

Nationwide Petition to Elected Officials to Support HR 1707 and Investigate WHINSEC
(The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation)

WHEREAS: The U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA) operated as a combat training school for Latin American soldiers and police. It has a long and well-documented history of graduating students who have then proceeded to use their acquired skills, like counterinsurgency and interrogation tactics, to wage a war against their own people. They have particularly targeted educators, union organizers, religious workers, student leaders, and the poor. These notorious ‘graduates’ include 11 former dictators.

AND WHEREAS: Attempts to give the SOA a public relations face-lift in 2000 by changing its name to the Western Hemispheric Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) were, as the late Senator and SOA supporter Paul Coverdale of Georgia said, “basically cosmetic” changes to the school that did not address the serious humanitarian concerns.

AND WHEREAS: Amnesty International also refutes the claim that WHINSEC is a new institution, stating that it "is essentially the same school as SOA, with the same primary mission..."

AND WHEREAS: Amnesty International, in its 2002 report “Unmatched Power, Unmet Principles“, called for an independent commission of inquiry to investigate the SOA/ WHINSEC, a suspension of training at the institution, and appropriate reparations for violations of human rights.

AND WHEREAS: One hundred and thirty five Members of the 109th Congress called for a repeal of WHINSEC’s statutory authority and a joint congressional task force to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of all Defense Department training in Latin America and one hundred and eighty eight Members of the House voted to cut funding for WHINSEC:

We, the undersigned, hereby petition our elected representatives to take immediate action towards:
A) stopping training at WHINSEC, B) initiating an independent investigation into the past and present education and training the Defense Department provides to Latin American personnel, and
C) COSPONSORING HR 1707, legislation that would suspend operations at the SOA/ WHINSEC

PRINT NAME

CITY/STATE

SIGNATURE

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Once completed, please send a copy to SOA Watch: PO Box 4566, Washington, DC 20017. (t) 202-234-3440. (f) 202-636-4505