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FOURTH QUARTERLY REPORT ON THE MISSION
TO SUPPORT THE PEACE PROCESS IN COLOMBIA

MAPP/IOEA

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**ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
MISSION TO SUPPORT THE PEACE PROCESS IN COLOMBIA**

FOURTH QUARTERLY REPORT

March 16, 2005

1. Background

In compliance with resolution CP/RES. 859 (1397/04) in which the Secretariat was instructed “...to provide quarterly reports to the Permanent Council on the work of the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OAS) and its continued ability to contribute, through its work in Colombia, to the fulfillment of the values and principles contained in the Charter of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Democratic Charter,” MAPP/OAS presents its fourth quarterly report to the Permanent Council of the OAS.

This report addresses the development of eight demobilizations carried out since the submission of the last report from the Secretary General to the Permanent Council, which when added to earlier demobilizations has made possible the dismantling of 10 armed AUC [*Audodefensas Unidas de Colombia*] units, the handover of a significant number of weapons, and the first step toward civilian status for thousands of people.

Throughout the earlier reports, the Mission placed particular emphasis on the development of its verification role during the cease-fire and cessation of hostilities and demobilization and disarmament stages. This fourth report continues the discussion of the development of these functions and adds discussion of verification and monitoring of the reintegration process.

In addition, this report continues the discussion of relations between the Mission and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the evolution of the reintegration process in Medellin, as well as the challenges and prospects of the process in general and the Mission in particular.

2. Development of the Mandate

In developing its mandate, MAPP/OAS carried out the following activities:

2.1. Demobilization and Disarming of the AUCs

Between November 2004 and February 2005, pursuant to agreements reached between the Government of the Republic of Colombia and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC),^{1/} eight *bloques* or fronts were demobilized. These were the Bloque Bananero (Antioquia), Bloque Catatumbo (Northern Santander), Bloque Cundinamarca (Cundinamarca), Bloque Calima (Valle del Cauca), the Sinú and San Jorge Fronts of the Self-Defense Forces of Córdoba (Córdoba), the Bloque of Southwestern Antioquia (Antioquia), Bloque Mojana (Sucre) and the Self-Defense Forces of Southern Magdalena and Isla de San Fernando (Magdalena).

1. Santafé de Ralito Agreement of July 15, 2003, ratified by the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia on October 7, 2004, through a public communiqué called the “Act of Good Faith in Peace.”

During this period, as verified by the Mission, a total of 3,793 men and women were demobilized (See Annex 1). Added to this figure are the 868 troops demobilized from the Bloque Cacique Nutibara and the 168 troops from the Peasant Self-Defense Forces of Ortega, which occurred before the arrival of the Mission, for a total of 4,828 demobilized troops.

In addition, according to the verification conducted by the Mission, a significant amount of weapons, explosives, communications and service materials, as well as real estate, vehicles, tools and beasts of burden were turned over to the government (See Annex 2).

The Mission has participated in this process by assisting the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OHCP) in the work of awareness-raising in communities and transferring AUC members and demobilized troops, in adapting the areas of concentration and, essentially, in the work of verifying the lists of persons and weapons (count, transfer, storage and destruction of explosives).

It should also be emphasized that the Mission has observed the OHCP in the transfer and control visits of demobilized soldiers with serious crimes who are currently at the Santafé de Ralito placement zone [*zona de ubicación*] making voluntary use of the government's offer that they remain there while awaiting a legal framework that will define their legal status.

2.2. *Monitoring Reintegration*

The principal tool the Mission uses to monitor reintegration is its presence at the Reference Centers (*Centros de Referencia – CRO*) created by the government to provide care, guidance, and follow-up for reintegrated individuals.^{2/}

At these centers, the Mission has direct contact with each of the demobilized individuals to explain MAPP's mandate to them and the reason for its presence at the CROs. In addition, it is using these personal contacts to develop a database to monitor the reintegration process from an individual as well as general perspective.

To date, seven CROs have been put into operation. Five of them are permanent: Turbo (Urabá Antioqueño), Montería (Córdoba), Cúcuta (North Santander), Bogotá and Medellín (Antioquia). There are also two Mobile Reference Centers in Cundinamarca and Valle to serve small groups of demobilized individuals.

Regarding the actual delivery of the service offered to the demobilized troops and the impetus for their reintegration from the Reference Centers, there is no uniform diagnosis. This is because the process is moving ahead satisfactorily at some centers, while there have been difficulties at other

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2. In order to serve the demobilized population, taking into account its geographic distribution and the diversity of its needs, the Government of Colombia has established Reference and Opportunity Centers (CROs) in various places throughout the country. The CRO is a place provided by the national government where those who have been demobilized can obtain care and information, to which reintegrated individuals must go after completing the concentration, demobilization and verification stage. Here they can go through the procedures necessary for their full reintegration in civilian life and receive information regarding the benefits available to them. The CRO provides inter-institutional management of counseling, information and referrals to services for the demobilized population in the areas of health, education, psychosocial care, work training, economic reintegration choices, etc.

centers. For example, at the CRO in Turbo, Urabá, all the services offered were provided, training courses were started, two productive projects were launched, and preliminary studies were begun for another 15 projects in different areas. In contrast, the CRO in the Valle del Cauca began its operations on February 21, 2005, two months after the demobilization of that area. Despite the difficulties encountered at the beginning of the CRO work, most of the planned activities have been carried out and, generally speaking, there has been timely payment of the humanitarian assistance established in the agreements.

Against the backdrop of this difficult and complex process, during the period from December to February, 22 demobilized individuals were the victims of homicide. According to the information received by the Mission, most of these homicides involve causes unrelated to political motivations. In addition, it can be noted that during this period, 27 demobilized individuals have been arrested by the authorities, 25 of them for common crimes occurring after demobilization and 2 for open cases involving serious crimes and who did not accept the government's offer to go to the Santafé de Ralito placement zone.

Given this panorama, the Mission emphasizes that, even in the midst of difficulties, the process of reintegrating former combatants into civilian life is developing in an acceptable manner, although it is not free of risks and some points need to be refined. In this respect, it is essential to strengthen and increase the pace of work training courses in intermediate office and technical work at the National Training Service *Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje* - SENA) as well as the start-up of productive projects with the participation of local communities. In addition, it would be desirable to involve local authorities in the reintegration process, since practice shows that this factor – the leadership of former commanders – has made the difference in the development of the reintegration process from one region to another.

The Mission is continuing its work of monitoring and verification of the reintegration process of the former Bloque Cacique Nutibara (BCN). The conflict in Medellín involves perpetrators of politicized violence, common violence, organized crime, and drug-traffickers. However, despite the continued presence of some AUC structures in Medellín and its surroundings and gangs, the reintegration process, under the aegis of the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, the Office of the Mayor of Medellín and the Democracy Corporation (an umbrella organization of demobilized individuals), is generally making acceptable progress.

From 2002 to late 2004, all the indicators of violence declined dramatically in Medellín. While there were 3,721 homicides in 2002, equal to a rate of 184 per 100,000 inhabitants, by 2004 that rate had fallen by 57 per 100,000, which is equal to a 68.4% decline in two years, or in absolute terms, 2,546 fewer people killed in 2004 compared to 2002.

Furthermore, a study of the decline in homicides by community reveals an average decline of 44.24% between 2003 and 2004 in the 10 communities where the reintegrated BCN members live,^{3/} compared to 22.58% in the remaining 6 communities where there are no reintegrated BCN members. In other words, the decline in the homicide rate in the communities where there are reintegrated BCN members is twice that recorded in the communities where there are none.^{4/}

3. Communities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 16. This is not counting the *corregimientos*.

4. This information comes from a study done by MAPP on the demobilization of the BCN, which will be made public in the near future.

2.3 *Verification of the Cessation of Hostilities*

Although the AUCs have not totally fulfilled the commitment to the cessation of hostilities, in the areas where this force has territorial control there has been a marked decline in violations. On the other hand, in those zones where there are still territorial disputes among illegal armed groups, the hostilities continue and have increased in some cases, such as in the departments of Nariño, Putumayo, Arauca, and North Santander.

During this reporting period, 89 reports of violations of the cessation of hostilities were filed with the Verification Committee,^{5/} an entity that has been in operation since the signing of the Fátima Agreement, the purpose of which is to verify specific violations of the cessation of hostilities. Of these reports, violation by the AUCs was confirmed in 31 cases. In five cases, the participation of the AUCs was ruled out, and in another five cases the report could not be verified due to the lack of evidence or the absence of the mission. The remaining 48 cases are in the process of being verified. This procedure is intended not only to establish concrete cases of violations of the cessation of hostilities but also to discourage violations and thus improve on the commitment undertaken by the AUC.

The changes in the map of violence in Colombia are dramatic (See Annex 3), particularly in regions where the influence of the self-defense forces has been nearly exclusive in the last 10 years. Urabá, Catatumbo, Valle, Córdoba, regions of Magdalena Medio, Antioquia, and Cundinamarca are undergoing a process of transition where the homicide rates have fallen dramatically. However, in nearly all regions a portion of the population has expressed widespread fear of a possible return to guerrilla warfare and the humanitarian consequences such a return could have. To date, there are no reports of guerrilla raids in these zones, although there has been sustained fighting between the Army and the FARC in some zones bordering on these territories.

The situation of violence is of great concern in the departments of Cesar, La Guajira and Atlántico, particularly in the municipalities of Valledupar, Pueblo Bello and Pailitas in Cesar, Dibulla in La Guajira and Baranoa in Atlántico, where there have been homicides, disappearances, threats and displacements. In the case of Northern Santander, serious reports of homicides, abductions, and torture are a concern.

In other areas of the country where the Mission does not have a presence, monitoring can only be carried out through visits made by officials or by accessing the information through secondary sources. Another monitoring tool is the reports submitted to the Mission by the Security and Democracy Foundation. Based on these reports, the most critical areas in December 2004 and January 2005 were Arauca, Putumayo, Cesar and the Valle del Cauca.

2.4 *Work with Communities Affected by the Violence*

With respect to the communities affected by the violence, MAPP/OAS has been working in particular with communities located in areas where demobilizations have been carried out. The work of the Mission was basically to develop awareness activities regarding the mandate and the process of

5. Entity in operation since the signing of the Fátima Agreement, the purpose of which is to verify specific violations of the cessation of hostilities.

a return to civilian life and assisting the Office of the High Commissioner in promoting the transition to institutionalism.

In January, the Mission visited the municipality of Tame, Arauca Department, to participate in a security meeting and a community human rights meeting to discuss issues of security in that area. The Mission agreed to make periodic visits to the site to verify compliance with the cessation of hostilities.

In addition, and using Dutch government funds, the Mission is now in the evaluation and diagnosis phase for conducting community projects involving demobilized individuals and community leaders in the areas affected by violence. For this purpose, a diagnostic visit was made to the city of Medellín to evaluate the possibility of carrying out a project on conflict resolution, negotiation, and citizen participation. Work will be done in the Santafé de Ralito placement zone to develop a community justice project. These projects will also serve to bring government and academic institutions to the communities and contribute to institutional strengthening.

2.5. Agreements with Institutions

On January 24 of this year, the Mission signed an agreement with the Office of the Defender of the People of Colombia for the purpose of establishing a mechanism for collaboration and for receiving information on the verification of the cessation of hostilities. This agreement also makes it possible to carry out joint projects to strengthen institutionalism in the populations affected by the violence. It is also a valuable tool supporting the work of the Mission.

In addition, the Mission plans to sign two agreements in the month of March, one with the Facilitating Committee of Antioquia and the other with the Office of the Mayor of Medellín. These agreements will make it possible to broaden the institutional support for the Mission and strengthen programs on justice and the rule of law and against violence in the communities most affected by the violence.

In the context of an agreement between the Embassy of Sweden and the Security and Democracy Foundation and in order to support the Mission in verifying the cessation of hostilities at the national level, MAPP receives weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports on alleged violations of the cessation of hostilities and fighting between the AUCs and other outlaw groups as well as with the armed forces.

These analytical and informative contributions represent a valuable tool for the Mission and provide it with a broad view of the cessation of hostilities situation at the national level. In addition, the Mission uses the data provided in these reports as input along with reports and information received in the various regional offices, for better and more complete analysis as to who is responsible for violations of the cessation of hostilities.

2.6. Follow-Up on the Relationship with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)

As indicated in earlier reports, MAPP/OAS assumes its mandate based on the premise that its work is consistent with the obligations of the OAS member states with respect to the full exercise of

human rights, international humanitarian rights, and the advisory services that the IACHR should provide to the Mission in this area.

Thus, the Mission has accompanied the Commission's visits to Colombia – most recently the visit of February 17, 2005. The IACHR has been asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding detailing the scope of advisory services and note has been made of the report prepared by the Commission regarding the peace process in Colombia.

3. Legal Aspects of the Process

According to the observation made by the Mission, the demobilizations have been carried out in accordance with current law and regulation. The Government of Colombia, through its democratic institutions, has initiated a process to improve the current legal framework in order to address these mass demobilizations. To do this, the government has held special sessions of Congress starting this past February 15. Once the new legal framework is approved, the Mission will verify its implementation, in accordance with its mandate.

4. Capacity of MAPP/OAS

The mass demobilizations of the AUCs and the resulting formation of territories that must be brought back under the control of the Colombian state, present the Mission with a challenge to its actual capacity to monitor such a task. As of now, the Mission does not have the operational capacity to deal with all the obligations needed to fulfill its mandate.

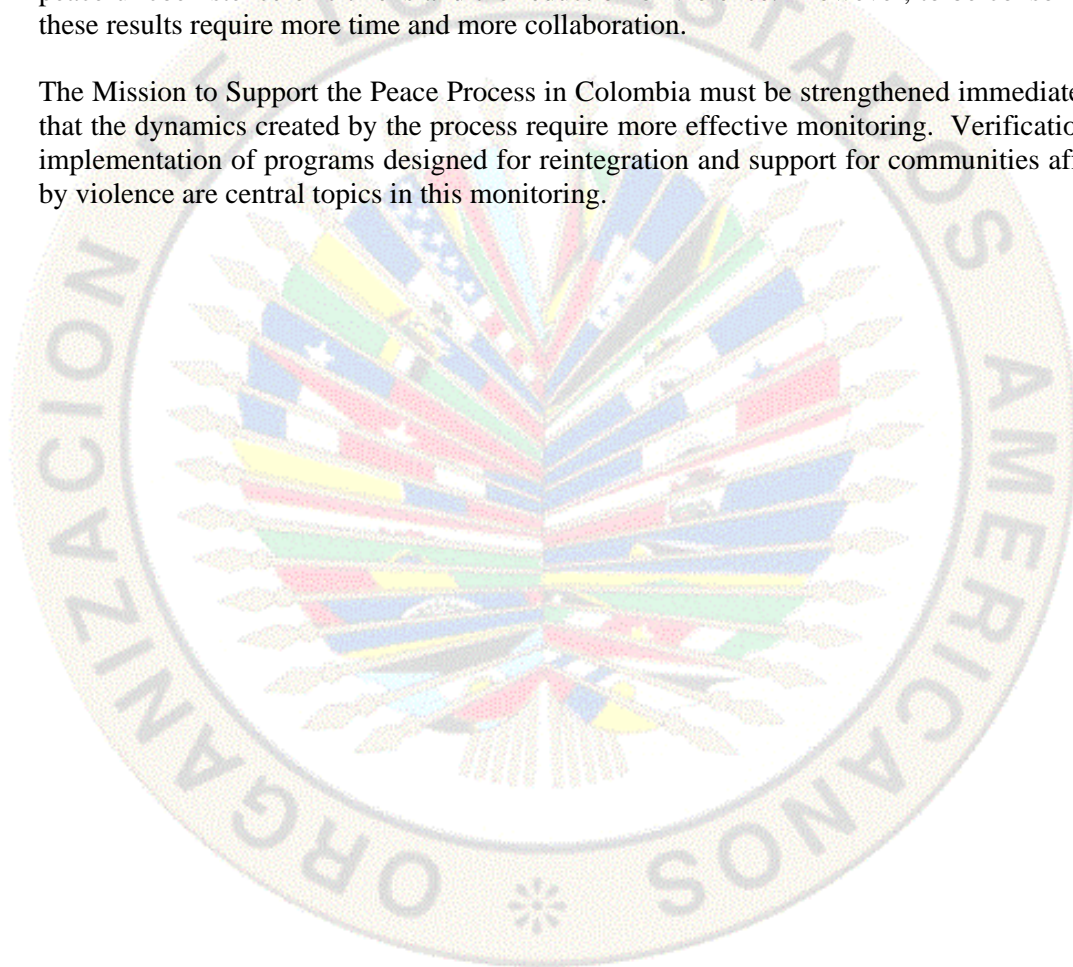
This topic is of crucial importance to the OAS as a whole and for the peace process that has been started. It requires urgent measures and decision-making on the immediate future of the Mission. Fulfilling a broad and comprehensive mandate to monitor a peace process requires much broader resources and support than those provided to date.

The complexity of the problem of violence, the dynamics of demobilizations, the distances and sizes of the territories involved, and the resulting obligations call for much greater capacity so as not to hinder the Mission's ability to meet the mandate and the enormous challenges it brings. The hiring of employees, greater logistical support and greater ability to develop programs to monitor authorities and communities are essential and immediate needs and thus more resources will be required.

5. Conclusions

1. In the midst of criticism and mistrust among domestic and foreign sectors, the process of dialogue with the AUCs has shown significant results, taking into account not just the number of people who put down their weapons but also the territories that now can and should be occupied by the institutions of government.
2. The start of debate in Congress on the government's bill called "Justice and Peace" is a key component that may determine the continuation of the process with the self-defense forces.

3. The reintegration into civilian society of those who have been demobilized, the workings of justice in cases where serious crimes have been committed, the reconstruction of the truth, and reparations programs for the victims of violence will be the most meaningful tasks from now on.
4. In the specific case of Medellín, the process of the transition toward peace is still ongoing. The process has made it possible to open up significant opportunities in terms of security, peaceful coexistence of citizens and the reduction of violence. However, to be consolidated, these results require more time and more collaboration.
5. The Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia must be strengthened immediately, in that the dynamics created by the process require more effective monitoring. Verification and implementation of programs designed for reintegration and support for communities affected by violence are central topics in this monitoring.



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Annex 1

DEMOBILIZED PERSONS

November 2004 - February 2005

<i>BLOQUE</i>	Numbers
Bananero	452
Self-Defense Forces of Southern Magdalena	47
Cundinamarca	148
Catatumbo	1435
Calima	554
Sinú and San Jorge (Córdoba)	924
Southwestern Antioquia	124
Mojana	109
Total	3,793

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Annex 2

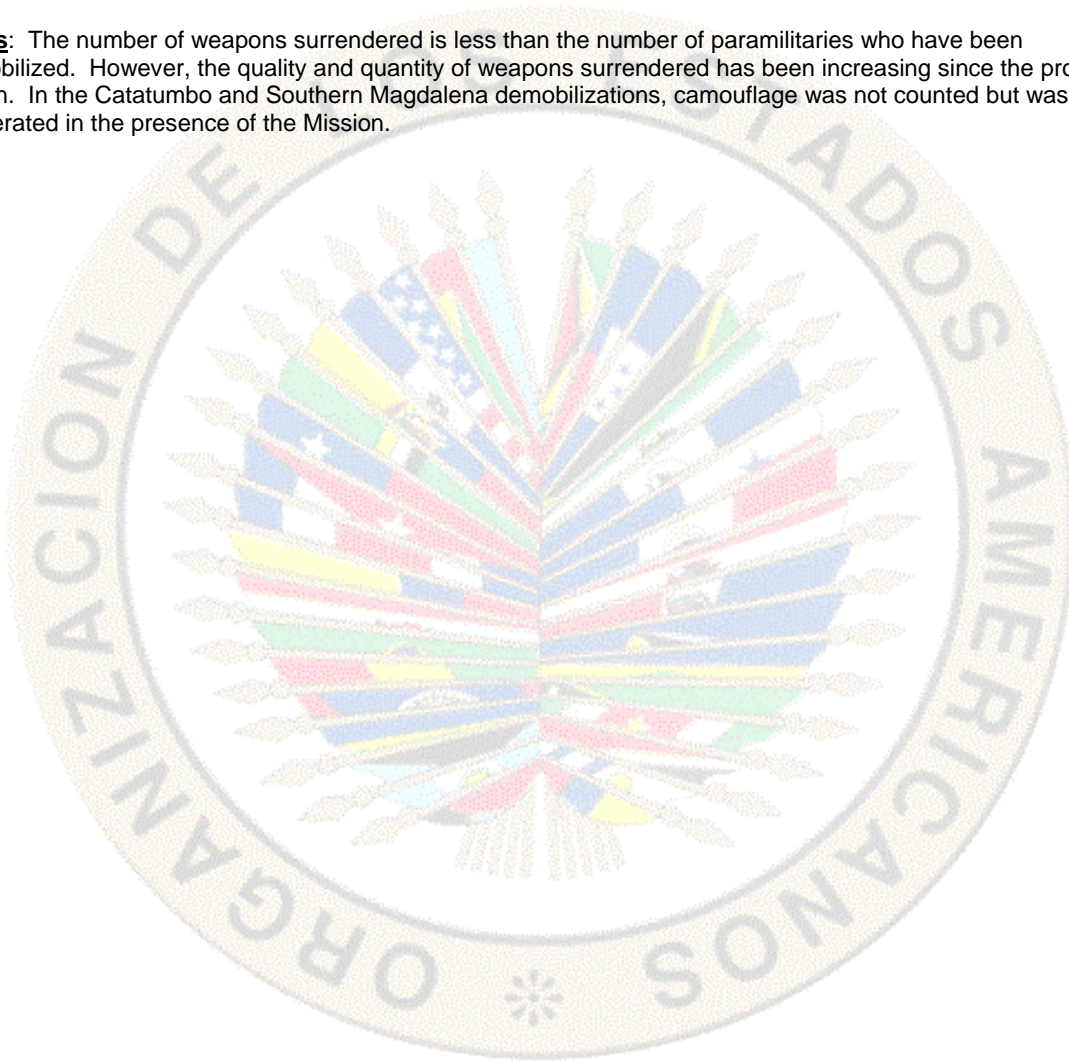
WEAPONS SURRENDERED BY THE AUCs

Verified by MAPP-OAS

TYPE OF ARMAMENTS	QUANTITY
WEAPONS	
Rifles	2093
Machine guns	27
Grenade launchers	78
Mortars	49
Submachine guns	49
Carbines	32
Shotguns	41
Rocket launchers	7
Pistols	180
Revolvers	152
Total weapons	2708
EXPLOSIVES	
Grenades	2407
Antipersonnel mines	3
Mines	2
Bars of dynamite	50
Bars of Sismofex	2
Bars of Sismigel	10
Pentonite (pounds)	6
Total Explosives	2480
AMMUNITION	
Ammunition	484404
SERVICE MATERIAL	
Camouflage shirts	1329
Camouflage pants	1255
Combat gear	864
Tactical vests	2139
Total Material	5587
COMMUNICATIONS MATERIAL	
Portable Radios	526
Base Radios	49
Total Comm. Material	575
ACCESSORIES	
Magazines for long weapons	6235
Magazines for short weapons	268
Rifle cleaning rod tips	84
Rifle cleaning rods	142
Detonating cord (meters)	25
Non-electrical detonators	114
Electrical detonators	593
Field glasses	3
Metal detector	1
Mini laser designator	1
Mita telescope	3
Silencers	2
Total accessories	7471

OTHER PROPERTY SURRENDERED	
	105 Farms
	58 buildings (incl. houses and lots)
	10 Boats
	45 Mules
	11 Vehicles

Notes: The number of weapons surrendered is less than the number of paramilitaries who have been demobilized. However, the quality and quantity of weapons surrendered has been increasing since the process began. In the Catatumbo and Southern Magdalena demobilizations, camouflage was not counted but was incinerated in the presence of the Mission.



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