

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

Declassified by Donald K. Holm, Senior Reviewer. Declassified on: 20180927

ENVELOPE

RATCZYUW RUEHCVA0789 3191712-CCCC--RUZDTPW.
ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH
TOQ7037
RR RUEHC

HEADER

R151712Z NOV 11
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RHMCSUU/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEHYZ/USOFFICE NEWINGTON
BT

APPEALS PANEL ACTION: RELEASED
IN FULL

CONTROLS

~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~

CARACAS 000789

SENSITIVE
SENSITIVE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMEMBASSY PARIS PASS TO AMCONSUL STRASBOURG
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL LEIPZIG
USOFFICE NEWINGTON PASS TO USOFFICE GLOBAL FINANCIAL SERVICES
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PASS TO AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PASS TO AMEMBASSY GRENADA
E.O. 13526: DECL: 2021/08/18

BODY

TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, KCRM, VE
SUBJECT: GOOD POLICE WORK LEADS TO RESCUE OF WASHINGTON NATIONALS
CATCHER WILSON RAMOS
CLASSIFIED BY: ROBIN D. MEYER, POL; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

1. (S) SUMMARY: VENEZUELAN SECURITY FORCES RESCUED WASHINGTON NATIONALS CATCHER WILSON RAMOS TWO DAYS AFTER HE WAS KIDNAPPED FROM HIS HOME. LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTACTS REPORTED THAT THE VENEZUELAN POLICE ALREADY HAD THE KIDNAPPING RING UNDER INVESTIGATION, AND, BASED ON SOURCE INFORMATION AND WIRETAPS, WERE IMMEDIATELY ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE ABDUCTORS AND LOCATE RAMOS. THE KIDNAPPING RING WAS NOT HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED, PROBABLY HAD HOPED FOR A QUICK AND EASY PAYOUT, AND LIKELY UNDERESTIMATED THE INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION THE CASE WOULD GENERATE. FOUR KIDNAPPERS ARE CURRENTLY IN CUSTODY.
END SUMMARY.

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

PRIOR LEADS PERMITTED PROMPT ACTION

2. (U) ON NOVEMBER 11, VENEZUELAN SECURITY FORCES FREED WILSON RAMOS, THE VENEZUELAN CATCHER FOR THE WASHINGTON NATIONALS, TWO DAYS AFTER ARMED MEN KIDNAPPED HIM FROM HIS HOME IN VALENCIA, A PROVINCIAL CAPITAL ABOUT TWO HOURS WEST OF CARACAS. ACCORDING TO LOCAL MEDIA REPORTS, SECURITY OFFICIALS TRACKED THE ABDUCTORS TO A HOME IN A MOUNTAINOUS REGION NEAR VALENCIA AND FREED RAMOS AFTER A SHOOTOUT, IN WHICH NO ONE WAS INJURED. INTERIOR AND JUSTICE MINISTER TARECK EL AISSAMI ANNOUNCED THAT FOUR VENEZUELAN KIDNAPPERS HAD BEEN ARRESTED, AS WELL AS AN ELDERLY COUPLE, WHO HAD SUPPLIED THE KIDNAPPERS WITH FOOD AND SUPPLIES. RAMOS TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE ABDUCTORS KNEW PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT HIM, BUT THAT THEY DID NOT WEAR MASKS DURING THE KIDNAPPING, DID NOT MISTREAT HIM, AND EVEN TRIED TO FEED HIM.

3. ~~(S)~~ ACCORDING TO POST LAW ENFORCEMENT, RAMOS'S RESCUE WAS THE RESULT OF GOOD POLICE WORK. LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTACTS REPORTED THAT THE SPECIAL KIDNAPPING UNIT OF THE SCIENTIFIC, PENAL AND PENAL INVESTIGATIVE CORPS (CICPC) ALREADY HAD THE ABDUCTORS UNDER INVESTIGATION PRIOR TO RAMOS'S KIDNAPPING BECAUSE THE GROUP HAD KIDNAPPED OTHER INDIVIDUALS IN THE SAME AREA OF VALENCIA. BASED ON PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED SOURCE INFORMATION AND WIRETAPS, THE CICPC WAS IMMEDIATELY ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE INDIVIDUALS RESPONSIBLE AND THE LOCATION WHERE RAMOS WAS BEING HELD. THIS PRIOR INFORMATION ENABLED THE CICPC TO ACT QUICKLY AND IMMEDIATELY BEGIN PLANNING ITS "RESCUE MISSION." APPROXIMATELY 300 CICPC OFFICIALS PARTICIPATED IN THE CASE.

4. ~~(S)~~ THE MEDIA HAVE SPECULATED THAT THE FARC WAS INVOLVED IN THE ABDUCTION. IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS, RAMOS CLAIMED THAT TWO ABDUCTORS SPOKE WITH COLOMBIAN ACCENTS AND SPOKE OF "LA GUERRILLA." SO FAR, POST LAW ENFORCEMENT HAS RECEIVED NO EVIDENCE TO CORROBORATE A FARC CONNECTION. ALSO, CONTRARY TO SOME MEDIA REPORTING, POST LAW ENFORCEMENT BELIEVES THE "SHOOTOUT" WAS LIKELY A CICPC DIVERSION TO DISORIENT THE ABDUCTORS DURING THE RAID. LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTACTS REPORTED THAT CICPC OFFICIALS ORDERED THAT ALL INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THE KIDNAPPING WERE TO BE TAKEN ALIVE.
COMMENT

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

5. ~~(S)~~ THE KIDNAPPING RING RESPONSIBLE FOR RAMOS'S ABDUCTION DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED. THE KIDNAPPERS MAY HAVE BELIEVED RAMOS WOULD BE AN EASY TARGET AND PERHAPS UNDERESTIMATED THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ATTENTION THE KIDNAPPING OF A MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYER WOULD GENERATE. THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION IN THIS CASE IS ONGOING AND POST LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPECTS MORE DETAILS TO EMERGE IN THE COMING DAYS, INCLUDING REGARDING THE ALLEGED PARTICIPATION OF THE FARC. END COMMENT.
DERHAM

ADMIN

BT

#0789

NNNN

SECRET//NOFORN