

RELEASE IN PART
B6

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2012 1:25 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: Honduras - NYTimes story

From: asw18 [mailto:]
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2012 12:11 PM
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Subject: Honduras - NYTimes story

B6

Dear Cheryl:

Greetings in the new year, and hope you are well. I just returned from leading the US Delegation to the Inauguration of President Perez in Guatemala over the weekend, and in the course of this trip had a chance to see first hand our operations in one of our largest programs in Central America.

We have been carefully monitoring the safety and security situation in Honduras (and also in the other countries in the northern triangle of CA--El Salvador and Guatemala), and completed a preliminary review of the situation in the northern triangle in December. We had closely monitored the security situation in CA through out 2011.

We are very concerned about the increased and random crime incidents in Honduras that often affect PCVs. In late 2011, a PCV in Honduras was shot in the leg during a bus hijacking/robbery, she was not targeted, but was caught in the cross-fire between the robbers and passengers. Fortunately she survived the gunshot wound, is doing very well, and is now back in the US on medevac. However, these type of random incidents are increasing in that country, and especially on public transportation.

In order to ensure the safety and security of all Volunteers, I decided after much thought and consultation to cancel the arrival of the Feb 2012 group of new trainees, and to temporarily pause our program in Honduras. we announced this on December 20th. We have not closed the program in Honduras, but we decided that the best course of action was to remove PCVs from the country (note: the PCVs are now on administrative leave for 1 month) to ensure their safety while we complete additional safety & security review of existing policies and procedures, and put in place the additional actions that need to be implemented if we are to maintain operations in Honduras in the future.

These actions will require careful planning and execution, in addition to significant amounts of time from our staff in Honduras and Washington. Prior to potentially re-starting operations, our regional and headquarters-based safety and security staff will conduct a new assessment of the security environment, in coordination with Ambassador Kubiske and the Embassy's RSO to ensure that we can operate safely in Honduras. The goal is to determine the possible number of Volunteers and consolidated geographic areas can we safely place PCVs.

Let's talk when you return from your travel, I have a couple of other topics that I would like to discuss with you.

regards,

Aaron

From: Mills, Cheryl D [mailto:MillsCD@state.gov]
Sent: Tue 1/17/2012 12:58 AM
To: Williams, Aaron; asw18
Subject: Fw: 158 Peace Corps volunteers leave Honduras (AP)

Dear Aaron

I hope your new year is treating you well.

Is there anymore background you can share re this?

Thanks
Cdm

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2012 07:38 PM
To: NEWS-Mahogany
Subject: 158 Peace Corps volunteers leave Honduras (AP)

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras - (AP) The entire Peace Corps delegation in Honduras has left the country weeks after the United States decided to pull them out of for safety reasons.

U.S. Embassy spokeswoman Ledy Pacheco says 158 volunteers have left the Central American country notorious for the world's highest homicide rate.

Honduras President Porfirio Lobo said Monday that the group was affected by rising crime, but he and the U.S. haven't specified attacks.

The Peace Corps had operated in Honduras since 1963.

In December, Peace Corps announced it was bringing home volunteers from Honduras and suspending training for new volunteers in El Salvador and Guatemala. The region is plagued by drug gang violence.

Volunteers remain in the other two countries.

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