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PLAN GUARIMBA: ORGANIZING THE PEOPLE FOR VIOLENCE

Venezuela's opposition movement has taken on a disturbing tone. Calls for decentralized protest violence have increased in recent months. A number of opposition leaders now espouse the so-called "Guarimba plan"--systematic acts of violent and disruptive civil disobedience designed to protest President Chavez, generate headlines and create fear among civil society. The plan's chief architect, a Cuban exile named Robert Alonso, is currently sought by Venezuelan authorities for housing more than 130 anti-government paramilitary forces on his farm outside Caracas. More information on Guarimba can be found at www.robotalonso.com.ve/GUARIMBA.htm. Statements by Alonso and other supporters of opposition violence give pause to anyone concerned with a peaceful solution in Venezuela:

- **“‘The Guarimba’ is the name given to a perfectly designed plan that is applied at the same time in all the major cities in Venezuela at the moment of RADICAL DEFENSE of the nation...The Guarimba is anarchical. Everyone does whatever they want, depending on their level of frustration. Once the city is completely shut down – fire everywhere, barricades, etc. – some more extreme groups may do worse things.”**

“If we want to preserve the nation as we know it, to opt for bettering it and converting it into a dignified Venezuela for our children and grandchildren, then we must go out into the streets and stand strong before history. We must RADICALLY APPLY THE GUARIMBA . . and not abandon it until will oust this terrible and unimaginable national nightmare which could extend beyond our borders.”

--From the Alonso website, <http://www.robotalonso.com.ve/No%20101%20LA%20GUARIMBA.htm>

- **When asked in an interview whether “...there are reasons to depose the President,” ex-finance Minister Manuel Rosendo agreed, stating, “I believe the National Armed Forces should take actions in that respect. The Armed Forces establish the position of the generals and admirals and I don’t think they will remain blind and deaf before the present situation.”**

--Interview from *El Universal*, Sunday, May 23, 2004

- **An Email sent by the opposition group Bloque Democratico on May 14, quotes a statement published in Venezuelan newspaper *El Universal* that day. "The regime needs to dismantle the opposition because the Venezuela people have realized that the CNE has been bought...The Venezuelan people have realized that the only way to get rid of the regime is through civil disobedience...We demand all civilians and military to not be afraid and to not fall for this perverse manipulation and to continue to organize to not recognize the authority of this regime and to declare ourselves in active disobedience, as per articles 333 and 350 of the Constitution.”**

--“*Bloque Democratico Insiste en la Desobediencia Civil*,” E-mail from Bloque Democratico, May 14, 2004

- **Daniel G. Cardozo M., Principal Editor of the *Frente Democratico* wrote, “IT IS TIME TO OVERTHROW THE TYRANT, IT IS TIME TO FIGHT THE REGIME, IT IS TIME FOR THE GUARIMBA AND THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.”**

--E-mail address to *Frente Democratico* listserv, May 11, 2004

The Venezuela Information Office is dedicated to informing the American public about contemporary Venezuela, and receives its funding from the government of Venezuela. Further information is available from the FARA office of the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.