

News from
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**STATEMENT BY CHAIRMAN ELIOT ENGEL IN SUPPORT OF
THE US-COLOMBIA DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT
(DCA)**

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman Eliot L. Engel, the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, made the following statement regarding the provisional Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA) reached between the United States and Colombia:

“The recent announcement of a provisional Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA) between the United States and Colombia is just another example of the robust bilateral relationship between our two countries. I would like to thank President Uribe and the government of Colombia for proving once again that the United States has a true partner as we work to face common security challenges. In recent years, Colombia has made impressive strides. Kidnappings and homicides have markedly decreased, and terrorist groups in the country are being forced to play defense.

“The DCA will further strengthen our outstanding bilateral relationship with Colombia, and will facilitate even deeper bilateral cooperation on security matters in Colombia – from combating narcotics production and trafficking to fighting terrorism and illicit smuggling. As Chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, I am extremely pleased that we can continue to count on Colombia as a strategic partner and friend.

“In spite of reports to the contrary, this bilateral agreement only regularizes cooperation between the U.S. and Colombia. It envisions no permanent U.S. bases or increased military deployments. I would welcome the opportunity to extend U.S. cooperation with our other partners in South America and throughout the hemisphere to achieve our jointly held goals of reducing violence, improving security for citizens of the region, and increasing prosperity for all.”