SUBJECT: [redacted] - COMMENTS ON ESAF OPINION REGARDING THE JESUIT CASE

1. IN EARLY APRIL 1991, A SENIOR SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES (ESAF) OFFICER COMMENTED ON THE CURRENT ATMOSPHERE WITHIN THE JOINT GENERAL STAFF (EMCFA) REGARDING THE JESUIT CASE. HE NOTED THAT AFTER THE MEETING IN WHICH COLONEL MAURICIO ERNESTO ((VARGAS)) DISCUSSED A LETTER THE HIGH COMMAND HAD SENT TO THE SALVADORAN MINISTER OF JUSTICE, ASKING THAT THE INVESTIGATION BE AMPLIFIED AND THAT WITNESSES BE RECALLED TO TESTIFY, THE TOPIC HAS ONCE AGAIN CEASED TO EXIST.

2. [redacted] COMMENT: ONE REASON FOR THIS MAY BE THAT THE EMCFA HAS BEEN FOCUSING ITS ATTENTION ON THE UPCOMING ROUND OF PEACE TALKS, SCHEDULED TO START IN MEXICO CITY ON 4 APRIL. THE HIGH COMMAND WOULD NOT HAVE SENT THE LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE OF ITS OWN VOLITION AND MUST HAVE RECEIVED EXTERNAL PRESSURE TO MAKE SUCH A GESTURE. THIS PRESSURE PROBABLY CAME FROM THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT ALFREDO ((CRISTIANI)). FURTHER, CRISTIANI PROBABLY ALSO WAS RESPONDING TO EXTERNAL PRESSURE, BECAUSE APPROACHING THE HIGH COMMAND WITH AN ULTIMATUM SUCH AS THIS WOULD NOT ENDEAR HIM TO THE HIGH COMMAND.)

Approved for Release
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