into CIA ties with human rights violators in Guatemala, we urge you to undertake a prompt review of agency relations with the SIN. If such ties with Montesinos do in fact exist, they should be severed immediately and publicly. If they do not, we urge the U.S. government to make an unequivocal public statement to that effect.

As you may be aware, a death squad composed of SIN and military agents set up under Montesinos's direction have carried out some of the most notorious atrocities attributed to government forces during the government of President Alberto Fujimori. These human rights violations -- including the massacre of fifteen individuals in a downtown Lima apartment in November 1991 and the "disappearance," torture, and extrajudicial execution of nine students and a professor from La Cantuta University in 1992 -- will never be punished, as the Fujimori government last year passed broad amnesty legislation making criminal sanction impossible.

Recently, a powerful imprisoned drug lord, Demetrio Chávez Peñaherrera (a.k.a. *El Vaticano*) publicly declared that in 1991 and 1992, he paid Montesinos \$50,000 a month through an intermediary in exchange for information on imminent antidrug raids. Nonetheless, the Attorney General has made the surprising statement that these allegations will not even be investigated.

Although the highly secretive Montesinos is not the official SIN commander, it is widely recognized that he controls the agency behind the scenes. During congressional questioning following the La Cantuta disappearances, the armed forces commander, Gen. Nicolás Hermoza de

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L. MILLS
DATE/CASE ID: 6 MAY 2002 199700716

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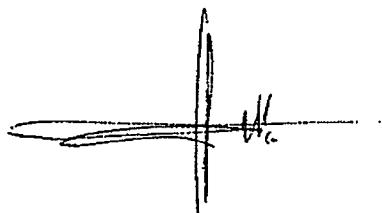
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Bari, stated that Montesinos works twenty-four hours a day at the SIN, but receives no remuneration. When allegations of Montesinos's ties to drug traffickers surfaced in November 1992, President Fujimori deflected reporters' questions, saying that "If Mr. Montesinos indeed had these connections, most likely the U.S. intelligence service, the CIA, would not have any type of relations with Peru's SIN." (See attached news report.)

At that time, both of our organizations made inquiries as to the exact nature of the U.S. government's relationship with Montesinos but were never provided with the information requested. We believe that allegations about U.S. support for Montesinos will continue to surface until the Clinton Administration addresses them directly and again, request your assistance toward that end. We would be happy to provide any additional information upon request.

Best regards,



José Miguel Vivanco
Executive Director
Human Rights Watch/Americas



George Vickers
Executive Director
Washington Office on Latin America

cc: John Deutch
House and Senate Intelligence Committees
Amb. Jeffrey Davidow
Assistant Secretary John Shattuck
James Dobbins
Eric Schwarz