

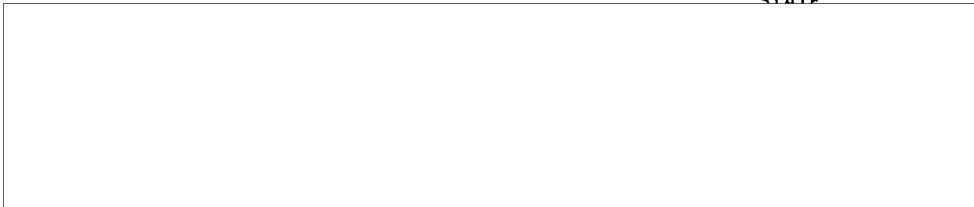
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TAGS: SNAR, PREL, XL, BF, HA, JM, CU, CD, PM
SUBJECT: 3/9 HFAC NARCOTICS TASK FORCE HEARING ON THE CARIBBEAN

1. (U) SUMMARY. ASSISTANT SECRETARIES ABRAMS AND WROBLESKI, ALONG WITH DEA DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR BYRNE, TESTIFIED 3/9 BEFORE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (HFAC) TASK FORCE ON INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL HEARING ON THE CARIBBEAN. CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FOCUSED ON THE USG RESPONSE TO THE INFLUENCE OF COLOMBIAN CARTELS IN THE REGION, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE BAHAMAS, HAITI, JAMAICA, AND CUBA. CHAIRMAN SMITH REITERATED HIS INTENTION TO INTRODUCE A RESOLUTION TO DECERTIFY THE BAHAMAS. CONGRESSMAN CROCKETT, ON THE OTHER HAND, EXPRESSED STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE BAHAMAS. WHILE SMITH HAD SOME HARSH WORDS

FOR THE ADMINISTRATION'S CERTIFICATION DECISIONS, THE HEARING ON THE WHOLE WENT QUITE WELL. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) SMITH (D-FLA) WAS JOINED AT THE HFAC HEARING BY CO-CHAIRMAN GILMAN (R-NY) AND COMMITTEE COLLEAGUES ACKERMAN (D-NY), AND MEYERS (R-KANSAS). ALSO PRESENT WERE SUB-COMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN CROCKETT (D-MICHIGAN) AND CONGRESSMAN BURTON (R-INDIANA).

3. (U) PARTICIPANTS ALL AGREED THAT ORGANIZED DRUG CARTELS POSE A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF THE CARIBBEAN REGION, A THREAT RECOGNIZED BY GOVERNMENTS IN THE AREA. AS WROBLESKI BRIEFED THE COMMITTEE ON THE RECENT CARIBBEAN NARCOTICS LAW ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE AND VOICED HER CONCERN OVER THE VULNERABILITY OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN

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