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ACTION DS-00

INFO LOG-00 AMAD-01 ARA-01 OASY-00 OIGO-01 TEDE-00 ADS-00  
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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6717

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BOGOTA 05371

DEPT FOR DS/DSS, DS/CMi, DS/DSS/OP, DS/DSS/I,  
DS/CMi/CI, DS/CMi/PSP, DS/CMi/PRD, DS/EPC/EPE AND  
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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: ASEC  
SUBJECT: MONTHLY STATUS REPORT - MARCH 1993

I. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

A. OVERVIEW

- THE BOMBING CAMPAIGN IN BOGOTA BY THE ESCOBAR ORGANIZATION SUBSIDED DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH. THIS COULD BE ATTRIBUTED TO A COMBINATION OF THE UNRELENTING PRESSURE EXERTED BY THE COLOMBIAN SECURITY FORCES AND THE PEPES (PEOPLE EXPLOITED BY PABLO ESCOBAR) AGAINST ESCOBAR AND HIS ASSOCIATES. OVER THE PAST MONTH THE ESCOBAR ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN

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DEALT A SERIES OF SETBACKS. SEVEN OF ESCOBAR'S TOP LIEUTENANTS HAVE SURRENDERED AND FOUR HAVE BEEN KILLED BY SECURITY FORCES OR PEPES. A CAR BOMB EXPLODED IN BOGOTA ON MARCH 5 INJURING 55 PEOPLE. THE GOC HAS ALSO BEEN PUTTING TREMENDOUS PRESSURE ON THE GUERRILLAS. FIVE GUERRILLA LEADERS FROM THE VARIOUS GUERRILLA FACTIONS WERE ARRESTED OR SURRENDERED DURING MARCH. AS OF EARLY MARCH THE EMBASSY WAS WORKING ON FIVE UNRELATED KIDNAPPING CASES INVOLVING SEVEN AMCIT VICTIMS. THIS IS THE GREATEST NUMBER OF AMCITS KIDNAPPED AT ANY ONE TIME

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OVER THE PAST 13 YEARS, AN AMCIT WAS SHOT AND KILLED ON MARCH 12 IN BOGOTA, A VICTIM OF AN APPARENT ROBBERY. ON MARCH 8 THERE WAS A SHOOTING IN FRONT OF THE CHANCERY BY A COLOMBIAN MILITARY POLICEMAN AT A SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE WHICH RESULTED IN ONE KILLED AND ONE WOUNDED. THE VICTIMS' MOTIVES WERE UNKNOWN BUT SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATION INDICATES THIS INCIDENT TO BE NON-TERRORIST RELATED. EMBASSY STILL PERCEIVES ESCOBAR AS A SERIOUS THREAT, BUT BELIEVES SECURITY SITUATION HAS EASED SOMEWHAT. SOME RESTRICTIONS REMAIN ON MISSION PERSONNEL BUT MANY HAVE BEEN MODIFIED GIVEN LACK OF SPECIFIC THREAT INFORMATION AND IMPROVED SECURITY SITUATION IN BOGOTA.

IN ADDITION TO THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED DAILY BRIEFINGS FOR TDY PERSONNEL AND NEW EMPLOYEES, RSO CONDUCTED SPECIAL BRIEFINGS FOR ALL AMERICAN CONTRACT EMPLOYEES (PIT AND PSC). BRIEFINGS WERE CONDUCTED ON SECURITY REGULATIONS AND THE PROPER HANDLING OF CLASSIFIED MATERIAL.

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B. COVERAGE OF CONSTITUENT POSTS:

- ARSO MCELWEE VISITED AMCONSUL BARRANQUILLA FROM MARCH 26-27 IN FURTHERANCE OF HIS DUTIES AS SECURITY OFFICER FOR THE CONSULATE.
- ARSO MCELWEE VISITED PUERTO LEGUIZAMO ON MARCH 30 TO ASSESS THE THREAT AND SECURITY SITUATION WHERE U.S. PERSONNEL WILL BE BASED.

C. MSG ACTIVITIES:

- GUARD SCHOOL DATES:
  - 4 MAR
  - 11 MAR
  - 18 MAR
  - 25 MAR
- MSG INTERNAL DEFENSE DRILL WAS CONDUCTED ON MARCH 13 AND AN INTRUDER DRILL WAS CONDUCTED ON MARCH 27 1993.

II THREATS AND INCIDENTS

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A. PREVIOUSLY REPORTED:

- NARCO ACTIVITY
- DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH FOUR TOP LIEUTENANTS OF PABLO ESCOBAR WERE KILLED-TWO BY COLOMBIAN SECURITY

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FORCES AND TWO BY THE PEPE. IN ADDITION, SEVEN  
OTHER LIEUTENANTS OF ESCOBAR HAVE SURRENDERED TO  
COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES. GOC BELIEVES THAT ESCOBAR IS  
FEELING THE INCREASING PRESSURE AND IS NOW LEFT WITH  
NO CLOSE CONFIDANTS. (BOGOTA 003346)  
(BOGOTA 003367/003543/003718)

- ON MARCH 4 IT WAS REPORTED THAT GOC AUTHORITIES THWARTED A PLAN TO BOMB THE U.S. EMBASSY. PLAN

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DS/DSS/ITA.

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INVOLVED PLACING 130KGS OF DYNAMITE

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                     AND A 30KG CAR BOMB NEAR THE EMBASSY.  
(BOGOTA 005275) (NOTE: THIS WAS CIRCULAR REPORTING  
FROM INFORMATION RECEIVED EARLIER WHICH WAS LARGELY  
DISCOUNTED.)

- ON MARCH 5 A CAR BOMB EXPLODED IN BOGOTA NEAR THE  
HEADQUARTERS OF COLOMBIA'S TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY  
(TELECOM) INJURING 55. WHILE COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES  
BELIEVE BOMBING TO BE ATTRIBUTED TO ESCOBAR, IT MAY  
HAVE BEEN CONNECTED WITH THE TELECOM UNREST WITH A  
POSSIBLE GUERRILLA CONNECTION. (BOGOTA 003715)

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- ON MARCH 7 TWO ARRESTED MEDELLIN CARTEL MEMBERS  
IMPLICATED PABLO ESCOBAR'S SON JUAN PABLO, IN THE  
MURDER OF A COLOMBIAN POLICE INTELLIGENCE CAPTAIN IN  
DECEMBER 1992. (BOGOTA 004436)

- ON MARCH 17 COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES REPORTED A PLOT  
TO MURDER NATIONAL POLICE COMMANDER GENERAL MIGUEL  
ANTONIO GOMEZ PADILLA. OPERATIONS LED TO THE ARREST  
OF NINE MEMBERS OF THE MEDELLIN CARTEL, 14 MEMBERS OF  
THE PEOPLE'S MILITIA AND A WEAPONS CACHE.  
(FBIS 170439Z MAR 93)

- ON MARCH 19 COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES ARRESTED TWO  
ESCOBAR ASSOCIATES WHO ADMITTED THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE  
FOR THE MARCH 5 CAR BOMBING IN BOGOTA. THE ARRESTED  
INDIVIDUALS INDICATED THE CAR BOMB WA INTENDED FOR  
THE NORTHERN AREA OF BOGOTA (PRIMARILY A RESIDENTIAL  
AREA WHERE ALL AMERICAN MISSION PERSONNEL RESIDE).  
(FBIS 191506Z MAR 93)

- ON MARCH 19 COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES CONFIRMED THAT  
MARIO CASTANO MOLINA, ALIAS "EL CHOPO" WAS KILLED BY  
THE ESCOBAR TASK FORCE IN MEDELLIN. "EL CHOPO" WAS  
THE LAST MAJOR ESCOBAR LIEUTENANT STILL AT LARGE.  
(BOGOTA 004394)

- ON MARCH 20 THE PABLO ESCOBAR TASK FORCE ARRESTED  
TWO MEDELLIN CARTEL MEMBERS IN THE ACT OF PREPARING  
THREE CAR BOMBS ALLEGEDLY PLANNED FOR BOGOTA, PEREIRA  
AND CARTAGENA.

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(BOGOTA 004394)

-GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES

- ON FEBRUARY 23 MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT FABIO VILLEGAS STATED THAT OVER 1,400 GUERRILLAS HAD BEEN KILLED IN THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS. (BOGOTA 003712/01)

- ON MARCH 5 A SMALL GROUP OF FORMER M-19 GUERRILLAS DROPPED OUT OF THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT AND HAVE TAKEN UP ARMS AGAINST THE GOC. (BOGOTA 003558)

- ON MARCH 9 THREE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA (FARC) FRONT LEADERS WERE CAPTURED IN MEDELLIN. (BOGOTA 004031)

- ON MARCH 17 A MODERATE NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY (ELN) SPLINTER GROUP, THE SOCIALIST RENEWAL CURRENT (CRS) ANNOUNCED ITS DESIRE TO ENTER INTO PEACE TALKS WITH THE GOC. GOC INDICATED A UNILATERAL CRS CEASE FIRE PRIOR TO NEGOTIATIONS. (BOGOTA 004279/01)

- ON MARCH 19 THE COLOMBIAN ARMY FOUND A 50LB LAND MINE AT SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE. THE LOCATION IS 2KMS FROM A U.S. NAVY CONSTRUCTION SITE WHERE APPROXIMATELY 40 SEABEES ARE BUILDING A COLOMBIAN NAVY BASE. (COMUSMILGPBOGOT 004448)

-KIDNAPPINGS OF AMCITS IN COLOMBIA

- DURING MARCH A KIDNAPPING CASE INVOLVING AMCIT WAS RESOLVED. AT PRESENT THERE ARE FOUR  
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ACTIVE, UNRELATED KIDNAPPING CASES INVOLVING SIX  
AMCIT VICTIMS.

- ON MARCH 7 NEW TRIBES REPRESENTATIVES ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE THREE AMERICANS, [REDACTED] KIDNAPPED ON JANUARY 31, MET WITH THE AMBASSADOR CONCERNING THE REPORTED DEATH OF THE THREE AMERICAN MISSIONARIES. (BOGOTA 003744/01) (NOTE: VERIFICATIONS OF THE DEATHS NOT CONFIRMED BY EMBASSY.)

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TAGS: ASEC

SUBJECT: MONTHLY STATUS REPORT - MARCH 1993

- ON MARCH 11 A.C.S. REPRESENTATIVE MET WITH  
CANADIAN COUNTERPART CONCERNING [REDACTED] (AMCIT  
KIDNAPPED ON FEB 6 ALONG WITH A CANADIAN AND A  
VENEZUELAN). CANADIAN INDICATED THAT THE WHEREABOUTS  
OF VICTIMS IS STILL UNKNOWN. CANADIAN FURTHER  
REITERATED THAT THE VICTIMS' FAMILIES HAVE DIFFERENT  
STRATEGIES IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THIS DIVISIVENESS  
IS MAKING NEGOTIATIONS DIFFICULT. (BOGOTA 003923)

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- RANSOM PAYMENT SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 12 FOR  
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KIDNAPPED AMCIT [REDACTED] BY AN ASSOCIATE OF [REDACTED]  
(CARACAS 002289) (NOTE: A.C.S. BOGOTA  
STATED THAT [REDACTED] WAS RELEASED ON MARCH 13 AFTER  
A RANSOM PAYMENT OF \$150,000 USD.)

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- KIDNAPPERS OF AMCITS [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] HAVE RE-ESTABLISHED RADIO CONTACT  
WITH NEW TRIBES REPRESENTATIVES ON MARCH 16.  
(PANAMA 002218/01)

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B. MISCELLANEOUS

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- EMBASSY RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT AN AMCIT WAS SHOT AND KILLED ON MARCH 12 IN BOGOTA. SUBJECT WAS APPARENTLY A VICTIM OF A ROBBERY ATTEMPT. SUBJECT WAS IDENTIFIED AS HAROLD DAVIS A PRIVATE AMCIT. IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS WERE NOTIFIED.

(BOGOTA 4078)

- DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH AMCON BARRANQUILLA REPORTED THE FOLLOWING:

- IN MARCH COLOMBIAN SECURITY FORCES IN THE CONSULAR DISTRICT CONTINUED THEIR ASSAULT ON THE NARCOTRAFFICKERS AND GUERRILLAS. HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

-ON MARCH 2 COLOMBIAN SECURITY FORCES CONFISCATED AN ARMS CACHE IN THE GUAJIRA DEPARTMENT THAT WAS STOLEN FROM THE VENEZUELAN ARMY. SEVERAL DIFFERENT CALIBER WEAPONS AND ROCKET GRENADES WERE SEIZED THAT WERE DESTINED FOR THE FARC AND ELN GUERRILLA FRONTS.

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-ON MARCH 11 THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE CAPTURED ELEVEN GUERRILLAS AND CONFISCATED WEAPONS, EQUIPMENT AND SUBVERSIVE PROPAGANDA IN EL CARMEN DE BOLIVAR. THE CAPTURED GUERRILLAS WERE MEMBERS OF THE ELN THAT HAVE RECENTLY BEEN CARRYING OUT TERRORIST ACTIONS, KIDNAPPINGS, EXTORTION AND MURDER AGAINST THE LOCAL POPULACE IN BOLIVAR AND SUCRE DEPARTMENTS.

III. VIOLATIONS

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(01)NUMBER OF VALID SECURITY VIOLATIONS FORWARDED TO DS/CMI/PRD

IV DS INITIATED INVESTIGATIONS

20 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS ON HAND  
13 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS RECEIVED  
05 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS COMPLETED  
00 BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS OVERDUE

V. ACTION CABLES NOT ANSWERED BY DS DURING FEBRUARY: 0

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