United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

1 TOP SECRET//COMINT
DECL: 20340506

May 17, 2009

2 Dear General Alexander:

3 (TS//SI) On behalf of the Department of State, I would like to express my gratitude and congratulations for the outstanding signals intelligence support we received from the National Security Agency in the lead-up and aftermath of the Fifth Summit of the Americas (April 17-19). The Summit was a critical point of departure for U.S. Foreign Policy in our hemisphere: our new Administration was determined to build a productive, positive relationship with our neighbors, while our rivals in the region were equally determined to embarrass and discredit us. We succeeded and our rivals failed, and our success owes in good measure to the abundant, timely, and detailed reporting that you provided. The more than 100 reports we received from the NSA gave us deep insight into the plans and intentions of other Summit participants, and ensured that our diplomats were well prepared to advise President Obama and Secretary Clinton on how to deal with contentious issues, such as Cuba, and interact with difficult counterparts, such as Venezuelan President Chavez.

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(TS//SI) Our work is far from done --the Organization of American States General Assembly meeting next month will probably feature renewed discussion of Cuba, and such countries as Venezuela and Bolivia remain intent on challenging our interests in the short term—but I am confident that NSA reporting will continue to give us the edge that our diplomacy needs.

Sincerely,

5 Thomas A. Shannon, Jr.
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

TOP SECRET//COMINT
Classified by: John Dinger, INR A/S, Acting
REASON FOR CLASSIFICATION: E.O. 12958 1.4(c) and (d)
DECL ON: 20340506