

INFO	LOG-00	AF-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	A-00	GHFS-00	RPPR-00
	CA-00	CCO-00	CIAE-00	CTME-00	INL-00	DNI-00	DODE-00
	DS-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	DIAS-00	OBO-00	H-00
	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	CAC-00	ARMY-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00
	M-00	VCIE-00	NSAE-00	ISN-00	NSCE-00	OCS-00	OMB-00
	NIMA-00	OPR-00	PA-00	PER-00	PM-00	PRS-00	SCT-00
	ISNE-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00	USSS-00	VO-00
	FMP-00	R-00	SHEM-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00
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TAGS: PREL, SMIG, KMDR, MX, ES

SUBJECT: Tamaulipas Massacre Seizes Front Page in El Salvador

1. (U) SUMMARY. Government and public condemnation of the killing of 72 migrants in Tamaulipas, Mexico - including at least 13 Salvadorans - has been swift and strong. The Foreign Minister has called for a full investigation by the Government of Mexico (GOM), and President Funes has requested an urgent meeting with President Calderon of Mexico on the subject. On August 28, the GOM stated it cannot guarantee the safety of Salvadoran consuls in Mexico. The story continues to grip the media, and reactions are equally outraged across the political spectrum. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) From the first report of Salvadoran victims in Tamaulipas, all the papers in El Salvador have given front page coverage to the massacre. Blame for the act has been assigned to the Zetas gang from the beginning. As the number of Salvadoran victims climbed from 6 to 13, papers gave more space, with some publishing 10 articles in a single day. In addition to coverage of the crime and investigation, articles have focused on official GOES and GOM statements, the victims' families, and the pitfalls of Salvadoran migration to the United States via Mexico. Editorials focus on deploring criminality, assigning blame to the GOM's inability to provide security and justice, and in one case leftist daily.

CoLatino blaming U.S. immigration policy for the tragedy.

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3. (SBU) Within a day of the discovery, GOES Minister of Foreign Affairs' Hugo Martinez publicly condemned the killings, and the Legislative Assembly held a minute of silence. Deputies from the FMLN (left-wing) to the ARENA (right-wing) parties expressed outrage over the deaths, citing the migrants' desire for a better life in their statements. In asking for a full investigation the next day, Martinez stressed that despite the alleged involvement of local Mexican officials, the GOES believes it is not GOM policy to violate migrants' rights. Martinez has daily increased his public requests to the GOM for justice. The MFA told PolCouns that a tentative meeting between Funes and Calderon scheduled for October is being pushed to early September at Funes's request. On August 28 the Salvadoran press reported the GOM told GOES consular officers in Mexico it cannot guarantee their safety, and they should spend their nights in Texas.

4. (SBU) COMMENT. Migration to the United States is a unifying factor in Salvadoran society, and is not regarded by most as illegal, even when it is illegal. As a result, while this tragic story has given the Public Affairs Officer opportunities in several TV interviews to underscore the dangers of illegal immigration, Salvadoran officials and opinion-makers from across the political spectrum have primarily focused on the GOM's failure to provide more protection for Salvadorans migrating to the U.S. - ironic given the state of security in El Salvador. Further, linking of the Zetas to the massacre serves to inflame popular imagination regarding their rumored infiltration of Salvadoran organized crime (Funes's first statement to this effect was in March 2010). To the GOES's credit, the Deputy Foreign Minister for Salvadorans Abroad, Juan Jose Garcia, has echoed our own message about the dangers of illegal migration. END COMMENT.

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