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ZNR UUUUU ZOC STATE ZZH

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RR RUEHC

HEADER

R 071752Z SEP 10

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE

RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC

RHMFIUU/CDR USNORTHCOM PETERSON AFB CO

RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC

RHMFIUU/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

BT

CONTROLS

UNCLAS MEXICO 004278

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****

BODY

E.O. 13526: N/A

TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, MX

SUBJECT: OAS/UN TEAM ON PRESS FREEDOM: **MEXICO** VISIT A MISSED OPPORTUNITY FOR CALDERONREF: 10 **MEXICO** 3864; 10 **MEXICO** 453

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: A TWO-WEEK UN/OAS FACT-FINDING MISSION ON THE SITUATION OF **VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS IN MEXICO CONCLUDED ON AUGUST 24 WITH A PRESS CONFERENCE AND REPORT OF INITIAL FINDINGS. THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS CRITICIZED VIOLENCE, IMPUNITY AND SELF-CENSORSHIP AFFECTING MEXICAN MEDIA**

1.4(B)
1.4(D)
B1

END SUMMARY.

"A MISSED OPPORTUNITY"

Classified by DAS, A/GIS, DoS on : 11/15/2013 ~ Class:
CONFIDENTIAL ~ Reason: ☐ B1(b&d) ~ Declassify on:
09/06/2025

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Adolph Eisner, Senior Reviewer

UNCLASSIFIED

page 41

UNCLASSIFIED

2. (SBU) THE TWO-WEEK VISIT TO **MEXICO** BY UN SPECIAL RAPPOREUR FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF OPINION AND EXPRESSION, FRANK LA RUE, AND OAS SPECIAL RAPPOREUR FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, CATALINA BOTERO, CAME ON THE HEELS OF A HIGH PROFILE KIDNAPPING OF FOUR MEDIA MEMBERS AND A NATIONWIDE DEMONSTRATION TO PROTEST CONTINUED VIOLENCE AND IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS (REF A). THE SPECIAL RAPPOREURS HELD OVER 40 MEETINGS WITH FEDERAL AND LOCAL GOM OFFICIALS, AND TRAVELED TO CIUDAD JUAREZ, CHIHUAHUA CITY AND TOWNS THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF GUERRERO TO GATHER INFORMATION FOR A REPORT ON PRESS FREEDOM IN **MEXICO**.

1.4(B)
1.4(D)
B1

3. (SBU) IN THEIR AUGUST 24 **PRESS** RELEASE, THE RAPPOREURS DESCRIBED THE SITUATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS IN **MEXICO** AS "ALARMING AND INTENSIFYING." THEY NOTED THAT CURRENTLY THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (CNDH) IS THE ONLY ENTITY THAT KEEPS TRACK OF CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS IN **MEXICO**, AND CALLED THE LACK OF OFFICIAL GOM STATISTICS "TROUBLING." THEY FURTHER UNDERSCORED THE PROBLEM OF IMPUNITY, NOTING THAT THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR FOR CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS AT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE (PGR) HAS NOT MADE AN IMPACT ON REDUCING WHAT THEY DEFINED AS "GENERAL IMPUNITY" FOR CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS. THEY STRESSED THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF AGGRESSIONS AGAINST LOCAL AND REGIONAL JOURNALISTS GO UNREPORTED DUE TO A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN AUTHORITIES AND CHARACTERIZED THE STATES OF **CHIHUAHUA, COAHUILA, DURANGO, GUERRERO, MICHOACAN, NUEVO LEON, SINALOA AND TAMAULIPAS** AS "COMPLETELY SILENT" DUE TO DRAMATIC LEVELS OF MEDIA SELF-CENSORSHIP. THEY IDENTIFIED ORGANIZED CRIME GROUPS AS THE PRIMARY THREAT TO JOURNALISTS, BUT EMPHASIZED THAT THE GOM HAS FAILED TO COMMUNICATE THE IMPORTANCE OF A FREE PRESS TO ITS SECURITY FORCES.

UNCLASSIFIED

page 42

UNCLASSIFIED

4. (SBU) THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDED STRENGTHENING THE PGR SPECIAL PROSECUTOR FOR CRIMES AGAINST JOURNALISTS BY PROVIDING THE OFFICE WITH INCREASED AUTONOMY AND RESOURCES. THEY NOTED THAT THE UNDERREPORTING OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL CRIMES COULD BE ADDRESSED BY ADOPTING REFORMS TO RENDER AGGRESSION AGAINST JOURNALISTS A FEDERAL CRIME. THEY ALSO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL MECHANISM TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS AND PROVIDING TRAINING ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION TO SECURITY FORCES. THE RAPORTEURS ALSO DESCRIBED STRUCTURAL DEFICIENCIES, NOTING THAT THE PREDOMINANCE OF CENTRALIZED MEDIA AND THE LACK OF INDEPENDENT REGULATION STIFLE

***** START OF SECTION 2 *****

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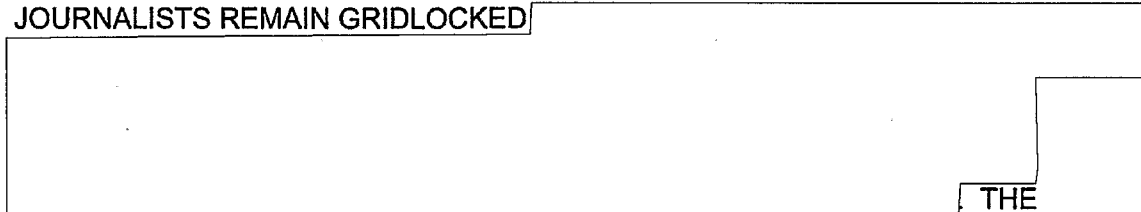
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COMMUNITY AND LOCAL RADIO AND PREVENT A MORE PLURALISTIC MEDIA SYSTEM. THEY HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED TO CHANGE OUTDATED FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS THAT RESTRICT THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, NOTABLY THE 1917 LAW ON DEFAMATION AND SIMILAR LAWS IN 15 STATES THAT HAVE BEEN USED TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST JOURNALISTS WHO PUBLISH UNFLATTERING INFORMATION ABOUT PUBLIC FIGURES.

COMMENT

5. (SBU) AS THE GOM FOCUSES INCREASINGLY ON POLITICAL POSTURING IN THE COUNTDOWN TO 2011 AND 2012 ELECTIONS, RELATIVELY NON-DIVISIVE ISSUES SUCH AS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION ARE FALLING BY THE WAYSIDE WITHOUT CLEAR GOM LEADERSHIP AND RESOURCES. WHILE MEASURES TO HALT VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS WOULD LIKELY OBTAIN SUPPORT ACROSS THE SPECTRUM OF POLITICAL PARTIES, THE GOM HAS NOT ENUNCIATED A CLEAR STRATEGY ON THE WAY FORWARD AND RAPID RESPONSE MEASURES TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS REMAIN GRIDLOCKED



THE EMBASSY HAS ENGAGED JOURNALISTS IN INFORMAL ROUNDTABLES AND HAS SPONSORED SEMINARS ON MEDIA FREEDOMS. THE JOURNALISM COMMUNITY IS BOTH ACUTELY AWARE OF THE CHALLENGES AND DIVIDED ON HOW TO ADDRESS THEM. POST WILL CONTINUE TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE, BUT OUR

1.4(D)
B1

UNCLASSIFIED

page 43

UNCLASSIFIED

EFFECTIVENESS WILL BE VERY MUCH DRIVEN BY THE WILLINGNESS OF
JOURNALISTS TO TAKE A LEADERSHIP ROLE.

PASCUAL

ADMIN

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page 44