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Case Number: S200200010

PTQ2007

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B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D)

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ACTION SCT-00

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-10	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AID-00	ARA-01	A-00
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	OASY-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-01	EB-00
	EUR-01	FAAE-00	H-01	IMMC-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	MMP-00	M-00	NRCE-00
	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03	OIC-02	OIS-01	OMB-01	OPIC-01
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	CIO-00	SP-00	SSO-00
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 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6537
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 AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: WILLIAM E. LANDFAIR
 DATE/CASE ID: 13 AUG 2002 S200200010
 CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 25X6
 DECLASSIFY AFTER: 1 APR 2027

EXTEND CLASSIFICATION

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Case Number: S200200010

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JUSTICE FOR TVCS -- J LANCASTER
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
ROME PASS EMBASSY VATICAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/18/2007

TAGS: PTER ASEC PREL PGOV PHUM ICRC PE

SUBJECT: PERU'S HOSTAGE CRISIS UPDATE - MARCH 18-21

1. CLASSIFIED BY JIM MACK, DCM, EMBASSY LIMA. REASON: 1.5 (D).
2. [REDACTED] SUMMARY: GUARANTOR PREPARATIONS FOR THE SAFE PASSAGE OF THE TUPAC AMARU REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT (MRTA) TERRORISTS TO A THIRD COUNTRY HAVE ADVANCED FARTHER THAN THEIR EFFORTS TO BROKER A NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE MRTA. PRESIDENT FUJIMORI PUBLICLY REITERATED THAT HE WILL NOT RELEASE JUSTLY CONVICTED MRTA PRISONERS, BUT HE RETAINS NEGOTIATING ROOM TO RELEASE "INNOCENTS," UNCONVICTED MRTA DETAINEES, OR TO REVIEW THE SENTENCES OF MRTA PRISONERS. TWO WEEKS AFTER REACHING AGREEMENT WITH THE MRTA TO DO SO, THE PERUVIAN PRESIDENT IS ALLOWING A GUARANTOR TEAM TO VISIT MRTA PRISONERS. END SUMMARY.
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GUARANTORS CONTINUE TO MEET WITH MRTA AND GOP

3. (U) ARCHBISHOP JUAN LUIS CIPRIANI, TDY JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TERUSUKE TERADA, AND CANADIAN AMBASSADOR ANTHONY VINCENT CONTINUE TO SHUTTLE ALMOST DAILY BETWEEN THE GOP AND MRTA. AS ESTABLISHED EARLIER, ICRC CHIEF DELEGATE TO PERU MICHEL MINNIG PARTICIPATES ONLY IN DISCUSSIONS OF HUMANITARIAN ISSUES. THE GUARANTORS MET WITH GOP INTERLOCUTOR DOMINGO PALERMO AND MRTA LEADER NESTOR CERPA CARTOLINI ON MARCH 20. THEIR NEXT MEETING WITH CERPA CARTOLINI IS SLATED FOR MARCH 21, 4:00 P.M. AT THE NEGOTIATION HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE.

FUJIMORI REAFFIRMS THAT GOP WILL NOT RELEASE MRTA PRISONERS
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n/a

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4. (U) MAKING HIS FIRST PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE HOSTAGE CRISIS IN THE WAKE OF JAPANESE VICE MINISTER KOMURA'S MARCH 18-19 VISIT TO LIMA, PRESIDENT FUJIMORI CATEGORICALLY DENIED THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING RELEASING MRTA PRISONERS TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH THE MRTA TERRORISTS HOLDING 72 HOSTAGES. NOTING THAT THE RESOLUTION OF THE PERUVIAN HOSTAGE CRISIS WILL SET PRECEDENTS IN PERU AND FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, FUJIMORI REITERATED THAT HE CANNOT MAKE CONCESSIONS TO TERRORISTS. REAFFIRMING THAT HE IS PATIENTLY SEEKING A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE HOSTAGE STANDOFF, THE PERUVIAN PRESIDENT INVITED ANYONE OR ANY INSTITUTION WITH A PROPOSAL FOR A RAPID SOLUTION THAT DOES NOT COMPROMISE PERUVIAN NATIONAL SECURITY TO SEND THEIR IDEAS TO HIS OFFICE.

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5. [REDACTED] COMMENT: ALTHOUGH FUJIMORI ONCE AGAIN TOOK A HARD LINE PUBLICLY, HE STILL LEFT HIMSELF SOME WIGGLE ROOM. THE PERUVIAN PRESIDENT SAID HE WOULD NOT RELEASE A SINGLE PRISONER WHO WAS CONVICTED JUSTLY. HE CAN STILL RESUME PARDONS RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE AD HOC COMMISSION REVIEWING CASES OF PERSONS FALSELY ACCUSED OF TERRORISM, WHICH HE SUSPENDED IN THE WAKE OF THE HOSTAGE CRISIS. FUJIMORI COULD ALSO CONCEIVABLY TAP THE AD HOC COMMISSION AS COVER TO RELEASE AS "INNOCENTS" LOW-LEVEL MRTA MEMBERS WHO COMMITTED MINOR OFFENSES. ALSO IN THE REALM OF POSSIBILITIES, THE PERUVIAN PRESIDENT COULD STILL BARGAIN FOR THE RELEASE OF UNCONVICTED LOW-LEVEL MRTA DETAINEES OR AGREE TO ORDER A REVIEW OF THE SENTENCES OF SOME CONVICTED MRTA MEMBERS.
END COMMENT.

GUARANTOR VISITS TO MRTA PRISONERS BEGIN

6. [REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF MARCH 20 THAT THE GUARANTOR PRISON VISITS TO MRTA DETAINEES WOULD BEGIN MARCH 21. THE GOP AND MRTA AGREED ON THESE VISITS TWO WEEKS AGO; HOWEVER, THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT DID NOT AUTHORIZE THE VISITS UNTIL JAPANESE VICE MINISTER KOMURA RAISED IT WITH PRESIDENT FUJIMORI, [REDACTED] THE GUARANTOR PRISON VISITS

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TEAM WILL CONSIST OF [REDACTED] (TDY FROM BOGOTA FOR THE CRISIS), JAPANESE FIRST SECRETARY HIRATA (A FORMER HOSTAGE), AND A JAPANESE DOCTOR. IN ADDITION, AN ARGENTINE NUN WHO IS THE PRISON CHAPLAIN AT CHORRILLOS WOMEN'S PRISON (AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE) AND A DOCTOR FROM THE PERUVIAN HEALTH MINISTRY ARE ALSO PART OF THE TEAM. THE VISITS TO THE PRISONS HOLDING MRTA MEMBERS WILL CONTINUE NEXT WEEK, AND [REDACTED] WAS HOPEFUL THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD FOLLOW THROUGH ON THIS AGREEMENT AND ALLOW THEM TO VISIT ALL THE PRISONS, INCLUDING CALLAO NAVAL PRISON WHERE MRTA LEADER VICTOR POLAY IS HELD.

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MRTA WANTS TO USE CUBAN AIRCRAFT

7. [REDACTED] THERE WERE CURRENTLY TWO OPTIONS FOR FLYING THE MRTA HOSTAGE TAKERS TO CUBA. THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT HAD OFFERED TO PROVIDE AN AIRCRAFT, AND THE ICRC WAS WORKING THROUGH A BROKER IN HONG KONG TO OBTAIN AN AIRPLANE. [REDACTED] A STICKING POINT FOR THE ICRC EFFORT WAS THAT NO AIRCRAFT COULD BE UTILIZED FROM ANY G-7 COUNTRY, DUE TO A G-7 AGREEMENT THAT PRECLUDED THE USE OF THEIR AIRCRAFT BY TERRORISTS. [REDACTED] DISMISSED A REPORT PHONED INTO USIS LIMA FROM A U.S.-BASED JOURNALIST THAT A CANADIAN AIRCRAFT WAS ON ITS WAY TO LIMA TO FERRY THE HOSTAGE TAKERS. [REDACTED] THE MRTA HOSTAGE TAKERS IN ANY EVENT WANTED TO LEAVE ON A CUBAN AIRCRAFT AND NOT ON A PLANE PROVIDED BY THE ICRC. [REDACTED]

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PERUVIAN ARMY ANNOUNCES CAPTURE OF 38 MRTA TERRORISTS

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8. (U) THE DEFENSE MINISTRY ANNOUNCED ON MARCH 18 THAT THE PERUVIAN ARMY RECENTLY CAPTURED 6 LEADERS AND 32 MEMBERS OF THE MRTA ON THE LEFT BANK OF THE PERENE RIVER IN THE PROVINCE OF CHANCHAMAYO IN JUNIN DEPARTMENT. ACCORDING TO THE DEFENSE MINISTRY, THE ARMY'S ARREST OF THE 38 MRTA TERRORISTS SCUTTLED MRTA'S PLANS TO ATTACK AN ARMY BASE IN VILLA RICA IN THE PROVINCE OF OXAPAMPA IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PASCO ON FEBRUARY 24. IN ADDITION, THE PERUVIAN ARMY SEIZED AN MRTA ARMS CACHE IN CHANCHAMAYO PROVINCE CONSISTING OF 10 AKM RIFLES, 11 GRENADES,

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[REDACTED]

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AND STORES OF AMMUNITION. THE DEFENSE MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE CALLS THE CAPTURES A "STRONG BLOW" AGAINST THE MRTA AND NOTES THAT THE ARMY IS CONTINUING MILITARY OPERATIONS IN AN EFFORT TO "DESTROY THE LAST VESTIGES OF THE MRTA" IN THE CENTRAL JUNGLE. (NOTE: THE DEFENSE MINISTRY DID NOT ANNOUNCE WHEN THE ARMY MADE THE 38 ARRESTS, SO WE CANNOT EXPLAIN THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE DATES OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT AND THE PLANNED MRTA ATTACK. END NOTE).

9. (U) AFTER CONTACTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS NGO ASOCIACION PRO DERECHOS HUMANOS (APRODEH) FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE, FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE DETAINEES DISPUTED THE DEFENSE MINISTRY'S ANNOUNCEMENT IN A MARCH 20 LIMA PRESS CONFERENCE. THE RELATIVES ALLEGE THAT THE DETAINEES HAD BEEN FORCED TO CONFESS TO LINKS TO THE MRTA AFTER THREE TO FIVE DAYS OF DETENTION. THE RELATIVES ACCUSED ONE FORMER MRTA MEMBER WHO COLLABORATED WITH THE GOP OF FALSELY FINGERING THE DETAINEES AS MRTA TERRORISTS. APRODEH DIRECTOR GENERAL FRANCISCO SOBERON TOLD REPORTERS THAT HE BELIEVED THE PERUVIAN ARMY ARRESTED INNOCENT PERSONS IN AN AREA OF MRTA ACTIVITY IN AN EFFORT TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE ARMED FORCES ARE MAKING INROADS AGAINST THE REMNANTS OF THE MRTA.

10. (U) MAKING RADIO CONTACT WITH FOREIGN JOURNALISTS IN LIMA, MRTA LEADER CERPA SAID THE DETAINEES DO NOT BELONG TO THE MRTA. HE ACCUSED THE GOP OF ARBITRARILY ARRESTING FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE MRTA HOSTAGE TAKERS AND POOR FARMERS AS PART OF AN OFFENSIVE

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AGAINST MRTA STRONGHOLDS. CERPA ALSO DENIED THAT MRTA WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MARCH 15 ATTACK ON A TEXTILE WAREHOUSE IN LIMA. HE INSISTED THAT HE WAS STILL DISPOSED TOWARD A DIALOGUE WITH THE GOP TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE HOSTAGE STANDOFF.

PRESS LINKS PRIEST'S ASSASSINATION TO MRTA BUT DOUBTS REMAIN

11. (U) AN ITALIAN PRIEST WORKING IN SAN LUIS PROVINCE, DEPARTMENT OF ANCASH, WAS KIDNAPPED BY FIVE PERSONS AND KILLED DURING THE NIGHT OF MARCH 19. LOCAL MEDIA REPORTS REFER TO THE ASSASSINS AS "PRESUMED MRTA TERRORISTS" AND ASSERT THAT THEY WERE

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ENDEAVORING TO COLLECT "WAR TAXES" IN THE AREA. A POLICE INVESTIGATION IS UNDER WAY.

12. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THE MURDER OF THE ITALIAN PRIEST IS MORE CONSISTENT WITH THE XENOPHOBIA OF SENDERO LUMINOSO (SHINING PATH-SL) THAN IT IS WITH MRTA'S TACTICS. MRTA, WHICH IS FOND OF APPEALING TO FOREIGN PUBLIC OPINION AND USING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AS AN INTERMEDIARY WITH THE GOP, HAS LITTLE TO GAIN AND MUCH TO LOSE BY ATTACKING CLERGYMEN. MOREOVER, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, MRTA HAS A MERELY LOGISTICAL (NOT MILITARY) PRESENCE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ANCASH. END COMMENT.

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