

DECONTROLLED/UNCLASSIFIED  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

RELEASED IN FULL

PAGE 01 SANTO 08975 01 OF 02 202043Z  
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	AID-01	AMAD-01	CIAE-00	OASY-00	DODE-00	EB-01
	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-16	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00
	M-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-00
	PRS-01	P-01	SNP-00	SP-00	SR-00	SS-00	STR-01
	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	PRME-01	DRL-09	G-00

/040W

-----7F7134 202247Z /38

R 202043Z OCT 94  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1330

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 SANTO DOMINGO 008975

E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, DR  
SUBJECT: DOMINICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE: UPDATE ON PRACTICES

1. LOU -ENTIRE TEXT.

SUMMARY

2. IN A TOUR D'HORIZON ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, DOMINICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE PRESIDENT VIRGILIO ALMANZAR NOTED RECENT EXAMPLES OF AREAS OF CONCERN, AMONG THEM:

--SELF-CENSORSHIP BY THE MEDIA,  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 SANTO 08975 01 OF 02 202043Z

--INDISCRIMINATE DETENTIONS IN POLICE ROUNDUPS,

--DISREGARD FOR JUDICIAL PROCEDURES,

--THE MAY DISAPPEARANCE OF NARCISO GONZALEZ.

ALMANZAR, WHO ALONG WITH FELLOW COMMITTEE MEMBER MARCELINO DE LA CRUZ MET WITH POLOFF OCTOBER 13, ALSO RECOUNTED A JULY INCIDENT DURING WHICH HE RECEIVED DEATH THREATS FROM THE SECOND IN COMMAND

OF SANTO DOMINGO'S LA VICTORIA PRISON. ALMANZAR SAID HE HAS FILED CHARGES AGAINST THE POLICE OFFICIAL IN POLICE COURT. END SUMMARY.

-----  
 MEDIA "SELF-CENSORSHIP"  
 -----

3. IN AN INTRODUCTORY MEETING WITH POLOFF OCTOBER 13, DOMINICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE (DHRC) PRESIDENT VIRGILIO ALMANZAR LAMENTED THE STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. TO ILLUSTRATE, HE USED THE EXAMPLE OF THE RECENT SERIES OF WHAT HE CALLED INDISCRIMINATE AND INEFFECTIVE POLICE ROUNDUPS OF ALLEGED CRIMINALS AROUND THE COUNTRY. HE SAID THE DHRC HAD CALLED A PRESS CONFERENCE TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE SUBJECT EARLIER IN THE WEEK. THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS WELL-ATTENDED, ALMANZAR SAID, WITH MORE THAN A DOZEN REPRESENTATIVES OF NEWS ORGANIZATIONS PRESENT. WHEN NOTHING APPEARED IN THE PRINT MEDIA OR ON TELEVISION ABOUT THE EVENT, THE DHRC PRESIDENT SAID, HE CALLED SOME JOURNALISTS WHO COLLABORATE WITH THE GROUP, AND WHO HAD BEEN PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, TO INQUIRE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED. THE JOURNALISTS TOLD HIM THE WORD HAD COME DOWN FROM THEIR SUPERIORS NOT TO BOTHER WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03            SANTO 08975 01 OF 02 202043Z  
 THE STORY.

-----  
 INDISCRIMINATE DETENTIONS  
 -----

4. IN THE PERIODIC POLICE ROUNDUPS, DOMINICAN AUTHORITIES BRING INTO CUSTODY SOMETIMES HUNDREDS OF PERSONS FROM A PARTICULAR NEIGHBORHOOD OR AREA. THE AUTHORITIES THEN CHECK NAMES AGAINST POLICE INVESTIGATION RECORDS. HOW LONG AN INNOCENT PERSON IS HELD BEFORE BEING RELEASED, DEPENDS ON HOW QUICKLY THE NAMECHECKS ARE DONE. ALMANZAR SAID THE ROUNDUPS ARE, AT BEST, INEFFICIENT POLICE ACTIVITY AND WITHOUT A DOUBT AN OBJECTIONABLE HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICE. HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE PRACTICE WAS INDICATIVE OF THE SHORTCOMINGS IN THE DOMINICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM. ALMANZAR SAID THE DHRC, IN THE HOPES OF FOCUSING POLICE EFFORTS MORE ON THE INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS TO SOLVE CRIMES, HAD COMPILED A LIST OF SOME TWO DOZEN OPEN CRIMINAL CASES UPON WHICH THE RECENT ROUNDUPS HAD HAD NO EFFECT. IT WAS THIS LIST THAT THE GROUP SOUGHT TO MAKE PUBLIC AT ITS PRESS CONFERENCE.

-----  
 DISREGARD FOR JUDICIAL PROCEDURES

-----DECONTROLLED/UNCLASSIFIED

5. ANOTHER SHORTCOMING IN THE DOMINICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM, ALMANZAR COMMENTED, IS THE LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS IMPRISONED WITHOUT CHARGES AND THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO BE DETAINED DESPITE ORDERS FOR THEIR RELEASE. HE LAMENTED HOW THIS ISSUE HAD GOTTEN MIXED UP WITH THE DRUG TRAFFICKING ISSUE. WHILE DRUG TRAFFICKERS ARE ONLY ONE GROUP OF PERSONS AFFECTED BY THIS FAILING, HE SAID, THEY HAVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04           SANTO 08975 01 OF 02 202043Z  
FOCUSED RESOURCES ON THE ISSUE THROUGH THEIR LAWYERS' INVOLVEMENT WITH LOCAL GROUPS THAT ARE BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS ATTENTION TO THE MATTER. THIS DRUG CONNECTION MAKES MORE DIFFICULT EFFORTS TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS WHICH COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF REFORMS.

-----  
THE DISAPPEARANCE OF NARCISO GONZALEZ  
-----

6. ALMANZAR WAS ALSO CRITICAL OF THE POLICE INVESTIGATION OF THE DISAPPEARANCE OF NARCISO GONZALEZ, THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO DOMINGO PROFESSOR WHO WAS LAST SEEN MAY 26. THE DHRC PRESIDENT COMMENTED THAT IF THE CHIEF OF POLICE REALLY WANTED TO SOLVE THE CASE, HE WOULD HAVE APPOINTED A HIGH-RANKING OFFICER TO HEAD THE INVESTIGATION. ASKED ABOUT THE THREE POLICE COLONELS OVERSEEING THE CASE, ALMANZAR SAID THEY WERE FIGUREHEADS AND THAT THE DAY TO DAY WORK ON THE CASE IS HANDLED BY AN OFFICER WITH THE RANK OF MAJOR. ALMANZAR ALLUDED THAT THE POLICE HAD NOT FULLY PURSUED ALL THE LEADS ON THE CASE BECAUSE THEY COULD RESULT IN HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS BEING IMPLICATED. HE DID NOT ELABORATE THE POINT, ADDING ONLY THAT HE SUSPECTED MILITARY INTELLIGENCE TO BE INVOLVED.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNNN

DECONTROLLED/UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 SANTO 08975 02 OF 02 202043Z  
ACTION ARA-01

INFO LOG-00 AID-01 AMAD-01 CIAE-00 OASY-00 DODE-00 EB-01  
H-01 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-16 LAB-01 L-01 ADS-00  
M-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-00  
PRS-01 P-01 SNP-00 SP-00 SR-00 SS-00 STR-01  
TRSE-00 T-00 USIE-00 PMB-00 PRME-01 DRL-09 G-00  
/040W

-----7F7138 202248Z /38

R 202043Z OCT 94  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1331

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 SANTO DOMINGO 008975

E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, DR  
SUBJECT: DOMINICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE: UPDATE ON PRACTICES

7. ALMANZAR SAID HE HAD JOINED WITH NEARLY A DOZEN OTHER PERSONS TO FORM A "TRUTH COMMITTEE" TO WORK ON THE GONZALEZ CASE. THE COMMITTEE IS CHAIRED BY THE VICERECTORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO DOMINGO AND THE SANTO DOMINGO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY. ACCORDING TO ALMANZAR, AND LATER REITERATED IN AN ARTICLE IN THE AFTERNOON TABLOID "EL NACIONAL", THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE BELIEVE THE DOMINICAN AUTHORITIES HAVE NOT PROVIDED A "SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION" OF WHAT MAY HAVE HAPPENED TO GONZALEZ. THE COMMITTEE'S STATED OBJECTIVE IS TO ASSURE "THE PUNISHMENT OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 SANTO 08975 02 OF 02 202043Z  
GUILTY PARTIES."

-----  
FACE-TO-FACE DEATH THREATS  
-----

8. THE DHCR PRESIDENT RECOUNTED HOW DURING A VISIT TO SANTO DOMINGO'S LA VICTORIA PRISON IN JULY, HE AND A COLLEAGUE RECEIVED DEATH THREATS FROM THE PRISON'S DEPUTY COMMANDER, A COLONEL WITH A REPUTATION FOR BRUTALITY. THE OFFICER, ALMANZAR SAID, HAD BEEN

DECONTROLLED/UNCLASSIFIED

REINSTATED EARLIER IN THE YEAR AFTER BEING SUSPENDED FOR TORTURING PRISONERS. THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS TO INTERVIEW PRISONERS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN BEATEN BY THE OFFICER WITH A STRIP OF RUBBER FROM A TRUCK TIRE WHEREBY THE TREADS CAUSE ESPECIALLY PAINFUL LESIONS. FORCED TO WAIT NEARLY TWO HOURS IN THE MIDDAY SUN, THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS MET WITH PRISONERS FOR LESS THAN TEN MINUTES BEFORE THE OFFICER TERMINATED THE VISIT. HE ORDERED ALMANZAR AND HIS COLLEAGUES TO LINE UP TO LEAVE. AFTER AN HOUR AND FORTY-FIVE MINUTES AGAIN WAITING IN THE OPEN SUN, THE OFFICER VERBALLY ASSAULTED THEM AND PRONOUNCED HIS THREATS OF FATAL HARM. ALMANZAR SAID HE HAS FILED A COMPLAINT AGAINST THE OFFICER IN POLICE COURT AND WITH THE CHIEF OF POLICE.

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

9. A PROFESSOR AND A LAWYER, ALMANZAR IS THE MOST RECENT PRESIDENT OF THE TWELVE-YEAR-OLD DHRC. HE IS INTENT ON KEEPING THE ORGANIZATION ACTIVE AND FOCUSED ON THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS. HE IS KNOWLEDGEABLE AND READILY CONVERSANT ON THE  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03           SANTO 08975 02 OF 02 202043Z  
RANGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES DISCUSSED IN THIS MEETING IN BOTH A  
DOMINICAN AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT.  
HRINAK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNNN

DECONTROLLED/UNCLASSIFIED