

Duncan, William H

From: Blair, Donna M(Ciudad Juarez)
Sent: Tuesday, June 07, 2005 11:39 AM
To: Duncan, William H; Royster, Steven B
Subject: FW: Mireille Roccatti

fyi

—Original Message—

From: Munoz, Patricia
Sent: Tuesday, June 07, 2005 9:49 AM
To: Blair, Donna M
Cc: Joria, Joanne
Subject: Mireille Roccatti

RELEASED IN FULL

Mireille Roccatti

On May 30, Daniel Cabeza de Vaca, Mexico's new Federal Attorney General, appointed a new Federal Special Prosecutor on the Juarez Women's Homicides. Maria Lopez Urbina was replaced with Mireille Roccatti, a law professor who served as president of the Mexico's National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) from 1997 to 1999. When working for the CNDH, Roccatti reviewed the Juarez murders and issued some recommendations.

Lopez Urbina's work:

The job at first entailed a review of 336 cases of murders of women dating from 1993. López Urbina reviewed 80 percent of the files from the Chihuahua state police. After Lopez' office review, the Federal Organized Crime Unit (SIEDO) took over the investigation of 24 cases. Although she recommended criminal charges be filed against 41 of the 143 state officials under investigation, so far only two have been charged with negligence.

She also started a DNA databank to help identify remains.

Lopez Urbina spent over a year on the job and faced mounting criticism that she had made little progress.

Rocatti's challenges:

In a press conference on June 2, Roccatti stated that there now is a greater public mandate for federal authorities in this city, where state authorities have led probes because homicide is a state-level crime. During an interview with local Norte newspaper on June 7, Roccatti said she would pick up investigative work where her predecessor left off. The new prosecutor has promised to scrutinize the case files with a fresh pair of eyes, and promised to go after corrupt federal, state and local officials who may have been involved in the killings or at least let them remain unsolved because of corruption or negligence. Though her office will not take over any investigations, they will continue to provide technical assistance to the state authorities when needed.

As other authorities have done in previous occasions, Roccatti also stated that one of the main obstacles that she faces is the lack of information in the cases: "We open a file and all we find is one sheet of paper that says, 'Removal of skeleton,' and a date", said Roccatti to the media.

A priority of her mandate in Juarez is also to create a culture of prevention. She stated that more has to be done to protect would-be victims before slayings occur. Roccatti pledged close cooperation with Guadalupe Morfin, Federal Special Commissioner to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women in Juarez and other agencies on this matter.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M BOUTON
 DATE/CASE ID: 04 OCT 2006 200502506

1

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Among the announcements made in the press conference on June 2, Roccatti said the 61 million pesos (approx. 60,000 USD) reparation fund promised by President Fox last year, will be distributed to the relatives of the victims in the next few weeks.

Her ambitious comments echoed those of Lopez Urbina when she first took the job. The President of the National Human Rights Commission, Jose Luis Soberanes, requested the government and community give her a chance.

Latest statistics from PGR

On June 2, the Federal Attorney General's Office (PGR) released statistics showing that 32 women were killed in Juárez in 2004 and 19 so far in 2005, of whom seven had been sexually assaulted. Only nine of the cases were solved, with 15 suspects jailed. Domestic violence was cited as the biggest motive.

The office also said that 363 women had died in Juárez since 1993, although some victims' rights activists put the number around 400.