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Case Number: S200200010

RELEASED IN FULL

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ACTION SCT-00

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-05	ACDE-00	AID-00	AMAD-01	ARA-01	A-00
	CA-02	CCO-00	CG-00	COME-00	CTME-00	OASY-00	DOEE-00
	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-01	EB-00	EUR-01	FAAE-00
	UTED-00	IMMC-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00	IO-00	L-02
	MCO-01	ADS-00	M-00	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	OCS-03	OIC-02
	OIS-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	SSO-00	SS-00
	TRSE-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-09
	G-00	/031W					

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 FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
 TO DEAHQS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
 DOJ WASHDC IMMEDIATE
 CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 FBI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 JCS WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ IMMEDIATE
 AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO IMMEDIATE
 SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5031
 DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
 AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
 USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
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 AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
 AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
 AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: WILLIAM E. LANDFAIR
 DATE/CASE ID: 13 AUG 2002 S200200010

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WHITE HOUSE WASHDC

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JUSTICE FOR TVCS -- J LANCASTER
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
MONTEVIDEO PASS TO LEGAT

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: DECL: N/A

TAGS: PTER, ASEC, PGOV, PE, MY, JA, GT

SUBJECT: MRTA HOSTAGE TAKING UPDATE - DECEMBER 25-26

MRTA RELEASES TWO MORE HOSTAGES

1. [REDACTED] MRTA TERRORISTS RELEASED KENJI HIRATA, A JAPANESE EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY, ON CHRISTMAS DAY. ACCORDING TO THE JAPANESE EMBASSY, HIRATA'S HEALTH SUFFERED FROM THE STRESS OF CAPTIVITY, AND MRTA DECIDED TO RELEASE HIM ON THOSE GROUNDS. ICRC
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ESCORTED HIRATA OUT OF THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE IN A WHEEL CHAIR. HE IS REPORTEDLY IN STABLE CONDITION AT A LOCAL HOSPITAL.

2. [REDACTED] THE MRTA ALSO RELEASED GUATEMALAN AMBASSADOR JOSE MARIA ARGUETA ON DECEMBER 26, ALSO FOR HEALTH REASONS. UNLIKE HIRATA, ARGUETA WAS ABLE TO WALK OUT OF THE JAPANESE RESIDENCE WITHOUT ASSISTANCE. ARGUETA'S RELEASE COMES THREE DAYS BEFORE THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT AND GUATEMALAN NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY UNITY (URNG) SIGN A PEACE ACCORD. RELEASED HOSTAGE AMBASSADOR ARMANDO LECAROS DE COSSIO, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR BILATERAL AFFAIRS, IS STILL SLATED TO REPRESENT PERU AT THAT SIGNING CEREMONY.

3. (U) THE RELEASE OF HIRATA AND ARGUETA REDUCES THE TOTAL NUMBER OF HOSTAGES HELD BY THE MRTA TO 104. ICRC ESTIMATED THE NUMBER OF HOSTAGES TO BE BETWEEN 125 AND 140 AFTER 225 WERE RELEASED ON DECEMBER 22, BUT THAT ESTIMATE TURNED OUT TO BE TOO HIGH.

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ARCHBISHOP STEPS IN

4. [REDACTED] ARCHBISHOP OF AYACUCHO JUAN LUIS CIPRIANI SPENT SIX HOURS AT THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE ON CHRISTMAS, OSTENSIBLY PERFORMING RELIGIOUS DUTIES. BASED ON ICRC CHIEF DELEGATE MICHEL MINNIG'S DECEMBER 24 COMMENT TO US THAT THE USE OF A RELIGIOUS PERSON AS A NEGOTIATOR WAS BEING DISCUSSED, CIPRIANI MAY BE PLAYING THAT MUCH-NEEDED ROLE. A MEMBER OF THE CONSERVATIVE CATHOLIC OPUS DEI MOVEMENT, CIPRIANI ENJOYS THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE OF PRESIDENT FUJIMORI, MORE SO THAN ANY OTHER CHURCH

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FIGURE. CIPRIANI IS NO STRANGER TO INSURGENCIAS -- HIS DIOCESE WAS THE BIRTHPLACE AND THE AREA MOST AFFECTED BY SENDERO LUMINOSO (SHINING PATH -SL) TERRORISM.

RUMORS OF MRTA ESCAPE ATTEMPTS

5. (U) LIMA PAPERS CARRIED ON DECEMBER 26 SEVERAL CONFLICTING STORIES WITH THE COMMON THREAD THAT ONE OR MORE MRTA TERRORISTS ATTEMPTED TO SLIP OUT OF THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE WITH THE 225 HOSTAGES RELEASED ON DECEMBER 22. THE GOP HAS NOT YET PUBLICLY CONFIRMED OR DENIED THESE STORIES.

MALAYSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TRAVELS TO LIMA

6. (U) MALAYSIA HAS REPORTEDLY SENT ITS FOREIGN MINISTER, AHMAD BADAWI ABDULLAH, TO LIMA TO DISCUSS THE ONGOING HOSTAGE CRISIS. MRTA IS STILL HOLDING CAPTIVE THE MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR, ALONG WITH THE AMBASSADORS FROM JAPAN, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, HONDURAS, AND

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	TRSE-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-09
	G-00	/031W					

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SUBJECT: MRTA HOSTAGE TAKING UPDATE - DECEMBER 25-26

BOLIVIA, AND THE CONSUL GENERAL FROM ARGENTINA. THE ARRIVAL OF THE
MALAYSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER COMES ON THE HEELS OF THE DECEMBER 22
DEPARTURE OF JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER IKEDA.

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