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United States Department of State



RELEASED IN PART Washington, D.C. 20520

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JUN 24 1992

Dear Senator Kohl:

Thank you for your letter of March 6, 1992, in which you expressed concern on behalf of your constituent, [redacted] over human rights violations in Peru. This Administration shares your concern about the Sendero Luminoso guerrilla insurgents. As your constituent correctly observed, Sendero has targeted humanitarian and church workers as part of its brutal effort to overthrow the democratically elected Government of Peru.

In the State Department's 1991 report on Peru's human rights practices (attached), we note that such persecution by Sendero is increasing, and that numerous religious workers were among the hundreds of innocent civilians murdered by Sendero in 1991 in its campaign to destroy Peruvian democracy. As long as Sendero continues its terrorist tactics, religious and other development workers face grave danger while in Peru.

While Sendero is the principal cause of human rights violations in Peru, the Peruvian military and police have also committed human rights abuses while defending Peru's government against the Sendero threat. President Fujimori has pledged to take steps to improve respect for human rights, and the government's human rights performance has improved under Fujimori.

Unfortunately, due to President Fujimori's April 5 dissolution of Congress and suspension of the Constitution, these gains are in doubt. In response to President Fujimori's actions, the U.S Government immediately suspended all new aid to the Government of Peru (except for humanitarian and food assistance) and began reviewing all aid programs in Peru. We will consider reinstating non-humanitarian aid to Peru when President Fujimori takes concrete steps towards re-democratization.

The Honorable
Herbert Kohl,
United States Senate.

1992 JUN 25 PM 4:17
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We share your commitment to improve the human rights situation in Peru and are using our influence and the persuasive power of U.S. policy to help the Peruvian government improve its human rights performance. Given the challenges guerrilla insurgency, narcotics trafficking, severe economic dislocation, poverty and the recent anti-democratic steps by President Fujimori, we need to continue to work with the Peruvian government and its people to help them defend and strengthen their democratic institutions.

It is unlikely that the curtailment of any continuing U.S. assistance to the government of Peru would reduce Sendero's long history of using violence against all sectors of Peruvian society, including religious workers. It is also unlikely that the suspension of any U.S. aid which is subsequently reinstated would alter Sendero's violent nature.

Please assure your constituent that human rights concerns and a return to democracy are high on the Department's list of priorities and figure prominently in our discussions with the Peruvian Government.

Sincerely,

Janet G. Mullins
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Attachments:

Correspondence returned
1991 State Department Report on Human Rights in Peru

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Project: ARA/AND: BMacclay x7-3023
SEARCHED 8/27/07 6/2/92

Cleared: ARA/AND: BWilliamson *ante*
ARA/AND: BHitte *PSH*
HA: MJacobsen *ante*

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