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PAGE 01 GUATEM 03116 012240Z
ACTION HA-08

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00 ARA-00
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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7470

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E.O. 12356 NA
TAGS: PINR, PINS, PREL, SHUM, SOCI, GT
SUBJ: MURDER OF MEMBER OF MUTUAL SUPPORT GROUP (GAM)

- REF: (A) TELECON 25 MARCH GUSTAFSON/SCHIVELEY
- (B) TELECON 28 MARCH SCHOFIELD/SCHIVELEY
- (C) TELECON 29 MARCH SCHOFIELD/SCHIVELEY
- (D) GUATEMALA 2212 (E) GUATEMALA 2421
- (F) GUATEMALA 1668

SUMMARY

HECTOR ORLANDO GOMEZ CALITO, A MEMBER OF THE ACTIVIST MUTUAL SUPPORT GROUP (GAM), WAS ABDUCTED AND ASSASSINATED THE WEEKEND OF MARCH 30-31. ACCORDING TO REPORTS, THE GAM CLAIMS THAT GOMEZ WAS KILLED BECAUSE OF HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH THE ORGANIZATION. END SUMMARY.

HECTOR ORLANDO GOMEZ CALITO, 32 YEARS OLD, WAS ALLEGEDLY ABDUCTED IN GUATEMALA CITY ON MARCH 30 BY UNIDENTIFIED MEN FOLLOWING HIS ATTENDANCE AT A GAM MEETING. ON THE MORNING OF MARCH 31, GOMEZ'S BODY, ~~LIMITED OFFICIAL USE~~

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PAGE 02 GUATEM 03116 012240Z

BOUND AND SHOT, WAS FOUND NEAR THE PACIFIC HIGHWAY, SOME 15 MILES FROM GUATEMALA CITY.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 () RELEASE
 () EXTEND
 () DENY
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 IN PART
 EO Citations
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2. REPORTS DESCRIBED GOMEZ AS THE SPOKESMAN FOR GAM AND AS A MEMBER OF ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS. HE WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF THE GROUP FOR TWO YEARS. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS REPORTS, GAM DIRECTORS SAID THAT GOMEZ WAS KILLED BECAUSE OF HIS ROLE IN PLANNING A PUBLIC MARCH TO BE HELD APRIL 12 OR 13. HIS ASSASSINATION FOLLOWS IN THE WAKE OF REPORTS THAT MEMBERS OF THE GROUP HAD BEEN THE SUBJECT OF UNSPECIFIED THREATS. THESE REPORTS APPEARED IN THE WEEKEND PRESS (MARCH 30-31).

3. GOMEZ'S ALLEGED ROLE AS "SPOKESMAN" OF THE ORGANIZATION IS NOT SUPPORTED BY INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, GOMEZ NEVER SERVED AS SPOKESMAN IN NEWS ACCOUNTS OF GAM ACTIVITIES, IN CONTACTS WITH EMBASSY, OR IN ACTIVITIES WITNESSED BY EMBASSY PERSONNEL. TWO GAM DIRECTORS TOLD EMBOFF ON MARCH 20 THAT THE SIX MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GROUP WERE: MRS. BEATRIZ VELASQUEZ DE ESTRADA, MRS. AURA FARFAN, MRS. MARIA ROSARIO GODOY DE CUEVAS, MRS. MARIA CHOXOM DE CASTANON, MRS. NINETH MONTENEGO DE GARCIA, AND ANOTHER "MRS. GARCIA", MOTHER-IN-LAW OF MRS. NINETH GARCIA. THEY DID NOT MENTION THAT GOMEZ WAS A DIRECTOR. IT IS LIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT THE GAM LEADERSHIP HAS AVOIDED, FOR SECURITY REASONS, DESIGNATING A SPOKESMAN, AND THAT GOMEZ MAY HAVE ACTED IN THAT CAPACITY ON OCCASION, WITHOUT THAT FACT COMING TO OUR ATTENTION.

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PAGE 03 GUATEM 03116 012240Z

4. IN PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH HIGH-LEVEL GOG OFFICIALS, AMBASSADOR, DCM AND OTHER EMBOFFS HAVE EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO PERMIT GAM TO OPERATE FREELY AND WITHOUT INTIMIDATION. AMBASSADOR WILL RAISE SUBJECT AGAIN WITH CHIEF OF STATE AND FOREIGN MINISTER AT HIS NEXT MEETING WITH THEM.

5. WE WILL REPORT NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS CASE AS THEY OCCUR.

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