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INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

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REVIEW AUTHORITY: Oscar Olson, Senior
Reviewer

E.O. 12065: GDS 7/27/87 (ENDERS, T.O.)

TAGS: ES, HO

SUBJECT: REGIONAL INTERDICTION OF CLANDESTINE
INFILTRATION

REFS: (A) SAN SALVADOR 5362 (NOTAL); (B) STATE 170597
(NOTAL); (C) USDAO SAN SALVADOR IR 6-82-9-0375;
(D) TEGUCIGALPA 3674; (E) TEGUCIGALPA 5167;
(F) SAN SALVADOR 5030 (NOTAL); (G) STATE 170597

1. (S-ENTIRE TEXT.)

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2. AS ADDRESSEES AWARE, MUCH HAS BEEN DONE IN PAST
SEVERAL MONTHS IN THE WAY OF BASIC PLANNING AND DATA
COLLECTION ON MEANS TO INTERDICT INFILTRATION OF
CLANDESTINE ARMS AND MEN INTO EL SALVADOR VIA LAND, AIR
AND SEA ROUTES. WE ARE NOW ADDRESSING THE BASIC ISSUES
OF IMPROVED INTELLIGENCE, REGIONAL COOPERATION AND
SECURITY ASSISTANCE IN SUPPORT OF THESE OBJECTIVES.
FOLLOWING, AS PART OF OUR ONGOING EXCHANGE, RAISES SOME
SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS/QUESTIONS FOR ADDRESSEE COMMENTS.

3. LOOKING AT SALVADOR'S BORDERS ONE BY ONE THE SOUTHERN OR SEA FLANK IS COMPLETELY EXPOSED AND THE GOES APPEARS TO HAVE LITTLE OR NO CAPABILITY TO INTERDICT THERE.

WHAT ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT TRANSFERS OR TRAINING, IF ANY, WOULD PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT SHORT-TERM INTERDICTION IMPROVEMENT? WOULD A US NAVY SURVEILLANCE PRESENCE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE THE SALVADORAN FORCES' INTERDICTION CAPABILITY? THESE QUESTIONS WERE DISCUSSED WITH CINCSOUTH DURING GENERAL SUMNER'S RECENT VISIT. SHOULD OTHER OPTIONS BE EXPLORED, E.G., PARTICIPATION BY THIRD COUNTRIES?

4. THE SHORT EASTERN FLANK IS A MATTER OF CONCERN TO BOTH SALVADOR AND HONDURAS. IDEALLY INTERDICTION SHOULD BE COORDINATED BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, WITH THE GOES TAKING THE LEAD AND COMMITTING THE BULK OF ITS MEAGER RESOURCES TO THIS BORDER. FURTHER TRAINING FOR THIS EFFORT WILL OBVIOUSLY BE REQUIRED.

5. THE MOST DIFFICULT FLANK TO PROTECT IS THE LONG NORTHERN BORDER, BECAUSE OF DIFFICULT TERRAIN, AVAILABLE

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CONCEALMENT, REFUGEE PROBLEMS, COORDINATION PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, ETC. TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A CORDON SANITAIRE ON THIS FLANK, THE REFUGEES WOULD HAVE TO BE REMOVED FROM THE AREA, A MAJOR UNDERTAKING IN ITSELF FOR BOTH COUNTRIES--AND ONE THAT LEFTIST PROPAGANDA WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY EXPLOIT. ONCE THE REFUGEES ARE REMOVED, NUMERICALLY AUGMENTED HONDURAN AND SALVADORAN FORCES, BOTH GROUND AND AIR, COULD ESTABLISH A COORDINATED PROGRAM OF CONTINUED PRESENCE AND INTERDICTION THAT SHOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE ENEMY TO MOVE UNIMPEDED AND UNDETECTED, EITHER BY LAND OR BY AIR. THE INTERDICTION PROBLEM IN THE AIR IS PART OF A LARGER PROBLEM OF DETECTION, DISCRIMINATION AND INTERCEPTION FOR BOTH COUNTRIES. THIS PROBLEM ALSO MUST BE ADDRESSED PERHAPS SEPARATELY, BUT IN CONJUNCTION WITH ONGOING EFFORT.

6. INTELLIGENCE - PLANS OF SALVADORAN HIGH COMMAND TO ESTABLISH NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER BY END OF CY 81 IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED. IN THIS CONNECTION, SALVADORAN HIGH COMMAND SHOULD BE LOOKING TOWARD BROADENING AND FACILITATING WITH BASIC COMMUNICATIONS THE REPORTING NET OF THE MILITARY/SECURITY FORCES ON MOVEMENT OF CLANDESTINE AIRCRAFT, VESSELS OR VEHICLES. THERE MAY BE PROBLEMS IN IDENTIFYING TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS, E.G. BORDER RADAR, WHICH WOULD WORK IN THE SALVADORAN ENVIRONMENT.

BEYOND INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION, WHAT ARE EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON SALVADORAN REACTION CAPABILITIES? FOR EXAMPLE, IS IT REALISTIC TO EXPECT THAT THE FAS COULD INTERCEPT CLANDESTINE AIRCRAFT IN A TIMELY FASHION WITH EXISTING ASSETS OR WITH THOSE PROJECTED UNDER THE FY 82 FMS PROGRAM (PLEASE FACTOR PILOT/MAINTENANCE CONSTRAINTS INTO YOUR REPLY)? WOULD O-2E AIRCRAFT SUGGESTED REF A BE USEFUL IN THIS ROLE?

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7. REGIONAL COOPERATION - WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY FLORES LIMA'S INITIATIVES WITH HIS COUNTERPARTS AND NOTE WITH INTEREST RECENT IR (REF C) REPORTING POSSIBLE COORDINATED OPERATION ON HONDURAS/SALVADOR BORDER. WE WOULD LIKE FOLLOW UP REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF THAT OPERATION. HAVE PROSPECTS IMPROVED FOR INCREASED INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE BETWEEN HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR? (IN THIS REGARD, A PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ARMS INTERDICTION TRAINING PLAN WITH HONDURANS (REF D) WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON THE POLICE HIGHWAY INTERDICTION PROGRAM IN THE NICARAGUAN BORDER AREA.) IN VIEW OF HONDURAS' REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FMS IN FY 81 (REF E), IF WE COULD REPROGRAM SOME FUNDS FOR HONDURAS, COULD THESE BE USED AS INCENTIVE TO PROMOTE CLOSER TIES WITH THE SALVADORAN MILITARY? ALSO USEFUL WOULD BE ADDRESSEE COMMENTS ON SUGGESTIONS RAISED (REF B) ON CONCEPT OF AIR FREE FIRE ZONE ON THE HONDURAS/SALVADOR BORDER AND HOW THIS MIGHT AFFECT THE OAS OBSERVER MISSION IF THE GOH AND GOES RENEW THE HELICOPTER SUPPORT TEAM LEASE. FINALLY, IS THERE EVIDENCE EITHER IN HONDURAS OR SALVADOR OF MOVEMENT TOWARD CLOSER MILITARY COOPERATION WITH GUATEMALA?

8. REGIONAL INTERDICTION PLANS - SOUTHCOM WILL BE TASKED TO DEVELOP INTEGRATED REGIONAL INTERDICTION PLAN DRAWING ON CONSIDERABLE BACKGROUND WORK ALREADY DONE BY SOUTHCOM IN THIS AREA E.G. THE HONDURAS INTERDICTION PLAN. WE WOULD, OF COURSE, ALSO WELCOME SOUTHCOM COMMENTS ON ABOVE AND ANY ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS IT MAY WISH TO ADVANCE.
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