



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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1 September 2004

### VEN42889.E

Venezuela: The political party in Zulia State called "Un Nuevo Tiempo," including its ideology and whether it supports or opposes President Chavez's Movement for the Fifth Republic Party (2003-August 2004)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Several sources state that Manuel Rosales of the "Un Nuevo Tiempo" (UNT) party is the governor of Zulia state (Indymedia 13 Jan. 2003; *Nueva Provincia* 18 Aug. 2004; *Ultimas Noticias* 27 Aug. 2002). *La Nueva Provincia* adds that Rosales founded the party in 1997 after splitting from the [translation] "social democratic" Democratic Action Party (Acción Democrática, AD) (18 Aug. 2004). Rosales will run for re-election as governor in the September 2004 elections (ibid.). A 19 February 2004 FBIS report stated that Rosales was a member of the Democratic Council of Governors, a group of governors opposed to Chavez's presidency; the group had formed in preparation for the recall referendum in August 2004.

The National Assembly of Venezuela Website lists the names of four deputies of the UNT who are members of the National Assembly, and who are all from Zulia State: Jesús Salvador Alcántara Borrego, Omar José Fuenmayor Mora, Charles Luis Medina Urdaneta and Ángel Emiro Vera (Venezuela n.d.). *El Nacional* corroborates the information above on the names of deputies and adds that the UNT is one of 11 parties that comprise the opposition parliamentary block for autonomy (Bloque parlamentario por la autonomía) in the National Assembly; the main party in this block is the Democratic Action (n.d.).

In January 2003, thousands of members of commercial, neighbourhood, student, transportation, indigenous and farmers' groups took to the streets in Maracaibo, the capital of Zulia State, to protest against the closing of universities and schools (Indymedia 13 Jan. 2003). Rosales ordered the regional police to [translation] "suppress" the protest by using tear gas and water canons on the protesters (ibid.). Furthermore, supporters of Rosales' UNT party supposedly attacked the protesters by throwing rocks at them when they approached the offices of the governor (ibid.). According to the Indymedia report, several people were detained, but no one was injured (ibid.). No additional and/or corroborating information on this protest could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

The Zulian chapter of an organization for victims against fraud (Victimas contra el fraude) reported that members of the UNT party had attempted to bribe some indigenous voters in the town of Altos de Tejas to vote in favour of recalling President Chavez in the referendum (Radio Nacional de Venezuela 14 Aug. 2004).

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 additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

### References

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Indymedia. 13 January 2003. Gladys Suárez. "Venezuela: Policía reprime marcha bolivariana." <<http://ecuador.indymedia.org/es/2003/01/1420.shtml>> [Accessed 3 Aug. 2004]

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Venezuela. n.d. "Asamblea Nacional: Lista de Diputados." <<http://www.asambleanacional.gov.ve/ns2/listadip3.asp>> [Accessed 3 Aug. 2004]

### Additional Sources Consulted

**Publications:** *Political Handbook of the World 2000-2002, Political Parties of the World* (2002).

**Internet sources, including:** *El Día, Vheadline, El Universal.*

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