Latin American and Caribbean Program

The May 8, 1994 Elections in Panama

International Observer Delegation of the

The Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government

The Carter Center of Emory University

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THE COUNCIL OF FREELY ELECTED HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

The Carter Center of Emory University

PANAMA OBSERVER DELEGATION, MAY 4-6, 1994

Council Members

1. President Jimmy Carter
   Chairman of the Council of Freely Elected Heads
   of Government.

2. Mrs. Rosalynn Carter
   Former First Lady of the United States.

3. The Honorable George Price
   Vice-Chairman of the Council of Freely-Elected Heads
   of Government.

4. The Honorable Rodrigo Carazo
   Former President of Costa Rica (1978-1982).

Personal Representatives of Council Members

5. Dr. Tulio Alvarez
   Special Councillor to the Presidency, Special
   Representative of Council Member and Venezuelan
   President Rafael Caldera.

6. Dr. Rodrigo Madrigal
   Representative of former Costa Rican President Oscar
   Arias.

7. Mr. Joaquin Daly
   Former official of the Organization of American States,
   Representative of former Peruvian President Fernando
   Belaunde Terry. Participated in advance mission to
   Panama.

Other Delegation Members

8. The Honorable Jim Wright
   Former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.
   Participated in Council delegation to Haiti.

9. The Honorable Jack Vaughn
   Chairman, ECOHUSA. Former Ambassador to Panama.
   Former Director of the Peace Corps. Former Assistant
   Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs.
10. Mr. Curtis Cutter  
President of InterWorld Consultants. Senior Advisor and Representative of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. Retired foreign service officer. Worked on Panama Canal Treaties. Participated in Council/NDI delegation to the Dominican Republic.

11. Mr. Bruce McColl  
President, International Republican Institute. Former Executive Director, Freedom House.

12. Mr. John Moore  
Founder and former Chairman of BMC Software. Founder, The Moore Foundation and the River Blindness Foundation. Regent, University of Houston.

13. Ms. Rebecca Moore  
Founder and Treasurer, The Moore Foundation. Secretary and Treasurer, River Blindness Foundation.

14. Mr. Neil Creighton  
President and CEO, Robert McCormick Tribune Foundation. Retired Major General, US Army.

15. Mr. Charles Trainer  
T & B Management, Milwaukee, WI. Member, Board of Trustees, CARE.

16. Dr. Juan Manuel Garcia Passalacqua  

17. Dr. Richard Millet  
Professor of History at Southern Illinois at Edwardsville. Noted scholar of Central America. Participated in Council delegation to Nicaragua.

18. Dr. Michael Conniff  
Professor of Political Science, Auburn University. Author of *Panama and the US: The Forged Alliance*.

19. Dr. Jennifer McCoy  
Senior Research Associate, The Carter Center of Emory University. Professor of Political Science, Georgia State University. Directed Council’s Nicaragua Election Office. Participated in Council delegations to Haiti and Guyana.
20. Dr. David Carroll
   Associate Director, Latin American and Caribbean Program, The Carter Center of Emory University.
   Participated in Council delegations to Guyana and Paraguay.

Consultants and Council Staff

21. Dr. William Purlong
   Professor of Political Science, Utah State University.

22. Ms. Harriette Martin
   Program Administrative Assistant, Latin American and Caribbean Program, The Carter Center of Emory University.

23. Ms. Sue Palmer
   Program Coordinator, Conflict Resolution Program, The Carter Center of Emory University.

24. Ms. Rachel Fowler
   Program Assistant, Human Rights Program, The Carter Center of Emory University.

25. Ms. Kelly McBrady

26. Mr. Orlando Perez
   Ph.D. Candidate, University of Pittsburgh. Resident in Panama.

27. Mr. Frank Boyd
   Ph.D. Candidate, Emory University. Consultant to Latin American and Caribbean Program, The Carter Center of Emory University.

28. Ms. Monica Washington
   Aries Foundation, graduate of Harvard University.
SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL RESULTS OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Percent (of valid votes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ernesto Perez Balladares</td>
<td>355,307</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mireya de Gruber</td>
<td>310,372</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruben Blades</td>
<td>182,405</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruben Carles</td>
<td>171,192</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eduardo Vallarino</td>
<td>25,476</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Lewis Galindo</td>
<td>18,424</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jose Salvador Munoz</td>
<td>2,688</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Other Electoral Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total valid votes</td>
<td>1,066,844</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Null votes</td>
<td>37,734</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of votes cast</td>
<td>1,104,578</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of votes cast</td>
<td>1,104,578</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstained</td>
<td>394,873</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Registered voters</td>
<td>1,499,451</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Junta Nacional de Escrutinio
SEATS IN THE LEGISLATURE, BY PARTY (AND COALITION)
UNOFFICIAL PRELIMINARY RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pala</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libre</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnulfista</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDI</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molirena</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Alianza Democratica&quot;</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Cambio 94&quot;</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL SEATS 72

* There are 71 regular Assembly seats distributed among 40 electoral "circuitos." The results in 17 of the 40 circuitos have been challenged, but most of these are intra-party disputes and will not affect the final distribution among parties. The Electoral Tribunal will not release final official results until all the challenges ("impugnaciones") have been resolved, possibly by the end of June.

In addition to the 71 regular seats in the Assembly, additional seats are awarded to any party that wins at least 5% percent of the national vote without winning any regular seats. This occurred in the case of one party, MORENA, which was awarded a seat. The total number of seats in the legislature is therefore 72.

Source: Junta Nacional de Escrutinio
Séñor
Jimmy Carter
Expresidente de los Estados Unidos de América
y Presidente del Carter Center of Emory University
One Copenhill
Atlanta, Georgia
U.S.A.

Estimado Presidente Carter:

Me es grato comunicárselo que el Tribunal Electoral de Panamá, por este medio, le invita a participar en calidad de observador en las próximas elecciones generales a celebrarse en nuestro país el 3 de mayo de 1994.

Usted y su comitiva podrán participar en todas las etapas, tanto desde el inicio del proceso electoral como hasta la entrega de las credenciales a los ciudadanos que sean elegidos para Presidente, Vicepresidentes de la República, Legisladores, Alcaldes, Concejales y Representantes de Cetragimiento de la República de Panamá.

En virtud de que nuestro presupuesto de elecciones es limitado nos vemos en la imposibilidad de costearle su estadía y pasaje a nuestro país.

Sin embargo, el Tribunal Electoral se pone a su disposición para coordinar su visita y proveerle de cualquier información que requiera para el mejor desempeño de su misión.

La figura de Jimmy Carter ha estado ligada desde hace mucho años al difícil proceso democratizador de Panamá, y confiamos en que las próximas elecciones nos permitirán ver cristalizados tales
Los esfuerzos suyos como los de los panameños al ver unas elecciones transparentes, libres y honradas como lo manda la Constitución.

En espera de su respuesta, nos suscribimos de usted,

Atentamente,

[Firmado]
Eduardo Valdés E.
Registrador Presidente

IVI/dredp.
April 25, 1994

To Eduardo Valdés E.

I write to thank you and the Electoral Tribunal for your invitation to observe the May 8 elections in Panama, and to inform you that I accept the invitation on behalf of the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, a group of 23 current and former Presidents and Prime Ministers from the Americas.

As you know, the Council sent a small assessment team to Panama last week to meet with you, Panamanian leaders, and others. Based on the recommendations of that team the Council has decided to accept your invitation, and is currently organizing a delegation of 12-15 observers. Our delegation plans to arrive in Panama by May 6 and stay through May 9 or 10.

I would like to thank the Tribunal also for your offer to provide assistance, including transportation and briefing, to our observer delegation. Our current plans call for most of our observers to remain in the area close to Panama City on election day. However, we would like for 5-6 members of our team to travel to polling sites in the interior regions, and would appreciate it if they could travel on buses and planes provided by the Tribunal. Dr. McCoy will contact you soon to follow-up on our delegation’s arrangements.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Eduardo Valdés E.
Remitente Presidente
Tribunal Electoral
República de Panamá
Introduction and Terms of Reference:

The 1994 Panama Elections

Purposes of the Mission

Exactly five years ago, an opportunity for peaceful, democratic change in Panama was aborted by General Manuel Noriega. Many people believed that Noriega had an elaborate plan for stealing the election and for preventing Panamanians from voting. An international, bipartisan delegation led by Presidents Carter and Ford and Prime Minister Price went to Panama, and perhaps by their presence, provided assurance to Panamanians that their votes could make a difference. The people of Panama turned out to vote in such large numbers as to overwhelm any attempt by Noriega to manipulate the vote. In the end, he was compelled to annul the vote and subject himself to international condemnation. Instead of an opportunity for democratic legitimacy, the election in 1989 served to delegitimize Noriega's regime.

The election of May 8, 1994 promises to be very different. While the Electoral Tribunal was an instrument of Noriega's in 1989, it has gained confidence from political parties and much of the people. In 1989, the press was censored, but in 1994, it has been alive with questions, criticism, and public opinion polls. While there is some nervousness among the people, polls indicate that they want to vote, and they believe their vote will have meaning. Why then are we going? For four reasons.

First, because we were invited by the Electoral Tribunal and President Endara. Our delegation will hopefully encourage Panamanians to vote knowing that the world is watching and supporting them. The important role played by President Carter and the Council in the 1989 elections was appreciated by many of the political leaders with whom the Council's advance mission met. They welcomed the return of our group to reinforce the democratic process in Panama at this juncture in the country's history.

Second, international observers could lend support to the institutions of democracy, especially the Electoral Tribunal and the Comision de Justicia y Paz, that has begun to consolidate an impartial democratic process.

Third, if irregularities or problems emerge, a Council delegation could help to assess their cause, pattern, and effect. If the elections are close or questioned, our delegation, working with other domestic and international groups, could help reduce tensions and encourage the practical, problem-solving necessary to complete the process in a way that would give it stability and national and international legitimacy.
The Political Contest

In the May 1989 election, a wide coalition consisting of the Arnulfitas (President Guillermo Endara), the Norilena party (Vice President Billy Ford), and the Christian Democrats (Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon) contested against the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), led by Carlos Duque. But, in fact, the vote was a referendum on General Noriega, and the General lost by more than 2:1. The coalition took power after the U.S. military action, but in 1991, the Christian Democrats left the government, and in January 1994, Molinera left as well, having failed to reach agreement on a common candidate for the May election. When the date for registration of candidates closed on February 8, seven presidential candidates had been registered by 15 of 18 parties.

The Arnulfitas chose Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, the widow of three-time president Arnulfo Arias, in coalition with three other parties. The Norilena party passed over Vice President Billy Ford to choose the Comptroller General, banker Ruben Carles, who was supported by two other parties. Christian Democratic leader Ricardo Arias Calderon resigned for health reasons and was replaced by Edy Vallarino. The PRD chose Ernesto "Toro" Perez Balladares, and he was supported by two other parties.

With the division of the "civilista" coalition that had opposed Noriega and the PRD in 1989, the PRD has consistently led the polls with support that has ranged from 28-40%. The other parties have tried numerous times to unify as they did in 1989 — but personal ambitions and bitter feelings between candidates representing different parties of the former civilista coalition seem, at times, as deep as between them and the PRD.

Support for the other Presidential candidates have fluctuated in the polls. In November-December 1993, polls suggested that Ruben Blades, the leader of the new political party, Pana Eboro ("mother earth" in an Indian language) would be the most formidable candidate, but by the time the other candidates registered in February, his star seemed to have crested and fallen in the polls. Ruben Carles then showed the most strength, even though the polls indicated that he had about half the support that Perez Balladares was receiving, and Carles' negative ratings were the highest of all the candidates. Polls taken in mid-April after a couple of Presidential debates indicate that Blades' popularity has increased and surpassed Carles while Perez Balladares' support declining, reducing his lead significantly. Mireya de Gruber was also doing much better in the polls. (We will try to send you the most recent polls before your arrival in Panama. The final poll is due to be published on Friday, May 6th.)

In brief, the political climate approaching election day is uncertain with the possibility that the election for Presidency could be close.
The Elections

On May 8, 1994, 1,499,451 Panamanians will be eligible to vote at 5,310 voting tables (mesas) in 1,980 polling centers. They will elect a new President, a unicameral National Assembly of 71 members (legisladores), 67 mayors (alcaldes), 511 municipal representatives (corregimientos), and 24 city councilors. There are five ballot papers representing these five different elections.

There are seven presidential candidates representing 15 parties through various coalitions. (See list of political parties.) The picture of 4 of the candidates appear several times on the ballot under each of the parties of a Coalition. (For example, Mireya de Gruber has four pictures; Carles and Perez each have three.) A voter may only mark one party square, however. This is important to the parties because in order to survive legally, a party must win 5% of the vote in one of the races.

Voters may choose different parties for the presidential and legislative races, and about 35% indicated in a poll published in *La Prensa* on April 15th that they intend to split their vote. This makes it difficult to predict the outcomes of the legislative races, although it is extremely unlikely that any party will win a majority in the legislature.

For elections at the legislative level, voters live either in 26 demographically smaller single-member districts (circuitos) or 14 more populous districts where several legislators will be selected by proportional representation. In the multi-member districts, voters can vote for individuals within a party, but they cannot vote across parties.

The Electoral Tribunal

With justification, the Electoral Tribunal of Panama in 1989 was deeply distrusted. A new Tribunal was formed by the Endara administration. It is led by three magistrates chosen by the three branches of the government (and the three parties of the governing coalition) for a ten-year term beginning in 1990: President Eduardo Valdes was nominated by the Molirena Party; Guillermo Marquez by the Christian Democrats; and Dennis Allen by the Arnulfistas.

The new Tribunal has worked hard to gain the public's confidence. Opinion polls vary on the extent to which they have succeeded. A Gallup-CDI poll in March 1994 found that about half of the public trusted the Tribunal, and half did not. But the *La Prensa* poll of April 15 found that 68.7% trusted the Tribunal and only 20.2% did not. Other questions found that 61.1% believed the electoral process would be clean and impartial; 62.7% that the count would be honest; and 67.8% that the police would be impartial. While these figures reflect an encouraging trend, still about one-third of the population is not confident in the process.
The advance team reported that only two of the presidential candidates interviewed expressed concerns about the Electoral Tribunal or the electoral process to date. The Molirena candidate, Ruben Carles, was concerned about the Tribunal's decision to uphold the indictment of the Molirena candidate for mayor, the incumbent Maylin Correa, for using public resources to support her campaign. (She is removed from her mayoral duties for one year, but will remain on the ballot. She is ahead in the polls. If she wins, her substitute would take office for the remainder of the one-year period.) Carles also raised concerns that the new ballot system may confuse voters and lead to a large number of null votes which could affect the results in a tight race.

The PRD candidate, Ernesto Perez Balladares, expressed his concerns to the advance team and publicly with the decision of President Endara on April 14 to dramatically broadcast on national television videotapes recorded by General Noriega. The tapes included excerpts from the cabinet meetings of President Solis Palma (1988-89) with scenes of the security forces beating people in the streets. The tapes showed members of the PRD talking about the misuse of state resources. The PRD viewed the decision to air the tapes as a deliberate attempt to denigrate the PRD and a violation of Endara's own published commitment to remain impartial and above the electoral process. In a public address afterwards, Perez Balladares expressed his sadness that the tapes were publicized and repeated that he and his party have no wish to recreate a military or return to the dark days of the Noriega past.

In the view of many PRD opponents, it was appropriate to air the videos and revive a discussion of the past because the voters deserved to be reminded and to be exposed to a debate about the role of the PRD in Panama's history.

The Tribunal issued a full page statement declaring that only the Legislature has the constitutional prerogative to judge the President's actions, but at the same time, in an implicit slap at the President, it reaffirmed its own independence and commitment to ensure that the electoral process will be completely fair. The Comision de Justicia y Paz issued a balanced and thoughtful statement, noting that "no one can disregard the past," but calling on the candidates to debate the current and future issues "with tolerance, respect, and responsibility." With great delicacy, the commission said that the manner of presentation by the President could "be interpreted as an effort to change the preferences in the present electoral process, which could contradict his call not to, 'use his authority and influence to serve the interests of the participants in the election process.'"

Both the PRD and the Arnulfistas filed complaints with the Tribunal that they received death threats as a result of the tapes. In addition to these complaints, some isolated incidents of campaign violence were reported to the team by the Arnulfista and
FRD candidates. The Tribunal also told the team about complaints by the parties about negative campaigning directed at the FRD and Cambio 94. It was suspected that sympathizers of the two parties were placing the ads anonymously. The Tribunal met with the television stations and obtained an agreement from them prohibiting the placement of anonymous ads. The negative ads then stopped.

Nevertheless, of the major issues in an election process -- voter registration list, access to media, campaign resources, impartiality of election authorities, and election day procedures -- the parties had no serious complaints, even though there are no campaign spending limits. Although there were a few criticisms of the process by two of the parties, no one questioned the impartiality of the Electoral Tribunal.

The Tribunal will have about 42,000 personnel working on election day. All of the voting table officials have been named and are being trained, although not all have been showing up. This could cause some problems on election day. In addition, the Tribunal organized a 400-volunteer Cuerpo de Delegados (Corp of Delegates) to serve as mediators during the campaign and on election day. They are reported to be very effective.

**Voter Registration**

The voter registration list was an object of concern in 1989, but the current Electoral Tribunal has carried out a civic education campaign to encourage voters to update their documents, and about 880,000 voters did so. About 95% of the voting population registered before the cutoff date on October 23, 1993, for a total of 1,499,451 voters with credentials. They may vote with either their old voter card or a new cedula, which was issued up until April. However, no one can vote without a credential. Although some people did not receive a credential, this problem was not a source of concern for the political parties.

The Tribunal has organized mobile teams and a phone line where voters can check their ID and their voting place.

**The Vote Count**

After the ballots are counted, the results are written on an Acta, which is signed by the election officials and sometimes by the poll-watchers as well. The Acta is the crucial instrument for aggregating the count. After the actas are completed and transmitted, both the marked and the unused ballots are burned at each voting site. The purpose of the burning is to avoid stuffing ballot boxes or the stealing or exchange of ballot boxes during transport to central vote count centers.

Complaints about the conduct of the elections may be written on the actas by the party poll-watcher, but to be official, a
complaint must be registered within 3 days of the publication of official results. The Tribunal is the adjudicator of complaints, and there is no legal deadline for the Tribunal to resolve complaints.

The key to the count remains the Actas. The Electoral Tribunal has an extensive network of faxes, radios, and car transport planned to communicate the results of the vote count at each mesa. The procedure for the count at the mesa is to first count the presidential ballots and then transmit the results to the next level of electoral authorities (through the municipality, province and up to the national level). Next, the legislative ballots are counted and transmitted, and so on through the 5 races.

The transmission of unofficial results to the Tribunal occurs as follows: a) voting centers within 45 minutes of the national vote count center will be transmitted by car; b) centers within 2 hours distance will use phone, radio or fax; c) remote centers will use radios.

The Tribunal has its own radio network which will provide back-up to telephones and help prevent problems in rural areas where fraud has happened historically. The computer systems have a back-up to provide a replication of results. If electricity is cut, the telephones should still work, though faxes will not.

The Tribunal will begin announcing unofficial results as soon as they receive 5% of the results (based on the Chilean model); and expect to have presidential results Sunday night. Official results will have to await the actual transport of the hard-copy actas to Panama City.

**Election Observers and Pollwatchers**

The Catholic Church-led Comisión de Justicia y Paz is the successor to the Cruzada Civilista which organized a quick count in the 1989 elections that provided the basis for estimating the true winners of that election. Formed in August 1991, the Comisión has organized an impressive voter observation network, as well as played an important mediating role throughout the 1994 electoral process. (Their quick count of 1992 confirmed the Tribunal's results in the referendum.)

The Comisión has encouraged a calm electoral process from the beginning when it mediated the approval of the Compromiso de Santa María in which all of the political parties agreed to a clean, peaceful and ethical campaign. The Comisión also holds weekly meetings with the candidates to mediate problems and encourage ethical behavior. In addition to the work of the Commission, the United Nations Development Program has coordinated a process - "the Bambito process" - of dialogue among the political parties, business, labor, universities, and the Church beginning in 1993.
The purpose has been to discuss social and political issues and to promote reconciliation.

The Comision will have 1800 Panamanians observing the elections on election day and will conduct a parallel tabulation of 80% of the votes (at 1500 mesas), as well as an exit poll between 9am and 2 pm. The parallel tabulation will provide the data for a quick count for the presidential race, although the Comision does not plan to publicize their results. Observers will stay in one location the entire day. The Comision expects to have its results by 10:00 pm on Sunday night.

Political parties are each allowed to have two poll-watchers in each voting station, although no party is likely to do so. The PDC and PRD will each try to place one pollwatcher in perhaps 50% of the mesas. The Arnulfistas and Morilena are also expected to mobilize large numbers, although less than that. The Tribunal has trained about 2000 party representatives.

Several groups of foreign observers will be present. The Tribunal is inviting about 20 electoral magistrates from Latin America. The Comision is inviting a group of foreign observers. The OAS (15-20), CAPEL (20), UN (2) and EEC are all sending small delegations, as well as the diplomatic corps in Panama. We will seek to coordinate our activities with these groups.

Civic Education

The Centro ProDemocracia and the Electoral Tribunal have conducted extensive civic education on how to vote. The Tribunal has had ads on TV every day for the last two months, as well as in newspaper and radios. They have provided training for party representatives as well as their own voting station officials.

During the visit of the advance team, the Tribunal was conducting tests to see if citizens understand the voting process. Although the results were not yet in, it appeared that the most errors occurred not on the more complicated legislative ballots, but on the presidential ballot where individuals marked their chosen candidate each time he/she appeared in a party box.

Public Safety

The Public Forces are turned over to the Electoral Tribunal beginning May 2 until three days after the elections. Police who are stationed in areas outside of their voting site will be allowed to vote after the polls are closed in order to avoid multiple voting. None of the parties and few observers voiced concerns about the police.
Summary of Discussions with Political Leaders
Advance Mission
Panama City
April 13-16, 1994

President Guillermo Endara

President Endara stated he was committed to a clean election; that the Tribunal was excellent; and that the Catholic Church (in the Comision de Justicia y Paz) had promoted the important Corte Santa Maria. He said he will transfer power to whoever wins the elections.

President Endara expects a good climate during and after the elections. He has faith in the police force. He has already announced his plan to invite the winner on May 9 to the Palace to being a transition. He will also invite the president-elect to the Cartagena summit scheduled for June 18.

Endara invited and welcomed President Carter's advice in the transition. Since Panamanians do not have any experience in a presidential transition, Carter's experience would be very useful.

Arnulfista Candidate Mireya Moscogo de Gruber and Coalition Members

Sra. Mireya de Gruber commented that Panamanians are in a learning process as this will be their first democratic elections. She wants these elections to be peaceful, but is concerned that there will be violence. The Arnulfistas expect the campaign to heat up. Already one violent incident occurred in a campaign rally against Gruber, and she has received blackmail threats regarding President Endara's national address (the upcoming videotape airing).

The coalition plans to have 8,000-10,000 pollwatchers; expects to win 31-35 legislative seats; and is "sure they will win the elections." They have confidence in the Tribunal and will respect the results. They cited the good work of the Tribunal in the 1992 referendum, even though the government lost the vote. They also stated that President Endara (Arnulfista party) will deliver power to whoever wins.

Gruber stated that President Carter was instrumental in 1989 and that they were grateful for his role then. The subsequent OAS mediating role, however, was in favor of the military. The U.S. invasion was to defend democracy in Panama, not to intervene. President Carter can count on their support and can help guarantee democracy in Panama. They are receiving threats from the same group as in 1989 (and referred to PRD members who played prominent roles then as being active in the PRD campaign now). Gruber recognized that the Canal Treaties were followed by a political opening under Torrijos to allow the formation of political parties, and that the Treaties had a high political cost to President Carter in the next U.S. election.
The Arnulfistas fear the PRD reaction in the event of a loss, and believe that a Carter-led delegation could help prevent violence. They want many international observers and encouraged international organizations and Carter to come to "guarantee a pristine election and deter any manipulation."

**PRD Candidate Ernesto Perez Balladares and Campaign Staff**

The PRD campaign staff stated that they saw a consensus on the integrity of the Tribunal and that, despite the fact that the PRD did not have a representative among the magistrates, the PRD has confidence in the Tribunal. They cited several reasons for their confidence. One, the track record in the 1991 partial elections and the 1992 referendum demonstrated its capacity. Two, the PRD conducted an audit of the 1994 voter registration list (padron) and found it to be accurate; in fact, they noted this was the first time an audit by a political party affirmed the integrity of the padron. Three, the Tribunal moved to change the electoral law in June 1992 to abolish the vote of party representatives (pollwatchers) on the Actas. Four, the Tribunal took a positive action to end the negative campaigning in the form of the media ads by sympathizers of the Cambio 94 campaign against the PRD, and the responding ads by PRD sympathizers against Ruben Carles. They further complimented the work of the Comision de Justicia y Paz and said that the party's deputy secretary general attends the weekly meetings.

Nevertheless, Ernesto Perez Balladares related the following concerns to the team regarding the election process to date: the use by the government of public resources for the campaign (though the PRD did not plan to file a formal complaint); death threats to him (complaint lodged with Tribunal); and President Endara's violation of both the electoral code and his personal commitment not to interfere in the campaign when he televised the videotapes of the Noriega period.

Perez Balladares stated that he will accept the results of the elections and will move away from the Panamanian tradition of "Either I win, or I'm robbed of my victory." He has promised to recognize the victor on election night. If the victor, Balladares will broaden his government to include independents and other parties in his cabinet and a non-PRD member as Attorney General (Procurador). The PRD expects to win 20-25 Assembly seats, but will seek a concertation among parties in the Assembly even if they win a majority of seats.

The PRD is mobilizing 33,000 supporters to work in some capacity on election day: 11,000 pollwatchers (1 per polling site plus alternate); 17,000 to mobilize and help voters outside the voting sites; and runners (corredores) to collect and transmit data for the parallel vote count.

They indicated that the prestige of an observer team led by President Carter would be important to prevent violence and
encourage the acceptance of the results of the elections.

Cambio 94 Candidate Ruben Carles

Ruben Carles had two concerns regarding the electoral process to date. First, he questioned the decision of the Tribunal Electoral to uphold the indictment of Molirena mayoral candidate Maylin Correa on charges of using public resources for her campaign. Second, he raised concerns about the new ballot system that could cause confusion among voters. In his view, the new ballots were a dramatic change from the past and would lead voters to make errors in marking their ballots that would result in many null (invalidated) ballots, and could even effect the outcome of a close election.

Carles' views of international observers were equivocal. He stated that there was an important role for international observers in the 1994 elections, but that President Carter suffers from an image of being pro-Tortijista. Nevertheless Carter's presence in the 1989 elections, along with President Ford, was determinant, and Carles encouraged them to return in 1994 with a bipartisan delegation. In his view, the Americans played a more positive role than did the Latin Americans, especially the OAS, whom he viewed as pro-Tortijista in 1989.

PDC Candidate Eduardo Vallarino

Vallarino had no significant complaints about the electoral process and felt the Tribunal was doing a good job. International observers would be a stabilizing factor and should come because "if they come, they probably won't be needed; but if they don't come, they probably will be needed."

The UNDP's ambito process has been very good. It has helped erase the animosities among Panamanians. The PDC has offered to form a new sort of coalition in which the party would give up its presidential candidacy if other parties would sign its political program (Pact for the People). This would constitute a true uniting of programs, rather than a coalition with divided programs. So far the party has received no response from other parties.
Panama Background/April 29, 1994

BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM:

THE 1994 PANAMERICAN ELECTIONS

Summary of Conclusions of Advance Mission and Description of the Electoral System

The Advance Mission

As chair of the Council of Freely-Elected Heads of Government, an informal group of 24 leaders from the Americas, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter was invited by the Electoral Tribunal and President Guillermo Endara to observe the national elections in Panama on May 8, 1994. An advance team comprised of Jennifer McCoy, Joaquin Daly, Juan Manuel Garcia-Passialagua and Kelly McBride visited Panama April 13-16 to assess the status of the electoral process, consult with Panamanian leaders, and recommend whether the Council should accept the invitation.

The team met with five of the seven presidential candidates, the Electoral Tribunal, the Catholic Church-led Comisión de Justicia y Paz, officials of the U.N. Development Program, and the Centro Pro-Democracia (see attached interview list). In discussions with the presidential candidates and political parties, the team found widespread confidence in the Electoral Tribunal, extensive preparations by the Comisión de Justicia y Paz to mount a domestic election observation and parallel vote count, and few complaints about the electoral process to date.

Nevertheless, the team sensed a general uneasiness in the country that was perhaps related to the tragic electoral fraud perpetrated by General Manuel Noriega in 1989 and witnessed by a delegation led by Presidents Carter and Ford and Prime Minister George Price sponsored by the Council of Freely-Elected Heads of Government, and the National Democratic and National Republican Institutes for International Affairs. The nervousness in the country was captured in an extensive public opinion poll, published in the Panamanian newspaper, La Prensa, on April 15, in which a plurality - 42.6% - indicated that they thought there would be violence during the electoral process - whereas 36.4% said there wouldn't.

Because the team was encouraged in virtually all of its meetings to send an observer delegation and for other reasons described in the terms of reference, the Council decided to send an international and bipartisan team.
Finally, the council delegation could promote reconciliation and a smooth, peaceful, and democratic transition - an event that Panama has not witnessed for three decades.

The Monitoring Process

Our delegation will begin its briefings on Friday afternoon and continue them through Saturday. We will learn about Panama's electoral process and how we should monitor the election. We will meet with many of the candidates, and we need to ask them their views of the electoral process and whether they will accept the results if the vote and count are fair. We will show you how to monitor the election and how to fill out a survey form, which we will give to you during the briefings.

On Sunday, we will deploy throughout the country and in coordination with other Panamanian and international groups. We will return to the Hotel on Sunday evening or Monday morning to evaluate as a group what we have seen and to discuss the statement that will be issued at our concluding press conference.

The most important premise that should guide this delegation, as it has guided all of our missions, is that we should be absolutely impartial with respect to all of the political parties and candidates. Secondly, we should not draw any conclusions about the electoral process until the group has an opportunity to gather at the conclusion to hear from each other. On the day of the election, some of you will see a process working very smoothly, and some might see some problems. It is impossible and unfair to your colleagues and to the Panamanian people to draw a conclusion about the overall election from a single person's monitoring experience. That is why we all need to fill out the forms and hear from each other before reaching any conclusions. To avoid the possibility that remarks may be taken out of context or misconstrued, delegates should not make any statements to the media regarding their evaluations until the delegation has reconvened, each team has presented their findings, and a formal statement has been released.
Hon. Jimmy Carter  
May 6, 1994  
Arrival Statement  
Panama

Five years ago, we left Panama distressed that an opportunity for peaceful, democratic change was aborted. Today, we return confident that the Panamanian people will have the chance that was denied them by General Manuel Noriega - to fulfill the democratic right to choose their next leaders.

The Council of Freely-Elected Heads of Government, a group of 24 current and former leaders of the Americas, was invited to observe these elections by the Tribunal Electoral and President Guillermo Endara. As Chair of the Council, I want to introduce the delegation that has travelled here to witness these historic elections. My co-chairs are George Price, former Prime Minister of Belize and Vice Chair of the Council, who was also here for the 1989 elections, and former Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo, who will be arriving tomorrow.

I want to thank Council members President Rafael Caldera of Venezuela, Fernando Belaunde of Peru, and Oscar Arias of Costa Rica for sending representatives to serve on our delegation. I would like to thank my good friend former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Jim Wright for joining us and would also like to recognize Bruce McColm, President of the International Republican Institute and Jack Vaughn, former U.S. Ambassador to Panama. In fact, let me ask each of my colleagues if they would stand and identify themselves.

The Council has observed eight elections in this hemisphere. Everywhere we have gone, we have been committed to impartial witnesses of elections and to support the democratic process of the countries that invite us to come.

In the last four years, Panamanians have worked hard to develop democratic institutions that have integrity. Part of our mission is to lend our support to those in the Tribunal Electoral and the Comisión de Justicia y Paz, who have worked so hard to make sure this election would be free and fair.
As in many other countries where we have monitored elections, we are coordinating our work with the Organization of American States and with CAPEL. Our delegation is composed of 30 members and staff, and on election day, our group will be divided and will travel to different areas of the country. Together with groups from the Organization of American States and CAPEL, we will monitor as many areas as possible. Then Monday morning, we will reassemble in this hotel to share our assessments of the elections and to consult with the other observer groups and with the Commission on Justice and Peace. We plan to share our conclusions with you on Monday afternoon in a press conference.

As most of you know, Rosalynn and I have always felt a bond of affection for the people of Panama. We therefore appreciate being invited to visit your country at such a crucial moment. The new government that the people of Panama will elect on Sunday will have to work closely with the United States to ensure the successful implementation of the Canal Treaties. Most important, however, the new government will need to be able to consolidate democracy, reconcile the many different parties, and address many issues of concern to Panamanians. Such a government can only emerge from a free election that is accepted by the people of Panama and the international community.

The people of Panama are ready to make such a decision, and we are here to express our solidarity with those who are committed to making the election on Sunday the most democratic decision in decades.

Thank you.
Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government

Observer Form

May 8, 1994 Panamanian Elections

[Fill out one (1) form for each polling table (mesa).]

1. Basic Information
Observer Name ___________________________ Circuit number/Name ___________________________
Polling site (centro) name ___________________________
Mesa number ___________________________

Time at site ___________________________ Number of Voting Mesas at site ___________________________
Number of registered voters at this mesa: ___________________________
Present at Poll Opening?: Yes ___ No ___; Present at Poll Close?: Yes ___ No ___

II. Complete the following based upon your observations, as well as the impressions of President of the voting mesa and/or poll watchers:

1. Did mesa open on time? ___________________________
   Yes ___ No ___

2. Was ballot box empty at poll opening? ___________________________
   Yes ___ No ___

3. Approximately how many have voted so far (percent)? ___________________________

4. Is the mesa well-organized? ___________________________
   Yes ___ No ___

5. Are three mesa officials present? ___________________________
   Yes ___ No ___

6. Did the three mesa officials appear well-prepared and independent? ___________________________
   Yes ___ No ___

7. Did the voters understand the ballot? ___________________________
   Yes ___ No ___

8. Were there significant problems with the voter rolls? ___________________________
   Yes ___ No ___

9. Were there significant problems with the voting credentials (cedula)? ___________________________
   Yes ___ No ___

10. Does security situation appear satisfactory? ___________________________
    Yes ___ No ___

II. Is voting private? ___________________________
    Yes ___ No ___

12. Which poll watchers (representatives) are present from the parties: Alianza Democratica (Arnulista Party--PA( ); Authentic Liberal Party--PLA( ); Liberal Party--PL( ); Independent Democratic Union Party--UDI( ); Pueblo Unido [Democratic Revolutionary Party--PRD ( ); Labor Party--PALA ( ); Liberal Republican Party--PLR/LIBRE ( )); Cambio 94 [Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement--MOLIRENA ( ); National Renewal Movement--MORENA ( ); Civic Renewal Party--PRC ( )); Convergencia Nacional (Solidarity Party--PS ( ); National Unity Mission Party--Mision ( )); Parties not in coalition: Christian Democratic Party--PDC(), Doctrinal Panamanian Party--PPD(); Papa Egoro Movement--MPE( ); Popular Nationalist Party--PNP ( )

13. Domestic observers: Comision de J. y P. ( ) Other( )

II. Based on your assessment answer the following:

Overall, does voting process appear satisfactory? Yes ___ No ___
Any other observations or comments? (Use space on back of form)
I. Información General

Nombre del Observador/es: ____________________
Circuito: ________ Numero de Mesa: ________
Centro de Votación: ________ Numero de Mesas: ________
Hora de llegada: ________ Numero de Electores Registrados: ________
Observe la apertura de la mesa? Sí ___ No ___ El cierre? Sí ___ No ___

II. Basado en sus observaciones y asimismo en las opiniones del Presidente de mesa y/o representante:

1. Abrió la mesa a la hora prevista? Sí ___ No ___
2. Estaban las urnas vacías Sí ___ No ___
3. Hasta el momento, ¿de electores han votado? ______
4. Esta la mesa bien conformada y organizada Sí ___ No ___
5. Están presentes tres oficiales de mesa? Sí ___ No ___
6. Observa que los tres oficiales de mesa son independientes y bien preparados? Sí ___ No ___
7. Los votantes comprenden el proceso de votación? Sí ___ No ___
8. Hubieron problemas en el registro electoral? Sí ___ No ___
9. Hubieron problemas con la cédula electoral? Sí ___ No ___
10. Es satisfactoria la seguridad? Sí ___ No ___
11. Es el voto secreto? Sí ___ No ___

12. Que representantes de partidos están presentes: Alianza Democrática [Partido Arnulfista—PA( )]; Partido Liberal Auténtico—PLA( ); Partido Liberal—PL ( ); Partido Union Democrática Independiente—UDI( ); Pueblo Unido [Partido Revolucionario Democratico—PRD ( )]; Partido Laborista—PALA ( ); Partido Liberal Republicano—PLR/LIBRE ( ); Cambio 94 [Movimiento Liberal Republicano Nacionalista—MLRN ( )]; Movimiento de Renovación Nacional—MORENA ( ); Partido Renovación Civilista—PRC ( ); Concertación Nacional [Partido Solidaridad—PS ( )]; Partido Milenio de Unidad Nacional—Mision ( )]; Partidos no en coalición: Partido Demócrata Cristiano—PDC( ); Partido Panamenista Doctrinario—PPD( ); Partido Movimiento Papa Egore—MPE( ); Partido Nacionalista Popular—PNP ( )

13. Observadores locales: Conclor de Justicia y Paz ( ) Otros ( )

III. Conclusion:
En general, el proceso de votación se desarrolla satisfactoriamente? Sí ___ No ___
Otros comentarios (favor use el otro lado de la pagina):
Preliminary Summary of Election Observer Forms

The Council delegation members observed a total of 335 means. The results were overwhelmingly positive. Below is a summary of the results of two of the most important questions, the "overall assessment" in part III, and the number of party "poll watchers" present (question §12):

III. Overall, does voting process appear satisfactory?

Yes 323
No 1
Undecided 3
(No answer checked, apparently because observer did not feel comfortable in characterizing the process as satisfactory or unsatisfactory)

Incomplete form 5
(No answer checked and answer is unclear from other information on form)

§12. Poll watchers (representantes) present from the parties? (total number present)

In the 335 means observed by the Council delegation, there was an average of 6.6 party poll watchers (representantes) present.
Hon. Jimmy Carter
May 9, 1994
Departure Statement
Panama

Upon our arrival in Panama we noted a dramatic change since we were here in 1989. In the 1989 election the Panamanian people were denied the chance to successfully complete their democratic right to choose their leaders. Today, we must congratulate the Panamanian people, President Endara, the Electoral Tribunal, and all the leaders in the political arena for their extraordinary expression of civic participation.

As Chair of the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, a group of 24 current and former leaders from the Americas which I chair, I am leading an observer delegation which is here at the invitation of the Electoral Tribunal, President Endara, and other Panamanian leaders. Also with me as co-leaders of this delegation are the Council’s Vice Chairman George Price, former Prime Minister of Belize, and Rodrigo Carazo, former President of Costa Rico, who had to leave a few hours ago. Other members of the delegation include representatives of Council members former Peruvian President Fernando Belaunde Terry, and former Costa Rican President Oscar Arias.

The 27 members of our delegation were deployed throughout the country, and coordinated closely with the observer teams sent by the OAS, led by Mario Gonzalez, and CARPL, led by Daniel Tovatto, both of whom we hope to cooperate with in the future. All three of our groups share the view that this election was one of the best organized and successful we have ever seen. Our observers also consulted with the Panamanian observers organized by the Comision de Justicia y Paz, as well as with the observers organized by the Electoral Tribunal. Panama today should be proud to celebrate this historic day. Although only one of the presidential candidates could win the election, all the people of Panama are the true winners of this process. Their efforts in this election stand as a model for the entire region and for the hemisphere.

While there are many whose efforts were vital to the success of this election, we want to make special mention of the outstanding work of the Panamanian Electoral Tribunal from the three Magistrates, down to the thousands of officials nationwide who organized the voting sessions, including the important contributions made by Panamanian youth and women.
This morning, I met with Ernesto Perez Balladares, and this afternoon I will meet with other candidates. The Council and I are ready to assist Panamanians in any way if we can be of help during the transition and after.

When I return to the U.S. tomorrow I will inform President Clinton and Secretary of State Christopher of our observations of the electoral process and the spirit of democracy which we have witnessed here.

Panama has a special place in my and Rosalynn's hearts, and we are confident that all Panamanians will continue to work to strengthen their democracy in the future.
The U.S. Stake in Panama...

A few votes anywhere will mean more for the United States this year than Panama's presidential elections last Sunday. It's not that the winner, U.S.-educated millionaire businessman Sereno Perez Balladares, is Washington's man; on the contrary he heads Panama's leading nationalist party. It's that on his watch Panama must carry off final conversion of the American-built Panama Canal to Panama on Dec. 31, 1999. The smooth transfer of this vital naval facility will call for high political skills on each side.

Treaties made by President Jimmy Carter and the late General Omar Torrijos in 1979 spelled out the new status of Panamanian sovereignty and operation over the waterway and surrounding lands. Nothing has changed to justify altering those treaties, but in both countries political snags lurk. In some Panamanian quarters there is a disturbing reluctance to move on without American guidance—for instance, to lose the income from American military bases, which are to close. In some American quarters there persists the attitude of "patriotic" overresponsiveness toward the canal that fired up the losing but bruising battle against treaty ratification in the Senate.

Aware that both the process and the result of voting in Panama can color the countdown to 2000, President Carter himself led an election observer mission. Despite widespread fears of discrimination, the process was peaceful and fair. The easy victory that Mr. Perez Balladares scored and the comfortable governing coalition he is expected to assemble should strengthen him as an interlocutor with the United States. Mr. Perez Balladares is of the popular party that Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega turned into the political arm of the armed forces until an American invasion deposed the strongman five years ago. He has sworn to identify himself with his party's most acceptable Torrijos roots and to democratize the party from the inside. But he will have to keep working hard to stem fears of the revival of the drug trade and corruption associated with Gen. Noriega.

President Bush invaded Panama in 1989 in large measure to halt Gen. Noriega's patronage of the drug traffic. The chief effect of his ouster on the drug trade was to privatize it and to create another set of obstacles to law enforcement. On this and other pressing concerns, the United States badly needs Panama's vigorous cooperation.
Businessman Appears Victor In Panama

By WARD R. FRENCH

Appointed by New York Times

A left-of-center businessman who reminds the image of his party after his emergence on the scene under Gamboa in Panama last year has won Panama's fourth democratic election in seven years of a century today, according to exit polls this evening.

The expected victor, Ernesto Pérez Balladares, 48, an American-educated lawyer and former government minister, was expected to secure a single mandate for Panama's presidential election, which was called by the government in the wake of the coup d'etat in the American territory.

Mr. Balladares is a prominent figure in the political and economic scene in Panama, known for his strong stance on issues such as corruption and reform. He has been a vocal critic of the previous government and has been seen as a symbol of hope for a more stable and prosperous future.

In the first free elections in Panama in 25 years, the incumbent candidate was soundly defeated. Early results showed that a leftist candidate, Gerardo Torres Balladares, who received more votes than any other candidate in the race, was not in the lead.

Balladares submitted papers today offering an open challenge to the results of the vote, stating that he had won by a margin of 500,000 votes.

After decades of political instability in Panama, the United States was relieved to see a fair election in the country.

For five years, the United States had been involved in Panama, but the results were seen as a major step forward in the country's democratic process.

The world community, led by the United States, congratulated Panama on its democratic transition.

In addition to a presidential election, a constitutional assembly was elected.

About 1.4 million of Panama's 2.5 million citizens were registered to vote.
Candidate with links to Noriega leads Panama presidential vote

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Panama City, Panama — A millionaire businessman with past ties to Gen. Manuel Noriega was leading Sunday in Panama's first presidential elections since the U.S. invasion in 1989, according to early official results.

It was the first time Panamanians had voted as freely and peacefully. The military, which ruled Panama for more than two decades before the United States invaded to depose Noriega, had influenced outcomes through electoral fraud and threats of coups.

With 60.1 percent of the vote counted late Sunday, Ernesto Perez Balladares, known as "Toró" ("Bull") for his beefy build, was leading with 33.1 percent of the vote, the Independent Electoral Tribunal said.

Perez Balladares ran the 1989 campaign of Noriega's hand-picked candidate, but he gained popularity in the current election by invoking the memory of the late populist military dictator Gen. Omar Torrijos.

Perez Balladares has said he opposes a return to militarism and has tried to distance himself from Noriega.

Mireya Moscoso of the ruling Arnulfista Party was in second place with 28.3 percent of the vote, the tribunal said. She is the widow of the late Arnulfo Arias de la Madrid, a popular president who was elected three times and thrown out all three times by coups.

Actor and salsa singer Ruben Blades, who campaigned by holding concerts featuring his popular music and calling for a break with past politics and parties, was third with 17.7 percent of the vote.

The last elections, held in May 1989, were annulled by Noriega when it became apparent that his candidate would lose to Guillermo Endara. Endara and his vice presidential candidates were beaten up by street thugs controlled by Noriega.

Endara was later sworn in as president on a U.S. military base during the American invasion. U.S. forces captured Noriega and took him to Miami, where he was convicted of drug trafficking. He is serving a 40-year sentence in a prison in Miami.

Some 1.4 million of Panama's 2.5 million citizens were registered to vote. In addition to electing a president, they chose two vice presidents, 71 representatives, 67 mayors, 311 magistrates and 24 local council members.

Turnout appeared to be heavy as thousands of voters lined up under cloudy skies at dozens of voting stations around the capital.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter was one of some 1,200 international and Panamanian election observers. The vote was seen as a test of the Central American nation's democracy, especially since Endara's party was likely to lose power.
Noriega's party wins in Panama

Reborn group to rule as canal turnover nears

By David L. Marcus

The Washington Post

Monday, May 9, 1994

Noriega's party wins elections in Panama

Continued from Page 1A.

Before the 1989 invasion, although he had denounced the corruption at the top of the military, Mr. Noriega had supported the junta. He was a former member of the Fuerzas Publicas, Panama's national police force. He was also a member of the National Front for the Defense of Panama, a military group that opposed the United States invasion. He was a member of the National Front for the Defense of Panama, a military group that opposed the United States invasion.

With more than 45 percent of the vote counted, the Revolutionary Democratic Party was winning the presidency, ahead of several other parties. The party, led by its leader, the former government minister, had promised to end the civil war and to negotiate a peace accord. It was also a member of the coalition government that had been formed in 1989.

The elections were seen as a test of the country's commitment to democracy and its ability to move forward after years of civil war. The RDP, which had been in power since 1989, had promised to end the civil war and to negotiate a peace accord. It was also a member of the coalition government that had been formed in 1989.

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El gobierno de Clinton colaborará con el nuevo gobierno panameño

Estados Unidos reconoce triunfo electoral del PRD

El secretario de Estado norteamericano calificó como "libres y limpias" las elecciones.

Panamá. AP/Reynaldo Pérez

El decreto de Estado de Estados Unidos reconoció el triunfo electoral de Ernesto Pérez Balladares, del expuesto Partido Revolucionario Demócrata (PRD) de Panamá y le dio el poder en su país, según se ha dicho a través de un mensaje de prensa distribuido por la embajada norteamericana en la capital panameña.

"Tenemos toda la expectativa de que podemos trabajar con el señor Pérez Balladares en una nueva, constructiva y fructífera relación, especialmente en los aspectos del Canal de Panamá, y en el logro de mayores mutuas y objetivos comunes", expresó el comunicado.

La nota incluye también una felicitación al pueblo panameño por realizar una campaña "libre, justa y pacífica".

El PRD fue el partido de los militares que gobier nan a Panamá entre 1968 y 1989. En este sentido, el diario "El Universal" reconoció que este país "ha vivido una transición pacífica".

El general Noriega fue derrocado por la invasión estadounidense a Panamá el 20 de diciembre de 1989, que instaló al magnate e industrial de Miami, Guillermo Endara.

Por su parte, el Secretario de Estado de los Estados Unidos, Warren Christopher, dijo en la ciudad de México que el gobierno del presidente Bill Clinton colaborará con el nuevo presidente electo Ernesto Pérez Balladares.

Christopher también expresó su deseo de que "el nuevo gobierno mantenga" el tránsito del Canal de Panamá.

El secretario de Estado de los Estados Unidos dijo que Washington negociará con el nuevo gobierno pen ameño para asegurar que la transferencia del Canal de Panamá, prevista para el 31 de diciembre de 1999, sea libre y pacífica.

El comunicado de Clinton se produjo sin mayores problemas, lo que ha sido un cielo especial en el mundo en donde las relaciones públicas están desborda do por la inestabilidad política.

El ex presidente Ford e incluso el ex presidente Carter se analizaron en una conferencia de prensa.

Por su parte, el ex presidente Carter dijo que la transición panameña "es una de las mejores organizadas" que ha conocido en su vida.

En su declaración, Carter dijo que las elecciones de Panamá no presentaron "la menor menaza" y que las autoridades han "seguido una agenda pacífica".

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El Departamento de Estado felicita al futuro presidente –

“Estoy convencido de que Pérez Balladares será un maravilloso dirigente de Panamá”, dijo Carter

Por A. SANCHEZ BULLEAS

El Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos, felicitó ayer al presidente electo de Panamá, Ernesto Pérez Balladares, y le deseó éxito en su gobierno.

“Felicitamos al pueblo panameño por sus elecciones, las cuales, según los observadores, fueron libres, imprescindibles y justas. Felicitamos al ganador Ernesto Pérez Balladares, por su victoria y la tiranía que dicha elección ha llevado a su gobierno”, dijo oficialmente el Departamento de Estado.

“Tenemos la esperanza de poder trabajar con el Sr. Pérez Balladares de una manera oficial, después de la transición y el régimen de autoría”, agregó el organismo estadounidense.

En tanto, ayer en Panamá, el presidente de los Estados Unidos, Jimmy Carter, dijo que las elecciones realizadas en Panamá, el pasado domingo, han sido una de las “mayores” del mundo y que se han celebrado en América Latina.

“Nunca es nuestra vida hemos visto un país en su justicia, paz y orden”, expresó Carter en una declaración de agradecimiento, a la que añadió que la crisis de Panamá es una cuestión que debe ser resuelta a través de un proceso democrático.

“La tragedia internacional de Panamá ha llegado a su fin”, dijo Carter, al manifestarse que la crisis de Panamá es una crisis de la democracia, y que el pueblo panameño debe elegir a su nuevo representante.
"No hay problemas, mucha gente quiere votar", Carter

Por EMILIO SINCLAIR

El expresidente estadounidense Jimmy Carter, quien encabeza la delegación de observadores de su país, manifestó en las primeras horas de la mañana de hoy que "no hay problemas, mucha gente quiere votar".

La delegación de observadores de los Estados Unidos junto con invitados de otras naciones recorren todo el país, para percatarse de la pureza del sufragio.

El aeropuerto internacional Marcos Gelabert (Panamá) por razones de seguridad permanece cerrado para los vuelos regulares y los aviones hacia el interior del país parten del Aeropuerto de Tocumen.

Algunos observadores internacionales, asignados a la vigilancia del proceso electoral, recorrieron la carretera percibiendo los acontecimientos.
Se registran incidentes durante elecciones

Víctor E. Figueroa B.  
De La Prensa

Tres detenidos por la comisión de supuestos delitos electorales, entre ellos dos candidatos a representantes, un acto de protesta en el interior del país, el accidente de un observador internacional y de un funcionario del Tribunal Electoral y la colocación de materiales a este bloqueando comercios en Chiriquí por la venta de bebidas alcohólicas, fueron algunos de los incidentes que se dieron ayer en Panamá durante el proceso de elecciones.

El presidente de Costa Rica, Rodrigo Carazo, al ser informado de la detención de dos candidatos, expresó que lamenta que lamento que lamento que los candidatos se vean en esta situación.

Auto de observador Rodrigo Carazo choca en la calle 50 en el Tribunal Electoral.

Luego de que el observador Carazo se reuniera con el presidente de Estados Unidos, Jimmy Carter, en Esteban, un vehículo alquilado por el Tribunal Electoral se accidentó en las cercanías de la ciudad de Colón. El conductor Roberto Galindo fue internado en el Hospital Anamur Guerra.

Sin revelar la identidad, el TEI informó que en la provincia de Veraguas un conductor no respondió a un sismo y terminó con su vehículo en la carretera, provocando daños en más de 100 vehículos de la carretera del Este.

Otras de las detenciones, un caso de derechos humanos en Colón, fue registrada recientemente. Un observador fue detenido por supuestos delitos electorales.

Comerciantes que no respetan ley seca fueron sancionados.

Un boletín del TEI informó que en Chiriquí, Guti y Parita se registraron protestas de varios comerciantes de partidos políticos, que llegaron a la hora del cierra de las elecciones a denunciar

Cuando las autoridades de la mesa aplicaron los dispositivos de seguridad, se registró el incidente.

Pretende la boca de pronto que en el Centro de Votación de la escuela República Dominicana, en Coclé, hubo una llamada de alerta sobre la colocación de una bomba, cuyo caso fue atendido por especialistas y atendido por la policía, quienes luego de realizar una inspección en el área, informaron que no se trataba de una falsa alarma.