



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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The Board		12 March 2007
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Biographies		
Organization Chart	Dominican Republic: Organized crime; government actions to fight organized crime; state protection for witnesses of crime	
Employment	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board du Canada, Ottawa	
Legal and Policy		
References	Background	
Publications	According to Freedom House, "[o]fficial corruption remains a serious problem" in the Dominican Republic (8 Sept. 2006). The Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International (TI) ranks the Dominican Republic 99 of 163 countries, tying it with Georgia, Mali, Mongolia, Mozambique and Ukraine (6 Nov. 2006). The <i>Transparency International Barometer 2006</i> report indicates that 54% of Dominicans believe that government measures to combat corruption are effective, but that 43% believe that government measures are either ineffective in fighting corruption or even encourage it (TI 7 Dec. 2006, 18). According to the Dominicans surveyed, for the same report, the police, political parties, the legislature and the judiciary are the most corrupt institutions in the Dominican Republic (<i>ibid.</i> , 22). Further, 23% of the Dominican respondents reported that, in 2005, they paid a bribe to receive a public or private sector service (<i>ibid.</i>).	
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division		
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Research Program	The <i>International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2006</i> indicates that although the government of the Dominican Republic took some steps to advance its fight against corruption, in 2005, "corruption and weak governmental institutions remained an impediment to controlling the flow of illegal narcotics" (US Mar. 2006). Two international reports state that the Dominican Republic is a major transit point for drugs from South America (Freedom House 8 Sept. 2006; US Mar. 2006). An article published by Prensa Latina indicates that according to intelligence investigations conducted in 2004, every year more than 200 airplanes carrying drugs pass through the airspace of the Dominican Republic en route to the United States (20 Dec. 2005). The <i>International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2006</i> indicates that "Dominican criminal organizations are involved in international drug trafficking operations, with the country's primary role being a transshipment hub" (US Mar. 2006). In addition, <i>Freedom in the World 2006</i> notes that the Dominican "government estimates that some 20 percent of the drugs entering the country remain there as a 'payment in kind'," which contributes "to increasing drug abuse and street crime" (Freedom House 8 Sept. 2006).	
National Documentation Packages		
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets		
Responses to Information Requests		
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Media Centre		
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Completed Access to Information Requests	According to an article published by the Jesuite Refugee Service (JRS), an international Catholic organization that works to protect the rights of refugees (JRS n.d.), there is illegal trafficking of human beings across the Dominican-Haitian border through the official crossing at Wanament-Dajabón, and through other non-	

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official crossings such as Meyak-Manzanillo, Ferye-Sanché and Kapoti-Capotill (idib. 4 Sept. 2006). Dominican-Haitian human trafficking networks with the complicity of some Dominican migration, police and military officials, have reportedly generated and maintained a lucrative illicit industry (ibid.; see also US 8 Mar. 2006, Sec. 5). Further, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005* cites an estimate from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), that indicates that in 2005, "50 thousand Dominican women worked in prostitution around the world and of these women, one third were victims of trafficking" (ibid.).

Government actions to fight organized crime

Under Dominican law, individuals who traffic persons can face a jail term of 15 to 20 years and "a fine of up to 175 times the monthly minimum wage" (ibid.). *Country Reports 2005* notes that a congressman was paroled in October 2005, after he had been sentenced the previous March to 18 months' imprisonment on "charges of alien smuggling" (ibid.). The same report adds that "[t]wo co-defendants were found guilty and sentenced to time served" (ibid.). No further information on the application of Dominican laws on trafficking in persons could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, *Country Reports 2005* outlines some of the steps taken by Dominican authorities to fight trafficking in persons, as follows:

The attorney general's antitrafficking unit coordinated the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases. Units at the National Police, the Migration Directorate, and the Attorney General's Office targeted trafficking in persons, as did the interagency Committee for the Protection of Migrant Women. The Migration Directorate created an antitrafficking department, which coordinates with the Attorney General's Office and the National Police to find and prosecute persons dedicated to trafficking women for prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation. (US 8 March 2006, Sec. 5)

No information on the effectiveness of the measures taken by the Dominican government to fight illegal human-trafficking activities could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

The *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2006* indicates the following on efforts of the government of the Dominican Republic to fight drug-related crime, in 2005:

Policy Initiatives. Intelligence-sharing plays an important part in interdiction efforts. The [Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)] Center for Drug Information (CDI), housed in the [Dominican Republic (DR)] National Drug Control Directorate (DNCD), served as a clearinghouse for intelligence within the Caribbean. ... The [Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR)] continues to struggle to implement anti-money laundering legislation passed in 2002. In support of this effort, the GODR created a Financial Analysis Unit under the [National Drug Council], which became operational during 2005.

Law Enforcement Efforts. In 2005, the DNCD increased its seizure rate and netted record single seizures of both heroin (39 kilograms) and MDMA (259,627 units) with the cooperation and assistance of the DEA. ...

The DNCD made 3,330 drug-related arrests in 2005; of these, 3,206 were Dominican nationals and 124 were foreigners. Maritime seizures remain a challenge for the DR, especially drugs hidden in commercial vessels for shipment to the U.S. and/or Europe and drugs arriving by "go-fast" boats from South America. The DNCD and their DEA counterparts concentrated increasingly on investigations leading to the takedown of large criminal organizations.

In 2005, the GODR expanded its counternarcotics and explosive detection canine

units with U.S., Dutch and international assistance, increasing coverage to all international airports and major sea ports. ...

Drug Flow/Transit. In 2005, the DNCD focused interdiction operations on the drug-transit routes in Dominican territorial waters along the northern border and on its land border crossings with Haiti, while attempting to prevent air drops and maritime delivery of illicit narcotics to remote areas. (US March 2006)

A news article published by AlterPress indicates that the chiefs of the Dominican and Haitian police expressed their intention to monitor closely the land border between the two countries in order to fight drug and human trafficking activities; the two officials noted that [translation] "there will be no truce with organized crime" (2 Sept. 2005).

No information on state protection for witnesses of crimes 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 for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

AlterPresse [Port-au-Prince, Haiti]. 2 September 2005. "Jefes policiales comprometen estricta vigilancia frontera." <<http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article3193>> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2007]

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Prensa Latina [Havana]. 20 December 2005. "Penetran en Dominicana unas 200 aeronaves con drogas." <<http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/domi/doc/aeronaves.html>> [Accessed 3 Jan. 2007]

Transparency International (TI). 7 December 2006. *Report on the Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer 2006*. <http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/gcb/2006> [Accessed 8 Mar. 2007]

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United States (US). 8 March 2006. Department of State. "Dominican Republic." *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005*. <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61725.htm>> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2007]

_____. March 2006. Vol. 1. Department of State. "Dominican Republic." *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*.

<<http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2006/vol1/html/62108.htm>> [Accessed 19 Dec. 2006]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral Sources: Participación Ciudadana did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International (AI), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Center for Contemporary Conflict, government of Dominican Republic, Human Rights Watch (HRW), Organisation mondiale contre la torture (OMCT), United Kingdom (UK) Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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