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 ARA/AND:APATTERSON
 HA/BA:KLYONS

ARA/PPC:RJACOBSON

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PHUM, PREL, EFIN, EAID, ICRC, PE
 SUBJECT: A/S ARONSON LETTER TO DE LA PUENTE

1. [REDACTED] -- ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SET FORTH BELOW IS A LETTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARONSON TO PRIME/FOREIGN MINISTER OSCAR DE LA PUENTE. THIS LETTER FOLLOWS SEVERAL TELEPHONE
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

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 CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND THE PRIME/FOREIGN MINISTER REGARDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PERU. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO DELIVER A COPY OF THE LETTER TO PRIME/FOREIGN MINISTER DE LA PUENTE AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY. A SIGNED ORIGINAL WILL/WILL FOLLOW.

3. BEGIN TEXT

HIS EXCELLENCY OSCAR DE LA PUENTE RAYGADA
 PRIME AND FOREIGN MINISTER OF PERU

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J. OLSON
 DATE/CASE ID: 1 AUG 2001 200003853

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LIMA, PERU

DEAR OSCAR:

I AM WRITING THIS LETTER TO FOLLOW UP ON OUR MANY USEFUL TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS. AS YOU KNOW, DURING THE PAST FEW MONTHS, PERU HAS BEEN THE FOCUS OF MUCH OF MY EFFORTS-- PARTICULARLY THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION. I RECENTLY HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SET FORTH SOME OF MY CONCERNS DURING A TELEVISED INTERVIEW WITH SEVERAL PERUVIAN JOURNALISTS. I HOPE THIS INTERVIEW MADE CLEAR HOW MY GOVERNMENT STANDS ON THIS ISSUE. I BELIEVE I HAVE ALREADY SENT YOU A COPY OF THE TRANSCRIPTS OF THIS INTERVIEW.

SPECIFICALLY. I AM CONCERNED BECAUSE PERU APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN SEVERAL STEPS BACKWARD ON HUMAN RIGHTS. IN SEPTEMBER 1991, YOUR GOVERNMENT MADE A CLEAR AND STRONG STATEMENT OF GOOD FAITH TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WHEN IT GRANTED THE ICRC UNRESTRICTED ACCESS TO CIVILIAN PRISONS AND MILITARY AND POLICE INSTALLATIONS. HOWEVER,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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SINCE SEPTEMBER OF THIS YEAR, THE ICRC HAS BEEN DENIED ACCESS TO CIVILIAN PRISONS, AND I UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR VISITING PRISONERS HAS BEEN QUESTIONED AS WELL. SO FAR, PROGRESS IN RESTORING FULL ICRC ACCESS TO PRISONS HAS BEEN SLOW. AS A FRIEND, I MUST TELL YOU THAT THE LONGER THIS DISPUTE LINGERS ON, THE MORE IT WILL HURT PERU IN THE EYES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DONORS.

FURTHER I AM ALSO PERPLEXED BY REPORTS THAT THE NAME OF A WELL-KNOWN LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST, CARLOS CHIPOCO, HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN A LIST OF SUSPECTED SHINING PATH APOLOGISTS. CARLOS CHIPOCO HAS BEEN AFFILIATED WITH AMERICAS WATCH, A RESPECTED HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP WITH WHICH I HAVE FREQUENT CONTACT. HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS ALSO TELL ME THAT THERE IS A NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE REPORT WHICH DESCRIBES AMERICAS WATCH AS A GROUP THAT "INDISCRIMINATELY SUPPORTS THE SHINING PATH."

IF THESE REPORTS ARE ACCURATE, I WOULD URGE YOUR GOVERNMENT TO REMOVE ANY REFERENCE LINKING AMERICAS WATCH TO THE SHINING PATH. AMERICAS WATCH IS CLEARLY NO ADVOCATE OF THE SHINING PATH: AMERICAS WATCH REGULARLY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY THE SHINING PATH AND THE

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MR. CHIPOCO, AND HAS RELEASED SEVERAL PRESS STATEMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN PERU DEFLOGING SHINING PATH ATROCITIES. ASSOCIATION WITH AMERICAS WATCH SHOULD NOT BE PREJUDICIAL TO MR. CHIPOCO. IF YOU BELIEVE THAT MR. CHIPOCO HAS COMMITTED SOME CRIME, THE GOVERNMENT OF PERU NEEDS TO PROVIDE SOLID EVIDENCE TO THAT EFFECT. OTHERWISE. I URGE YOUR GOVERNMENT TO UNEQUIVOCALLY REMOVE [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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MR. CHIPOCO'S NAME FROM ANY SUCH LIST.

FINALLY, THERE HAS BEEN VERY LITTLE PROGRESS TO DATE IN RESOLVING VARIOUS HIGH-PROFILE HUMAN RIGHTS CASES. I KNOW THAT MANY CREDIBLE OBSERVERS SUSPECT THAT ARMY INTELLIGENCE AGENTS MAY HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NOTORIOUS BARRIOS ALTOS MASSACRE OF NOVEMBER 1991, YET THE INVESTIGATION OF THIS INCIDENT HAS STALLED.

I CANNOT OVERSTATE TO YOU THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVING PERU'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD. HUMAN RIGHTS IS, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, A "MAKE-OR-BREAK ISSUE" FOR PERU. FOR, IF PERU IS TO RECEIVE THE EXTRAORDINARY SUPPORT IT NEEDS IT WILL NEED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT IT IS SERIOUS ABOUT THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

AGAIN, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I VALUE HIGHLY THE CLOSE COOPERATION WE HAVE ENJOYED OVER THE PAST YEAR. I REALIZE THE DIFFICULTY OF THESE ISSUES, AND APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS.

SINCERELY,
BERNARD ARONSON CHRISTOPHER
[REDACTED]

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