

Afghan situation. New Delhi became concerned by reports that the objective of that visit was to extend a friendly hand to Islamabad on behalf of Moscow, in order to tame the Taliban rulers in Afghanistan. At the time that Putin arrived, Indian media were reporting on the alleged deal.

To a large extent, Putin succeeded in reassuring New Delhi that Moscow has not changed its policy on either the Taliban or Kashmir. He endorsed India's position on disputed Kashmir, saying that talks with Islamabad can start only when "foreign interference" in Kashmir comes to a halt. Though President Putin had barely veiled his denunciation of Pakistan, at the same time, he urged both India and Pakistan to "compromise" on Kashmir on a bilateral basis.

If the Russian President was less than specific on the Kashmir issue, he nonetheless identified clearly the focus of the alliance between India and Russia as the struggle against international terrorism. Describing terrorism as the principal threat to the objectives of the two countries, he urged India to join Russia to act against international terrorism as the perceived enemy.

Elaborating the theme in an address to a packed Indian Parliament, Putin said that he was sharing "absolutely true and verified information that it was often the same individuals, the same terrorist organizations, that were conducting terrorist acts, from the Philippines to Kosovo, including in Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Russia's North Caucasus."

Putin said that it was time to combat organized international terrorism decisively, and accordingly, Russia has supported the Indian proposal to create a consolidated front against global terrorism.

Mixed Reactions to a Strategic Partnership

Reaction to the Indo-Russian declaration for a strategic partnership has been mixed. While Beijing hailed it as a positive development, the West was less exuberant. Washington has so far refrained from sounding negative. Nonetheless, a senior State Department official told a Pakistani news correspondent that the United States has always encouraged Russia and other countries to take into account the effects of weapons sales on regional stability.

On the other hand, the reaction from Pakistan has been one of unease. A Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Oct. 8 that the huge military supply to India by Russia may trigger an arms race in the area. One leading Pakistan news daily expressed alarm, speculating that there is an American-Russian agreement to appoint India as the "regional policeman."

The largest circulation Urdu news daily, *Jang*, editorialized on Oct. 5, that Washington and Moscow are doing their best to woo New Delhi to strengthen links with it in all fields. "The Russo-Indian alliance, based on agreements signed by Putin in India, especially defense deals, nuclear collaboration, and cooperation in combating terrorism, can create problems for Pakistan," the editorial said.

Brazil Toughens Security in Face of FARC Threat

by Silvia Palacios

The Sept. 22 arrest by Brazilian Federal Police of Jesuit priest Francisco Antonio Cadena Colazzo (a.k.a. Oliveira Medina), who has operated for at least the last two years as the narco-terrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia's (FARC) "ambassador" in Brazil, should not be dismissed as a routine operation, or a one-shot deal. The arrest, rather, signals that Brazil's security policy as a whole has shifted, based on the recognition by Brazilian Armed Forces and related security agencies, that the political advance of Colombia's narco-guerrillas along the strategic Amazon border, and the FARC's open and public links to Brazil's Landless Movement (MST), constitute a threat to Brazil's territorial integrity.

The arrest of "Father" Cadena, on charges that he was "dangerous to national security," occurred as "Operation Cobra" was set into motion. Led by the Federal Police, Operation Cobra has the mission of reinforcing security along the 1,500 kilometer border with Colombia, in the Amazon area which the Armed Forces considers the area of greatest geopolitical tensions in the country. In recent years, the Armed Forces have revamped their war plans, based on the hypothesis that the Amazon is the principal area to be defended, given the drive by the Anglo-American powers to impose the doctrine of "limited sovereignty" upon Brazil. The Army is preparing to rapidly double the 22,000 troops it currently deploys in that border area.

The warnings coming from the Armed Forces have become urgent. One of the principal items discussed at an extraordinary Oct. 4 meeting of the General Officers of the Army High Command, for example, was the repercussions for Brazil of the ongoing crisis in Colombia. As they were meeting, Rear Adm. Helcio Blacker, Deputy Chief of Intelligence for the Chief of Staff of the Defense Ministry, was telling hearings on the Colombia crisis called by the Chamber of Deputies' Amazon and Regional Development Commission, that Brazil would respond militarily to any attempt to invade its territory, whether by guerrillas, drug traffickers, or foreign troops of any nationality.

No More Flirting with the FARC

Cadena had been working on politicians, diplomatic circles, and the Brazilian National Congress since 1998, attempting to get the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government to recognize the FARC as a "belligerent force," which would allow it to maintain official diplomatic offices, with the same



Colombian police and military personnel held prisoner by the FARC in a Nazi-like concentration camp. A FARC-style movement now threatens to engulf Brazil.

status granted the Palestine Liberation Organization earlier. In late 1998, Cadena and *Comandante* Hernan Ramírez of the FARC's International Commission, redoubled their pressure, securing interviews with the governors of the three influential states of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Rio Grande do Sul, and getting Congressman Arturo Virgilio, a member of President Cardoso's political party, to mediate for them. The Ministry of Foreign Relations and the President himself flirted with the idea of diplomatic recognition, and permitted the FARC's "diplomats" to operate freely inside the country.

This narco-terrorist diplomacy began to be cut off in October 1999, following the visit of former Colombian Armed Forces Commander and Defense Minister Gen. Harold Bedyoya (ret.) to Brazil. His public and private interventions, widely reported in the Brazilian press, were successful in unequivocally demonstrating both the narco-terrorist nature of the FARC and its role in the "Balkanization" of Colombia, and its links to the MST.

The Brazilian Intelligence Agency recently released a report revealing that a faction of the FARC, operating near the Brazilian border, was "recruiting" Brazilian youths to its ranks. The group was identified as the "Amazon Front," which maintained two bases along the Putumayo and Caqueta Rivers, both of which cross from Colombia into Brazil, emptying into the Amazon River.

There is also solid evidence that Brazilian territory is being used by the FARC as a major logistical base for its drugs-for-weapons trade. *O Estado de São Paulo* reported on July 11, for example, that two Brazilian aircraft downed inside Colombian territory, were part of the "Surinam Connection."

In this route, heavy-caliber weapons are smuggled into Brazil's tiny neighbor, Surinam, from Europe, and transported by air into the south of the state of Pará in the Brazilian Amazon, whence they head for Colombia, to be sold to the FARC in exchange for drugs.

Cadena was arrested in Foz de Iguaçu, precisely the area identified by the Federal Police as a major logistical base for the FARC. This is where Cadena had been most active, deploying throughout the state of Paraná, giving presentations, and visiting MST encampments which, together with the Workers' Party (PT), is the FARC's main lobbyist, outside the government. The Jesuit "ex-priest" was backed by a network of Theology of Liberation activists, who have a very strong base in Paraná, from where they direct part of the MST's operations in the Punta de Paranapanema, the area where the MST envisions establishing a "liberated" enclave, the so-called "Republic of Pontal."

The fact that the MST poses a direct threat to Brazilian national security was confirmed publicly for the first time by a high-level Army general on Sept. 20, at a ceremony called by the Southern Military Command, which covers Brazil's three southernmost states, to pay homage to Marshal Castelo Branco, the first President of the Brazilian military government in 1964. The Commander of the region, Gen. Francisco Pinto dos Santos Filho, read the "Orders of the Day" before 200 officers, among them five active-duty generals of Rio Grande do Sul, three reserve generals, and Archbishop of Pôrto Alegre Dedeus Grings. His "Orders of the Day" were a fierce defense of the role of the Armed Forces in combatting groups that threaten Brazil's integrity — an unmistakable reference to the MST.