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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR TAGS: PTER, PGOV, PHUM, PE SUBJECT: SENATOR VALLE RIESTRA FAILS IN DIALOGUE ATTEMPT WITH PERUVIAN TERRORISTS

(C) SUMMARY: SENATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION PRESIDENT SENATOR VALLE RIESTRA MADE A VAIN ATTEMPT TO DIALOGUE WITH CAPTURED SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) TERRORISTS ON AUGUST 24. TERRORISTS UNDERSCORED CONTINUED REJECTION OF DIALOGUE AND COMMITMENT TO ARMED STRUGGLE. EVENTS SHOULD BOOST HAND OF THOSE IN GOP FAVORING BALANCED COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY CONFIDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

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EMBRACING MILITARY AND DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS.

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SUMMARY.

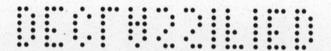
- 2. (U) SENATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION PRESIDENT SENATOR JAVIER VALLE RIESTRA VISITED LIMA'S LURIGANCHO PRISON ON AUGUST 23, WHERE HE INSPECTED FACILITIES AND ATTEMPTED TO DIALOGUE WITH PRISONERS OF THE SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) TERRORIST GROUP. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY SENATORS JORGE DEL PRADO (UNITED LEFT-IU), JAVIER DIEZ CANSECO (IU), AND CESAR DELGADO (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT PARTY). VALLE RIESTRA DEPLORED CRAMPED AND UNSANITARY FACILITIES, RECEIVED ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE AND CORRUPTION, AND CALLED FOR QUICK GOP ACTION ON PARDONS FOR COMMON CRIMINALS AND SO-CALLED POLITICAL PRISONERS (GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD TO MEAN MEMBERS OF LEGAL POLITICAL PARTIES CHARGED UNDER TERRORISM STATUTES).
- (U) FAR MORE DRAMATIC WAS VALLE RIESTRA'S ATTEMPT TO CONVERSE -- AT A DISTANCE -- WITH SOME OF THE 400 SL MEMBERS HELD IN A SEPARATE CELL BLOCK IN LURIGANCHO. STANDING NEAR AN IMPROVISED SL FLAG, A MASKED SL SPOKESMAN DENOUNCED THE GOP, TOLD VALLE RIESTRA SL CARED NOTHING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND EMPHASIZED SL'S COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVE A "NEW DEMOCRACY" THROUGH FORCE. THE SENATOR REPORTEDLY RESPONDED THAT HE SHARED "MANY OF YOUR VIEWS ABOUT DECADENT PERU. LIKE ME, MANY PERUVIANS REJECT GENOCIDAL METHODS." HE ALSO PROMISED TO ARRANGE FOR THE IMMEDIATE DELIVERY OF BOOKS AND WORK MATERIAL; THE SL THEN INTERRUPTED HIM WITH CHANTS AND SONGS. PUTTING AN END TO THE ATTEMPTED DIALOGUE. ATTEMPTING TO PUT THE BEST FACE ON THESE EVENTS, VALLE CONFIDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

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RIESTRA SAID LATER HE HAD CARRIED OUT A "HISTORIC MONOLOGUE." HE ALSO WAS REPORTED TO HAVE CALLED FOR THE RELEASE OF SL LEADER AND IDEOLOGUE ANTONIO DIAZ MARTINEZ, ACCUSED OF TERRORISM.

4. (C) COMMENT:

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