R 090729Z NOV 00
FM AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3753
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
INFO ALL USCONS MEXICO 0273
XMT AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLASS SECTION 01 OF 02 CIUDAD JUAREZ 5266

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PGOV, SOCI, PHUM, MX
SUBJECT: RECENT MURDERS AND DISAPPEARANCES OF WOMEN FIT OLD PATTERN

REF: A) CIUDAD JUAREZ 1519  B) CIUDAD JUAREZ 0189
C) 99 CIUDAD JUAREZ 2336  D) 98 CIUDAD JUAREZ 0414

1. SUMMARY: THE DISAPPEARANCE OF A COLLEGE STUDENT AND THE UNCLASSIFIED

DISCOVERY OF THE BODY OF A YOUNG WOMAN IN THE DESERT ARE THE LATEST INCIDENTS IN THE STRING OF MURDERS OF WOMEN WHICH HAS PLAUGUED CIUDAD JUAREZ IN RECENT YEARS. IN ADDITION, TWO OTHER TEENAGE GIRLS HAVE DISAPPEARED IN THE PAST MONTH. IN THE CASE OF THE MISSING COLLEGE STUDENT, FELLOW STUDENTS HAVE STAGED SEVERAL PUBLIC PROTESTS AND A US$1,000 REWARD HAS BEEN OFFERED BY THE CITY GOVERNMENT. LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OFFICIALS HAVE STARTED A PROGRAM CALLED "SAFE WAY HOME," AND THE FIRST BINATIONAL FORUM ON WOMEN'S CRIMES WAS HELD ON NOVEMBER 3-4. END SUMMARY.

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RECENT CASES
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2. Since 1993 Ciudad Juarez has been plagued by scores of similar murders of young women. The women usually disappear while on the way to or from work or shopping, and their raped and murdered bodies are discovered days, weeks, or months later, often in remote desert areas. The recent such incident that has received the most publicity involves a student who disappeared while returning home from school on September 30. A special brigade formed by municipal authorities, a specially trained dog brought in from Puerto Rico, and students and teachers from local colleges have organized numerous searches on the outskirts of Juarez with no results. Several community protests have taken place to try and pressure the authorities, and a $1,000 USD reward has been offered for information related to the student’s whereabouts. The state judicial police have received at least 100 misleading calls, and one person was convicted last week of misleading authorities. The relatives of other disappeared women have protested the disproportionate interest shown by the authorities in this case. Most of the other victims have been young, migrant factory workers living in isolated areas of Juarez. Their families believe that their low socio-economic status has contributed to a lack of police action in most cases.

3. Other recent incidents include:
--On October 12, the remains of a young female were found in an isolated desert area on the outskirts of Juarez. The victim had been raped and beaten. Authorities are attempting to verify identity through fingerprints and dental records, but believe the body is that of a teenager who disappeared on June 20 after leaving work at a factory. Like most previous victims, resided in a shanty-town on the outskirts of the city.
--On October 19, a 19-year-old was reported missing by her parents. Left for work at 4:00 PM accompanied by her boyfriend. Her family believes the boyfriend is involved and have requested a search warrant for his house, but authorities do not regard the boyfriend as a suspect.
[ ] disappeared on October 27 after leaving work at 3:30 PM. Once again, the case profile is similar to scores of other incidents. 16-year-old worked in a maquiladora and resided on the outskirts of Juarez.

Safe way home

4. Representatives of the National Chamber of Commerce (Canaco)
AND THE NATIONAL CHAMBER OF INDUSTRY (CANACINTRA) HAVE RECENTLY
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ACTION WHA-00

INFO LOG-00 MFA-01 NP-00 AID-00 A-00 CA-02 CCO-00
CIAE-00 CTME-00 DODE-00 DQEE-00 SRFP-00 DS-00 EB-00
ED-01 OIGO-00 FBI-00 UTED-00 PBO-01 VC-00 HHS-01
H-01 SSA-01 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-00 LAB-01 L-00
VCE-00 M-00 AC-01 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OCS-03 OIC-02
OMB-01 OPIC-01 OPR-01 PA-00 PM-00 PRS-00 ACE-00
P-00 SCT-00 SP-00 IRM-00 SSO-00 SS-00 STR-00
TRSE-00 USIB-00 USSS-00 ASDS-01 PMB-00 DSCC-00 FRM-02
DRL-02 G-00 SAS-00 /023W
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R 090729Z NOV 00
FM AMCONSL CIUDAD JUAREZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3754
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
INFO ALL USCNS MEXICO 0274
XMT AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLASSIFIED SECTION 02 OF 02 CIUDAD JUAREZ 5266

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STARTED A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM CALLED "SAFE WAY HOME." THE
PROGRAM IS DESIGNED PRIMARILY FOR STUDENTS, AND TRAINING IS BEING
PROVIDED FOR PARTICIPATING PARENTS AND STUDENTS. ORANGE STICKERS
ARE PLACED ON HOUSES WHERE RESIDENTS HAVE AGREED TO ASSIST
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STUDENTS WHO MIGHT ENCOUNTER PROBLEMS ON THEIR WAY HOME FROM
SCHOOL. SO FAR, FOUR HIGH SCHOOLS AND SIX ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS,
MAINLY ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF JUAREZ ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE
PROGRAM.

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FIRST BINATIONAL MEETING ON WOMEN'S CRIMES
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6. COMMENT: DEPENDING ON WHO IS COUNTING (GOVERNMENT OR NGOS), BETWEEN 150 AND 200 WOMEN HAVE BEEN MURDERED IN JUAREZ IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS. SPECIAL PROSECUTOR PONCE AND OTHER AUTHORITIES CONTINUE TO PLACE THE BLAME FOR MOST OF THE KILLINGS ON ABDUL LATIF SHARIF AND VARIOUS ACCOMPlices, INCLUDING A GROUP OF BUS DRIVERS AND A LOCAL STREET GANG (REF A). SHARIF, HOWEVER, WAS CONVICTED OF ONLY ONE KILLING, AND EVEN THAT HAS BEEN OVERTURNED ON APPEAL FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE. AS A RESULT OF THE WIDE PRESS COVERAGE IN THE CASE OF THE MISSING COLLEGE STUDENT BOTH THE MUNICIPAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS ARE UNDER RENEWED PRESSURE. THE POLICE, HOWEVER, SEEM AT A LOSS AS TO HOW TO PROCEED. RECENT POLICE ACTIONS, SUCH AS ROUSTING PATRONS AT SCORES OF BARS AND NIGHTCLUBS IN THE HOPE OF FINDING SOME OF THE MISSING WOMEN WORKING AS PROSTITUTES, SEEM MOTIVATED MORE BY THE NEED TO BE SEEN TO BE TAKING SOME ACTION, RATHER THAN BASED ON ANY EVIDENCE OR REASONABLE THEORY.

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