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## COSTA RICA: RETURN TO WHINSEC

Date: 2007 December 20, 17:42 (Thursday)  
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL  
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Executive Order: -- Not Assigned --  
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Current Classification: CONFIDENTIAL  
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Locator: TEXT ONLINE  
Concepts: -- Not Assigned -- (/plusd/?q=&qfconcept=--+Not+Assigned+--+#result)  
Type: TE - Telegram (cable)  
Archive Status: -- Not Assigned --  
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Classified By: CDA Peter M. Brennan for reason 1.4 (d).

1. (SBU) On December 13, Public Security Minister Fernando Berrocal wrote President Oscar Arias a letter recommending that Costa Rican law enforcement personnel "could maintain a training scheme" at WHINSEC to receive counternarcotics, counterterrorism and other "strictly police" training. (Full text and informal translation emailed to WHA/CEN and SOUTHCOM.)

2. (C) Following the plan that Berrocal outlined to us after his November visit to Fort Benning, President Arias will not respond to this letter, and his silence will be treated as acquiescence. Berrocal will then be authorized to resume

unrestricted, non-military training for Costa Rican law enforcement personnel at WHINSEC.

3. (C) COMMENT: Berrocal's letter ended the controversy (reftel and previous), which began in May when Arias told School of the America's Watch (SOAW) representatives that the GOCR would no longer send students to WHINSEC. However, two areas of potential concern remain, especially since this "private" correspondence will likely surface in the media sooner or later: a) the use of "could" (quoted in para 1 above) instead of the stronger "will" or "should" might provide an opening for a SOAW counterattack that Costa Rica is not fully committed to training at WHINSEC, after all; and b) an implicit (and false) expectation, that the USG will help equip the Air Section of the Ministry of Public Security with two additional helicopters. (Berrocal and his staff made this pitch during their visits to JIATF-South and SOUTHCOM in November.) On balance, however, we welcome the letter; Berrocal kept his word, and WHINSEC training for Costa Ricans can continue.

BRENNAN

#### References to this document in other cables

[08SANJOSE263 \(/plusd/cables/08SANJOSE263.html\)](#)

#### References in this document to other cables

[05SANTODOMINGO1999 \(/plusd/cables/05SANTODOMINGO1999.html\)](#)

[07SANSALVADOR1999 \(/plusd/cables/07SANSALVADOR1999.html\)](#)

[07SANJOSE1999 \(/plusd/cables/07SANJOSE1999.html\)](#)

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