greater had not local grower protests temporarily brought the program to a near halt in December.

In excess of 15,000 active criminal corruption investigations have been filed by the Attorney General against government officials, including 21 Colombian members of Congress. In 1994, there were no senior government officials indicted for corruption. Although Colombia and the United States in 1980 signed a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, Colombia has failed to ratify the treaty, and it has not entered into force. The Colombian Congress did not pass bills introduced by the Samper administration to counter money laundering activities and asset retention by illegal enterprises and those who participate in them. There was insufficient progress to detect and remove those corrupt officials primarily involved in counternarcotics efforts. There continues to be a problem with drug syndicate control of sovereign territory, such as San Andres Island.

The performance of two successive governments of Colombia during 1994 on the counternarcotics front did not meet the expectations agreed upon between our governments in numerous official and non-official meetings on the subject. Certain performance criteria were set out with the GOC in order to advance our joint commitments to this problem. Despite a national election and promises by the new government, Colombia did not meet these performance criteria nor did it take adequate steps on its own to achieve full compliance with the goals and objectives established by the 1988 UN Convention. As a result, the activities of the Colombian drug syndicates continue to ensure that the flow of cocaine, heroin and marijuana from Colombia to the United States remains undiminished.

There was a demonstrable absence of support by some quarters of the political establishment to buttress the gains achieved by GOC institutions operating at the ground level. There were no efforts made in the areas of judicial reform, capture and incarceration of syndicate heads, or the strengthening of executive institutions to counter the successful efforts of the trafficking syndicates. Lack of action by the Congress on GOC-introduced legislation also remains a problem.

Vital U.S. national interests would be at risk if we were to deny Columbia certification. As Colombia is the primary source of cocaine to the United States, continued cooperation with the GOC is very important to this country. A vital national interest certification will ensure that USG policy and assistance remain focused on developing more effective Colombian anti-drug efforts, while acknowledging that GOC actions to date have not had the desired impact on the flow of illegal narcotics to the United States. Further, such a certification allows the United States to continue working closely with Colombia on the other important issues on our bilateral agenda: promoting human rights, advancing free trade, and cooperating in international fora.

If Colombia were not certified, the USG would be required to vote against multilateral development lending. Termination of such assistance would have an adverse effect on the Colombian economy, reducing the resources available to the GOC to combat narcotics trafficking and fostering conditions in which more Colombians would be encouraged to engage in illicit coca cultivation and trafficking. Moreover, Colombia would find it more difficult to get international donors to help fund its projected alternative development scheme. Columbia's planned purchase of a U.S. radar system using Export-Import Bank financing would be cancelled, further reducing Colombia's interdiction capabilities.

While the GOC needs to do more in its efforts against drugs, the decrease in narcotics cooperation that would likely attend denial of certification would result in even more narcotics entering this country. Decertification would result in strident nationalistic calls on the GOC to cease its CN cooperation with the USG. In short, the risks associated with denying certification to Colombia are greater than the risks associated with Colombia's failure in the last year to cooperate fully with the United States, or to