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30 September 2003

DOM42023.FE

Dominican Republic: Whether a well-known member of the Morado Party (Partido de la Liberacion Dominicana, PLD) was killed by a bodyguard of President Hipolito Mejia when demonstrators surrounded and attacked a procession that included the president's vehicle, and whether security forces dispersed the demonstrators (December 2001)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

No information on the above-mentioned subject could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints for this Response. However, some sources reported an incident that occurred on 11 December 2001 and that resulted in the death of Dario Gomez, a senator of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Dominicano, PRD) (*Weekly News Update on the Americas* 16 Dec. 2001; *Latin American Regional Reports: Caribbean & Central America Report* 15 Jan. 2002; *Listin Diario* 14 Dec. 2002).

According to a report in *Weekly News Update on the Americas*, Gomez and his bodyguard were shot and wounded while attending a family celebration at a residence in eastern Santo Domingo (16 Dec. 2001). Gomez died early on 14 December from his injuries (*Weekly News Update on the Americas* 16 Dec. 2001). Drug traffickers are believed to be behind the killing, which took place the day the Senate approved a new law establishing stiff sentences for drug money laundering (ibid.).

A 15 January 2002 article in *Latin American Regional Reports: Caribbean & Central America Report* stated that a group of gunmen entered the home of Senator Gomez and shot him dead. This source also indicated

that the police arrested five suspects on 14 December 2001 and that there was speculation that the killing was related to a vendetta by drug traffickers or was politically motivated (*Latin American Regional Reports: Caribbean & Central America Report* 15 Jan. 2002).

A 14 December 2002 article in *Listin Diario* stated that, a year after Dario Gomez's murder, his sister, Senator Celeste Gomez, asked Congress to take action in order to fully explain her brother's death. Celeste Gomez also demanded that the state security forces publish a report on the results of their investigation, and deplored the fact that the crime "remained unpunished" (*queda impune*) (*Listin Diario* 14 Dec. 2002).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Latin American Regional Reports: Caribbean & Central America Report [London]. 15 January 2002. "Dominican Republic / Assassination." Latin American Newsletters.

Listin Diario [Santo Domingo]. 14 December 2002. Manuel Azcona. "Congreso recuerda hoy al senador Dario Gomez." <<http://www.listin.com.do/antes/141202/cuerpos/republica/rep21.htm>> [Accessed 29 Sept. 2003]

Weekly News Update on the Americas [New York]. 16 December 2001. "Dominican Republic: Senator Killed." (NEXIS)

Additional Sources Consulted

Europa World Year Book 2002

IRB Databases

Latinamerica Press [Lima]

Political Parties of the World 2002

World News Connection/Dialog

Internet sites, including:

Ahora [Santo Domingo]

Amnesty International

Cadena de Noticias [Santo Domingo]

El Caribe [Santo Domingo]

Centro de Documentación y Comunicación del Caribe (CEDOC)

Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH)

Country Reports 2002

Enelpunto.net

Freedom House

Human Rights Watch

Instituto de Derechos Humanos de Santo Domingo (IDHSD)

Participación Ciudadana

Political Database of the Americas

La Prensa [Panama City]

Russin, Vecchi & Heredia Bonetti (RVHB) Newsletter

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