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 UNCLASSIFIED *MASS*
 One Hundred Fourth Congress
 from Congress of the United States
 M. Committee on International Relations
 House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

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July 29, 1996

The Honorable Warren Christopher
 Secretary of State
 2201 "C" Street, NW
 Washington, D.C. 20520

RELEASED IN FULL

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Our Committee staff has been briefed on a proposed U.S. government-to-government arms sale of 12 UH-60 "BLACKHAWK" helicopters to the Government of Colombia. It is our understanding that these helicopters would be used by the Colombian Army.

We would appreciate additional information to consider this proposed transfer. In particular, what assurances have U.S officials sought to ensure that these helicopters would be used primarily for counter-narcotics purposes? Have we sought or received such assurances in writing? Are these helicopters better utilized by the Colombian Air Force which already has existing stocks of this helicopter? And, how will this equipment complement the counter-narcotics efforts of the Colombian National Police (CNP)?

I believe these and other questions would best be answered by the Administration testifying in public session before the Committee. The focus of the hearing would be on U.S. counter-narcotics policy in Colombia and the overall equipment needs of both the Colombian military and police in the difficult fight with the narco-guerrillas. Accordingly, I would like to request that the Assistant Secretaries for Inter-American Affairs, Political-Military Affairs, and International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, be made available to testify on the proposed arms transfer before the full committee shortly after the Congress returns in September.

During the intervening period, I would not oppose your moving forward with the 20-day informal notification regarding this proposed transfer. I would note, however, that my approval for sending forward the 20-day notification should not be construed as either support for, or opposition to, the proposed sale.

Instead I believe we need to move the process forward so that we are in a position, after hearing the Administration's testimony in September, to make a decision on the proposed sale.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J. OLSON
 DATE/CASE ID: 18 DEC 2001 200101108

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The Honorable Warren Christopher
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I would specifically request that you defer action on any formal 30-day notification pursuant to section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act until further notice.

Thank you for your consideration of my views.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,



BENJAMIN A. GILMAN
Chairman

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