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Talking Points for Ambassador Adams on Huanuco

- We are very concerned about recent reports of killings of civilians in Huanuco Department in central Peru.
 - o Earlier this month, the Peruvian army began conducting operations against Shining Path guerrillas in Huanuco Department.
 - o Human rights monitors and journalists who have visited the area report that civilians have been targeted by the army as well. There are allegations of at least 24 deaths.
 - o Information received second and third hand from witnesses indicates that army personnel may have tortured and raped some of their victims.
 - o Journalists accompanied local residents to one of the site where they saw seven bodies. They also interviewed refugees who said they had survived an anti-terrorist offensive in which the military used helicopters to fire rockets and strafe villages.
- President Fujimori has publicly denied press reports that the army has used helicopters to bomb terrorists.
- However, based upon information gathered by the embassy in Lima and journalists' reports, we believe that rocket attacks have indeed occurred against certain villages suspected by army intelligence of concealing SL arms caches or collaborating with the terrorists.
- The Peruvian Government has restricted access to the area by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), so it has not been possible to determine how many civilians have died.
- On April 22 General Hermoza, Chairman of the Armed Forces Joint Command, publicly invited the ICRC to visited the restricted zone with a military escort. The ICRC has declined Hermoza's invitation, as their normal operations are carried on independently and not under escort.
- We have conveyed our concern to Peruvian officials urging them to allow full ICRC access to the region and to begin a thorough investigation of these reports of civilian deaths.

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