

EXHIBIT E

**News articles regarding the presence of FARC
terrorists in Northern Ecuador**

The Washington Post

Ecuadoran Town a Hub for Drug-Running Rebels, Colombia Says

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By Juan Ponce
Washington Post Foreign Service
Wednesday, May 20, 2009

PUERTO NUEVO, Ecuador -- The townspeople in this tiny frontier outpost, deep in the rain forest hugging Colombia's border, say there is a quiet, law-abiding community of shopkeepers, subsistence farmers and fishermen.

Authorities in neighboring Colombia, though, contend that Puerto Nuevo is the thriving nerve center for an elite Colombian rebel unit that helps keep a 44-year-old insurgency alive by trafficking cocaine through Ecuador's ports. That unit, the 48th Front, has moved operations here, Colombian officials say, eluding Colombia's U.S.-backed military and creating a nettlesome problem for President Alvaro Uribe's government.

The man behind the strategy, according to Colombian intelligence officers and former guerrillas, is a rebel operative named Oliver "The Fatman" Solarte. He is not a ranking commander, but those who have worked for him say he has become an indispensable cog in the moneymaking apparatus of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, as the rebel group is known.

Colombian authorities call Solarte the FARC's merchant of cocaine in this region and say he has forged ties to drug traffickers from Colombia and beyond, including buyers from two of Mexico's drug cartels. The result is steady financing for the fighting units of the FARC, an insurgency that has learned over its long struggle how to remake itself in the face of adversity, bedeviling Colombian policymakers and U.S. governments.

"This town, what's its history?" said a Colombian intelligence agent who has tracked the FARC in this region. "It was built by the FARC."

The intelligence officer, as well as guerrillas who trafficked cocaine for the 48th Front, said that the commander of the unit is Edgardo Tovar but that the man with the nose for business, and a deft sense of how to avoid danger, is Solarte.

"His power comes from controlling the national and international contacts," said a former rebel in the 48th Front who deserted in December after 14 years in the FARC.

'Cash Cows of the FARC'

Senior Colombian government officials say Solarte has built an intricate cocaine-trafficking web in Ecuador, operating labs where cocaine is produced, corrupting policemen and soldiers who man roadblocks, and building links with drug-trafficking groups.

The 48th Front, along with other drug-trafficking units on the borders of Venezuela and Panama, has become more vital than ever for the FARC after a disastrous year in which top commanders were killed in military strikes and thousands of experienced fighters deserted. The Uribe administration's success

has in part been due to \$7.5 billion in U.S. aid that, since 2000, has helped transform Colombia's military capabilities.

"The FARC sets up cocaine-producing labs on the border areas and takes advantage of the lax and sometimes nonexistent controls in some of our neighboring countries to supply those labs," said Sergio Jaramillo, Colombia's vice minister for defense. "That means that the FARC fronts that are on border areas have become the cash cows of the FARC."

Intelligence officials in Bogota, Colombia's capital, and former rebels who operated in Puerto Nuevo said Solarte feels so supremely confident inside Ecuador that he owns a bar and a market here. They say that with much of the FARC repositioning itself in Colombia's south, the 48th Front's operations have been transferred to a string of dusty outposts in Ecuador's Sucumbios province.

"The 48th Front doesn't spend time in Colombia; it is in Ecuador," said a former guerrilla commander in that unit who spoke about its history and leadership. The commander recently disarmed and is free. But he spoke on the condition of anonymity because his old comrades have placed a bounty on his head for giving up information about the front's operations.

"Over there, they have camps and labs for coca and training camps, with courses on explosives, workshops," said the commander, who is in his 30s and spent two decades in the FARC.

The Ecuadoran government of President Rafael Correa says that far from tolerating the FARC, it has deployed as many as 11,000 soldiers to the border and built new military posts. Ecuador's security forces destroyed 78 FARC camps last year, up from 48 the previous year, said Miguel Carvajal, minister for internal and external security.

"This country is a victim of a conflict that is not ours," Carvajal said in an interview in Quito, Ecuador's capital. "We spend millions of dollars in deploying military and police to control our frontier from armed groups that come from Colombia, and they want to tell the world that we tolerate the FARC, which is insulting."

Ties to Ecuador Alleged

Residents of Puerto Nuevo, with its two main streets, meagerly stocked shops and school, insisted that the FARC plays a minor role.

"I know nothing about guerrillas. I haven't seen them," Luz Miranda said.

Rebel deserters say FARC trainers operate camps in the region to teach fighters the art of bombmaking, including letter bombs and "bunker buster" mortar shells. The local big town, Lago Agrio, is filled with brothels, bars and pool halls used by Colombian fighters taking a break from the war.

One of the FARC's top seven commanders, Raíl Reyes, lived in a series of camps in Sucumbios for a year until he was killed March 1, 2008. That day, under Uribe's orders, Colombian fighter planes bombed his camp, killing two dozen rebels, including Reyes, and touching off a diplomatic dispute with Ecuador that has yet to be resolved.

In interviews and reports from Colombian government interrogations provided to The Washington Post, former rebels said there was a level of acceptance of the FARC by some Ecuadoran authorities, though they did not link Correa directly to the group. They described a web of corruption involving military

officers and policemen in Ecuador who permitted rebels to operate in exchange for bribes.

"To say that Correa supports the guerrillas, well, it is under the table," said the former FARC commander who spent two decades in the group. "To say the military supports the FARC -- no, not all of them, but some do."

Carvajal, Ecuador's minister for internal and external security, said that "it would be naive" to think that corruption does not taint Ecuadoran police and soldiers. But he said that Ecuador's critics have exaggerated the problem and that his country is a world leader against narco-trafficking.

The Southern Bloc

Several guerrillas, though, described Carvajal's predecessor, Gustavo Larrea, as the point man for contacts with the FARC.

Larrea's deputy, José Ignacio Chauvin, was charged this year in a drug-trafficking case involving an Ecuadoran gang that prosecutors say worked closely with the 48th Front. Chauvin did not deny having ties to the FARC, telling reporters that he had been friends with Reyes, the slain commander.

Documents seized from Reyes's computers after Colombian authorities bombed his camp include messages he and other commanders exchanged that paint a close relationship with Larrea and former general René Vargas, now ambassador to Venezuela. In those documents, guerrilla commanders also spoke of funds funneled to Correa's successful 2006 campaign and recount how guerrilla commanders urged Correa emissaries to permit the FARC to operate more freely.

Larrea and Vargas could not be reached for comment, and the Correa administration has rejected the Reyes documents as fabrications of Colombia's government.

Carvajal said Larrea's visits to the FARC focused on securing the release of hostages held by the group, a role he said was similar to that of presidents of other Latin American and European countries. "Why don't they condemn the president of France, the presidents of Brazil or Argentina?" he asked.

But Colombian authorities and rebel deserters said the collaboration with Ecuadoran authorities has helped keep revenue generated by the 48th Front flowing to eight other fronts that form the Southern Bloc. Colombian officials say that has created a welcoming business environment for contacts such as Cachi, a Mexican who rebels say frequently made deals with Solarte.

Former guerrillas say Solarte impresses Cachi -- whose real name is unknown to the rebels -- by showcasing his influence with local authorities and his affluence. And Cachi is not the only one who comes looking for cocaine.

"People from all over show up, daily," said a deserter from the 48th who worked with Solarte.

"The truth is that catching Oliver or killing Oliver would kill the Southern Bloc," the man said, referring to Solarte by his first name, "because he is the owner of the contacts."

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Posted on Tue, Mar. 04, 2008

FARC forays out of Colombia are typical

By JENNY CAROLINA GONZALEZ AND TYLER BRIDGES

The allegation that FARC guerrillas regularly operate in Ecuadorean territory is not news to an 11-year veteran of the leftist guerrillas who calls himself Freddy.

The FARC "paid [Ecuadorean soldiers] a sum of money so they could pass across the border with weapons, munitions, people -- all that is necessary to wage war," Freddy, who defected in January 2007, told The Miami Herald.

But the FARC rebels have been increasingly seeking shelter in Venezuela and Ecuador in recent years to escape powerful Colombian military offensives ordered by President Alvaro Uribe, analysts and officials along the borders said Monday.

The rebels also have found a more friendly reception from the leftist government of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, analysts added.

"They replenish their food supplies, receive medical care and rest," Javier Muñoz, a state legislator from Venezuela's Zulia state, said by telephone Monday. "Many of them even have Venezuelan ID cards."

FARC activities just inside of Venezuela and Ecuador are getting heightened scrutiny after Colombia's military raided a rebel camp just over the border in Ecuador on Saturday. The raid killed the second-ranking member of the FARC, known as Raúl Reyes -- and 21 other guerrillas.

Ecuador and Colombia share a 300-mile border that consists mostly of dense Amazon jungle. Defense Minister Wellington Sandoval said Ecuador has found 47 FARC camps in the past few years and captured several rebels.

"When there were [Colombian military] operations on the border, we crossed over to the other side to wait for things to calm down," Freddy said in a telephone interview from his home in southern Colombia.

Venezuela and Colombia share a lightly populated border that stretches for 1,400 miles through rugged terrain and is largely without troops. Not only are FARC fighters believed to come and go at will but cocaine traffickers and right-wing paramilitary squads also operate with little impediment.

Gustavo Azocar, a television talk-show host running for governor of the Venezuelan border state of Táchira, added that FARC -- the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia -- had been crossing into Venezuela long before Chávez was elected president in 1999.

"But they have a greater presence today, there's no doubt about it," Azocar added, pointing to the impact of Plan Colombia, an anti-drug and anti-guerrilla offensive.

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Opponents of Chávez say FARC has often kidnapped Venezuelans on Venezuelan soil.

The cattle ranchers' association in Táchira state claims that the FARC is holding 16 Venezuelans.

Col. Heber Aguilar, a Chávez supporter and the top law-enforcement official in Táchira state, told The Miami Herald two weeks ago that FARC does not cross into Venezuela and does not kidnap Venezuelans.

Aguilar said those thought by some to be FARC rebels are actually right-wing paramilitary squads from Colombia known as the "Black Eagles."

As long ago as 2000, the commander of the FARC's 33rd Front -- alias Rubén Zamora -- admitted to The Miami Herald that a non-aggression pact existed between the guerrillas and the Venezuelan armed forces.

Chávez had already declared himself "neutral" in the conflict, and the FARC leadership later began to speak of the "Bolivarian" ideology it shared with the Venezuelan president.

Miami Herald special correspondents Sibylla Brodzinsky, Jenny Carolina González and Stephan Kuffner contributed to this report from Bogotá and Quito. Special correspondent Phil Gunson contributed from Caracas. Correspondent Tyler Bridges reported from Lima, Peru.

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EL UNIVERSO

DOMINGO | 9 de marzo del 2006 | Guayaquil, Ecuador

I. Ecuador and the FARC, in a relationship without consent



Marzo 09, 2006

In the last 10 years, the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) have looked for ways to become close to Ecuador through a 600 kilometer open border which include wooded and jungle - like areas. The occasions on which they got in, they were repelled by military and police authorities.

Friday June 16th of 2000. The Ecuadorian police dismantled a gang composed of three Ecuadorians who were supplying FARC guerrillas with munitions. Friday January 2th of 2004. Nine at night. Ecuadorian police capture the number four man in FARC hierarchy in Quito, Juvenal Ovidio Ricardo Palmira, alias Simón Trinidad. Saturday the 8th of 2007. A clandestine FARC detachment is operating in the Yanayaru area, in Sucumbios. Ecuadorian military personnel destroyed that base.

FARC presence in Ecuador is not new. At least 60 times it has made news in Ecuador as the only Colombian armed group in the country in this last decade. Some times because they have infiltrated into Ecuadorian territory, have fought in border areas leaving casualties behind (over 20 guerrilla attacks have occurred in the last ten years according to an armed forces evaluation in Sucumbios), they have recruited minors and have used this country for storage; yet other times because their detachments deep in the jungle or their contacts for food and arms purchases have been dismantled.

Ecuador has an unconsented relationship with the FARC according to analysts. According to Patricio Haro, an expert on military issues, some facts bear this out as he bring Simón Trinidad's detention to mind.

Last monday the Colombian government complained of a supposed guerrilla relationship with Ecuador and showed documents obtained supposedly from Raúl Reyes' computer detailing dialogues between the FARC and Minister Gustavo Larrea in which the Ecuadorian government assumed a commitment to change or relieve from command those military men hostile to the FARC. Larrea acknowledged having met with Reyes in march to solicit freedom for the hostages and that both Uribe and Sarkozy knew about it.

This revelation drew immediate response. Last tuesday in Geneva, Justice Minister Gustavo Jalkh assured that "Ecuador has a zero tolerance policy as to FARC presence in their territory" and about a month ago President Rafael Correa had said that Ecuador has 11 thousand troops on the border with Colombia at a cost of approximately one hundred million dollars.

According to statistical data, the defense ministry, last year 21 military operatives were conducted to dismantle illegal armed groups operating on the border. As an example, Defense Minister, Wellington Sandoval mentioned that "on april 24th of 2007, 24 irregular armed forces were captured and brought to

justice".

Notwithstanding, controls have been insufficient, something that has been interpreted as "benevolence". "Governments could have better performance, a more clear position; the essential thing is to cooperate" says Alfredo Rangel, Director of the Security and Democracy Foundation in Colombia.

Due to radars-ineffectiveness they didn't detect the incoming Raúl Reyes or the sovereignty violation on the part of Colombia - thus some areas have been left exposed, say analysts. "The FARC have used border areas as relief and replenish spots to conduct guerrilla warfare, this they have done in Ecuador and Venezuela", according to Rangel.

The FARC have entered across the border, a 600 kilometer area filled with jungle and thickly wooded areas which border the Esmeraldas, Carchi and Sucumbios provinces. The Rumichaca International bridge is the main route between Ecuador and Colombia but there are an infinite number of bridges. In Carchi there are some 23 passageways installed over the river which divides both countries. These are small connections, built out of tree trunks, which do not appear on any maps. Twenty two alternative roads have been detected in Sucumbios alone. Local people speak of 100 routes by which FARC guerrillas enter operating on fronts 32 and 48 correspondent to the Putumayo and Narino departments on Colombian territory.

FARC infiltrations in Ecuador and other countries, according to international affairs experts, are looking to fulfill an old dream: regional expansion and reaching "belligerent forces" status and not that of "terrorist organization" as they are considered by 31 nations in the European Community besides the United States and Colombia.

According to International Public Law, if a state accepts an armed group's belligerent status, that conflict ceases to be just a local phenomenon and becomes an international one. Furthermore that armed group can request diplomatic immunity. "It would award them international legitimacy and the Colombian government sovereignty would be left in doubt" according to analysis by Grace Jaramillo, international relations expert.

The Ecuadorian government does not consider them belligerent. It calls them "irregular armed groups".
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Title	Ecuador: whether authorities provide effective law enforcement and prosecution of criminals, especially with respect to crimes committed against civilians by guerrillas and paramilitaries from Colombia; the identity and location of state protection institutions; and to whom and where civilians can seek redress for police abuse or negligence (2003 - 2005)
Publisher	Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
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Immigration and
Refugee Board of Canada

Commission de l'immigration
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Ecuador: whether authorities provide effective law enforcement and prosecution of criminals, especially with respect to crimes committed against civilians by guerrillas and paramilitaries from Colombia; the identity and location of state protection institutions; and to whom and where civilians can seek redress for police abuse or negligence (2003 - 2005)

Information on whether authorities provide effective law enforcement and prosecution of criminals, especially with respect to crimes committed against civilians by guerrillas and paramilitaries from Colombia was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

State action against armed groups' activities

Sources indicated that the Ecuadorian army increased its presence at the border following a June 2005 incursion into Colombian territory by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (AFP 26 June 2005; FSD Sept. 2005). According to Colombian authorities, the FARC used a camp in Ecuador to launch an attack in the southern Colombian region of Putumayo in which 22 soldiers were killed (AFP 12 July 2005; *La Hora* 23 Sept. 2005). A cocaine production facility was destroyed (ibid.) in this FARC camp the largest ever found in Ecuador (Europa Press 23 Sept. 2005).

Subsequently, the authorities augmented their surveillance in the town of Lago Agrio as well as around the San Miguel international bridge (AFP 26 June 2005). According to *Latin America Weekly Report*, 7,000 soldiers patrol the border zone with Colombia (21 Mar. 2005); the Security and Democracy Foundation (Fundación Seguridad y Democracia, FSD) states that 10,000 Ecuadorian forces personnel patrol the border area (Sept. 2005).

As well, the FSD believes that the use of security forces in solving internal security problems diverts their attention from border control and opens the door to armed groups' and criminal organizations' activities in Ecuador (Sept. 2005).

According to *Country Reports 2004* victims of kidnappings and extortion in Ecuador "often attributed to Colombian armed gangs" do not report them "for fear of retribution" (28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 1.b). For this reason, estimates concerning these types of crimes cannot be considered reliable; eleven kidnappings were registered by the police in November 2004 (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 1.b).

According to the Ecuadorian press, a Colombian paramilitary group operates in the cities of Lago Agrio, Shushufindi and Puerto El Carmen in the province of Sucumbios, allegedly selectively killing Colombians living in this region of Ecuador (Fundación Seguridad y Democracia Sept. 2005). The Sucumbios judicial police stated that between three and five killings occur on a weekly basis and that this paramilitary group plays a significant part in them (*ibid.*).

The FARC control a few municipalities on the Ecuadorian side of the border and, according to local populations, they impose curfews and manage conflicts (ICG 16 June 2005; *El Tiempo* 20 May 2005). An information network helps the FARC follow the Ecuadorian army movements (*ibid.*).

There are frequent assassinations in the province of Sucumbios; in October 2005, two Ecuadorian peasants linked to the FARC were killed (*La Hora* 11 Oct. 2005).

In January 2004, police arrested Ricardo Palmera, a FARC leader known under the war name Simon Trinidad (AFP 4 Jan. 2004; Reuter 3 Jan. 2004). Palmera was then extradited to Colombia (AFP 4 Jan. 2004). According to the International Crisis Group (ICG), before arresting Palmera, the Ecuadorian government of Lucio Gutiérrez "had turned a blind eye" on the use of Ecuadorian territory by the FARC (16 June 2005, 15). Sources mention a possible agreement between former president Lucio Gutierrez and the FARC under which the former would have promised not to attack the FARC (*ibid.*; AFP 10 Mar. 2005; *ibid.* 12 July 2005).

However, in February 2005, Ecuadorian authorities arrested 10 FARC members in a clandestine clinic (AP 24 Feb. 2005). Seven of them were extradited to Colombia in March 2005 (AFP 12 July 2005). Between January 2004 and July 2005, Ecuador extradited a total of 11 FARC members to Colombia (*ibid.*).

In September 2005, two FARC members were intercepted, among which was Marcial Campaña, in charge of finances of the FARC Front 48 (AFP 23 Sept. 2005; Xinhua 24 Sept. 2005). Both FARC members were extradited to Colombia (AFP 23 Sept. 2005).

According to the *National Post*, the frontier zone receives little protection from police forces, and Canadian employees of a petroleum exploitation company are potential targets of kidnappings orchestrated by criminalized Colombian groups or the FARC (28 July 2004). The article provides two examples of kidnappings that occurred in 1999 and 2001 and added that 250 kidnappings took place in Ecuador in 2003 compared with 3,000 in Colombia (*National Post* 28 July 2004).

In May 2004, Ecuadorian authorities discovered a truckload of FARC uniforms which were made in a northern neighbourhood of Quito (AFP 20 May 2004). Security forces also intercepted Ecuadorian citizens who were involved in the arms trade with the FARC (La Hora 2 Oct. 2005).

State protection institutions and police abuse

Access to a more recent version of the Website of the Ombudsman (Defensoría del Pueblo) than the one consulted for ECU41530.E of 28 May 2003 was impossible. This response provided a list of the Defensoría's offices in Ecuador. Concerning this institution, *Country Reports 2004* mentioned that "some observers criticized its lack of independence in practice" (28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 4).

Security forces personnel have had to face prosecution and prison sentences in some cases for human rights violations, however, most of the time no prosecution or sentences are imposed on human rights abusers (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 1.d, Intro).

Amnesty International stated that the police courts keep claiming authority in cases where police officers are involved, even though "[p]olice courts are neither independent nor impartial and are a cause of impunity" (25 May 2005; see also *Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 1.d).

In some municipalities, cases against police officers are referred to police courts by a "police internal affairs office" (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 1).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this information Request.

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