

Part of the U.S. assistance to the region has been helping locate groups of refugees and displaced persons to ascertain their movement and condition. The United States has used aircraft and other means in an effort to gain accurate and complete information. Although there has been sporadic fire from unknown sources at aircraft over-flying the Great Lakes region, including U.S. Navy aircraft, it is not clear that this fire was intentionally directed at U.S. personnel. This past weekend the United States also deployed an AC-130U aircraft to the area to facilitate this effort through the use of aerial surveys. Although its primary mission is aerial surveys, the aircraft is fully mission-capable and will be available for search and rescue or other force-protection missions, if required. The aircraft will be based in Entebbe Airfield, Uganda, and will conduct aerial surveys throughout the Great Lakes region. The aircraft will remain in the area as long as aerial survey efforts are required by relief efforts.

The United States recognizes that the return of peace and security to the region will ultimately rest on the resolution of long-standing political and social differences and an end to the fighting. The United States is actively supporting the United Nations and the international community to achieve those ends. Humanitarian concerns, however, require that the United States take immediate action to relieve the suffering of innocent victims of the regional instability until those long-term political and social differences can be resolved.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report in accordance with my desire that the Congress be fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action to assist the international community in its humanitarian relief efforts in Central Africa.

Sincerely,

**Bill Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of

the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 3.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on Major Illicit Drug-Producing and Drug-Transit Countries**

*December 2, 1996*

*Dear Mr. Chairman: (Dear Ranking Member:)*

In accordance with the provisions of section 490(h) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), as amended, I have determined that the following countries are major illicit drug-producing or drug-transit countries: Afghanistan, Aruba, The Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Jamaica, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Venezuela, and Vietnam. These countries have been selected on the basis of information from the March 1, 1996, International Narcotics Control Strategy Report and from other United States Government sources.

This year, I have added Aruba to the list of major illicit drug-transit countries. At the same time, I am adding the Netherlands Antilles to those countries that we monitor as potentially significant drug-transit countries. These already include Cuba, Turkey, the Balkan Route countries and the former poppy-growing countries of Central Asia.

*Aruba.* In the past 2 years, there has been a major shift in drug trafficking patterns, as enforcement activities in Mexico, the western Caribbean, and The Bahamas have pushed trafficking routes eastward. Taking advantage of the limited enforcement capabilities of most eastern Caribbean countries, Colombian drug syndicates have been routing U.S.-bound cocaine and heroin through the region. Consequently, countries that in the past have been peripheral to the drug trade have now taken on major roles that significantly affect the United States. While all of the eastern Caribbean is vulnerable to exploitation by traffickers, we have identified Aruba as a major drug-transit country. Aruba is situated on a major drug-transit route, with the

vast majority of the cocaine and heroin that transits Aruba destined for the United States.

Cocaine trafficking through Aruba to Puerto Rico continues to involve both transshipment through Aruba and redistribution from Aruba as a hub to other locations. Cocaine is smuggled by ship via Aruba, using commercial vessels, cruise ships, pleasure craft, and fishing boats. In addition, according to the DEA, traffickers use Aruba's free-zone facilities to engage in transit of bulk shipments of cocaine without scrutiny by local officials. A substantial portion of the free-zone's businesses in Aruba are owned and operated by members of the Mansur family, who have been indicted in the United States on charges of conspiracy to launder trafficking proceeds.

*Netherlands Antilles.* Analysis of the trafficking patterns indicates that there is considerable drug activity taking place around the Netherlands Antilles, especially around St. Maarten. Although, at present, we have only anecdotal information, it is possible that significant quantities of U.S.-bound drugs are involved.

*Turkey and Other Balkan Route Countries.* Although I am still concerned about the large volume of Southwest Asian heroin moving through Turkey and neighboring countries to Western Europe along the Balkan Route, there is no clear evidence that this heroin significantly affects the United States. If in the future it is determined that heroin transiting Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, the former Republic of Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Croatia, the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, or other European countries on the Balkan Route significantly affects the United States, I will add the relevant countries to the "majors" list.

*Cuba.* Cuba's geographical position astride one of the principal Caribbean trafficking routes to the United States makes it a logical candidate for consideration for the "majors" list. While there continue to be some credible reports that trafficking syndicates use Cuban territory (including waters and airspace) for moving drugs, it has not been confirmed that this traffic carries significant quantities of cocaine or heroin to the United States.

*Central Asia.* In 1996, the State Department conducted probe efforts in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, traditional poppy-growing areas of the former Soviet Union. These probes did not show significant opium poppy cultivation. If ongoing analysis reveals cultivation of 1,000 hectares or more of poppy, I will add such countries to the "majors" list at the appropriate time.

*Major Cannabis Producers.* While Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, the Philippines, and South Africa are important cannabis producers, they do not appear on the list since I have determined, pursuant to FAA section 481(a)(2), that in all cases the cannabis is either consumed locally or exported to countries other than the United States, and thus, such illicit cannabis production does not significantly affect the United States.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Claiborne Pell, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Mark O. Hatfield, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Lee H. Hamilton, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 3.

### **Teleconference Remarks on the Interagency Task Force Initiative for St. Petersburg, Florida**

*December 3, 1996*

**The President.** Hello.

**Mayor David Fischer.** Hello.

**The President.** Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor Fischer.** This is Mayor Fischer here, Mr. President.

**The President.** Hello, Mayor. It's nice to hear your voice. I'm here with the Vice President and Secretary Cisneros and Senator Bob Graham. And I think Congressman Young and Congressman Bilirakis are on the phone. And I know you've got some community leaders there. And I appreciate everyone being a part of this conference call today.