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DECLASSIFIED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE
INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)
ISCAP APPEAL NO. 2012-019, document no. 4
DECLASSIFICATION DATE: July 10, 2018

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 SAN SALVADOR 12707
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CITE: (U) [REDACTED]
SERIAL: (U) IIR [REDACTED] 1448 90.

/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY

COUNTRY: (U) EL SALVADOR (ES).
SUBJ: IIR [REDACTED] 1448 90/ESAF OFFICERS EXPRESS VIEWS ON
VARIOUS ISSUES/(111)(U)
WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT
FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED
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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

25X1, E.O.13526

DOI: (U) 900914.
REQS: (U) [REDACTED]
SOURCES: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SUMMARY: (CNF) [REDACTED] EXPRESSED SUPPORT
FOR THE NEW MOD, THE DIALOGUE, AND RECENT INTERNAL
MACHINATIONS. STRONG ESAF FEELINGS THAT THE FMLN IS NOT
NEGOTIATING IN GOOD FAITH, IS FRAUGHT WITH INTERNAL
DISSENT AND NOT CAPABLE OF SUSTAINED OFFENSIVE OPS.

TEXT: 1. (CNF) DURING RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] ESAF FIELD GRADE AND JUNIOR OFFICERS, [REDACTED] FOUND
WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR NEW MINISTER OF DEFENSE (MOD) COL
RENE ((PONCE)). THE OVERALL ATTITUDE IS ONE OF OPTIMISM
THAT PONCE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE NEEDED CHANGES AND LEAD

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THE ESAF, AS AN INSTITUTION, INTO A NEW ERA.

2. (C/NF) REGARDING THE INTERNAL MACHINATIONS CAUSED BY THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL ORDER 90/08 AND ITS FOLLOW-ON AMENDMENT, THE VIEWS WERE OVERWHELMINGLY SUPPORTIVE. TO A MAN, THE OFFICERS AGREED CHANGES NEEDED TO BE MADE. HOWEVER, SOME EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT TOO MANY CHANGES IN THE NEAR FUTURE MAY BE HARMFUL. COMMENT--THEIR STATEMENTS MUST BE VIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SIZE OF THE ARMY, THE NUMBER OF COMMANDERS THAT WERE AFFECTED BY THE RECENT ORDER, AND THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE DIALOGUE.)

3. (C/NF) THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONGST THE OFFICERS THAT--

--THE FMLN IS NOT NEGOTIATING IN GOOD FAITH.

--THE FMLN IS NOT CAPABLE OF THE SAME LEVEL OF SUSTAINED OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS AS OCCURRED IN 8911.

--GOES/ESAF CONCESSIONS MUST BE MADE FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, BUT FMLN ENCLAVES OR TERRITORIAL CONTROL ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS.

--A REDUCTION IN THE OVERALL SIZE OF THE ESAF WAS A REALITY IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. COMMENT--THIS SENTIMENT WAS NOT EXPRESSED BY ALL OF THE OFFICERS.)

4. (C/NF) ALMOST ALL OF THE OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT THERE WILL BE A REDUCTION IN U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO EL SALVADOR. FEELINGS WERE GUARDED AND MIXED ON HOW THIS WOULD AFFECT USG/GOES/ESAF RELATIONS. MANY EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT USG INTERESTS IN OTHER DEMOCRACIES IN THE REGION AND THE FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND EASTERN EUROPE ARE DISTRACTIONS FOR USG/GOES POLICY. IN ADDITION, THERE WAS AN ALMOST UNIVERSAL PERCEPTION THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS IS DECIDEDLY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN THE JESUIT CASE AND CONTINUES TO MISTRUST THE ESAF AS AN INSTITUTION.

COMMENTS: 1. (C/NF) COMMENTS. REGARDING ESAF REDUCTION, CONCERNS STEM FROM THE BELIEF THAT POLITICAL POSITIONING AND INFLUENCE WILL DETERMINE THE REDUCTION IN FORCE. COMPETENCY AND SKILL WILL BE IMPORTANT, BUT SECONDARY, CONSIDERATIONS.

2. (C/NF) ESAF COMMENTS ON FUTURE USG/GOES RELATIONS WERE INTERESTING. BELIEVES THE ESAF IS QUICKLY UNDERSTANDING THE REALITIES OF SIGNIFICANT CUTS IN USG SECURITY ASSISTANCE. THE ESAF WILL BE LESS WILLING AFTER AID CUTS TO RESOLVE PRIORITIES ON THE USG POLICY

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AGENDA:

3. ~~(CONF)~~ THE FIELD GRADE OFFICERS SEEMED MORE CONCERNED WITH HOW THESE RECENT CHANGES AFFECTED THEM PERSONALLY AND WHAT IT MEANT FOR THEIR CAREERS. THE JUNIOR OFFICERS LOOKED AT HOW THE CHANGES AFFECTED THEIR UNITS DIRECTLY (E.G., BETTER OR WORSE COMMANDER) AND HOW THE INSTITUTION AS A WHOLE WAS CHANGING.

//IPSP: (U) PG 1100//

//COMSOBJ: (U) 111//

ADMIN

PROJ: (U)

INSTR: (U) [REDACTED]

PREP: (U) [REDACTED]

ACQ: (U) EL SALVADOR [REDACTED]

DISSEM: (U) [REDACTED] AMEMBASSY EL SALVADOR.

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DECL: OADR

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