NEW COMMISSION WILL LIKELY OVERSEE NARCISO PROBE

CONFIDENTIAL
The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights requested that the Dominican government appoint three members to a six-member oversight commission. The new body, to include three members of the non-governmental Truth Commission, would provide guidance to the investigating judge examining the 1994 disappearance of University Professor Narciso Gonzalez. Dominican government representatives have asked for thirty days to decide whether to agree to participate on the proposed commission. Truth Commission President Tomas Castro told us this week he had hoped for a larger oversight body, but he expects the new commission to play a proactive role.

MOVEMENT ON WASHINGTON PROTOCOL AND OTHER TREATIES?

2. (SBU) Dominican Daily of Record Listin Diario gave front page coverage to the National Congress’s failure to ratify a number of international agreements signed over the years by the Dominican executive. Signed but unratified agreements include the Washington Protocol, the Managua Protocol, the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, the Law of the Sea, and the Convention on Missing Persons, among others. The article did not mention the executive’s failure -- over a period of decades -- to refer most of these agreements to Congress after signing them. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights brought the issue to public attention when it asked the Dominican government to ratify the Convention on Missing Persons. The public confidential

LABOR SECRETARY OPPOSES PROPOSED SALARY LAW

3. (U) Labor Secretary Rafael Alburquerque publicly disparaged draft legislation now in the Chamber of Deputies that would create a mechanism to provide annual...
AUTOMATIC SALARY INCREASES FOR PRIVATE SECTOR WORKERS.
ALBUQUERQUE BLASTED THE PROPOSED LAW AS UNCONSTITUTIONAL
AND AS PROMOTING A POLICY ALREADY DISCARDED BY SEVERAL
SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES. PRESENTLY, THE NATIONAL
SALARIES COMMITTEE, COMPOSED OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY
REPRESENTATIVES, DECIDES ON MINIMUM WAGE INCREASES.
VARIOUS LEGISLATORS TELL US THAT THEY WILL LIKELY PASS AN
AUTOMATIC MECHANISM TO INCREASE ONLY MINIMUM WAGE
SALARIES DESPITE FERNANDEZ ADMINISTRATION OBJECTIONS.

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CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM
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4. (U) DOMINICAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PRD) LEADER JOSE
FRANCISCO PENA GOMEZ HAS NAMED A PARTY COMMISSION TO
STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING ELECTIONS FOR A
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND REFORMING THE DOMINICAN
CONSTITUTION. COMMISSION MEMBERS WILL INCLUDE HUGO
TOLENTINO DIPP, MILTON RAY GUEVARA, AND TWO UNNAMED PRD
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. TOLENTINO DIPP IS ACTING PRD
PRESIDENT AND RAY GUEVARA IS COORDINATOR GENERAL OF THE
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PARTY'S "GROWTH COMMAND," A TITLE WHICH RINGS A LITTLE
LESS ODD IN THE EAR WHEN RENDERED IN SPANISH. PENA GOMEZ
FORMED THE COMMISSION IN RESPONSE TO AN OFFER TO DISCUSS
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM MADE BY FORMER PRESIDENT JOAQUIN
BALAGUER, LEADER OF THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN REFORM PARTY
(PRSC). THE PRSC HAS NOT YET NAMED ITS CONTERPARTS TO
THE PRD COMMISSION. PRESIDENT LEONEL FERNANDEZ REYNA HAS
SAID PUBLICLY THAT BOTH HIS ADMINISTRATION AND HIS
DOMINICAN LIBERATION PARTY (PLD) ARE STUDYING THE IDEA OF
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

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ELECTION LAW CONTROVERSY
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5. (U) CENTRAL ELECTORAL BOARD (JCE) PRESIDENT JUAN
SULLY BONNELLY BLASTED THE DRAFT OF THE ELECTORAL REFORM
BILL THAT PASSED ITS FIRST READING IN THE DOMINICAN
SENATE OCTOBER 14 AS A STRAIGHT-JACKET SURE TO UNDERMINE
THE JCE'S EFFECTIVENESS. HE STRONGLY CRITICIZED
PROPOSALS TO INCLUDE POLITICAL PARTY DELEGATES IN THE JCE'S DAY-TO-DAY ADMINISTRATION, SAYING SUCH DELEGATES WOULD DRAG EVEN TECHNICAL ISSUES INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA. HIS COMMENTS WRUNG FROM ALL THREE OF THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN CONGRESS PROMISES TO CONSIDER REVISIONS TO THE SENATE DRAFT'S MOST OBJECTIONABLE CLAUSES.
FRENCHMEN ACCUSE FORMER DRUG COP OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

6. (C) TWO FRENCH CITIZENS HAVE ACCUSED THE FORMER CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL DIRECTORY OF DRUG CONTROL (DNCD), CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

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AIR FORCE MAJOR GENERAL JUAN FOLCH HUBIERAL, OF VIOLATING THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS WHILE HE OVERSAW THEIR FIFTEEN-DAY LONG DETENTION AND INTERROGATION FOR ALLEGED DRUG TRAFFICKING, DOMINICAN MEDIA HAVE REPORTED. FRENCH EMBASSY COUNSELLOR ERIC LAVERTU TOLD US THE DNCD EVENTUALLY RELEASED THE FRENCHMEN, THAT THEY DO NOT ALLEGE ANY FORM OF TORTURE, AND THAT DOMINICAN AUTHORITIES WILL NOT FILE CHARGES AGAINST THEM. LAVERTU SAID HE HAD SOUGHT TO KEEP THE MATTER OUT OF THE PRESS, BUT -- HE BELIEVES -- THE PROSECUTOR’S OFFICE LEAKED THE STORY AS PART OF AN ONGOING CAMPAIGN TO EMBARRASS THE DNCD AND FOLCH. DOMINICAN NEWSWEEKLY RUMBO HAS ALLEGED THAT FOLCH SOUGHT TO SEIZE THE BEACH HOUSE OF ONE OF THE FRENCHMEN IN PALMAR DE OCOA.

BEST WISHES


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