

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment, please email the [Knowledge and Information Management Unit](#).

9 September 2015

VEN105297.E

Venezuela: Police corruption at the Pariaguán municipal police station in the Miranda district; police corruption at the Freites municipal police station, including in connection to the Director (2014-August 2015)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information on police corruption at the Pariaguán municipal police station in the Miranda district, as well as police corruption at the Freites municipal police station, including corruption in connection to the Director, was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

1. Corruption at the Pariaguán Municipal Police (PoliPariaguán) Station, Miranda District

On 1 December 2010, Venezuelan news source Informe 25 reported that after the intervention of the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service (Servicio Bolivariano de Inteligencia Nacional, SEBIN), a [translation] "commission" requested Tomás Bello, Mayor of Pariaguán, to remove the Chief of the Pariaguán municipal police, surname Vidal, due to his [translation] "extensive background" in planting evidence on innocent victims, and his participation in extortions and kidnappings (Informe 25 1 Dec. 2010). Information on this commission could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. The same article indicates that a public prosecutor at the Public Ministry and the Chief of Police were reportedly complicit in the commission of these crimes; the Mayor did not take any action (*ibid.*). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Informe 25 also reported in September 2013 that sources linked to the Miranda district police in the state of Anzoátegui sent a communiqué to Informe 25 indicating that newly appointed police officials at the Pariaguán municipal police station are officers who have been expelled from other police forces (*ibid.* 16 Sept. 2013). According to the communiqué, as reported by Informe 25, Álvaro Ortega Obregón, who was appointed Director General of the Pariaguán municipal police, was expelled from the Bolívar state police in 2002 for [translation] "extortion and serious offenses against internal police regulations," and Marvelis Guevara, who was appointed Deputy Director of the Pariaguán municipal police, was expelled from the Anzoátegui state police for extortion and fraud (*ibid.*). Other appointees included Miguel Barreto, who had been expelled from El Tigre municipal police for his alleged involvement in extortion and vehicle theft, and Luis Alberto Basanta, who had been expelled from the Anzoátegui state police on 22 September 2009 for failing a drug test (*ibid.*). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In October 2013, *Guanipa Noticias*, a digital newspaper based in Anzoátegui, reported that Pariaguán City Hall councillors from the Democratic Unity Table (Mesa de la Unidad Democrática, MUD) [the main opposition coalition made up of more than 50 political parties (*PHW* 2014, 1593)] indicated that they had received multiple complaints against Director of the Pariaguán municipal police Álvaro Ortega Obregón, and

mayor of Pariaguán Tomás Bello, of disproportionate use of force and human rights violations (*Guanipa Noticias* 22 Oct. 2013). According to the councillors, Pariaguán municipal police officers shot both rubber and real bullets at detainees who were protesting the lack of water in prison for their personal hygiene; several detainees were injured (ibid.). Additional information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. Police Corruption at the Freites Municipal Police (PoliFreites) Station

Sources report the following instances of investigations of police misconduct involving Freites municipal police:

- On 9 April 2014, *El Tiempo*, a newspaper based in Puerto La Cruz, quoted Heriberto Carrera [Eriberto Carrera], Chief of the Freites municipal police, as stating that 4 police officers were detained and dismissed from the force for the killing of a 22-year-old man and wounding 5 other people during a brawl at a local club (*El Tiempo* 9 Apr. 2014). According to Carrera, in addition to these officers, 12 more had been dismissed during the [translation] "purging process" at the Freites municipal police station (ibid.).
- On 19 January 2015, *El Tiempo* quoted Carrera as stating that 5 police officers from the Freites municipal police force were being investigated for negligence that allowed three people accused of theft to escape from jail (ibid. 19 Jan. 2015).
- On 24 February 2015, *El Tiempo* quoted Carrera as stating that 214 employees, including officers and administrative staff at the Freites municipal police station, were tested for drugs by the National Anti-doping Office (Oficina Nacional Antidopaje, ONA) (*El Tiempo* 24 Feb. 2015). Two police officers were dismissed after they refused to undergo the testing (ibid.). The article reports that, according to Carrera, [translation] "it was the first time a drug test had been performed since his arrival in the Freites municipal police force approximately one year ago" (ibid.).
- On 4 May 2015, *Nueva Prensa de Oriente*, a newspaper based in Barcelona, Anzoátegui, reported on the recent dismissal of 10 police officers from the Freites municipal police force for crimes including homicide and conspiracy, totaling 25 dismissals in the year and 8 months since Carrera took over the post of PoliFreites Police Commissioner (*Nueva Prensa de Oriente* 4 May 2015).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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Oral sources: Transparency International Venezuela.

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