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**February 14, 2006**

TO: Stephen J. Hadley

CC: The Honorable Dr Condoleezza Rice  
Vice President Richard B Cheney

FROM: Donald Rumsfeld

SUBJECT: El Salvador's Temporary Protected Status

I am concerned that "Temporary Protected Status" (TPS) has not yet been extended to El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. El Salvador has a parliamentary election on March 12. President Saca of El Salvador has been terrific in supporting us in Iraq, Haiti, the U.N., etc. There are serious problems in the hemisphere. Extending TPS a year is the right thing to do. If the hemisphere continues to deteriorate, the problems for DHS will be a lot worse than if we reject or delay TPS.

There may be as many as 250,000 El Salvadorans who will be affected by an extension. I've not gone back and checked the history, but I am told this would be the first major mass deportation of people out of the U.S. since 1831 when the Choctaw and Cherokee were sent out of U.S. Federal Territories.

The longer we wait, the less benefit an extension will have for the things that we are interested in supporting. Specifically, if we do not get this done soon, there will be a cloud over the legislative elections in El Salvador.

We need to have it finalized so that when President Saca comes to meet with the President on February 24 they can announce it.

If it looks like this will not be done, please let me know so that I have enough time to weigh in.



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021406-09



Certified as Unclassified  
January 9 2009  
IAW EO 12958, as amended  
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS

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