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Case Number: S199900030

Chile Project (#S199900030)

U.S. Department of State

Release Excise _____ Deny _____

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Exemption(s) _____

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ACTION OCS-06

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6819

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E.O.: 12356:OADR

TAGS: CASC, CI, PHUM (ROJAS DENEGRI, RODRIGO)

SUBJ: W/W: CASE OF RODRIGO ROJAS DENEGRI

FOR ARA/SC JIM SWIGERT AT OPENING OF BUSINESS
SUMMARY

1. BURN VICTIM RODRIGO ROJAS DENEGRI DIED SUNDAY, JULY 6, AT 3:50 P.M. AT THE POSTA CENTRAL IN SANTIAGO. THE SEVERE BURNS THAT HE SUFFERED ON JULY 2 WERE THE CAUSE OF HIS DEATH. ACCORDING TO EYE WITNESSES, ROJAS AND ANOTHER VICTIM WERE DELIBERATELY SET AFIRE BY ARMY SOLDIERS, WHILE DOCTORS AT THE POSTA CENTRAL CLAIM THE POSTA'S DIRECTOR OBSTRUCTED ROJAS' TRANSFER TO A CLINIC THAT WAS BETTER EQUIPPED TO TREAT HIM. U.S. DOCTOR JOHN CONSTABLE INTENDS TO ACCUSE THE CHILEAN MILITARY OF KILLING ROJAS. EMBASSY HAS ATTEMPTED TO ASSIST ROJAS, HIS MOTHER AND THE OTHER VICTIM, AND AMBASSADOR OR SENIOR EMBOFF INTEND TO BE PRESENT AT FUNERAL. END SUMMARY.

2. HIS MOTHER, VERONICA DENEGRI, ARRIVED IN SANTIAGO ON JULY 4, HAVING RECEIVED SPECIAL PERMISSION TO ENTER CHILE BY THE GOC BECAUSE SHE IS STILL ON THE GOVERNMENT'S LIST OF EXILES WHO ARE NOT ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THE COUNTRY. THE EMBASSY HAD INTERCEDED ON MS. DENEGRI'S BEHALF.

3. THE MOST DIRECT INFORMATION THAT WE HAVE CONCERNING

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HOW RODRIGO ROJAS AND CARMEN GLORIA QUINTANA WERE INJURED AND SUBSEQUENT EVENTS ARISES FROM TWO SOURCES: 1) ROJAS' AUNT, AMANDA DENEGRI, WITH WHOM HE HAD BEEN STAYING DURING HIS VISIT TO SANTIAGO. SHE IS A LAWYER WHO SAYS SHE HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH TWO EYE WITNESSES WHO ARE WILLING TO TESTIFY, BUT WHO WILL NOT DO SO UNTIL THE JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES HAVE APPOINTED A SPECIAL INVESTIGATING JUDGE TO INVESTIGATE THE CASE. 2) DOCTORS AT SANTIAGO'S PUBLIC EMERGENCY HOSPITAL, THE "POSTA CENTRAL," WHO ATTENDED THE TWO VICTIMS. THE DOCTORS, WHO RECEIVED INFORMATION FROM ROJAS AND QUINTANA, DISCUSSED THE CASE WITH EMBOFF AND DR. JOHN CONSTABLE, A MEMBER OF THE GROUP CALLED PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. CONSTABLE IS WITH THE BURN UNIT AT MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL IN BOSTON. ROJAS AND QUINTANA RELATED INDEPENDENTLY THE SAME ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THEM.

4. ROJAS AND QUINTANA TOLD

THE POSTA CENTRAL DOCTORS THE FOLLOWING: ROJAS HAD ACCOMPANIED A GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTIAGO ON JULY 2 TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THEM WORKING AT THEIR VOLUNTEER PROJECTS IN A POBLACION. HE WAS AN AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER, NOT A PROFESSIONAL. (COMMENT: A VISIT TO SEE A "VOLUNTEER PROJECT" IN A POBLACION ON A DAY SLUM RIOTS CAN BE ANTICIPATED STRETCHES CREDIBILITY. WHILE ROJAS' PURPOSE MAY BE MISREPRESENTED, WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THE REST OF THE STORY. END COMMENT). WHILE HE WAS TAKING PICTURES, SOME CIVILIANS (POSSIBLY VIGILANTES) APPEARED AND STARTED SHOOTING AT THE STUDENTS. ROJAS FLED ALONG WITH THE STUDENTS, INCLUDING QUINTANA. QUINTANA STUMBLED AND FELL, AND ROJAS STOPPED AND RETURNED TO HELP HER. AT THAT MOMENT, MED SOLDIERS

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SURROUNDED THEM AND BEGAN TO BEAT THEM. IT IS REPORTED THAT THE BEATING WAS SEVERE AND THAT ROJAS ATTEMPTED TO SHIELD UINTANA. THE SOLDIERS THEN SPRAYED THEM WITH A FLAMMABLE SUBSTANCE AND SET THEM ON FIRE. (COMMENT: IT IS NOT CLEAR WHERE THE FLAMMABLE SUBSTANCE CAME FROM. IT MAY HAVE BEEN A MOLOTOV COCKTAIL PICKED UP AT A DEMONSTRATION. END COMMENT). (THE DOCTORS

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SAID THAT THE TWO WERE SUFFERING AS WELL FROM CHEMICAL BURNS). THE SOLDIERS THEN WRAPPED BLANKETS AROUND THEM, THREW THEM INTO A MILITARY VEHICLE, DROVE THEM TO THE TOWN OF QUILICURA, JUST NORTH OF SANTIAGO, WHERE THEY THREW THEM OUT OF THE VEHICLE INTO A DITCH. THEY WERE SIGHTED BY A PASSERBY WHO WENT TO THE MAYORESS OF QUILICURA, AND SENT THE POLICE TO PICK THEM UP AND TRANSPORT THEM TO THE POSTA CENTRAL.

5. THE DOCTORS AT THE POSTA CENTRAL PASSED ALL OF THIS INFORMATION TO DR. CONSTABLE WHO FLEW TO SANTIAGO ON SUNDAY, JULY 6, TO VISIT THE BURN VICTIM AND BRING MEDICAL SUPPLIES. (NOTE: DR. CONSTABLE'S LAN CHILE FLIGHT, SCHEDULED TO DEPART SANTIAGO SUNDAY AT 11:30 P.M., WAS CANCELED DUE TO SEVERE GROUND FOG. HE DID NOT LEAVE UNTIL 1:00 P.M. MONDAY, JULY 7. UPON ARRIVING IN BOSTON, DR. CONSTABLE WILL HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE. HE PLANS TO NAME THE MILITARY AS THE PERPETRATORS OF THIS ACT.)

6. DR. CONSTABLE TOLD EMBOTTS THAT, IN HIS OPINION, ROJAS HAD SUFFERED BURNS OF SUCH SEVERITY THAT IT WAS PROBABLE THAT HE WOULD NOT HAVE RECOVERED. HOWEVER, HE DESCRIBED THE TREATMENT FACILITIES AT THE POSTA

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ACTION ARA-00

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 H-01 SSO-00 HA-09 L-03
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O 080453Z JUL 86 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6820

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E.O.: 12356:OADR
TAGS: CASC, CI, PHUM (ROJAS DENEGRI, RODRIGO)
SUBJ: W/W: CASE OF RODRIGO ROJAS DENEGRI

CENTRAL AS INADEQUATE AND THE MEDICAL CARE GIVEN TO ROJAS AS ARCHAIC AND INSUFFICIENT. DR. CONSTABLE PURPOSELY DID NOT CONVEY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO ROJAS' MOTHER, BUT HE INFORMED EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT IN AN ATTEMPT TO ASPIRATE FLUID THAT HAD ACCUMULATED IN ONE LUNG, THE DOCTORS CAUSED THE LUNG TO COLLAPSE. MOREOVER, THEY FAILED TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO ISOLATE HIM FROM OTHER PATIENTS AND THUS, SOURCES OF INFECTION.

7. ROJAS WAS NOT TRANSFERRED TO THE BURN PAVILLION AT THE HOSPITAL DE TRABAJADORES BECAUSE THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF THE POSTA CENTRAL, DR. GUZMAN, WROTE A NOTE ON THE MEDICAL CHART INDICATING THAT THERE WERE TO BE NO VISITORS BECAUSE OF THE "LEGAL" PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN HIS AND QUINTANA'S CASE, AND THAT HE WAS NOT TO BE TRANSFERRED. DR. GUZMAN'S ACTION PREVENTED ANY LEGAL DEPOSITIONS FROM BEING TAKEN. OTHER DOCTORS ON THE STAFF OF THE POSTA CENTRAL CONFIRMED THE EXISTENCE OF THIS NOTE. DR. GUZMAN, HOWEVER, HAS PUBLICLY DENIED THAT HE PROHIBITED THE TRANSFER OF ROJAS. HE CLAIMED THAT HE HAD ADVISED ROJAS' MOTHER AND AUNT THAT A TRANSFER WOULD BE DANGEROUS AS ROJAS NEEDED ACCESS TO AN ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATOR. HE ALSO DENIED THAT THE

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HOSPITAL LACKED NECESSARY MEDICINE.

8. THROUGH DR. JORGE VILLEGAS, HEAD OF THE BURN PAVILLION AT THE HOSPITAL DE TRABAJADORES, WE HAVE

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CONFIRMED THAT CARMEN GLORIA QUINTANA WAS TRANSFERRED TO THAT HOSPITAL FROM THE POSTA CENTRAL AT 11:00 P.M., SUNDAY, JULY 6. THE HOSPITAL INFORMED THE EMBASSY THAT AS OF 10:00 A.M. MONDAY MORNING, SHE REMAINED IN CRITICAL CONDITION AND WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY BREATHING. SIXTY-TWO PERCENT OF HER BODY WAS BURNED.

9. THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR REQUESTED THE APPEALS COURT TO DESIGNATE A MINISTRO EN VISITA (VISITING MAGISTRATE) TO INVESTIGATE THE CASE. THE COURT WAS TO MEET LATE MONDAY, JULY 7, TO DECIDE WHO WILL BE APPOINTED.

10. WITH REGARD TO THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE BURNING OF THE TWO PEOPLE, A SENIOR GOC OFFICIAL IN A POSITION TO KNOW GAVE EMBOFF SOME DETAILS ON JULY 3. THE OFFICIAL SAID THAT CARABINEROS INTERVIEWED THE BURN VICTIMS THE NIGHT OF JULY 2 AND THEY ACCUSED ARMY TROOPS OF DELIBERATELY BURNING THEM.

(PROTECT SOURCE)

11. EMBOFF ATTENDED WAKE JULY 7 AND SPOKE AT LENGTH WITH ROJAS' THER AND PERSONNEL OF CHILEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (CHRC). THE CHRC HAS COLLECTED NUMEROUS SIGNED STATEMENTS FROM EYE WITNESSES REGARDING THE DETAILS OF THE BURNINGS. FUNERAL WILL BE HELD ON JULY 9 AND EITHER AMBASSADOR OR SENIOR EMBOFF WILL ACCOMPANY ROJAS' MOTHER. BARNES

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