

LEFTISTS OPEN HAVANA MEETING

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HAVANA -- Hundreds of left-wing politicians and activists from across Latin America began a four-day meeting in Havana on Tuesday in a bid to unite their efforts against U.S. and capitalist influence around the world. Cuban President Fidel Castro joined 400 delegates at the opening of the 10th meeting of the Sao Paulo Forum. Other attendees included Brazilian opposition leader Luis Inacio Lula da Silva and Nicaragua's former president, Daniel Ortega. Subjects included opposition to the planned Free Trade Area of the Americas, the U.S. reaction to the Sept. 11 attacks and the U.S. naval presence on Puerto Rico's island of Vieques.

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Sao Paulo Forum Includes Active Terrorist Groups

The member organizations of the Sao Paulo Forum include several that are on the U.S. State Department's list of active terrorist groups, including the Colombian [FARC](#) (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas) and [ELN](#) (Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional); the Peruvian [MRTA](#) (Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement) and the Chilean MIR. In addition to the groups listed below, Granma Internacional, the official newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party, is reporting the attendance of Zuhair Dhaif, head of the Latin America Division of the Iraqi Baathist Party, and an unnamed Libyan representative at the Tenth Session of the Sao Paulo Forum in Havana.

[Read a description of the active terrorist organizations represented in the Foro Sao Paulo](#)

The membership list below was obtained from the Sao Paulo Forum website: www.forosaopaulo.org

País	Partido/Instit.
Argentina	Frente Democracia Avanzada
Argentina	Partido Comunista Argentino
Argentina	Partido Intransigente
Brasil	Partido dos Trabalhadores
Brasil	Partido Socialista Brasileiro
Brasil	Partido Comunista do Brasil
Brasil	Movimento Revolucionário 8 de Outubro
Brasil	Partido Popular Socialista
Colômbia	Alianza Democrática M19
Colômbia	ELN
Colômbia	FARC-EP
Colômbia	Partido Comunista Colombiano
Colômbia	Presentes por el Socialismo
Cuba	Partido Comunista
Chile	MIR
Chile	Partido Comunista de Chile
Equador	Movimiento Popular Democrático
Equador	Partido Socialista - Frente Amplio
El Salvador	FMLN
Guatemala	URNG
México	Partido de la Revolución Democrática
México	Partido del Trabajo
Nicarágua	FSLN

Porto Rico	Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño
Porto Rico	Nuevo Movimiento Independentista Puertorriqueño
Porto Rico	Frente Socialista
Panamá	Partido Revolucionario Democrático
Peru	Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru
Peru	Partido Comunista Peruano
República Dominicana	Alianza por la Democracia
República Dominicana	Fuerza de la Revolución
República Dominicana	Movimiento Izquierda Unida
República Dominicana	Partido de los Trabajadores Dominicanos
Uruguai	Frente Amplio
Uruguai	Partido Comunista
Uruguai	Partido Socialista de Uruguay
Uruguai	Movimiento de Participación Popular
Uruguai	Partido Obrero Revolucionario Trotskista-Posadista
Venezuela	Partido Comunista de Venezuela

Description of Terrorist Groups Participating in Tenth Reunion of the Sao Paulo Forum in Havana

Source: U.S. State Department , *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2000*,
[Appendix B: Background Information on Terrorist Groups](#)
 Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)

Description

Established in 1964 as the military wing of the Colombian Communist Party, the FARC is Colombia's oldest, largest, most capable, and best-equipped Marxist insurgency. The FARC is governed by a secretariat, led by septuagenarian Manuel Marulanda, a.k.a. "Tirofijo," and six others, including senior military commander Jorge Briceño, a.k.a. "Mono Jojoy." Organized along military lines and includes several urban fronts. In 2000, the group continued a slow-moving peace negotiation process with the Pastrana Administration, which has gained the group several concessions, including a demilitarized zone used as a venue for negotiations.

Activities

Bombings, murder, kidnapping, extortion, hijacking, as well as guerrilla and conventional military action against Colombian political, military, and economic targets. In March 1999 the FARC executed three US Indian rights activists on Venezuelan territory after it kidnapped them in Colombia. Foreign citizens often are targets of FARC kidnapping for ransom. Has well-documented ties to narcotics traffickers, principally through the provision of armed protection.

Strength

Approximately 9,000 to 12,000 armed combatants and an unknown number of supporters, mostly in rural areas.

Location/Area of Operation

Colombia with some activities--extortion, kidnapping, logistics, and R&R--in Venezuela, Panama, and Ecuador.

External Aid

Cuba provides some medical care and political consultation.

[Back](#)

National Liberation Army (ELN)--Colombia

Description

Marxist insurgent group formed in 1965 by urban intellectuals inspired by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. Began a dialogue with Colombian officials in 1999 following a campaign of mass kidnappings--each involving at least one US citizen--to demonstrate its strength and continuing viability and to force the Pastrana administration to negotiate. Bogota and the ELN spent most of 2000 discussing where to establish an ELN safehaven in which to hold peace talks. A proposed location in north central Colombia faces stiff local and paramilitary opposition.

Activities

Kidnapping, hijacking, bombing, extortion, and guerrilla war. Modest conventional military capability. Annually conducts hundreds of kidnappings for ransom, often targeting foreign employees of large corporations, especially in the petroleum industry. Frequently assaults energy infrastructure and has inflicted major damage on pipelines and the electric distribution network.

Strength

Approximately 3,000 to 6,000 armed combatants and an unknown number of active supporters.

Location/Area of Operation

Mostly in rural and mountainous areas of north, northeast, and southwest Colombia and Venezuela border regions.

External Aid

Cuba provides some medical care and political consultation.

[Back](#)

Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA)

Description

Traditional Marxist-Leninist revolutionary movement formed in 1983 from remnants of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, a Peruvian insurgent group active in the 1960s. Aims to establish a Marxist regime and to rid Peru of all imperialist elements (primarily US and Japanese influence). Peru's counterterrorist program has diminished the group's ability to carry out terrorist attacks, and the MRTA has suffered from infighting, the imprisonment or deaths of senior leaders, and loss of leftist support. Several MRTA members also remain imprisoned in Bolivia.

Activities

Previously conducted bombings, kidnappings, ambushes, and assassinations, but recent activity has fallen drastically. In December 1996, 14 MRTA members occupied the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Lima and held 72 hostages for more than four months. Peruvian forces stormed the residence in April 1997, rescuing all but one of the remaining hostages and killing all 14 group members, including the remaining leaders. The group has not conducted a significant terrorist operation since and appears more focused on obtaining the release of imprisoned MRTA members.

Strength

Believed to be no more than 100 members, consisting largely of young fighters who lack leadership skills and experience.

Location/Area of Operation

Peru with supporters throughout Latin America and Western Europe. Controls no territory.

External Aid

None.

[Back](#)

Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) (observer status)

a.k.a. Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna

Description

Founded in 1959 with the aim of establishing an independent homeland based on Marxist principles in the northern Spanish provinces of Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa, Alava, and Navarra and the southwestern French departments of Labourd, Basse-Navarra, and Soule.

Activities

Primarily bombings and assassinations of Spanish Government officials, especially security and military forces, politicians, and judicial figures. ETA finances its activities through kidnappings, robberies, and extortion. The group has killed more than 800 persons since it began lethal attacks in the early 1960s. In November 1999, ETA broke its "unilateral and indefinite" cease-fire and began an assassination and bombing campaign that killed 23 individuals and wounded scores more by the end of 2000.

Strength

Unknown; may have hundreds of members, plus supporters.

Location/Area of Operation

Operates primarily in the Basque autonomous regions of northern Spain and southwestern France, but also has bombed Spanish and French interests elsewhere.

External Aid

Has received training at various times in the past in Libya, Lebanon, and Nicaragua. Some ETA members allegedly have received sanctuary in Cuba while others reside in South America. Also appears to have ties to the Irish Republican Army through the two groups' legal political wings.

[Back](#)

Source: U.S. State Department , *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2000*, [Appendix B: Background Information on Terrorist Groups](#)