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NEED FOR EUROPEAN ASSISTANCE TO COLOMBIA FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST ILLICIT DRUGS

JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM, AND HOMELAND SECURITY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

AND THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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NEED FOR EUROPEAN ASSISTANCE TO COLOMBIA FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST ILLICIT DRUGS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2006

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM,
AND HOMELAND SECURITY
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,

AND

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittees met, pursuant to notice, at 12:07 p.m., in Room 2141, Rayburn House Office Building, the Honorable Howard Coble (Chairman of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security) presiding.

Mr. COBLE. Ladies and gentlemen, I apologize to you all for the delay. We had a vote on the floor, and we have no control over that. And we will commence very shortly. And thank you for your patience.

Good morning, again, ladies and gentlemen. Again, we apologize for the belated kick-off. I hope you all understand that.

I want to welcome you all to this important joint oversight hearing before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security and the House International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere to examine the increase in trafficking of Colombian cocaine into Europe and the role of the European community in combating cocaine trafficking from the Andes.

I recently traveled to Vienna, Austria—well, recently, 8 or 9 months ago—to meet with the European and South American leaders to discuss narcotrafficking. This meeting was hosted by Ambassador Rosso José Serrano, the Colombian Ambassador to Austria, and one of the witnesses who was invited to testify before us today.

Although I was encouraged to learn that U.S. cooperation with Colombian officials and vigilant efforts by our own DEA have reduced cocaine shipments into the United States, I was furthermore alarmed to hear that the Colombian cartels are now turning their attention toward Europe.

I hope our witnesses today might address the Geneva Convention reporting requirements for precursor chemicals. I am told that U.S.

chemical companies are required to notify Colombian authorities when precursor chemicals are sent to Colombia.

Although these requirements apply to the E.U., not all countries have complied. In fact, Germany and the Netherlands have become notorious in the drug enforcement community for supplying Colombia's drug lords with the essential chemicals to make cocaine.

I think it is important that we begin a dialogue with our European counterparts to gain their full cooperation on this critical component of cocaine production.

Portugal and Spain function as gateway nations for trafficking Colombian cocaine into Europe. Both nations are reporting massive increases in the amount of Colombian cocaine interdicted over the last year.

For example, in the first 6 months of 2006, the amount of seized cocaine increased to 30 metric tons, almost double the 18 metric tons seized over the entire previous year. If the rate in the increase of seizures remains constant, Portugal and Spain will experience a 400 percent increase in cocaine seizures between 2005 and 2006.

Just this past Monday, Dominican authorities seized 2,250 kilograms of cocaine, the largest amount seized by that country, concealed in a shipping container bound for Europe. In total, it is believed that between 40 and 50 percent of all Colombian cocaine is now sent to Europe.

Colombian cartels have realized several advantages to shifting their attention to Europe. Aside from being more geographically convenient than the United States, the implementation of open borders between E.U. member states has enabled traffickers to access markets across the entire continent with relative ease.

Perhaps the most attractive aspect of the European market to the Colombian cartels is the substantial increase in the profit margin. The price of a kilo of cocaine in Europe is roughly three times than that would demand in the United States.

Profits from the illicit exportation of narcotics are funding violent terrorist organizations, such the FARC and AUC. These organizations engage in brutal acts of violence against the government and civilians of Colombia and create an environment ripe for exploitation by the cartels.

While the United States has successfully prosecuted several paramilitary leaders and helped destroy thousands of acres of coca in Colombia, DEA officials report that FARC and AUC are operating in Spain, an indication that these organizations have turned their attention to Europe as an untapped resource.

Over the past year, I have often cited the extreme violence exhibited by paramilitary groups engaged in narcotics trafficking. I hope that our European counterparts recognize the imminent danger that these groups pose.

I am not laying blame or casting fault, but I am disappointed that the European Union has chosen not to participate in today's hearing, to which they were invited.

I am encouraged to learn that the seven European countries are creating a counternarcotics liaison center in Lisbon, Portugal, modeled after the Joint Interagency Task Force in Key West, Florida. I encourage the DEA to offer its support and assistance to these

countries and the creation of this center. I believe it will be a valuable asset to our Key West operation.

I look forward, as I am sure my colleagues do, to hearing from today's witnesses.

And I am now pleased to recognize Mr. Dan Burton, the gentleman from Indiana, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere. And I thank him and his Members if they in fact join us.

And, Dan, if you will suspend a minute, as we normally do, the opening statements will be restricted to the Chairmen and the Ranking Members, and all Members will be allowed to introduce their respective statements and be made a part of the record.

The distinguished gentleman from Indiana?

Mr. BURTON. Chairman Coble, I want to, first of all, ask how your surgery went this morning. Did it go well? He had to run out to the hospital.

Mr. COBLE. Well, I just told Mr. Scott, I went to the butcher shop this morning, but I think I am okay. Thank you for asking.

Mr. BURTON. Well, you look good anyhow.

As Chairman Coble pointed out, we are at a critical juncture in the war on drugs. Just as we and our Colombian allies are starting to make real progress in Colombia, we are finding that the path to ultimate success is being undermined by the growing demand for and consumptions of Andean narcotics in Europe, especially Colombian cocaine.

During a recent fact-finding trip to Spain and Portugal, it was discovered that as much as 50 percent of Colombian cocaine is now going to Europe. I think some of this has been mentioned by my colleague. This development should send alarm bells ringing through the capitals of Europe, the European Union and at our own State Department.

Spain, for example, is now the second-largest consumer of cocaine per capita, just behind the United States. Colombian cocaine is being trafficked from Colombia, Venezuela and other nations in our hemisphere directly to Europe. Spain and Portugal, unfortunately, are the portals for this trafficking.

With rising demand in Europe and prices per kilogram, as the Chairman said, reaching as much as three times more than here in the United States, it is no wonder we are seeing record seizures of cocaine in that region.

But what is more disturbing is that the drug flow to Europe is undermining every effort that we are making to reduce production in Colombia, thus destroying any hope for peace and stability in that region.

Since Mr. Coble outlined the problem in detail, I wish only to take a short moment here to offer some possible strategies that can be readily adopted by Europe and the United States to stem the flow of drugs and perhaps prevent the kind of drug-abuse epidemic characterized by increased crime rates, high body counts and broken communities that we have suffered here. I hope somebody in Europe might be paying attention, because they ought to be here today.

First, I would like to, as I said, air my disappointment that the European Union has again declined to participate in such an im-

portant hearing. This decision follows a November of 2004 request when we asked the Europeans to dialogue with us on this very issue. Then, like now, we were rebuffed. With 50 percent of Colombian cocaine going to Europe, it is hard to fathom their apparent lack of interest.

It is clear that drug trafficking is no longer just an American problem. It is a global problem that will require a concerted effort on the part of the Colombians, the Europeans and the United States to resolve.

To do this, the Congress, the State Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration must actively engage our European allies to recognize the drug problem that they are suffering and encourage them to become active players in the development and pursuit of real solutions.

Europe, if you are listening, you can no longer sit on the sidelines.

When Plan Colombia was first developed, it was believed that the European Union would make good on its funding pledge and support the non-security portions of the plan. This was the so-called "soft side" assistance would have included alternative development, educational initiatives, job training programs and other programs designed to support farmers and others who would leave the drug production business in Colombia and elsewhere.

But much of the pledged assistance has never arrived. Now, 6 years later, the U.S. continues to pay the lion's share of aid to Colombia, despite the fact that nearly half of all Colombian cocaine is going to Europe.

It is time for Europe to revisit its previous commitment to the soft-side assistance and begin a long-term relationship with Colombia. For example, over the last few years, more than 40,000 members of the narcoterrorist groups FARC and AUC have laid down their arms and are looking to re-enter society and become good citizens with honorable work.

The European Union could contribute the necessary resources to provide these most likely unskilled and untrained young demobilized Colombians to have the education, job training and other skills that they need to contribute to society.

I would like to thank the Dutch government for building a demobilization center in Bogota, which now supports 600 demobilized fighters. We could use a lot more help like this from the European Union.

Moreover, European law enforcement and other governmental agencies in Europe can follow the lead of Spain as it works to develop a joint European-Colombian law enforcement liaison center in Lisbon, Portugal, much like our Joint Interagency Task Force Center in Key West, Florida.

Putting such a center in Europe would allow law enforcement officials from all over Europe to jointly operate with law enforcement representatives from Colombia, Brazil and the DEA here in the United States, where intelligence can be shared and cooperative strategies to interdicting drugs can be developed.

To be successful, the U.S. Department of State should provide assistance and operational support for the new international police liaison center. In addition, all major seizures of cocaine in Europe

should be tested by DEA to see if it is originating in Colombia, Peru or Bolivia. By taking these simple actions and developing other cooperative programs, the tide of drugs washing up on European soil can be reduced.

Europe is on the verge of a cocaine epidemic of historic and tragic proportions. It is my hope that, by holding this hearing, our friends and allies in Europe will receive the message that it is high time to act and that their American allies will stand with them to battle this deadly and mutual enemy.

I agree with Mr. Calvani from the U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime, whose testimony includes this quote: "The international community and the United States must share the responsibility for reducing the world's biggest supply of cocaine. Cocaine-consuming nations need to reduce drug demand, especially in Europe, where abuse is rising rapidly."

I ask unanimous consent that the letter sent by the E.U. declining our invitation to testify in this hearing be entered in the record, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, we have President Musharraf of Pakistan here, and I have to run to that luncheon, but I will return just as soon as the luncheon is concluded.

Mr. COBLE. I thank the gentleman. And, without objection, that will be made a part of the record.

[The material referred to is available in the Appendix.]

Mr. COBLE. I am now pleased to recognize the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, the Ranking Member of our Subcommittee, Mr. Bobby Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to join you, Chairman Burton and Ranking Member Engel, our colleagues from the International Relations Subcommittee, in convening the hearing on the growing threat of cocaine in Western Europe.

It is my hope that Europeans will actually do a better job than we have done in the United States in employing cost-effective strategies in reducing the threat and impact of cocaine and other illicit drugs.

In our so-called war on drugs, we have spent billions of dollars annually over 20 years on supply-control strategies, such as interdiction and law enforcement. At the same time, we have spent very little comparatively on education and treatment and other demand-reduction strategies, despite the fact that all research shows those to be the most cost-effective strategies by far in reducing illicit drug use.

If our goal is to reduce drug use, we should review the 1994 RAND study on controlling cocaine, when they estimated the relative value and cost-effectiveness of four cocaine control programs. Those four are source control, interdiction, domestic law enforcement, and treatment.

This study answered the question: How much would Government have to spend on each approach to decrease cocaine consumption in the United States by 1 percent?

In brief, the study showed that, compared to treatment, it cost seven times more to achieve the same result with domestic law enforcement. It cost 10 times more to get those results with interdic-

tion, and 23 times more to achieve the results using the strategy of source control.

The RAND study found that to achieve the 1 percent reduction in cocaine use required $34 million if you use treatment; $246 million for domestic law enforcement; $366 million using interdiction; and $783 million if you use a strategy of source control to achieve the same 1 percent reduction in cocaine use.

To be sure, there have been increasing successes on source control, interdiction and law enforcement over the years. Plan Colombia, on which the United States has spent billions, and other crop eradication strategies such as the U.N. strategies we will hear about today, have been a significant success.

However, during the same period, we have seen a steady increase in production and supply, such that the quantity has actually gone up in many areas and the price has actually gone down.

There have been indications that there may have been declines in United States use, but that is not because of a reduction in supply. That is because the nature of the problem we are dealing with is that even if you achieve a 90 percent supply-side reduction, 10 percent is still available, and that 10 percent is so profitable that you can continue the trade.

Because the cost of the product is so low compared to the cost at retail, illicit drug distributors know, just like distributors in any other products know, that they can lose as much as 90 percent of their cargo and still make a profit if 10 percent gets through.

So we must do something more than just be successful on the supply-side control strategies to reduce and control illegal drug use.

Now, I am not saying that we should reduce anything we are now doing. Clearly, we must address criminal violation of our drug laws. However, I am saying that we have the ability to move forward from here based on knowledge and experience which shows that we should be pursuing research-based strategies using all of our approaches, which will actually reduce drug supply and use, with the attention to the cost-effectiveness.

Clearly, our strategy of knocking off the big drug cartels has not worked to reduce either supply or use. And ironically, it appears that we may have actually increased the supply, in that, with big ruthless cartels gone, we have many smaller cartels and individual distributors who are even more elusive than the large cartels were.

So, Mr. Chairman, I believe our advice to our European colleagues in addressing the growing threat of cocaine is to draw from our successes, failures, our research and knowledge in crafting appropriate responses.

I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses, and thank you for convening the hearing.

Mr. COBLE. I thank you, Mr. Scott.

And I am now pleased to recognize the distinguished gentleman from New York, the Ranking Member from the International Relations Committee, Mr. Engel.

Mr. ENGEL. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank you and Chairman Burton for calling this important hearing, and my colleague, Bobby Scott, as well.

Today's Joint Subcommittee hearing focuses on the need for European assistance to Colombia for the fight against illicit drugs. I

think it is good that we are having this joint hearing. I think it highlights the importance that we attach to this issue to have two Subcommittees from two different Committees holding this hearing.

Obviously, stemming the trade in illicit narcotics is an important topic that affects us all. It requires all nations to participate fully if we are to roll back the tide of drug violence and illegal drug abuse.

I am glad that our Subcommittee, in particular with Chairman Burton, has been using the prism of our Subcommittee to shine a bright light on the problem. It is important to hold our Government's feet to the fire to make sure we are doing everything possible to stop the flow of cocaine and other drugs from Colombia. And I want to particularly thank Dan Burton for his diligence and his interest.

But I think we have to be careful. I think we obviously need the cooperation of Europe in many endeavors around the world. We have a large number of shared interests with our European allies, many of which rise to the level of vital strategic concerns for the United States: We are working together to halt Iran's quest for nuclear weapons. Our troops are fighting shoulder to shoulder in Afghanistan to stamp out the Taliban. We have troops under joint command in Kosovo, where final status talks will soon reach their conclusion. And the lists of shared interests of the highest order goes on from there.

So I think I would like to emphasize our similarities and our shared interests, rather than highlight any kind of differences.

So I welcome the spirit of this hearing. With the enormous range of shared strategic interests, it is possible that we could also promote the goal of encouraging more European Union cooperation in the fight against the Colombian drug trade, not only through hearings, but through quiet meetings and intensified diplomacy.

I am also a Member of the Europe Subcommittee, Co-Chair of the European Union Caucus, and former Vice-Chair for the U.S.-European Union Transatlantic Legislative Dialogue. I believe, again, that it is important to have those dialogues.

And I hope that today's hearing will be viewed positively on the other side of the Atlantic, because I know this hearing is meant to be positive and helpful.

So, with that, I will again say that I share everyone's interest in this problem. At a previous hearing, I raised the question about Europe's effort in the fight against drugs. I fully agree that this is a matter worth exploring. In the days and weeks ahead, I have proposed that we work together to approach our European allies.

And I look forward to the testimony of today's witnesses.

Again, I hope that this hearing highlights the similarities and what we are doing together to combat illicit drugs. Obviously, it is never enough; we always need to be more intense and to continue to work together. But I would like to emphasize our joint interests and our joint cooperation, rather than say, "You guys aren't doing what you should be doing," because I think that we have much greater interests in working together.

And I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Mr. Engel.

Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, the distinguished lady from Florida, has requested permission for her statement to be made a part of the record. And, without objection, it will be done.

[The material referred to is available in the Appendix.]

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Chairman, if I might?

Mr. COBLE. Yes, sir?

Mr. ENGEL. I also have something from Congressman Sam Farr, who was a Peace Corps volunteer who served in Colombia. And he also has a statement and some questions that I would like unanimous consent to insert into the record.

Mr. COBLE. Without objection, that will be done.

[The material referred to is available in the Appendix.]

Mr. COBLE. Gentlemen, it is the practice of the Subcommittee to swear in all witnesses appearing before it, so if you would please stand and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. COBLE. Let the record show that each witness answered in the affirmative.

You may be seated.

We have three distinguished witnesses with us today—well, actually four, but one will not be testifying.

Our first witness is Mr. Michael Braun, Chief of Operations for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Since joining the DEA in 1985, he has also served as its Deputy Assistant Administrator for Intelligence and interim Director of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Intelligence Fusion Center.

In June 2003, Mr. Braun was detailed to the Department of Defense for a special assignment in Iraq as the chief of staff for the Interim Ministry of Interior Coalition Provisional Authority, where he assisted in creating the new Iraqi National Police Service and customs and border agencies.

Mr. Braun holds a B.S. degree in criminal justice from the Southeast Missouri State University and attended the Senior Managers in Government Program at Harvard University.

Our second witness today is Dr. Sandro Calvani, representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Dr. Calvani previously served as director of the United Nations Drug Control Program regional office for the Caribbean, with responsibility for U.N. drug control coordination in 29 countries and territories.

Under his leadership, UNDCP facilitated the development of the Barbados Plan of Action, an integrated drug control program for one of the largest regions in the world, endorsed and sponsored by more than 40 nations.

He is the author of 16 books on substantial development and development education and has been repeatedly quoted and interviewed on drug trafficking in the Americas by leading publications across the globe.

Dr. Calvani received his M.S. in biological sciences at the University of Genoa, pursued post-graduate studies at Colorado State University, the University of Louvain in Belgium, and Harvard University.

Our final witness is the Honorable Rosso José Serrano, who is here in absentia. Ambassador Serrano has been a figure in the war

against illegal drugs in the United States, Bolivia, Germany, Great Britain and, finally, the Dominican Republic.

Prior to entering the diplomatic arena, he concluded 45 years of service with the Colombian National Police Force in the position of general director. As director of the MPS Anti-Drug Unit, Ambassador Serrano distinguished himself in the fight against drug trafficking by initiating the fumigation of illegal crops in Colombia, which produced considerable results. He declared a direct national fight against criminal organizations, especially those involved in drug trafficking, which resulted in the dismantlement of the notorious Cali cartel.

Ambassador Serrano holds a Ph.D. in law and politics at the University of LaGrande, Colombia.

Unfortunately, the ambassador could not be with us today, and reading his statement and taking questions will be Major Raul Fernando Lopez of the Colombian National Police.

And, Mr. Lopez, who is your colleague to your left?

Major LOPEZ. Lieutenant Colonel Tuahiti, head of the National Interdiction Unit for the Colombian National Police.

Mr. COBLE. And it is good to have you with us too, sir.

Gentlemen, we operate around here on the 5-minute rule, as you all have previously been told. We have examined your statements. And when you see the amber light appear on the panel before you, that is your warning that the ice on which you are skating is becoming thin. You will have a minute to go. When the red light appears, your 5 minutes have expired, and no one will be keelhauled at that point, but if you could wrap up when you see the red light appear.

And then Mr. Scott and I impose the 5-minute rule against ourselves, as well, so when we ask you all a question, if you could reply as tersely as possible.

We thank you very much for being here.

And, Mr. Braun, why don't you kick us off?

TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL BRAUN, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, U.S. DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BRAUN. Thank you, sir.

Good morning, Chairman Coble, Chairman Burton, Ranking Member Scott, Ranking Member Engel, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittees.

On behalf of administrator Karen Tandy, I want to thank you for your continued support of the men and women that make up the ranks of the DEA. And I want to thank you, as well, for the opportunity to testify about the cocaine flow from South America to Europe and DEA's cooperative efforts with our European counterparts.

DEA's international offices support our organizational attack strategy by focusing our efforts on the world's most notorious drug trafficking syndicates. Cocaine trafficking in Europe is directly linked to South American and Mexican drug trafficking kingpins, the same kingpins that the DEA has in its crosshairs.

DEA's activities in Europe and around the world are seamless and support our single most important strategic objective: to disrupt and dismantle the world's most notorious and wanted drug

trafficking organizations that are impacting the United States and our allies.

Let me take just a minute to describe in part how Colombian and Mexican global drug trafficking syndicates operate.

First and foremost, they rule by fear. They rely heavily on the hallmarks of organized crime: corruption, intimidation and brutal violence.

They will start with corruption. If that doesn't work—and by the way, they have hundreds of millions of dollars at their disposal to corrupt with—then they will turn to intimidation, sometimes subtle intimidation, other times with outright defiance in public.

If intimidation doesn't work, then they turn to brutal violence, never to be outdone by any of the global terrorist organizations, by the way. They are just as brutal.

Their organizational structures are incredibly sophisticated. In fact, they are identical to global terrorist organizations. And they have evolved that way to thwart law enforcement.

The corporate headquarters are established south of the border, oftentimes in palatial surroundings where that corruption angle allows them to operate in such a fashion. They have established command and control cells on our side of the southwest border and now in various locations across Europe and West Africa.

Those command and control cells receive daily guidance and direction from corporate headquarters. The command and control cells in turn provide daily guidance and direction to subordinate cells responsible for drug distribution, transportation, security and money laundering. These subordinate cells, the worker bees, if you will, are working all over our country and throughout Europe, West Africa and elsewhere. They are so highly compartmentalized that if law enforcement takes down just one cell or a few cells, we have virtually no impact on the larger organization in whole.

How do they do it? They rely on the latest in technology to communicate that guidance and direction at every step of the way, as their drugs move in one direction and as the money flows in another. They also rely on the latest in technology to navigate, to move their drug loads to virtually any place on the globe with pinpoint accuracy. They operate most effectively in weak nation-states, and they spend hundreds of millions of dollars to corrupt in these environments.

Like any Fortune 500 organization, global drug trafficking syndicates are always searching for new markets. And Colombian traffickers hit the powerball jackpot when they expanded their operations into Europe.

A kilogram of cocaine that sells for $20,000 in the United States easily sells for $75,000 or more in some places in Europe. And I am not talking about the movement of tens of kilograms of cocaine. I am talking about multi-ton quantities.

It is important to understand that those who are ultimately responsible for trafficking cocaine in Europe are also the same kingpins responsible for trafficking cocaine in the United States.

Thanks to our outstanding relations with our European law enforcement agencies and many others in the global law enforcement community, we have experienced tremendous success in disrupting and dismantling global drug trafficking syndicates.

By working closely with our foreign counterparts, to include the sharing of highly sensitive leads, we add value to their investigations, they add value to ours. The end result is maximum impact against those responsible for global drug trafficking organizations.

We press forward our organizational attack strategy throughout our ranks. Virtually all of our major investigations eventually lead us to these same targets abroad.

Thanks to you, no other nation in the world has more strict drug laws than the United States, and the stiff sentencing guidelines that accompany those laws are feared the world over.

The last thing that any global drug trafficker wants—and I want to stress this—the last thing that any global drug trafficker wants to face is justice meted out in a United States courthouse.

And by the way, our foreign counterparts—I don't want to speak for Major Fernandez, but our foreign counterparts deeply appreciate those very strict drug laws and stiff sentencing guidelines that all of you have enacted. And that is something that you should all be very, very proud of.

In summation, sir, I would simply say that there is one other troubling factor that I would be more than happy to talk about as we move deeper into these discussions, and that is the close nexus between drugs and terrorism. I am convinced in my mind, after 32 years of this business, you cannot fight one without fighting the other and expect to win.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Braun follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL A. BRAUN

Statement of

Michael A. Braun
Chief of Operations
Drug Enforcement Administration

before the

House Judiciary Committee
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security

and

House International Relations Committee
Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere

September 21, 2006

"The Need for European Assistance to Colombia for the Fight Against Illicit Drugs"

Good morning, Chairman Coble, Chairman Burton, Ranking Member Scott and Ranking Member Engel and distinguished members of the subcommittees. On behalf of the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) Administrator, Karen P. Tandy, I want to thank you for your continued support of the men and women of DEA, as well as the opportunity to testify about the drug flow from South America to Europe and our cooperative efforts with our European counterparts.

Overview

The drug threat is global in nature. It affects not only the United States, but every country in the world. History has shown that any country that is a source country or part of the transit zone will eventually have a drug consumption problem. DEA is finding smarter and better ways to leverage the resources we have so that we can most effectively manage our drug law enforcement programs, while simultaneously coordinating with our foreign counterparts.

The good news is that today we know more about how drug trafficking organizations operate. This allows DEA to work more effectively and more intelligently. We have strong working relationships with governments throughout the world, particularly in Europe and Latin America. We depend upon the cooperation of these governments to leverage our resources most effectively and to implement our enforcement operations successfully. These joint initiatives not only help the United

States to reduce drug availability, but also in the long run will help others in their fight against the flow of cocaine from South America.

DEA has long been a leader in promoting international cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking. DEA currently has approximately ten percent of its workforce overseas. Of this international contingent, 60 DEA employees are stationed in 11 different European countries. This demonstrates our commitment to strong cooperation with our European counterparts. We believe that to combat worldwide drug trafficking effectively, the United States must maintain a sustained multi-national approach. The DEA focuses on improving counterdrug capabilities through developing personal liaisons with host nation law enforcement authorities, institution building with host nation governments, conducting bilateral investigations, and attacking the command and control structures of the major drug trafficking organizations. We depend upon the partnerships of our allies to achieve these goals.

My testimony today will focus on two primary issues. First, I will outline the drug threat facing Europe as a result of the movement of cocaine from South America. Second, I will discuss DEA's successful cooperation with our European law enforcement counterparts and our need to continue these multinational endeavors in stemming the flow of drugs from South America to the burgeoning cocaine market in Europe.

Increased Drug Flow to Europe

DEA benefits from first-rate intelligence and strong multinational coordination. Nonetheless, we still face a multitude of challenges in the counternarcotics arena. In recent years, Europe has seen an increased flow of drugs from South America. According to interagency estimates, approximately 80 percent of the cocaine destined for non-U.S. markets in 2005 was bound for Europe. The European Police Office (Europol) reports that cocaine is smuggled into the European Union annually via maritime shipments, air freight, and couriers.

DEA investigations have shown the same Colombian (and to a lesser extent Mexican) organizations that are smuggling cocaine to the United States are also responsible for smuggling cocaine to Europe. Therefore, it is vitally important that we coordinate with our European counterparts regarding illicit drugs. This is a threat that affects not only the United States, but also the entire international community.

Since the early 1990s, Europe has experienced a significant increase in the amount of cocaine trafficked from South America. There has been a series of events that has promoted this expansion. First, the U.S. Government and our host nation counterparts have conducted successful interdiction operations in the Western Hemisphere. For example, Colombia seizures of cocaine have increased over 400 percent -- from 41 metric tons in 1996 to 228 metric tons in 2005.

Greed has also lured major traffickers to European markets. Wholesale cocaine prices are significantly higher in Europe than in the United States. In 2006, wholesale

cocaine prices in the European Union range between $38,000 and $77,000 per kilogram as compared to the $9,000 to $40,000 per kilogram in the United States. As a result, the potential for this high profit margin has increasingly lured Colombian traffickers to European markets.

Furthermore, the demand for cocaine in Europe has significantly increased. According to U.S. government consumption estimates, Western European cocaine consumption has increased nearly 60 percent since 1998 – from 97 metric tons in 1998 to 153 metric tons in 2004.

Movement from Latin America to Europe

Over the past ten years, Colombian trafficking organizations have aggressively expanded their drug operations throughout Latin America and in Western Europe. Primarily shipping from Colombia, Venezuela, and the Southern Cone, cocaine is smuggled via a variety of conveyances before being shipped to Europe. The Colombian cells operate in Europe and often include representatives from multiple European nations.

The Iberian Peninsula, Spain and Portugal, is the principal gateway for cocaine entering Europe. It has strong cultural, linguistic, and ethnic ties to South America. Consequently, Colombian trafficking groups are more active in Spain than in any other European country. Spain seized an average of 39 metric tons of cocaine annually between 2001 and 2005, the most of any European nation.

Colombian trafficking groups have also established drug trafficking operations in the Netherlands, another important European gateway country for cocaine. Rotterdam, the Netherlands, is a key entry point for South American cocaine shipped to Western Europe by sea and air. Between 2001 and 2004, the Netherlands was second only to Spain in the quantity of cocaine seized, over 21 metric tons.

The United Kingdom is another significant country in both the consumption and transshipment of cocaine. In recent years, the UK has seen consumption and seizures increase. In particular, crack cocaine use has become a point of concern. According to the United Kingdom's National Criminal Intelligence Service, 35 to 40 tons of cocaine is transported annually into the United Kingdom.

Another significant cocaine transshipment point in Europe is Belgium. Antwerp, Belgium is Europe's second largest port and constitutes a major gateway for the import of cocaine from South America to the European Union. The Belgian National Police Central Drug Office estimates that approximately 20 tons of cocaine are smuggled into Antwerp annually. Colombian trafficking organizations control the distribution of cocaine when it arrives in Belgium.

The primary method for smuggling large quantities of cocaine from Latin America to Europe is via containerized cargo to ports such as Barcelona, Rotterdam, and Antwerp. Cocaine is hidden among legitimate cargo or within the container structure

itself. For example, recent seizures have included cocaine hidden among banana and pineapple shipments, within drums of honey, in fuel tanks, and secreted in marble sculptures. Other conveyances for smuggling cocaine include commercial maritime vessels, fishing vessels, air couriers, and airfreight on commercial aircraft. Before shipment, smaller consignments of cocaine are normally consolidated onto larger vessels in the Caribbean.

In May 2006, DEA/Special Operations Division (SOD) identified a critical need to develop an operating arrangement, and establish longitudinal participation, with the U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Intelligence Center (MIC), located in Miami. The MIC has several partners, including the United Kingdom. DEA/SOD was instrumental in facilitating strategic meetings to organize and formalize this agreement and is now an active participant in the MIC. The arrangement has already resulted in the seizure of more than 4,000 kilograms of cocaine.

Europe also faces the threat of South American cocaine that transits through Africa. Colombian cocaine traffickers have increasingly transshipped metric-ton quantities of cocaine to Europe via Africa. There is significant legitimate maritime activity between West African and European seaports, which makes detecting smuggled cocaine all the more difficult.

Colombia

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of shipments of cocaine from Colombia to Europe via personal couriers on individual commercial air flights. In 2005, 79% of cocaine seized at Colombian airports was en route to European locations, primarily Spain. This trend continued during the first half of 2006, as 86% of cocaine seized at airports in Colombia was destined for Europe, primarily Spain, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. The Colombian National Police has coined the term "microtrafficking" to describe the increased trafficking of small quantities of cocaine, averaging 2.5 kilograms per courier in 2006.

Venezuela

A significant quantity of the cocaine transiting Venezuela is destined for the European market. According to interagency intelligence assessments, in mid 2006, indicate that significant amounts of South American cocaine that flowed to non-U.S. destinations transited Venezuela. The building of drug distribution networks has been aided by Venezuela's large immigrant community, consisting of Middle Easterners and Europeans, primarily from Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Lebanon - some of whom cultivate ties with drug trafficking organizations. For example, Italian organized crime members are involved in cocaine smuggling from Venezuela to Italy.

The U.S. Government has spent more than $3 million building and equipping a cargo inspection facility at Venezuela's Puerto Cabello in order to detect Colombian cocaine from this important port, most of which is destined for the U.S., Europe, and

elsewhere. However, the Government of Venezuela has refused to allow this facility to open.

Central America and Mexico

Like the United States, Europe also faces the threat of South American cocaine that is transshipped through Mexico and Central America. Since the late 1990's, we have seen the seizure in Europe of small quantities of cocaine coming out of Mexican airports. This past year, in contrast to the customary smaller shipments, a significant smuggling operation occurred. On March 22, 2005, two metric tons of cocaine and 7.5 million Euros were seized in Barcelona, Spain. This cocaine had been smuggled into Spain via commercial air cargo from Mexico. Spanish authorities arrested seven Mexicans and one Colombian in connection with this case. Intelligence suggests that as much as 50 tons of cocaine was shipped to Spain using this modus operandi between January 2004 and the time of the seizure.

Movement to Europe via Africa

Colombian trafficking groups have established ties with African criminal organizations in such countries as Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, and Togo. Together, they take advantage of the weak governments in those nations in order to smuggle drugs to Europe. Africa is also becoming a key command and control platform for Spanish and Italian drug trafficking organizations. These drug trafficking organizations have connections in numerous countries in West Africa – from the islands of Cape Verde, 500 miles off the western coast to Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, and Togo in the western part of the continent. From western Africa, trafficking organizations ship cocaine to Europe via fishing vessels or sail boats. Trafficking organizations exploit historical ties as well as cultural and linguistic similarities to further their goals. Cocaine transiting this region is destined for Spain, Portugal, Italy, the Netherlands, and France. Over the past 12 months, we have seen several metric-ton quantities of cocaine seized in West Africa and off the coast of Africa.

Kenya and South Africa are also transit points for South American cocaine en route to Europe. In December 2004, nearly one ton of cocaine was seized in Kenya that was destined for Europe, most likely the Netherlands. This seizure made us all the more aware that international drug trafficking rings had made inroads into Kenya and may benefit from a climate of official corruption.

South Africa is another important transit area for cocaine from South America destined for both Southern African and European markets. Cocaine continues to be controlled in South Africa by Nigerian trafficking organizations based in Johannesburg.

In many parts of the world, DEA has a strong relationship with our foreign counterparts. However, effective law enforcement is a particular challenge in Africa due to the sheer number of containers that transit through the seaports, the lack of trained inspectors and investigative intelligence, weak governments, and the widespread practice

of corruption. Therefore, Africa is seen as an ideal place for drug trafficking, and Colombian traffickers are ready to exploit this opportunity.

DEA's Cooperative Efforts with our European Counterparts

DEA has a strong and cooperative relationship with our European counterparts. As I mentioned earlier, we have offices in 11 European countries with approximately 60 DEA employees. DEA participates in joint law enforcement, intelligence, and liaison activities with a host of law enforcement entities throughout Europe.

For example, in operation "Twin Oceans" DEA worked as part of a multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force wire intercept operation that targeted a cocaine trafficking and money laundering organization responsible for smuggling multi-ton quantities of cocaine destined for the United States and Europe. This investigation resulted in the arrest of Don Pablo Rayo-Montano, the commander and controller of a criminal organization whose information technology-literate managers used highly sophisticated methods to coordinate the movement of cocaine north and illegal proceeds south. This investigation was designated a Consolidated Priority Organizational Target (CPOT) investigation, conducted with the cooperation of law enforcement agencies in Colombia, Panama, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Spain, and Great Britain.. This three-year long investigation, which culminated in May, 2006, resulted in over 100 arrests and the seizure of over 47 metric tons of cocaine and nearly $70 million in assets.

DEA has a particularly close relationship with the United Kingdom (UK). In the UK, DEA works closely with the Serious Organized Crime Agency (SOCA). SOCA was formed in 2006 by combining several drug enforcement elements from a variety of critical agencies throughout the British government. SOCA is now the primary UK agency responsible for combating international drug trafficking. In addition to representatives working from the British Embassy here in Washington, SOCA maintains liaison positions at DEA SOD and in DEA's Miami Field Division. Similar to DEA, SOCA maintains representatives in many countries throughout the world. DEA currently has numerous ongoing joint operations with SOCA.

For example, DEA and SOCA recently announced the completion of Operation "White Dollar." This DEA-coordinated investigative effort, also a CPOT investigation was conducted with the support of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Colombian Departamento Administrativo De Seguridad in Bogotá, Colombia, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, SOCA in London and the New York City Police Department. The case involved the dismantling of a massive international money laundering ring that laundered millions of Colombian drug dollars in the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom through the Colombian Black Market Peso Exchange. This investigation resulted in the indictment of 34 individuals and the forfeiture to the United States of $20 million in laundered funds, as well as the issuance of seizure warrants for more than $1 million in additional laundered funds.

In the Netherlands, DEA has embedded two Special Agents with the Royal Dutch National Police National Crime Squad (NR). DEA works with an office in NR that has the responsibility for South American-related cocaine investigations. Since October 2005, DEA and the NR have conducted joint investigations that have led to seizures of approximately 6,200 kilograms of cocaine and the arrest of 32 defendants. One 4,500 kilogram seizure was linked to the North Valley Cartel, a major Colombian drug trafficking organization.

DEA is also active in other parts of Europe. In November 2005, DEA helped to coordinate an international cocaine investigation from Uruguay to the Ukraine. The cocaine traveled to Kiev via Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Lisbon, Portugal. This investigation resulted in the arrest of 8 defendants and the seizure of 10 kilograms of cocaine.

DEA and Spanish law enforcement are continuously working on joint investigations into cocaine smuggling. For example, on June 24, 2006, a joint DEA/Spanish Navy initiative resulted in a vessel being stopped by the Spanish Navy with approximately 2,500 kg cocaine on board. Twenty Colombian and Spanish nationals were detained. On June 21, 2006, a DEA joint Spanish Government initiative intercepted a fishing trawler sailing 500 miles off the Spanish coast carrying 3,300 kg. of cocaine. On September 1, 2006, a joint investigation with DEA, and Spanish and French authorities culminated in the seizure of 3,000 kilograms of cocaine in Spain and the arrest of eleven subjects. This notable success represented a four month joint investigation between DEA/SOD, Spanish, and French authorities which was supported by the Marine Intelligence Center (MIC) in Miami, Florida.

Within the last few days, the cooperative efforts between Spain and the DEA were bolstered when Administrator Tandy visited with the Spanish Interior Minister, Alfredo Perez Rubalcaba, and the Spanish Secretary of State for Security, Antonio Camacho, in Madrid. During these talks, the United States and Spain agreed to strengthen efforts to fight the laundering of drug money and jointly underlined the need for a "joint and coordinated" effort to stem drug-related crime, via the creation of specialized anti-narcotics teams from both countries. Spain is at the frontline of the anti-narcotics fight in Europe. In April 2007, Spain, in conjunction with DEA, will host the 25th International Drug Enforcement Conference (IDEC) in Madrid. IDEC was established in 1983 for law enforcement officials to share information related to narcotics trafficking and has been a major success in the international efforts to combat trafficking.

In addition to these cooperative efforts with DEA, Europe has also taken unilateral steps to combat the importation of cocaine to its shores. Seven countries, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom, are forming an intelligence and operational center in Lisbon where maritime drug smuggling investigations can be coordinated.

Similar to the U.S. Joint Interagency Task Force- South, this Lisbon-based facility, to be called the Maritime Analysis & Operation Center (MAOC), is still in the development stage. As currently designed, MAOC will be led by law enforcement, in

contrast to the US Joint Inter Agency Task Forces, which are led by the U.S. military. Initially, the center will concentrate on drug cases, but the Europeans have hopes to utilize the center to fight other crimes, such as immigration and terrorism.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, the DEA is committed to working both harder and smarter in dealing with the threat of transnational drug trafficking that affects the entire global community. Drug trafficking is a global menace that threatens not just American citizens, but communities all over the world. We recognize that interagency and multinational cooperation are essential elements of the President's National Drug Control Strategy, and these cooperative efforts are the best way for us to dismantle and disrupt international drug trafficking organizations. DEA will continue to work tirelessly to enhance the effectiveness of our enforcement operations in order to curtail the flow of drugs to both the United States and Europe.

We thank you for your continued support of DEA and for the opportunity to testify here today. This concludes my formal statement, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have at this time.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Mr. Braun. And, by the way, we will continue to dialogue with you on this. This will not conclude after we adjourn today, I can assure you. Thank you, sir.

Mr. BRAUN. Thank you.

Mr. COBLE. Dr. Calvani?

TESTIMONY OF SANDRO CALVANI, REPRESENTATIVE, UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF DRUGS AND CRIME, BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

Mr. CALVANI. Chairman Coble, Chairman Burton, Ranking Members Mr. Scott and Mr. Engel, good morning. Thank you for the invitation for briefing the Members of the two Committees on issues so relevant for global human security.

Since two of the world's most distinguished law enforcement institutions are here and they are going to report on the proper enforcement measures, which I share, I will limit my 5-minute introduction to two of the key points which I presented in my briefing which has been distributed to you.

The first one is a warning sign coming out of the increase of area under cultivation, 6,000 hectares last year, despite large-scale eradication, 139,000 hectares which have been air-sprayed. It is a warning signal to the Colombian government and to those that have participated in the joint drug control efforts.

The signal should alert us to refine drug control policies in Colombia in order to take into account the more challenging security environment and the inevitable difficulty of destroying coca fields fragmented in size, now around one hectare per field, dispersed on steep mountain slopes, embedded in protected national parks, and grown in proximity to international borders.

The overriding strategy of putting an end to the coca cultivation through eradication must be pursued relentlessly. However, there should be a change in tactics, using finer and more sustainable instruments.

In particular, the second strong popular mandate received by President Uribe should make it possible for his new government to launch a major drive in favor of greater assistance to farmers in coca cultivation areas, accompanied by structural policies devised to redistribute land, especially land seized from drug lords, to internally displaced people.

In Colombia, like in other countries, poverty in the countryside and lack of government control in many areas enable large-scale illicit activities and the resulting violence. Wide air-spraying remains cost-effective and keeps pressure on insurgents and organized crime.

Coca farmers need to be convinced to eradicate their own fields. Eradication backed by strong economic incentives would give farmers a greater sense of ownership in the government's zero-coca policy and increase the chance of long-term success.

My second point that I want to stress is the Colombian president's new program, Forest Warden Families Programme. The main objective is to motivate farmers to abandon illicit crops. Every family receives $265 per month for a 3-year period.

We have recently evaluated this program, and we have found surprising data: 82 percent of coca crops are eliminated for good. They never recur in the area where the program is present; 23 per-

cent of the reforestation; 66 percent of the direct beneficiaries are women.

Twenty thousand million pesos, which is more or less $8 million, has been used by these families to finance their own development projects. This is more than what they receive of aid from Germany and the United Kingdom together.

Twenty-five percent of the families bought lands, which means 32,000 hectares. This is more than what has been done by the National Land Reform Institute in 4 years.

Zero-nine percent of these families would consider a possibility to return to illicit crops as an economic subsistence or response to any problem. That means that 99.1 percent of these people don't want to go back to illicit crops.

That means that it is possible, if we reach one-third of the families who are doing coca, it is possible to reach the other two-thirds and reach 100,000 families who are now dealing with coca.

Due to very low international aid, in particular by Europe, we have reached so far only 20 percent of the population producing illicit crops.

As you have stated, Chairman Burton, the national community and the United States must continue to share the responsibility for reducing the world's biggest supplies of cocaine. And cocaine-consuming nations need to reduce direct demand, especially in Europe where this abuse is thriving.

The United Nations is there to help and to serve all its member countries in this undertaking and this endeavor.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Calvani follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. SANDRO CALVANI [1]

The world's appetite for cocaine remains stable but uneven, declining in the United States while increasing in Europe. In 2005 more than two thirds of the supply came from Colombia (640 tons), where coca cultivation increased by 8% over 2004: a discouraging outcome taking into account the resolute efforts of the Colombian Government to eradicate this illicit cultivation.

However, this increase should be kept in perspective. The overall level of coca cultivation in Colombia remains almost 50% below the peak recorded in 2000. Furthermore, country-wide aerial eradication has become more difficult due to a growingly aggressive insurgency fuelled by the narco-economy (and vice versa).

The two major armed groups are the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), on the extreme political left, and the United Self-Defence of Colombia (AUC), also called the 'paramilitaries' on the extreme right. The armed groups monopolize the purchase and sale of cocaine base and poppy latex and determine the taxes it charges to the traffickers, to the laboratories, the landing strips and the "gramaje". They also guarantee territorial control for the production. The armed groups promote illicit cultivation in their areas of influence because the income from drug trafficking provides the hard currency required in the international arms market. Therefore, the two illegal adversaries, the guerillas and the paramilitary, engage in a continuous and fierce fight to secure their income and finance their operations. According to a National Planning Department study, the FARC obtains 60% of its income from drug trafficking and the AUC has recognized that most of their financing depends on drug trafficking. Reportedly, for each dollar of cocaine sold in any of the streets in the world, 10 to 15 cents end up in the hands of Colombia's armed groups to continue financing the war.

The perverse vicious circle of drug trafficking-illegal crops-violence has resulted in a heavy burden on social and economic development. During the past ten years the country's financial resources were squeezed to provide greater resources to com-

[1] This briefing is based on UNODC Report. Colombia. Coca cultivation survey. June 2006. (Adapted and updated).

bat the narcoterrorism nexus and the resulting problems such as human rights violations, corruption, political instability and environmental destruction, in detriment of social and productive investment.

On the other hand, the UNODC study about productivity of coca fields and processing of coca base, suggest that there is more cocaine on the international market than previously believed. This may help explain why the price for cocaine has not gone up and the purity of doses has not decline on the streets of consuming nations, despite the halving in cultivation since 2000, the massive number of labs destroyed (1.953 in Colombia alone in 2005), and the dramatic (and still under-appreciated) increase in seizures world wide.

Clearly, the 2005 increase of the area under cultivation (6.000 ha) despite large-scale aerial eradication (139.000 ha) is a warning signal to the Colombian government and to those, that have participated in the joint drug control efforts.

This signal should alert us to refine drug control policies in Colombia in order to take into account the more challenging security environment, and the inevitable difficulty of destroying coca fields fragmented in size, dispersed on steep mountain slopes, embedded in protected national parks, and grown in proximity to international borders.

The overriding strategy of putting an end to coca cultivation through eradication must be pursued relentlessly. However, there should be a change in tactics using finer and more sustainable instruments. In particular, the second strong popular mandate received by President Uribe should make it possible for his new government to launch a major drive in favour of greater assistance to farmers in coca cultivation areas, accompanied by structural policies devised to redistribute land (especially land seized from drug lords) to internally displaced people. In Colombia, like in other countries, poverty in the countryside and lack of government control in many areas enable large-scale illicit activities and the resulting violence.

While aerial spraying is cost-effective and keeps pressure on insurgents and organized crime, coca farmers need to be convinced to eradicate their own fields. Voluntary eradication backed up by strong economic incentives would give farmers a grater sense of ownership in the government's zero-coca policies, and increase the chance of long-term success.

Countries that have shown the best results in the fight against illicit cultivations have found that alternative development is the most effective and sustainable eradication strategy. Indeed, a good alternative development strategy guarantees that the producer himself will destroy the illegal crops and will replace them with legal ones. Moreover, when this new activity is tied to a sustainable and profitable economy, the producer will not revert to growing illicit crops in a new location. Providing farmers legal and profitable alternatives and improving the living conditions in rural areas, villages and urban centers in regions affected by illicit cultivation proved to be the most effective socio-economic interventions, in order to reduce the scope of organized crime and their potential and indirect engagement in the conflict. *The results of alternative development are not immediate but they are indeed sustainable.*

Alternative development policies are rather new in Colombia, if compared with the situation in other countries. As a consequence, they are permanently adjusted to the new strategic priorities of the government and to the new scenarios that predominate.

The Colombian government has an innovative Programme of voluntary elimination of illicit crops and alternative development, called: "Forest Warden Families Programme". The main objective is to motivate farmers to keep their land free of illicit crops. The Programme also aims to recover the forest in areas that are ecologically and socially vulnerable. The government and the families involved should sign a contract, which establishes monthly payments of US$265 per family for a three years period. The Forest Warden Families Programme has two main components: First of all, the environmental component deals with the preservation of the environment. This involves technical support of expert entities, thus, training families on the establishment of productive and sustainable projects. The second component deals with the increase of the social capital, by a permanent training of families in community saving, leadership, and projects managements among others.

The selection criteria for the areas of each project is based on the identification of a number of districts within one or two municipalities that constitute a geographic unit along with the commitment of the inhabitants to keep all farms of his own district free of illicit crops. A break of this commitment from just one family in a given district implies the withdrawal of all families of that district from the Programme.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Colombia works on the close monitoring of this Programme bringing greater cohesion to UNODC's priorities and

strategies on the elimination of illicit crops. Recently, UNODC could inform the Colombian president, Mr. Uribe, that the Programme had achieved a reduction of 82% on coca crops and an increase of 23% on reforestation. Besides, 66% of the direct beneficiaries are women. As a result, farmers across the country have saved 20 thousand million pesos (Aprox. 8 million dollars) to finance alternative development projects. In addition, these families have been able to buy their own land with the salary they receive monthly. 25% of the families bought lands during the PFGB (around 32,000 hectares) resulting of 7,500 new families with their own land. Among the warden families only 0,9% would consider a possibility of returning to illicit crops as an economic subsistence.

Moreover, UNODC has fully supported the Alternative development projects of the Colombian government. After various years of technical assistance in the field of human security in Colombia, UNODC can conclude from that experience that its projects have contributed to the generation of a strong local social and human capital in the areas with a greater presence of illicit cultivation. The process to form social capital has focused on strengthening peasant organizations in the eight most affected departments: Cauca, Nariño, Putumayo, Caquetá, Guaviare, Meta, Bolívar and in Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. As a result, today all the producers' organizations have marketing agreements for their products and they participate actively in the planning and development institutions in their departments.

The UNODC projects have achieved: From 1996 to date more than 8,000 peasant families have benefited from alternatives such as double purpose livestock breeding (meat and milk), forestry and traditional crops such as coffee, cacao, plantains, fruits and palm hearts, among others. The products of the alternative development projects in Colombia are known in Colombia as "Peace Products" due to the evident positive effects which they produce in the country.

It is considered that if the creation of rural businesses which produce traditional crops such as coffee, beans, cacao, plantain, fruit, palm hearts, forestry, among others, and at the same time the support of the private sector can be relied upon for the commercialization of these products, we will be achieving more sustainable and successful policies against drugs in Colombia. For the time being, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has managed to sign marketing agreements with nationwide supermarkets such as Carrefour, CAFAM and Exito-Casino and at the same time count on the support of commercial European organizations like Andines (in France) to support the elimination of illicit cultivations of coca and poppy.

The drug problem is not only a Colombian problem. It required shared responsibility at world level, of the countries with high levels of consumption, of those countries which facilitate trafficking routes, of those who launder the proceeds or produce the necessary base chemicals for the production of cocaine or heroin.

The collaboration provided for the marketing of alternative producers, for the so-called "Peace Products", will be very valuable as it will allow the reduction of monies received by armed groups in Colombia, and slow down the advance of illicit cultivations into environmental ecosystems that are priceless to humanity.

We estimate that approximately 6,000 hectares of illegal crops have been eradicated and more than 50,000 hectares of legal cultivations have been installed by UNODC projects. The commercialization agreements with the private sector have generated important changes of the socioeconomic and market conditions. In fact, with a permanent "demand" for legal products in the same producing areas and the possibilities to compete against the illegal crops became real and the concept of 'illicit crop-free economy' became self-evident and no longer an abstract dream, former illicit crop producers have now abandoned for good any form of illegality and informality. They have become proud shareholders of sustainable and successful peasant companies. Carrefour and UNODC professionals could not ask for a bigger prize.

Yet, despite of the facts mentioned before, most of the alternative development projects have not achieved to consolidate an economic alternative to more than 20% of the population producing illicit crops. It is calculated that about 100.000 families live in Colombia with coca crops; thus, more international support is crucial in order to eliminate narco-traffic in Colombia. In the past decade, United States funds have been of great support (US$7 million = 42% of UNODC/Colombia total funds compared to 58% of Europe as a whole) but yet more international contribution is necessary to win the war against drugs (See Attachment 1).

The international community and the United States must share the responsibility for reducing the world's biggest supply of cocaine. Cocaine consuming nations need to reduce drugs demand, especially in Europe where abuse is rising.

Thank you very much.

Attachment 1

INTERNATIONAL DONORS [2]

UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

Drugs and Crime Programmes - Technical Cooperation

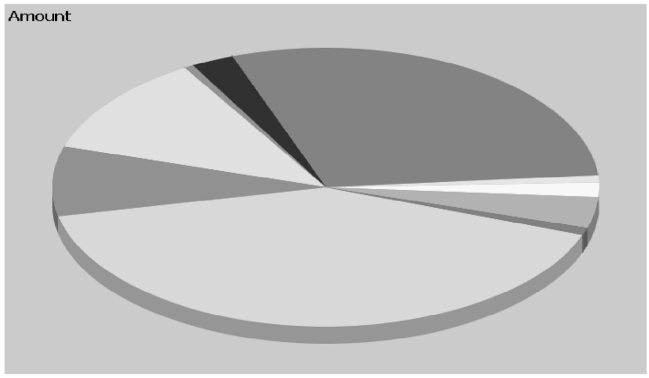
Donor Contributions by Office
Region: Latin America and Caribbean
for Ongoing or Operationally Completed Segments as of September 2006
All amounts are in US$ unless indicated otherwise

Report Criteria

Report ID: **DCONTRIB**
Run Date: **12 Sep 2006**
Run Time: **00:04**

Field Office	Total Approved Budget 2006	Total Funds needed	GP Fund	AUT	CAN	DNK	ESP	FRA	GBR	ITA	NLD	SWE	USA	Total Donor Contributions excluding GP Fund
COCOL	20,918,165	4,388,508	-	121,065	602,142	300,000	95,400	151,609	1,392,499	4,964,087	416,010	2,004,183	7,000,180	16,529,657
Percentage of total contributions by donor				**0.73%**	**3.64%**	**1.81%**	**0.58%**	**0.92%**	**8.42%**	**30.03%**	**2.52%**	**12.12%**	**42.35%**	**100%**
Totals	**20,918,165**	**4,388,508**	-	**121,065**	**602,142**	**300,000**	**95,400**	**151,609**	**1,392,499**	**4,964,087**	**416,010**	**2,004,183**	**7,000,180**	**16,529,657**

Donor Contributions by Office



[2] This information is only referent to international donor's contribution, without taking into consideration Colombia as a donor. However, Colombia is an important economic donor of UNODC/Colombia.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Dr. Calvani. I appreciate that.

Major Lopez?

TESTIMONY OF MAJOR RAUL FERNANDO LOPEZ, COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE, ON BEHALF OF THE HONORABLE ROSSO JOSE SERRANO, AMBASSADOR OF COLOMBIA IN AUSTRIA AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN VIENNA

Major LOPEZ. Mr. Chairman, distinguished Congressmen, I want to thank you for the invitation to attend the hearing today. I want to thank you for allowing me to read General Serrano's statement. I am going to read the most important facts.

I will seize the opportunity to express my gratitude for the great support that the Congress and the Government of the United States has given Colombia and its government to neutralize drug trafficking in my country, and especially for the support rendered to the National Police of Colombia.

I have witnessed at first-hand the ill-fated evolution of the global problem of illicit drugs. Now, as permanent representative to the United Nations office in Vienna, I have to come to grasp with the global panorama of this scourge from another and clearer perspective.

It is undeniable that progress has been made. The international community is beginning to understand that this phenomenon is by nature transnational and that it is consequently necessary to confront it in a joint, supportive, committed manner. The times where countries pointed to each other have passed, and now we are in the era of shared responsibility.

Transnational drug trafficking is an ever-changing phenomenon. Drug traffickers are constantly modifying their operations in order to mock the authorities, who do not always have the necessary capacity to adapt or to react.

These delinquents live in a permanent search for the line of least resistance in order to introduce their drug to those markets where control is most weak. This is what we see in the case of cocaine in Europe and other regions.

The statistics contained in the 2006 World Drug Report, published by the United Nations, clearly shows a tendency toward consumption increase of cocaine in Europe—Spain and the United Kingdom being the most affected.

A particularly dramatic case is Spain, whose annual prevalence of cocaine use among the population between 15 and 64 years increased from 1.6 percent in 1997 to 2.7 percent in 2003. In the United Kingdom, the annual prevalence went from 0.3 percent in 1992 to 2.4 percent in 2004.

These statistics are based on government surveys and demand for treatment in specialized centers. A similar study was carried by scientists of the Mario Negri Institute of Milan for Pharmaceutical Investigations, who took water samples from the Thames River. The results suggest that at different points in the river, cocaine consumption could be between 8 and 15 times above the official estimates.

These results allow for the supposition that the statistics that are officially administered concerning cocaine consumption in the main European cities are a pale reflection of the worrying reality.

In its 2005 report, the International Narcotics Control Board indicated, "The total volume of cocaine seizures in Europe continues to grow, which might indicate that the illegal use of this substance is widespread. Increase in the demand for treatment of cocaine addiction in Western Europe also indicates this situation."

The greater part of cocaine destined for Europe enters via Spain or the Netherlands, although in recent years its entry via other countries with less important ports has increased. Spain is a thermometer that allows measurement of the tendencies in the rest of Europe. It is the principal entry port of cocaine on the continent. The greatest part of cocaine seizures in Europe occur in this country, and it is the third country worldwide in drug seizures.

In view of the improvement of authority control, drug traffickers have developed new routes. An increase of trafficking via African countries has been evidenced, and also the creation of alliances between mafias and the use of traditional routes of other drugs such as cannabis, hashish and heroin.

Cocaine prices in Europe are also an important indicator of drug availability. According to the World Drug Report, a tendency toward the reduction of cocaine prices has been shown, as much in wholesale as in street price.

In conclusion, it is important to caution the European Union of this serious problem, which has not been dimensioned in its true magnitude. If these countries do not take the necessary corrective measures, the cost they will have to assume in social costs and in terms of public health will be incalculable.

It is necessary to make Europe aware of the high cost that Colombia is paying in trying to avoid that illicit drugs reach their markets. This effort must be compensated by a true will for demand reduction.

The European Union should, in the framework of shared responsibility, increase its support and renew its commitment toward the battle of our country against illicit drugs.

Drug trafficking is related to terrorism, and it is important to understand this relationship and to strike at this fountain of resources for terrorist groups.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Serrano follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ROSSO JOSÉ SERRANO

General (R) ROSSO JOSE SERRANO CADENA

Ambassador of Colombia in Austria and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Vienna

Septiembre 21, 2006

House Committee on International Relations,
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere

House Committee on the Judiciary's,
Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security

"The need for European Assistance to Colombia for the fight against illicit drugs"

Honorable Representative Dan Burton, Honorable Representative Howard Coble, Honorable Representatives, Members of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Members of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

I seize this opportunity to express my gratitude for the great support that the Congress and the Government of the United States have given Colombia and its Government to neutralize drug-trafficking in my country, and specially for the support rendered to the National Police of Colombia, which today counts upon the best aerial equipment and operational resources, which is in great part due to your assistance.

Is of general knowledge the results achieved by the Democratic Security Program of President Alvaro Uribe, who has as a priority the fight against illicit drugs. Drug trafficking is a factor that destabilizes and threatens our democratic institutions and fuels terrorism.

We, as Permanent Representatives at the United Nations in Vienna, are asking the International community's support and especially the European countries help to fight this scourge. The fight against drug trafficking needs the international solidarity expressed in cooperation and assistance.

Mr. Chairman:

In my 40 years of service with the National Police of Colombia, where I had the honor to occupy, among others, the position as Head of Antinarcotics, as also as Director General, I have witnessed first hand the ill-fated evolution of the global problem of illicit drugs. Now, as Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Vienna, I have come to grasp the global panorama of this scourge from another, and clearer, perspective.

It is undeniable that progress has been made – the international community is beginning to understand that this phenomenon is by nature transnational and that it is consequently necessary to confront it in a joint, supportive and committed manner. The times where countries pointed at each other have past and we are now in the era of "shared responsibility".

Nevertheless, given the different perceptions that countries have of Colombian reality and maybe because this lack of knowledge, the levels of commitment and support in the battle that liberates our country, in the common interest of eradicating drug-trafficking, are not the same.

There is no need for me to illustrate to the Honorable Congress the incalculable costs that Colombia has had to take on in this battle in terms of resources and human lives; I believe you are fully aware of these. The harmful influence that drug-trafficking has had on my country leads me to affirm that Colombian history can be divided into two: before and after the appearance of this cancer called drugs.

Transnational drug-trafficking is an ever changing phenomenon; drug-traffickers are constantly modifying their operations in order to mock the authorities, who do not always have the necessary capacity to adapt or react. These delinquents live in a permanent search of the line of least resistance in order to introduce their drug to those markets where control is most weak. This is what we see in the case of cocaine in Europe and other regions.

The statistics contained in the 2006 World Drug Report, published by the United Nations, clearly shows a tendency towards consumption increase of cocaine in Europe, Spain and the United Kingdom being the most affected. In the United Kingdom, the annual prevalence went from 0,3% in 1992 to 2,4% in 2004.

During his recent visit to Colombia on September 14, Foreign Office Minister and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State of the United Kingdom, Lord Triesman, stated that "consumption of cocaine in Europe has skyrocketed, which is why it is urgent to work together with the producing countries in order to thwart the actions of the drug cartels."

He also stated that they are "working towards catching drug traffickers and detaining the immense quantity of money and, without a doubt, there being so much money involved, the battle is very difficult, but we are committed."

It is particularly dramatic in the case of Spain, whose annual prevalence of cocaine use among its population between 15 and 64 years of age, increased from 1,6% in 1997 to 2,7 % in 2003, which means that Spain has become a great consumer of cocaine, as other countries of the Union.

A few days past, the Director of the National Drug Plan of Spain, Ms. Carmen Moya, assured that "the drug consumer is less conscious each time of the risk that the use of these substances represents for his/her health".

The same tendency appears in Germany, moving from 0,2% in 1990 to 1% in 2003. These statistics are based on Government surveys and on the demand for treatment at specialised centres.

Recently, press reports have circulated that make reference to studies carried out to measure the presence of the metabolite Benzoylecgonina, a metabolic derivative of cocaine consumption, in the rivers Po in Italy, Rhine in Germany, and the Thames in England, into which flow the residual waters of the cities. Scientists identified the presence of this metabolite in such concentrations as to suggest that the cocaine consumption in the valleys of these important river ports is greater than the official estimates.

Investigators of the Nuremberg Institute for Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Investigation carried out tests in the river Rhine that indicated an annual consumption of 11 tons of pure cocaine by the 38,5 million persons whose residual waters flow into the river in Düsseldorf. The official German statistics, based on surveys, demand for treatment in specialised centres, and police investigation, estimate that 0,8% of the population between 18 and 59 years, which represents some 400.000 people, consume cocaine at least once a year. If the results of the Rhine study are correct, this number would be a serious underestimation of the problem.

A similar study was carried out by scientists of the Mario Negri Institute of Milan for Pharmaceutical Investigations, who took water samples from the Thames River. The results suggest that at different points in the river, cocaine consumption could be between 8 and 15 times above the official estimates.

London would therefore be consuming 37.638 daily cocaine doses, which is in stark contrast to the official statistics taken from the British Crime Survey of 2003/2004 which estimates some 344.000 per month, representing around 2.397 doses of 100 mg daily.

In the valley of the River Po, where five million people live, scientists of the Mario Negri Institute calculated an annual consumption of 1.500 kilos, which equates to 40.000 doses daily, a number higher than the 15.000 doses per month established by the official statistics.

These results allow for the supposition that the statistics that are officially administered concerning cocaine consumption in the main European cities are a pale reflection of the worrying reality.

In its 2005 Report, the International Narcotics Control Board – INCB - indicated: *"The total volume of seized cocaine in Europe continues to grow, which might indicate that the illegal use of this substance is widespread. Increase in the demand for treatment of cocaine addiction in Western Europe also indicates this situation."*

Just to illustrate about the dimension of drug consumption in Europe, allow myself to make reference to the newspaper Die Presse, which informs in its September 8th edition, that in this summer alone, six people died in the Spanish island of Ibiza as consequence of drug abuse.

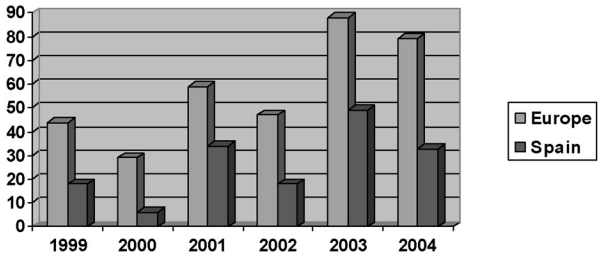
Even more worrying is the rise of crack-cocaine consumption in Europe. In the past years, seven European countries reported an increase in crack-cocaine consumption, other seven reported little change, and only two a decrease. Consumption of this substance is restricted to a few areas in Europe, but the risk for its expansion over the continent exists.

INCREASE OF COCAINE TRAFFICKING IN EUROPE

The greater part of cocaine destined for Europe enters via Spain or the Netherlands, although in recent years its entry via other countries with less important ports has increased. Recent seizures of large volumes of cocaine in Portugal allow inferring the increase of trafficking via that country – in November 2005, six tons of cocaine were seized in an area near Lisbon, in February 2006, in Algarve, 8 tons of cocaine were seized, which constitutes the second largest seizure of this drug in Europe in the present decade. The flow of cocaine via Portugal has increased during 2006 and it is nearing 30 tons, and if this tendency continues, Portugal will surpass Spain as main entry port for cocaine in the European Union.

Spain is a thermometer that allows measurement of the tendencies in the rest of Europe: it is the principal entry port of cocaine on the continent, the greatest part of cocaine seizures in Europe occur in this country and it is the third country worldwide in drug seizures. The largest cocaine seizure in Europe occurred in the Canary Islands in July 1999, when 10 tons of cocaine was seized.

Cocaine Seizures in Spain and European total
(Metric Tons)



	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
EUROPE	44	29	59	47	88	79
SPAIN	18	6	34	18	49	33

Source: World Drug Report 2006-ONUDD

It has to be taken into consideration that due to the high level of integration in the European countries and the inexistence of border control between the States, once that drugs enter the European Union, they can circulate with relative ease.

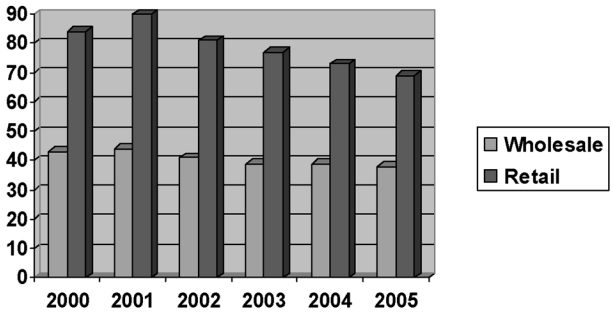
Seizures are indicators that allow evaluating up until what point illegal trafficking of a specific substance has increased. A greater amount of seizures show the efficiency of the authorities, but at the same time indicates a greater disposition of the drug in a specific geographic region and at the same time greater consumption. It is estimated that the authorities are able to seize only 20% of the produced cocaine.

In view of the improvement of authority control, drug traffickers have developed new routes. An increase of trafficking via African countries has been evidenced, as also the creation of alliances between mafias and the use of traditional routes of other drugs such as cannabis, hashish, and heroine.

This new phenomenon is of great worry for authorities since drug traffickers would operate from secure ports in Africa with little law enforcement infrastructure and prone to institutional corruption, to which the aggravating circumstance is added that some of these countries are particularly open to fundamentalism, where international terrorist organisations can operate.

Cocaine prices in Europe are also an important indicator of drug availability. According to the *World Drug Report 2006*, a tendency towards the reduction of cocaine prices has been shown, as much in wholesale as in street price.

Retail and Wholesale Cocaine Prices in Western Europe
(Gram. in euros)



	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Wholesale price (€)	43	44	41	39	39	38
Retail price (€)	84	90	81	77	73	69

Source: World Drug Report 2006 -ONUDD

CONCLUSIONS

What used to be a fear is today reality. Cocaine consumption grows at an accelerated pace in Europe, as evidenced by serious and credible studies such as the World Drug Report and the Annual INCB Report. The aforesaid allows us to establish a series of conclusions:

- It is important to caution the European Union of this serious problem, which has not been dimensioned in its true magnitude.
- If these countries do not take the necessary corrective measures the costs they will have to assume in social costs, and in terms of public health, will be incalculable.
- It is necessary to make Europe aware of the high cost that Colombia pays in trying to avoid that illicit drugs reach their markets.
- This effort must be compensated by a true will for demand reduction.
- The European Union should, in the framework of shared responsibility, increase its support and renew its commitment towards the battle of our country against illicit drugs.
- Drug trafficking is intimately related to terrorism and it is important to understand this relationship and strike at this inexhaustible fountain of resources for terrorist groups.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Major.

Mr. Braun, Portugal may exceed Spain as the leading gateway nation for Andean cocaine headed for Europe, yet DEA has no presence there. Does DEA plan to assign a permanent DEA agent or agents to the embassy of Portugal?

Mr. BRAUN. We are looking into that, sir, right now.

But I can tell you that, with respect to personnel and resources, we are strapped. We are under a hiring freeze right now and don't expect to be hiring any additional agents for probably the next couple of years.

But we are looking at it. We are exploring it.

I can tell you, the good news is that we visit Portugal on a regular basis. Our agents visit Portugal on a regular basis from our office in Madrid. And we will continue to do that.

Mr. COBLE. Irrespective of where the cocaine from Colombia is headed, either here or Europe, what role are illegal drugs playing in financing the global terrorist movements? And are the consumer nations, like those now in Europe, helping to feed that financial support?

Mr. BRAUN. Thank you for the question, because this is something I am real passionate about. And if you can, let me just give you a 30,000-foot view of this nexus between drugs and terrorism that I believe is growing at rates faster than most want to admit.

Eighteen of our nations, 42 global terrorist organizations, are tied to some aspect of drug trafficking activity. That can be something as simple as taxing farmers, or it can be terrorist organizations such as the FARC that are involved in virtually every aspect of the drug trade.

State sponsorship, now, let's tie this part in. This is important. State sponsorship for terrorism is decreasing, and it has steadily decreased since after 9/11. And I believe the actions we took in Afghanistan and Iraq play a big part in that. That is one man's opinion. These organizations are being forced to seek out other ways to finance their operations.

Many folks, my colleagues who are involved in counterterrorism, are saying that they are seeing less and less of a corporate terrorist cell structure, and what they are seeing more of now is a franchise cell structure.

By that, I mean franchise cells that they may subscribe to the theories and the ideology of, say, the al-Qaeda or some other terrorist group, but for the most part they are not taking direct guidance and direction from corporate headquarters. They are pretty much out there on their own as a franchise. Those franchise cells absolutely have to fund their operations.

Now, let's talk about the estimates for global drug trade. The U.N. estimates, I believe—Doctor, correct me if I am wrong—but about $322 billion a year is generated in the global drug trade. ONDCP, closer to home, estimates that about $65 billion is generated right here in the United States by the global trade.

If you look at what happened in Madrid, the Madrid train bombing was funded, my Spanish colleagues tell me, almost entirely by or through the sale of ecstasy and through hashish. It cost about $70,000 to pull that operation off. Again, you know, trying to put it all into perspective here.

Something that is even more troubling to us is, let's just look at the tri-border area of South America. The experts agree it is a breeding ground for terrorist organizations and potential terrorists. You can purchase a kilogram of finished cocaine product in the tri-border area for about $5,000 a kilogram. And that same kilogram can be sold in Saudi Arabia, Israel or the UAE for upwards of somewhere between $150,000 to $175,000 per kilogram.

So, in essence, you can take, with a $35,000 investment in the tri-border area, you can take that investment in seven kilograms of cocaine, put it into one suitcase, a normal-size suitcase, and ship it to another part of the world, and you have $1 million in profit. Okay? That is extremely troublesome to us.

Now, some——

Mr. COBLE. My time has expired, Mr. Braun, so I may have to get back to you. We will have a second round.

And, Doctor, I will get with you and the major subsequently.

But now I want to recognize the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Bobby Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I think your line of questioning really points out what we ought to be looking at, in terms of strategy.

How much are we spending trying to do source control of drugs in Colombia?

Mr. BRAUN. The United States?

Mr. SCOTT. The United States.

Mr. BRAUN. I don't have that number for you, sir, but I can certainly get it.

Mr. SCOTT. A lot? Billions?

Mr. BRAUN. Sure. I would say a lot.

Mr. SCOTT. Billions?

Mr. BRAUN. Over time, yes, certainly.

Mr. SCOTT. What is the trend in cocaine price on the street in the United States?

Mr. BRAUN. The trends, I am guessing you are talking about price and purity? Pricing remains, I believe, about the same. And the purity, ONDCP has reported that the purity has declined. But the price, I believe, remains the same, or we may have even seen a slight increase.

Mr. SCOTT. Well, if we are going to have a rational process, we ought to have some goal in mind in order to have some cost-effective measure.

How much more would we have to spend to have a meaningful impact on the cost of cocaine on the street?

Because if you are catching 10 percent or 20 percent or 50 percent, and the price of the product is a very small portion of the price on the street, how much would we have to catch or reduce coming into the United States to have a meaningful effect on the price of cocaine on the street? A lot? Can we get there?

Mr. BRAUN. Look, I am convinced we can get there. If I wasn't convinced that we could get there, I would have——

Mr. SCOTT. Well, you asked for some more money. I mean, are you representing that you can have a meaningful impact on the cost of cocaine on the street to the point where a drug addict ap-

proaches his dealer and the dealer says, "Well, you know, I just can't get any, it's not available"?

Mr. BRAUN. Well, I don't measure it, quite honestly, by price and purity. I measure our success, the DEA's success, in more than one way. But, you know, we are——

Mr. SCOTT. Well, tell me some ways that you measure your success.

Mr. BRAUN. Well, we measure our success by the number of major drug trafficking syndicates that we have either significantly disrupted or the numbers that we have dismantled.

Mr. SCOTT. And what difference did that make to the availability of drugs? I mean, I think our goal is to reduce drug use in the United States. When you bust a drug cartel, how much difference did that make?

Mr. BRAUN. Okay, well, again, I don't base it on just price and purity. We have seen or experienced a reduction in the abuse of cocaine in the United States over the past few years. The most recent household survey from the University of Michigan indicates that, I believe for, like, a third straight year now, we have seen teenage abuse of cocaine continually decline.

Mr. SCOTT. Now, how much of that can be attributable to what you are doing? And how much can be attributable to other things, the most cost-effective ways that we are dealing with drug abuse?

Mr. BRAUN. I don't know if there is any way that we can determine exactly what credit enforcement would receive versus prevention and education or treatment.

Mr. SCOTT. Well, if the cost hasn't gone down and the same amount of cocaine is available, the only variable appears to be demand. The supply will meet the demand. And that there is virtually nothing that you have done or propose to do that is going to affect the ability of the cocaine dealers to meet the demand. Is that right?

Mr. BRAUN. Look, here is what I believe most experts would agree on: A successful strategy is a three-legged stool. Enforcement has to be relentless and aggressive. You can't back away from it. You have to have prevention and education, and you also have to have treatment.

Mr. SCOTT. In my remarks, I mentioned that the costs of reducing drug use in the United States can be achieved, 1 percent reduction can be achieved with $34 million if you are dealing in treatment, but hundreds of millions, almost a billion, if you are trying interdiction.

Doesn't it make more sense to invest the next dollar that we spend in prevention and not fund spinning your wheels doing interdiction and source control?

Mr. BRAUN. I believe many experts would disagree with your figures and your numbers.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. Do you have any study that disagrees with the RAND study of 1994?

Mr. BRAUN. Off the top of my head, I don't have.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay.

Thank you.

Mr. COBLE. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The distinguished gentleman from Ohio. Mr. Chabot?

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for holding this important hearing.

If I could start out by discussing a trip that I made with one of my colleagues, Judge Louie Gohmert. Earlier this year, we had the opportunity to see first-hand what the situation is relative to the battle against drugs in Colombia.

And I know, Major Lopez, we had an opportunity to meet there and saw and learned an awful lot. I want to thank you for that experience.

One of the issues, I remember when we were flying over some of the national parks, we would see smoke, which was where the drug dealers had burned an area, and then they would plant cocaine there and then they would keep an eye on it and harvest it later on. It was in patches throughout the park.

And there is an aerial spraying program down there. And our Government, because of a policy—and my understanding of it is that especially European countries objected to spraying in parks, and they had sort of adopted that environmental protection attitude. And it made it very difficult to get at some of these places where the drug dealers were going literally into the parks and planting it on park land.

And there were a number of instances where you had to go in and hand-eradicate, you know, pluck the plants out or chop them down or whatever one does to get rid of the stuff. And a number of the people doing that were either wounded or, in some cases, even killed, because it is a very dangerous endeavor and would be a lot safer if you could just hit that particular patch from the air.

And it is basically my understanding it is like Roundup, the same stuff we use here in this country. So it is not like it is unknown what type of material one is using and it might be very dangerous or something.

Could you discuss what the status is of that program relative to eradication from the air, especially with respect to the parks when the drug dealers go in there?

And are you able to now hit those places from the air? Or do you still have to do this in the very expensive and time-consuming manner and dangerous manner of doing this by hand?

Major LOPEZ. Sir, we just finished to spray one of the—not to spray. We were doing manual eradication in one of our national reserve parks, which was in the Macarena. That is in the east side of Colombia. There was about 2,000 hectares of coca. We were doing manual eradication.

Mr. CHABOT. And the manual eradication is doing it by hand?

Major LOPEZ. Yes. We were doing it, but what we found out, sir, is that the terrorists were tying the landmines to the plants, so when the people were pulling the plants, they were getting blown up.

Since January, we have lost 19 military soldiers. We lost 12 policemen and 18 civilians that were working with us on the Macarena park work.

Mr. CHABOT. These were killed?

Major LOPEZ. Were killed.

Mr. CHABOT. Nineteen soldiers, 12 policemen and 18 civilians?

Major LOPEZ. Yes, sir.

Mr. CHABOT. So they would be pulling a plant up or chopping it down or whatever, and it would be boobytrapped with a mine?

Major LOPEZ. Yes. In the last attack, it was a bomb. It was like a can full of explosives, and eight workers were killed.

So, at the end, we had to spray, because a lot of our work people were at risk and a lot of our work people were being killed.

Mr. CHABOT. And it is much more expensive and time-consuming, as well as dangerous, to do it that way.

Major LOPEZ. Yes, sir, because in order to do the manual eradication, we had to move a lot of policemen and soldiers just to do 2,000 hectares of coca manual eradication.

Mr. CHABOT. Okay. Now, is the change to eradicating from the air, is that now the policy elsewhere as well?

Major LOPEZ. That is something that had to be decided by our government. We just execute the policy, sir.

Mr. CHABOT. Okay. Do you know what the government policy is at this point with respect to aerials? Or perhaps Dr. Calvani?

Mr. CALVANI. Yes. This discussion has been held at the president level. The policy is still not to spray the national parks, continual manual eradication, with the only exception of Macarena for the reason that the major has explained.

Mr. CHABOT. Okay. Because for what it is worth, just as an American legislator here—and we send a fairly significant amount of dollars down there, and we want the dollars to be used as efficiently as possible—I would strongly urge, it was the one thing I brought back that seemed, for both safety reasons for the people doing it and efficiency, that we ought to encourage that.

Mr. Braun, did you want to comment on that?

Mr. BRAUN. Sir, I mean, with all due respect, eradication is about as far outside of my lane as possible. I am an enforcement guy, and I always have been.

Look, I can tell you, though, that I think the most important point to be made here is that our counterparts, our Colombia National Police counterparts, whom we work very, very closely with, have shown, I think are a model, have shown that the Colombian people have the will to win.

These guys and gals have lost over 3,000 police officers in just the past few years, but yet they go out and they continue to face that beast day in and day out.

And they are winning. If you look at what is happening in Colombia, the numbers of bombings have been reduced significantly. The numbers of kidnappings have been reduced. The numbers of homicides have been reduced. The numbers of, I believe, even sex crimes, talking about rape, have been reduced. And that has all taken place over just the past few years.

Mr. CHABOT. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent for an additional 2 minutes, if I could.

Mr. COBLE. Without objection.

Mr. CHABOT. Okay. Thank you.

With respect to what you just said, Mr. Braun, I also want to make that observation to Major Lopez, that we were all very impressed with the dedication of the personnel, both military and po-

lice personnel, that we met with. Everyone involved was just exemplary.

And we had the opportunity to go, for example, to the police memorial with all the many, many, literally thousands, I believe, that have been killed. We went to the hospital and saw the most horrendous wounds that had been suffered by these very brave personnel.

So we want to thank you and commend you and your fellow workers in that respect.

Mr. Braun, if I could just conclude by asking you, the Europeans are planning a counter-drug liaison center in Lisbon, modeled after our JIATF in Key West. What role will DEA play in the center? And will you have a presence there in Lisbon?

Mr. BRAUN. It is still in the planning stages, is my understanding, sir, and we have not been invited to participate. However, I am sure I will.

The problem that we face is, once again I am going to go back to human resources, where we are having a tough time staffing domestic and foreign positions as we speak, because of the hiring freeze that we are under.

And, you know, I can tell you without any hesitation or reservation, however, that if this thing is stood up quickly and if we cannot have a permanent presence, if we find that we are not able to do it permanently, I assure you that we will have our folks from Madrid visiting the center on a regular basis. And I can assure you that the intelligence from the DEA will flow into that center, as we are doing daily with our European counterparts.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, as my time concludes, if I could just conclude by saying that we had an opportunity also at the American embassy in Bogota to discuss and talk about the three Americans that are still being held down there. And I know that everyone there and everyone is committed to trying to get them back here to their families as soon as possible, safely. So we want to encourage anything that we can do to help in that effort.

Thank you.

Mr. COBLE. I thank the gentleman.

The distinguished gentleman from New York, Mr. Engel?

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to briefly talk a little bit about Plan Colombia. I want to start with Mr. Braun, in asking you, is the U.S. counter-drug strategy working in Colombia? Has the price and purity of cocaine decreased on the U.S. street since the inception of Plan Colombia? And could you briefly tell us a little bit about Plan Colombia?

Mr. BRAUN. Well, first of all, as far as the price and purity, again, I believe we need to have the experts from ONDCP here, or maybe at some future meeting, to discuss that. They are the folks that really track those numbers.

But I can tell you, based on what I know from my Colombian counterparts and from personal experience back in the mid-1980's to almost the mid-1990's, I spent a lot of time in Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, through the northern-tiered countries of Central America, working shoulder to shoulder with host-nation counterparts on

counter-narcotics operations, hitting laboratories, cache sites, transshipment points, those kinds of things.

And I can tell you that—and I believe our Colombian colleagues encounter this to this day; it has never changed—that when we hit the traffickers hard, they have the ability to re-establish operations. They have laboratories that lay dormant for perhaps months, if not years, that are ready to go if they take a major hit anywhere in that Andean region.

And as long as you can produce cocaine finished product for $600 to $1,000 a kilogram and sell it in, let's just talk about our country, for, say, $20,000 or $25,000 a kilogram, there is a tremendous potential margin there. And they can quickly over-produce.

So, again, I don't rely, as far as success, on price and purity. I don't think price and purity actually tells you a whole lot.

Mr. ENGEL. Since you mentioned Peru and Bolivia, let me ask the major, to what extent has Plan Colombia resulted in drug cultivation increases in neighboring countries such as Peru and Bolivia?

Major LOPEZ. I don't have those numbers, sir.

Mr. ENGEL. Okay. Do you have any feel about it? Has it resulted in increases?

Major LOPEZ. Well, we have seen surveys that they are requesting more support from our units to go there and help them to support their operations, sir.

Mr. ENGEL. All right. Thank you.

Dr. Calvani, Plan Colombia has reportedly been controversial in Europe, especially among some European policymakers. Can you tell us what are some of the criticisms? And has European opinion shifted over time?

Mr. CALVANI. Maybe I am not the best to report on that subject, however, living in Bogota. I regularly listen to the ambassadors of the European Union and the European Union member countries.

The most common comment that they make is that the United States does not consult and the Colombian government does not consult with European members before deciding their own bilateral program. That is the reason why European members don't think that they are involved, or they can't share that kind of responsibility.

Another issue is that they are willing to apply to Colombia the same measures of alternative development which have been successful in other countries, in more than 10 countries around the world, which have eliminated illicit trafficking in a sustainable way. The most recent experience being Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, where the United Nations has certified complete elimination of illicit crops after a sustained alternative development initiative.

I wish also to take this opportunity to answer a question by Mr. Scott to Mr. Braun before, with reference to how much the Colombian program has reduced the trafficking in Colombia.

The study of the Colombian government has stated that only 9 percent of coca farmers now receive international assistance. While the coca crop has been eliminated completely through air-spraying, only 9 percent of the peasants have received the aid. The total value or the potential farm aid value of coca products in Colombia is $840 million U.S.

So for Mr. Scott, this is actually what we have to replace. It is not the cost of trafficking, because that is money which does not come directly to Colombia. And presently we don't reach $200 million spent in alternative development. As I have stated in my introductory comments, we have to reach the other two-thirds of people who have not been reached.

If we reach those people, those people really renounce for good. They never go back to the illicit crops. That is also demonstrated in the manual eradication program. In the manual eradication program, the level of re-cropping is extremely low.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. COBLE. I thank the gentleman from New York.

And we will start our second round of questioning now.

Dr. Calvani, I don't believe this has been asked to you. You mentioned that Colombian coca cultivation in 2005 increased by 8 percent over 2004. To what do you attribute the increase, A? And B, why has the eradication of coca become more difficult?

Mr. CALVANI. It is difficult to have scientific evidence. However, from the 55 monitors we have in the field every day, they visited last year 1.5 million hectares, and they have a database of 32,000 families, interviewing all of these people.

The result of this survey suggested that the reason why we got the very slight increase—I must remind you that this comes after a reduction of 51 percent of hectares in the last 5 years. So the trend was extremely down, then a little bit going up does not mean so much.

Anyhow, this going up might be due to the fact that alternative development programs have been significantly reduced in the past years. The aid that we receive from the USAID has been reduced significantly. And we are no longer able to reach a significant part of the coca peasants.

And that is also the reason why, since the demand has not gone down, particularly in Europe, that is the reason why the crop has also increased in the past years a bit in Peru and Bolivia. And the crop which has gone up in Colombia is now instead found an opposite balloon effect in Bolivia and Peru.

And then the second question was?

Mr. COBLE. Why was it difficult?

Mr. CALVANI. Why is it difficult? Because the people are moving inside the forests. Instead of having like they had before, two or three hectares per family, now they go inside the forest and they do very small crops. Now they are becoming one hectare. So it is very difficult to hit by air-spraying one hectare spread in 86,000 spots.

Mr. COBLE. Yes. Thank you, Doctor.

Major, I will really put this question to you. Mr. Braun may want to weigh in. The cocaine flow to Europe is massive, as we have learned. And Spain appears to be the main gateway point into Europe for those drugs.

How many Spanish anti-drug police are in Bogota? And how often do you work with them, as you do our DEA?

Major LOPEZ. Sir, at this moment, about 2 months ago, just one guy arrived. From DEA, it is about 125 DEA agents working with us on a daily basis.

Mr. COBLE. One Spanish anti-drug?

Major LOPEZ. Yes, sir.

Mr. COBLE. Okay. And how many DEA agents are in Bogota?

Major LOPEZ. It is about 125.

Mr. COBLE. About 125. Thank you, Major.

Mr. Braun, let me put this question to you. What percentage of the cocaine seized by the excellent Colombian National Police at El Dorado Airport in Bogota is headed for Europe? And what does that tell us about trafficking trends?

Mr. BRAUN. Sir, I believe it is about 80 to 85 percent of all the seizures at the airport are destined for Europe. I mean, I would have to stress that many of these are small quantities.

Mr. COBLE. What was the percentage again?

Mr. BRAUN. Somewhere between 80 and 85 percent.

Mr. COBLE. Okay.

Mr. BRAUN. These are small quantities, though. These are typically one to two or three kilograms that are body-carried onto a flight destined for somewhere in Europe.

Mr. COBLE. This may sound like a stupid question, but does that tell us that consumption inevitably is being reduced in our country?

Mr. BRAUN. Well, again, the facts and figures clearly indicate that cocaine consumption is on the decline in the United States.

Mr. COBLE. Well, common sense would tell me that, because heretofore we would have been the Europe beneficiary, in the older days.

Mr. BRAUN. That is a good point. It appears to have shifted significantly.

Mr. COBLE. Major, let me come back to you before my red light comes on. What are authorities in Bogota doing to dismantle the paramilitary groups and to cut off communication to their trafficking networks?

Major LOPEZ. Excuse me, sir. Can you repeat the question, sir?

Mr. COBLE. Yes. What are the authorities in Bogota doing to dismantle the paramilitary groups and to cut off communication to their trafficking networks?

Major LOPEZ. Sir, we have been treating the AUC as FARC, and we doing operations against them, against their labs, their cultivation, sir. So we are getting very good results with them.

Mr. COBLE. And you feel that it is effective?

Major LOPEZ. Yes, sir. It is working.

Mr. COBLE. All right. I see the red light is in my eye. Now I will yield to my friend from Virginia, Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, our goal is to try to reduce the amount of drug use in the United States, and I think we are all looking at our districts.

If we were to eliminate cocaine coming from Colombia, are there other sources of cocaine?

Mr. BRAUN. All the cocaine in the world is being produced in the Andean region, primarily Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. So if you cut Colombia completely off, you are still faced with a flow out of Peru and out of Bolivia.

Mr. SCOTT. Would that be sufficient to meet the demand in the United States?

Mr. BRAUN. I am not sure. I would have to get back with you.

Mr. SCOTT. We have heard suggestions that the cocaine use has been going down in the United States. Is that because people are using less drugs generally, or using meth, ecstasy, hash and other drugs instead?

Mr. BRAUN. I believe the numbers across the board are declining, but let me check with ONDCP and get back with you on that.

Mr. SCOTT. Is the use of meth going up or down?

Mr. BRAUN. Again, I would have to check with ONDCP.

Mr. SCOTT. Could somebody comment on the health implications of the spraying program in Colombia? Is it healthy or unhealthy for the residents of Colombia to be subjected to all of the spraying? Are there health implications involved?

Mr. CALVANI. A number of studies are available on the Internet, sir, done by reputable international organizations, including the Organization of American States, suggesting that, so far, it has not been possible to detect any unhealthy impact of the air-spraying.

Also because, by the way, glyphosate, which is the substance used for spraying, is largely used in Colombia for other purposes. Ninety-percent of glyphosate used in Colombia is not air-spraying. It is normal agriculture use. And glyphosate is also largely used in the United States for normal control of golf courses, of cornfields and so on. It is a very common substance.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent that a statement from Representative Barbara Lee be submitted for the record. And she had questions that she would like submitted to the witnesses. If these could be submitted on her behalf, I would appreciate it.

Mr. COBLE. Without objection.

[The material referred to is available in the Appendix.]

Mr. COBLE. I would also like to make a part of the record the report on Progress in Colombia published by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Mr. John Walters, director.

[The material referred to is available in the Appendix.]

Mr. SCOTT. And, Mr. Chairman, a statement from the representative from Texas, Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee. She has an opening statement she would like part of the record.

Mr. COBLE. And that will also be made a part of the record.

[The material referred to is available in the Appendix.]

Mr. COBLE. If you all will suspend just a moment, John, what did you have to say?

I have some questions for Mr. Burton that I will ask. Mr. Scott and I may go a third round.

Let me ask you all this before I forget it. Let me depart for a moment from Colombia. To what extent, if any, or what impact, if any, does organized crime in Russia have to do with the increased trafficking in Europe? Or do you know?

Dr. Calvani may be in a position. Or do you know, Mr. Braun?

Mr. BRAUN. Russian organized crime is not—I am not going to tell you that they are not involved in some trafficking in Europe, but they are not viewed as a significant threat in the trafficking of cocaine in Europe.

Mr. COBLE. Okay. How about other drugs? Doctor, do you want to weigh in on that?

Mr. CALVANI. Yes, I can confirm that. They are not involved in cocaine trafficking, but they are heavily involved in other drugs, including, in particular, heroin from Afghanistan.

Mr. COBLE. Heroin?

Mr. CALVANI. From Afghanistan.

Mr. COBLE. Yes. We know that Colombia, of course, is the main arsenal for cocaine. I assume that Afghanistan continues to be the main source of heroin. Is that correct? What would be the second-largest producer of heroin?

Mr. CALVANI. Myanmar, sir.

Mr. COBLE. Pardon?

Mr. CALVANI. Myanmar, former Burma.

Mr. COBLE. Okay. Thank you.

Now, let me read this question for Mr. Burton. If the Colombians are getting two or three times more per kilo for cocaine in Europe than in the U.S. and we are reducing their cocaine production in the country, doesn't what we see happening in Europe with cocaine seriously undercut our Colombian policy and doesn't the DEA have to now change some thinking and staff allocations?

This was from Mr. Burton.

Mr. Braun?

Mr. BRAUN. I am going to have to really think about that one long and hard, and——

Mr. COBLE. Well, and you can get back to him. We are going to leave the record open for 7 days.

Mr. BRAUN. Yes, sir. We will get back with you on that.

Mr. COBLE. The bell is sounding, which means we are going to be called to the floor.

Mr. Scott?

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Chairman, I would ask that questions on behalf of Ms. Jackson Lee be submitted to the witnesses.

Mr. COBLE. That will be done.

Gentlemen, we again thank you for your testimony today. This will be ongoing, folks. We are not cutting you loose after today. We will stay in touch, but we thank you for your testimony.

In order to ensure a full record and adequate consideration for this important issue, the record will be left open for additional submissions for 7 days. Any written question that a Member wants to submit should be submitted within that 7-day period.

This concludes the oversight hearing on the need for European assistance to Colombia for the fight against illicit drugs.

Thank you, again, for your cooperation.

The Subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:27 p.m., the Subcommittees were adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Hearing Record

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DAN BURTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Statement of Chairman Dan Burton
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere

Joint Hearing of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, House International Relations Committee and the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, House Judiciary Committee

Hearing: The Need for European Assistance to Colombia for the Fight against Illicit Drugs

September 21, 2006

As Chairman Coble pointed out, we are at a critical juncture in the war on drugs. Just as we and our Colombian allies are starting to make real progress in Colombia, we are finding that the path to ultimate success is being undermined by the growing demand for and consumption of Andean narcotics in Europe, especially Colombian cocaine.

During a recent fact finding trip to Spain and Portugal, it was discovered that as much as 50% of Colombian cocaine is now going to Europe. This development should send alarm bells ringing through the capitals of Europe, the European Union and at our own State Department. Spain, for example is now the second largest consumer of cocaine, per capita, just behind the United States. Colombian cocaine is being trafficked from Colombia, Venezuela and other nations in our hemisphere directly to Europe. Spain and Portugal, unfortunately, are the portals for this trafficking. With rising demand in Europe, and prices per kilogram reaching as much as three times more than here in the States, it is no wonder we are seeing record seizures of cocaine in this region. But, what is more disturbing is that the drug flow to Europe is undercutting every effort we have made to reduce production in Colombia, thus destroying any hope for peace and stability in that country.

Since Mr. Coble outlined the problem in detail, I wish only to take a short moment here to offer some possible strategies that can be readily adopted by Europe and the United States to stem the flow of drugs, and perhaps prevent the kind of drug abuse epidemic, characterized by increased crime rates, high body counts and broken communities, that we have suffered here. **But, first I would like to air my disappointment that the European Union has again**

declined to participate in such an important hearing. This decision follows a November of 2004 request when we asked the Europeans to dialog with us on this very issue. Then, like now, we were rebuffed. With 50% of Colombian cocaine going to Europe, it is hard to fathom their apparent lack of interest.

It is clear that drug trafficking is no longer just an American problem. It is a global problem that will require a concerted effort on the part of the Colombians, the Europeans and the United States to resolve. To do this, the Congress, the State Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration must actively engage our European allies to recognize the drug problem they are suffering and encourage them to become active players in the development and pursuit of real solutions. Europe can no longer sit on the sidelines.

When Plan Colombia was first developed, it was believed that the European Union would make good on its funding pledge and support the non-security portions of the plan. This so called "soft side" assistance would have included alternative development, educational initiatives, job training programs and other programs designed to support farmers and others who would leave the drug production business. But, much of the pledged assistance never arrived. Now, six years later, The U.S. continues to pay the lion's share of aid to Colombia, despite the fact that nearly half of all Colombian cocaine is now going to Europe!

It is time for Europe to revisit its previous commitment to soft-side assistance and begin a long term relationship with Colombia. For example, over the last few years, more than 40,000 members of the narcoterrorist groups FARC and AUC have laid down their arms and are looking to reenter society and become good citizens with honorable work. The European Union could contribute the necessary resources to provide these, mostly unskilled and untrained young demobilized Colombians, with education, job training and other skills needed to contribute to society. I would like to thank the Dutch government for building a demobilization center in Bogotá which now supports 600 demobilized fighters. We could use more help like this from our European allies.

Moreover, European law enforcement and other governmental agencies in Europe can follow the lead of Spain as it works to develop a joint European/Colombian law enforcement liaison center in Lisbon, Portugal, much like our Joint Interagency Taskforce center in Key West, Florida. Putting such a center in Europe would allow law enforcement officials, from all over Europe, to jointly operate with law enforcement representatives from Colombia, Brazil and the DEA where intelligence can be shared and cooperative strategies to interdicting drugs developed. To be successful, the U.S. Department of State should provide assistance and operational support for the new international police liaison center. In addition, all major seizures of cocaine in Europe should be tested by DEA to see if it is originating in Colombia, Peru or Bolivia. By taking these simple actions, and developing other cooperative programs, the tide of drugs washing up on European soil can be reduced.

Europe is on the verge of a cocaine epidemic of historic and tragic proportions. It is my hope, that by holding this hearing, our friends and allies in Europe will receive the message that it is time to act and that their American allies will stand with them to battle this deadly and mutual enemy. I agree with the Mr. Calvani from the UN office of Drugs and Crime whose testimony includes this quote:

"The international community and the United States must share the responsibility for reducing the world's biggest supply of cocaine. Cocaine consuming nations need to reduce drugs demand, especially in Europe where abuse is rising."

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE SHEILA JACKSON LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS, AND MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM, AND HOMELAND SECURITY, COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. Chairmen, I move to strike the last word. I thank the Chairmen and Ranking Members for holding this hearing.

The purpose of the hearing is to examine the dramatic increase in trafficking of Colombian cocaine into Western Europe and the role of the European Community in combating cocaine trafficking.

We are fortunate to have appearing before us today as witnesses Mr. Michael Braun, Chief of Operations, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and Mr. Sandro Calvani, Representative, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. I understand that the Honorable Rosso José Serrano, Colombian Ambassador to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, is not able to be with us this morning but has submitted a statement that will be presented by Major Raul Fernando Lopez of the Colombian National Police.

Mr. Chairmen, Western Europe is experiencing a surge in cocaine trafficking from Columbia. What used to be seen solely as an American problem is now increasingly becoming a European problem. *Roughly 40 to 50% of all Colombian cocaine is now sent to Europe.* As a result, the European Community is experiencing unprecedented seizures and rising cocaine addiction rates. European officials consistently report that the primary illicit drug used to be heroine from Afghanistan. While heroine is still prevalent, law enforcement officials now report that cocaine has surpassed heroine as the drug of choice for both traffickers and users.

Portugal and Spain are the primary "gateway nations" for trafficking Colombian cocaine into Europe. In recent months, both nations have reported major cocaine seizures from Colombia. In just the first six months of 2006, seizures have doubled to nearly 30 tons. It is estimated that these seizures account for only ⅓ of the total amount of drugs trafficked into Europe.

Large quantities of Colombian cocaine are brought by ship from Columbia, Venezuela, and Brazil. The cocaine is then transferred out at sea to smaller "fast boats" that in turn bring it to shore. This method presents several hurdles for law enforcement, not the least of which is equipment and manpower to seize the cocaine before it is transferred to the fast boats.

Africa also plays a significant role in cocaine trafficking into Europe. From North Africa, fast boats are now using long-standing hashish routes to bring in cocaine. Although these routes are well known to law enforcement, the fast boats are extremely difficult to locate and interdict. *West Africa is a staging ground for processing raw coca into street-grade cocaine and for smuggling smaller quantities of cocaine via commercial aircraft.* This is particularly significant for Portuguese-speaking nations such as Cape Verde, which is a large transit point between Columbia and Europe.

Mr. Chairmen, *Europe is a much more attractive target for cocaine trafficking than the United States for several reasons:* 1) it is geographically more convenient; 2) Europe now has open borders between EU member states, and 3) a kilo of cocaine garners three-times the profit in Europe than in the U.S. *This increase in drug trafficking has produced an increase in violent crime, particularly in Spain and Portugal, an increase in illegal immigration, and an increase in document fraud.* Spain and Portugal require visas for Colombian nationals but not for Brazilian or Venezuelan nationals. Thus, many Colombian drug traffickers are entering Spain and Portugal using forged Brazilian and Venezuelan passports.

The rise in Colombian cocaine into Europe has serious implications for America's efforts to end Columbia's cocaine legacy and, most significantly, the use of cocaine profits to fund the terrorist activities of organizations. The fledgling yet ever-expanding cocaine market in Europe serves to undermine America's efforts to dismantle narco-terrorism in Columbia.

There are currently 125 DEA agents assigned to the Bogotμ Country Office (BCO) who assist Colombian authorities with identifying and dismantling drug cartels. According to a 2005 report by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), cocaine purity is declining while price is increasing. Every acre of coca destroyed and every kilo of cocaine seized means less money for the drug cartels and paramilitary groups. It is clear that the cartels have turned their attention towards Europe as an untapped resource for cocaine distribution to finance their terrorist activities.

I am looking forward to hearing from the witness and considering their responses to the subcommittee's questions.

Thank you. I yield the balance of my time.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA, AND MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Remarks for Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere
The Need for European Assistance to Colombia for the Fight Against Illicit Drugs
Thursday September 21, 2006

Due to the location of my Congressional District of South Florida, frequently referred to as the gateway to the Americas, assistance to U.S. counter narcotics programs in Latin America is of great personal and local concern to my constituents.

The drug trade spreads corruption and money laundering. It erodes the institutional capacity of Colombia's fragile democracy.

Funding for Andean Regional Counter Drug initiative is therefore crucial in helping our partner in the Western Hemisphere eradicate the illegal narcotics trade and the criminal and FARC terrorist activity that it feeds.

A case in point is Colombia, where the efforts of law enforcement there, with the support of the U.S., have produced record positive results, especially in terms of eradication, interdiction and extradition of suspected major traffickers in the United States.

That said, the impact of the illegal narcotics trade stemming from our neighbor to the South is not limited to the U.S. or to the Hemisphere.

It has far-reaching implications, including for our Trans-Atlantic allies.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that there are close to 3.3 million cocaine consumers in Western and Central Europe today, with most of the cocaine coming from Colombia--the producer of roughly 70% of the world's cocaine.

Yet, European governments fail to grasp the magnitude of the threat; the linkages between narco-trafficking and global counter-terrorism efforts; and the conditions contributing to the continued expansion of the illegal drug trade.

They do not fully understand the comprehensive nature of the Plan Colombia strategy and, in turn, fail to provide the necessary assistance to defeat the enemy and counter the instability it breeds.

This is why today's hearing is so important.

The international community tends to refer to Plan Colombia as only a military operation, but this is inaccurate.

Plan Colombia is a social and political strategy to bring government presence to the country's frontier territories and re-unite them with the rest of the country.

In other words, it seeks to strengthen public institutions and the rule of law in an area overwhelmed by lawlessness.

Concurrently, it seeks to bring about economic reform and sustained growth to an ailing economy, which in 1999 had a negative GDP growth of 4.3%.

Of course, Plan Colombia also seeks to fight against the drug trade, because a significant portion of the multi-billion dollar profits from drug-trafficking are funding the activities of guerrillas and paramilitaries, while thousands of innocent civilians are caught in the crossfire.

While failing to take action in support of Colombia, the European Union views initiatives to eliminate the opium crop in Afghanistan as crucial to the political and economic stability of fledgling Afghan democracy.

According to U.S. Marine General James Jones, NATO's Supreme Commander of allied forces in Europe, Afghanistan's growing narcotics trade is spreading corruption and crime, destroying the creation of a viable economy, and ultimately, helping to finance the Taliban and other jihadists.

The same holds true in Colombia—a nation struggling to fend off attacks against its democratic institutions by the insidious culture of corruption and violence created by the cocaine trade headquartered there.

Therefore, if the U.S. and EU can work together in Afghanistan due to common goals, we should be able to do the same in Colombia, with the EU providing the necessary assistance to Colombia—another nation where we share common interests.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE BARBARA LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Today's hearing is the first subcommittee hearing since Dan Getz, the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee's professional staff passed away. And I would again like to express my condolences to Chairman Burton, his staff and Dan's family on the loss of such a kind-hearted and hard-working young man. His untimely passing shocked members and staff on both sides of the aisle and his absence is felt by all.

I would like to thank Chairman Burton, Chairman Coble and Ranking Members Engel and Scott for hosting today's hearing on the European Union's role in Plan Colombia.

Like the vast majority of my constituents. I strongly believe that Plan Colombia is an initiative that fails to provide security or relief for Americans, Colombians or others in the region. And those who put blinders on to hail the successes of this failed policy are simply ignoring a few blazing facts.

First, the European Union understands the importance of alternative development. Without providing social and economic alternatives, there simply is no incentive to deter coca production or to keep drug money out of politics.

Second, many of us who serve on the International Relations Committee have been horrified as the human rights abuses and violence continues to spread into new regions—especially in Afro-descendant and Indigenous communities. Colombia has the highest number of internally displaced persons in the hemisphere and is second only to Sudan in the world. In April, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees stated that some Indigenous communities are facing extinction. And when violence armed groups invaded the Narino community early this year, the vast majority of displaced persons—90 percent—were Afro-Colombians.

And finally, there continues to be little faith in the Colombian governments' ability to provide basic civil and social services in rural communities or to hold those responsible for violence and intimidation responsible. Instead, we hear increasing reports of drug money's infiltration into local communities, like when Orlando Valencia, an Afro-Colombian activist was kidnapped and murdered last October and the fact that police officers' played a role in the act. There continues to be a clear sense of impunity when it comes to the role of public officials in human rights abuses when the victims are poor and or of Afro or Indigenous descent.

Why should we have low standards for accountability and justice, continue to pump ridiculous amounts of money into the military, and be shocked that the cost of crack and coke is the same in our cities across the country and that the market is increasing across the globe?

Simply said, if we want to be effective in combating and containing what began as a national problem, developed into a hemispheric issue, and will eventually become a global crisis, we need to rework the formula. Ninety percent of assistance to Colombia is for military assistance. Six years and $ 4.6 billion later what have learned? Simply that the status quo isn't cutting it.

POST-HEARING QUESTIONS TO MICHAEL A. BRAUN FROM THE HONORABLE SHEILA JACKSON LEE [1]

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD TO MR. MICHAEL A. BRAUN, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, U.S. DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION, FROM *THE HONORABLE SHEILA JACKSON-LEE*

Joint Oversight Hearing
House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security
House International Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere

"The Need for European Assistance to Colombia for the Fight Against Illicit Drugs"

September 21, 2006

1. Please discuss the impact of the increase in trafficking of Colombian cocaine into Europe has on America's efforts to end Columbia's cocaine legacy.

2. Please explain how the use of cocaine profits to fund activities of terrorist organizations is impacting the global war on terror.

3. Please explain how Africa is being used as a conduit in the trafficking cocaine from Colombia into Europe.

4. What additional resources, if any, are needed by the Drug Enforcement Administration to achieve its mission objectives in this area?

[1] The answers to these post-hearing questions had not been received by the Committee at the time of the printing of this hearing.

POST-HEARING QUESTIONS TO SANDRO CALVANI AND MICHAEL A. BRAUN FROM THE HONORABLE BARBARA LEE [1]

Questions
Rep. Barbara Lee
Western Hemisphere Subcommittee Hearing on "The Need for European Assistance to Colombia for the Fight against Illicit Drugs"
21 September 2006

Sandro Calvani, Ph.D., Representative, United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, Bogotá, Colombia

1. Last year, I offered an amendment to the FY06/ FY07 State Authorization legislation that would require at least 40 percent of Andean Counterdrug Initiative funds be dedicated to alternative, economic and social development in rural areas, strengthening civilian governance, encouraging human rights protections, maintaining the rule of law, and protecting democratic institutions.

   This amendment did not cost more money, nor did it take funds away from existing programs. Instead my amendment would have paved the way to increased Colombian responsibility for Plan Colombia thus saving money in the long run. It is also important to remind Colombians that foreign investors are encouraged by safety, security, and rule of law protections. This is a tiny step to assert the importance of becoming leaders in protecting human rights and democratic institutions.

   Most importantly this amendment would have clarified the intent of the U.S. government by helping us develop clear guidelines for Plan Colombia. If this amendment had passed, do you believe that it would have sent a clearer message to our European counterparts regarding our shared priorities and intentions with Plan Colombia?

2. On May 21, 2006 ten agents of an elite anti-drug unit of the National Police were murdered at close range by a unit of the Colombian Army. That unit had a history of abuses, including killing of police agents. Unfortunately, little progress has been made in prosecuting army personnel responsible for this crime. This is only one example of the army's impunity. Moreover, the strategy of fumigating coca plants has had virtually no impact on the availability, price or purity of drugs in this country. In light of these conditions, how do you think the United States can re-direct resources now being spent on the Colombian military? How would a greater US commitment to humanitarian approaches to drugs work to make European collaboration more effective?

3. Are there ideas that from an international perspective about how the U.S. can better collaborate with our European allies in working together to accomplish development and anti-drug programs that actually have sustainable results, and cause less harm than fumigation, which also destroys families' food crops? This strategy clearly hasn't worked -- now's the time for frank discussion about how to do it better. Perhaps you can begin by explaining to the Members of the

[1] The answers to these post-hearing questions had not been received by the Committee at the time of the printing of this hearing.

Committee the intent and results of the European Unions "Peace Laboratories" in the Magdalena Medio region in central Colombia. What has your experience been with this very different concept? Can they be replicated and expanded elsewhere in Colombia?

Mr. Michael A. Braun, Chief of Operations, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

1. Yesterday, my good friend and colleague Rep. Sam Farr circulated a Houston Chronicle article that explained USAID's withdrawal of alternative development from the certain regions in Colombia despite the fact that this is where the need is the greatest. This article highlights how Plan Colombia funds failed to focus on alternative development in the most underserved area, and now six years and S 5 billion later we have still failed to understand why drug farmers refuse to switch to legal crops.

   I ask unanimous consent to submit this article for the record (see attached). The problem is not only have we been unable is common sense that expanding civil governance and alternative development programs in the rural communities in Colombia are the best means of fighting a drug war. You have to take away the incentives and the means to fight corruption. Unfortunately, I know that this is not under the jurisdiction of the DEA, but don't you agree that we need to prioritize alternative development and other humanitarian efforts that would reap a better investment for our drug interdiction money and perhaps an increase in international support for these efforts.

2. More than a dozen paramilitary leaders are under indictment in the United Staes for drug trafficking. The government of Colombia is carrying out a demobilization of these leaders, yet none of them has yet been extradited to the United States. What message do you think this sends to gunmen and to the public about the priorities of Colombia or the United States in relation to the paramilitaries and drug enforcement?

ATTACHMENT

(Note: Houston Chronicle article to submit for the record)

HoustonChronicle.com -- http://www.HoustonChronicle.com
Section: World
Sept. 10, 2006, 12:24PM

USAID pulls out of Colombia's south

Officials say rebel strongholds too dangerous but some call it choice of force over help

By JOHN OTIS
South America Bureau

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA — Although the southern jungles of Colombia are ground zero for the war against Marxist guerrillas and cocaine traffickers, a U.S.-backed program to persuade some of the region's drug farmers to switch to legal crops has been suspended.

In southern Caqueta state, a longtime rebel stronghold, the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, has pulled out of the campaign because the region lacked economic potential and was considered too dangerous for the agency's workers, according to a Colombian government memo.

The program, jointly administered by the U.S. and Colombia, was one of several alternative-development projects to wean peasant farmers from drug crops and steer them into legal livelihoods ranging from fish-farming to pineapple-growing.

Between now and 2008, nearly all of the State Department agency's $70 million annual budget for alternative development in Colombia will be channeled to more secure areas where the programs have a better shot at success.

"You can't be everywhere simultaneously, and you have to make choices," said an official at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota. "Resources have to be focused where they can be used most effectively."

But at a time when Washington is underwriting Colombia's largest-ever military push into the south as well as an aerial fumigation drive to destroy fields of coca, the plant used to make cocaine, some critics call the strategy an example of all stick and no carrot.

"This is not a good way to win hearts and minds," said Sanho Tree, a Colombia expert at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington. "We're driving people away from the government and into the hands of our declared enemies: the guerrillas and the drug traffickers."

Tree and others point out that a key goal of Plan Colombia — the counter-drug and counterinsurgency campaign that has cost U.S. taxpayers more than $4 billion since 2000 — is intended to help the Bogota government establish control and a thriving legal economy in many areas that have been left out of the U.S. aid agency's plans.

Costing U.S. taxpayers

"This decision runs contrary the whole concept of Plan Colombia," said Luis Fernando Almario, a congressman from Caqueta.

The U.S. and Colombian governments have long promised that humanitarian aid would flow into the south once the area was secured. Counterinsurgency experts say that such assistance is key to consolidating territorial control and support for civilian officials.

But about 80 percent of U.S. aid to Colombia still goes to the military and the police.

Except for Putumayo, the state first targeted by Plan Colombia six years ago, the rebel and drug-infested region of southern Colombia has received only small amounts of aid for alternative development.

"We haven't received anything from USAID," said Pedro Arenas, a former Colombian congressman from Guaviare state.

An even bigger problem, experts say, is that Bogota officials have long ignored Colombia's deep south.

Poverty, widespread unemployment and a lack of decent roads, schools and hospitals "were problems back in the 1960s and here we are 40 years later," said Bruce Bagley, an international studies professor at the University of Miami.

Thus, persuading coca farmers to abandon their lucrative coca bushes to raise legal crops remains a challenge. Referring to the potholed gravel roads of southern Putumayo state, Tree said, "Peasants drive to market with a load of tomatoes and end up with ketchup."

Changing tactics

Antonio Maria Costa, executive director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, recently urged Colombian President Alvaro Uribe to launch a major humanitarian aid drive to help farmers get out of the drug business.

"There should be a change in tactics, using finer and more sustainable instruments," Costa said in June.

Several USAID funded projects have faltered because of poor planning, corrupt local officials and security problems. As a result, USAID, has become more selective.

Last month, the agency unveiled its alternative development blueprint for 2006-08, which includes everything from reforestation to raising cocoa beans.

Most of these projects are slated for northern and central Colombia. All told, the projects will help create more than 177,000 jobs, according to U.S. Ambassador William Wood.

But Adam Isacson, a Colombia expert at the Center for International Policy in Washington, insists that writing off the war-torn south would be a grave error. Drawing parallels to the war in Iraq, he likened the current approach to saying: "Forget about the Sunni Triangle."

POST-HEARING QUESTIONS TO MICHAEL A. BRAUN, THE HONORABLE ROSSO JOSÉ SERRANO, AND SANDRO CALVANI, FROM THE HONORABLE SAM FARR, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND MEMBER, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS [1]

September 21, 2006

"The Need for European Assistance to Colombia for the Fight against Illicit Drugs"

I would like to thank the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the House Subcommittees on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security and the Western Hemisphere for allowing me to insert the following questions into the record. As a returned Peace Corps volunteer who served in Medellin, Colombia I am very actively engaged in helping Colombians help themselves improve their country. I hope these questions will encourage the USG to rethink its strategy towards Colombia and recognize that sustainable alternative development is a more potent force for promoting peace and prosperity than drug interdiction alone.

Question for Mr. Michael A. Braun, Chief of Operations, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

Is the US counterdrug strategy working in Colombia? Has the price and purity of cocaine decreased on the US street since the inception of Plan Colombia?

Questions for the Honorable Rosso Jose Serrano, Ambassador of Colombia to Austria and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Vienna

How is the Colombian government working to institutionalize economic development programs?

What is the Colombian government doing to coordinate with the EU and the US to implement comprehensive development programs?

Does the Colombian government have a comprehensive rural development strategy?

How is that strategy effectively integrating foreign assistance from the EU and the US?

How much money is the Colombian government investing in their own comprehensive rural development strategy?

Questions for The Honorable John Bruton, Head of Delegation of the European Commission to the United States

If the Committees would beg my indulgence, please provide me with information about European donors' efforts in Colombia, especially the "Peace and Development Laboratories." What has been your experience with this concept? What lessons do they offer for USAID programs? Can they be replicated and expanded elsewhere in Colombia?

Questions for Sandro Calvani, Ph.D, Representative of United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, Bogotá, Colombia

In June of 2006, your office stated that coca cultivation has leveled off in the Andean region. Yet, your office has recommended significant international assistance, including alternative development, is necessary to maintain recent gains in eradicating coca.

Please provide me with detailed information on the cost and scope of alternative development programs that will keep coca cultivation at this lower level.

Please tell me how the international community can be supportive, and what the Colombian government needs to do to sustain this reduction in coca cultivation?

[1] The answers to these post-hearing questions had not been received by the Committee at the time of the printing of this hearing.

LETTER TO THE HONORABLE HENRY HYDE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, FROM AMBASSADOR JOHN BRUTON, HEAD OF DELEGATION, EUROPEAN UNION, DATED SEPTEMBER 15, 2006

EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Head of Delegation

September 15, 2006

The Honorable
Henry Hyde
Chairman
Committee on International Relations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman,

I regret to inform you that I must decline the invitation to make a presentation at the 21 September hearing on the drug trade in Colombia. Unfortunately, an unchangeable professional conflict prevents me from accepting your invitation.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend to you my congratulations on your impressive career. I understand you recently told a meeting of the House International Relations Committee that you came to Congress wanting to change the world, and now simply want to leave it with your dignity intact. I want to assure you that you have achieved that goal with all of the officials of the European Union with whom you have worked over the years.

Sincerely,

John Bruton
Ambassador

2300 M Street NW Washington, DC 20037-1434 Telephone: (202) 862-9500 / Fax: (202) 429-1766

LETTER TO THE HONORABLE HENRY HYDE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, AND CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, INCLUDING OUTLINE OF DRUG POLICIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN COLOMBIA FROM AMBASSADOR JOHN BRUTON, HEAD OF DELEGATION, EUROPEAN UNION, DATED SEPTEMBER 19, 2006

EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The Head of Delegation

19 September 2006
(D)2006 1683/RW/fh

The Honorable
Henry Hyde
Chairman
Committee on International Relations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Further to my letter of last week, I would like to offer for the record of the hearing on Combating Illegal Drugs in Colombia the attached information which outlines the policies of the European Commission (Comm) in Colombia as well as other countries in Latin America. It also describes how discussion of counter illegal drug trafficking is part of the official dialogues carried on with several countries in the region, including many in the Caribbean Basin.

I hope the members of the committee find the information useful as they examine this important policy area.

Sincerely,

John Bruton
Ambassador

Encl.

2300 M Street NW Washington, DC 20037-1434 Telephone: (202) 862-9500 / Fax: (202) 429-1766

EU Cooperation in the field of fight against drugs production and trafficking directed at Colombia, the Andean Community and the Latin America region.

Of the over € 525 million in the stock of projects devoted in 2004 to the fight against drugs by the EU (Member States + European Commission), € 215 million correspond to funds devoted to Latin America and the Caribbean - the bulk goes to Colombia, Bolivia and Peru with a total of 50 projects amounting to nearly 200 million.

Most of the Commission (and EU) assistance goes to the support of alternative development efforts in the three Andean countries referred to above.

Nonetheless, there also are a number of initiatives in other areas. Member States devote significant resources to various forms of supply reduction efforts, at both national and sub-regional levels.

The European Commission is also very active in areas other than alternative development. Some Commission efforts are nationally based - we are promoting a drugs monitoring centre in Venezuela. Others are of a sub-regional character – e.g. two projects in the Andean region, one of which seeks to prevent the trafficking of precursor chemicals that are used for the manufacture of cocaine, heroine and amphetamine-type stimulants while the other one addresses the emerging problem of abuse, production and trafficking of synthetic drugs.

Cooperation by the European Commission

1) Bilateral cooperation 2001-2006 (stock of projects: € 145.5 million)
EC cooperation activities in the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) countries focus primarily on alternative development. At this very moment, the EU is implementing 8 drug related projects in the three Andean coca producing countries, as follows:

- In Bolivia: two alternative development projects (APEMIN II in La Paz, Oruro and Potosi for €7 million and FONADAL, a national project, with a specific focus on the Yungas area for €13 million); and a project funding the Government's study on the legal demand for coca leaf (€0.4 million);

- In Peru: one alternative development project in the area of Pozuzo/Palcazu (€22.6 million)

- In Colombia: three peace laboratory projects with an alternative development *component* (with respective EC contributions of €34.8 million, €33 million and €24 million); further, there is a satellite mapping project (€10.7 million) financed by the EU which aims to provide the Colombian government with territorial information relevant for alternative development but also for planning in the field of other sectors such as the environment, disaster prevention, agriculture, etc.

  Overall EC cooperation with Colombia for 2001-2006 amounts up to € 296 million

2) Regional cooperation with CAN 2001-2006 (stock of projects: €4.15 million)
There are two sub-regional CAN projects which focus on drugs: a first one for €1.6 million, focusing on drug precursors which is financed by the North South Drugs Budget line and is operating smoothly – after some difficulties in start-up; and a second one for €2.55 million which still is to begin operations– on synthetic drugs, to be financed from the 2002-2006 CAN Regional Strategy Paper.

3) Inter regional cooperation

Some significant European Commission efforts are undertaken at the inter-regional level. Thus, the Commission is launching now a project to strengthen intelligence sharing between Latin America/Caribbean and the EU. The Commission is also launching a novel project to help stop trafficking from Latin America via Western Africa, which appears to be an increasingly significant cocaine route. Demand reduction is also part of the the Commission picture and we are financing two interregional projects that seek to address harm reduction needs in the Caribbean and Latin America. The Commission is also preparing with CICAD a demand reduction initiative that will link cities in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe in an effort to learn from each other how to handle drug addiction. Finally, the Commission is sponsoring a conference organized by FAO and the GTZ, possibly in Washington on alternative development - its de-linking from forced eradication, its impact and the need to mainstreaming it into overall development assistance.

EU political dialogue on drugs

The fight against drugs has always been high on the agenda of the political meetings between the EU and the CAN

- as a result of the political dialogue, it was decided in the mid-1990's to establish an annual **EU-CAN High Level Specialised Dialogue on Drugs**, bringing together high level experts from both sides to exchange views on how best to address the drugs phenomenon and how best to coordinate efforts; the CAN is the only region in the world with which the EU has this kind of dialogue.

- all CAN countries (+ Venezuela) have concluded individual **'Drug precursor' agreements** with the European Community and follow-up meetings are organised in the format EU-CAN

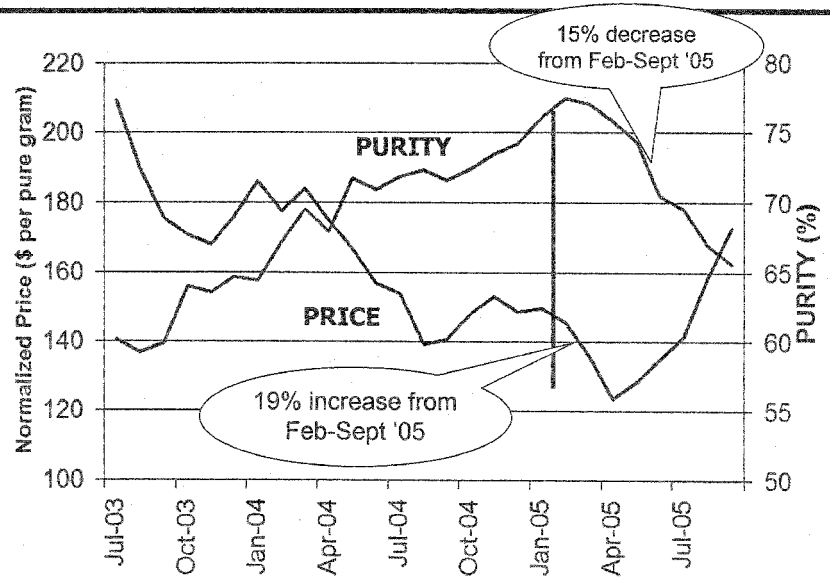
- in the more global Latin America and Caribbean ('LAC') context, the CAN countries also participate in the **EU-LAC Mechanism on Coordination and Cooperation in the field of drugs**; this is also an annual gathering during which exchange of views and cooperation in the field of the fight against drugs are being promoted, but with a much larger participation.

CHARTS FROM "REPORT ON PROGRESS IN COLOMBIA" OF THE OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY FROM NOVEMBER 17, 2005 BRIEFING TO FOREIGN PRESS CENTER

Report on Progress in Colombia

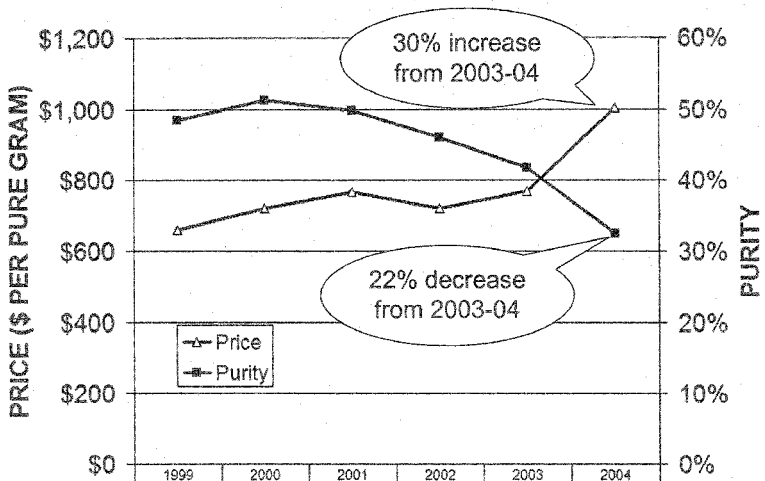
John P. Walters, Director
Office of National Drug Control Policy
Briefing to: FOREIGN PRESS CENTER
November 17, 2005

Purity of South American Cocaine at the Retail-Level Has Dropped While the Price Has Increased



Source: IDA analyses of STRIDE, Jul 2003 to Sept 2005, Nov 2005

Purity of South American Heroin at the Retail-Level Has Dropped While the Price Has Increased



	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Price	$659	$719	$766	$720	$769	$1,004
Purity	48.4%	51.3%	49.8%	46.0%	41.8%	32.5%

Source: Domestic monitor Project (DMP), average of all program samples, DEA-05017, June 2005