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Honduras: Colonel Álvaro Romero, Sabel Guifarro, Deputy Alberto Cruz, Freddy Salgado, Deputy Betio Guifarro, and four other persons; whether they play active roles in politics or in the army, or whether they are landowners in El Aguacate and Catacamas (November 2003)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

According to a 9 February 1998 article in Honduras This Week, a general by the name of Álvaro Romero celebrated his retirement at a ceremony held at the Francisco Morazan Military Academy. The article stated that Romero had served as Chief of the Presidential Guard from 1994 to 1998 (Honduras This Week 9 Feb. 1998).

A July 2002 article named Álvaro Romero as a member of the newly established Integral Security Commission, one of nine commissions created by the Liberal Party's Central Executive Council (Consejo Central Ejecutivo del Partido Liberal, CCEPL) in order to evaluate the first six months of President Ricardo Maduro's government (Tiempo 17 July 2002).

No other mention of Álvaro Romero could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

An August 2003 article mentioned that Fredy Alejandro Salgado had been Mayor of Catacamas from 1998 to 2002 (La Tribuna 30 Aug. 2003).

El Heraldo indicated that a cooperative arrangement was made in July 2001 between the mayor of Catacamas, Alejandro Fredy Salgado Cardona, and the National Defence Secretary, Enrique Flores Valeriano, to use the airplane runway at the El Aguacate military base for commercial and ecotourism activities (24 July 2001).

In a September 2001 article, El Heraldo noted that the mayor of Catacamas, Alejandro Fredy Salgado, instituted criminal proceedings against the director of the National Agrarian Institute (Instituto Nacional Agrario, INA) for abuse of authority (20 Sept. 2001). Salgado's complaint was related to a conflict regarding the land distribution in El Aguacate, a former American military base (El Heraldo 20 Sept. 2001).

According to a February 2000 article in Honduras This Week, Freddy Salgado, Mayor of Catacamas, was under investigation for his alleged complicity in the murder of Carlos Luna, a municipal councillor and environmental activist (28 Feb. 2000). Furthermore, a May 2001 article mentioned that human rights advocates also believed that Mayor Alejandro Fredy Salgado and his administrator, Rafael Campos Lobo, were behind Carlos Luna's murder (Tiempo 18 May 2001).

No mention of the outcome of the investigation into Salgado's involvement in the murder and no other mention of Salgado could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

According to the National Congress of Honduras Website, Luis Alberto Cruz is a deputy for the Department of Olancho and a member of the National Party (Partido Nacional) (Honduras n.d.). However, though no mention of any persons named Betio Guifarro or Sabel Guifarro could be found, the Research Directorate did find mention of a deputy for the National Party named Gillian Guifarro Montes de Oca, and a deputy for the Liberal Party (Partido Liberal) named Gilberto Guifarro Montes de Oca (ibid ).

According to a 13 June 2002 article in El Heraldo, a report written by a certain number of deputies for the Department of Olancho, including Luis Alberto Cruz, Guilliam [sic] Guifarro and Gilberto Guifarro, was criticized by a human rights organization. The purpose of the report was to propose solutions to deforestation conflicts in the Department of Olancho but, according to the Committee of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras (Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras, COFADEH), the document did not reflect the gravity of the environmental problems in Olancho and was biased, since it favoured the government and lumber merchants (El Heraldo 13 June 2002).
No mention of the four other persons named in the Information Request and no information on whether any of the persons mentioned in this request owned land in El Aguacate or Catacamas could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

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 to refugee status or asylum. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References


Additional Sources Consulted

Central America Report [Guatemala City]

IRB Databases

Latin American Regional Reports: Caribbean and Central America Report [London]

Latinamerica Press [Lima]

World News Connection/Dialog

Internet sites, including:

Amnesty International

Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CIPRODEH)

Country Reports 2002

Freedom in the World 2003
Honduras, Presidencia de la República

Human Rights Watch

Religious Task Force on Central America and Mexico

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