

UNCLASSIFIED

## HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PERU

### ISSUE:

With the virtual collapse of the economy and continued insurgent activity by Maoist organizations, human rights abuses continue to proliferate in Peru.

### BACKGROUND:

Human rights abuses in Peru are perpetrated by three main groups: (1) Sendero Luminoso (SL), (2) Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (MRTA), and (3) the military forces in their effort to counter the insurgency. In the past ten years, over 20,000 lives have been lost to political violence and more than \$18 billion in property losses have been incurred.

Over half the population of Peru currently live in "emergency zones" which are under direct military control, devoid of all civil liberties, including habeas corpus. The indigenous population are caught between the terrorists and undisciplined military forces without recourse to any form of relief. According to United Nations statistics, Peru has the distinction of having the highest number of annual "Disappearances" (over 400) for the past three years. Extra-judicial executions, torture, beatings, and rape are all common activities by both terrorists and military agents. Government officials, political figures, human rights activists, campesino leaders and recently even a nun have been targets for abuse and death. Since terrorists often masquerade as military personnel and military patrols have been known to cover their actions to make them appear to have been perpetrated by the SL, it is often difficult to determine responsibility for the violence. The insurgency is largely financed by "taxes" levied against narcotraffickers in the vast areas under terrorist control. The drug trade, although not responsible for extensive violence to date, adds another destabilizing factor to the already tenuous situation.

Upon his inauguration as President of Peru in July 1990, Alberto Fujimori undertook to fight terrorism and the resultant human rights abuses through improved economic activity, a stabilized agricultural sector and agricultural alternatives to the coca crop. He fired two of the three military commanders (not the army) and over three hundred senior police officials. He must however, proceed with caution as he needs the support of all sectors of Peruvian society if effective reforms are to be instituted.