



Australian Government
Refugee Review Tribunal

Country Advice

Dominican Republic

Dominican Republic – DOM38959 –
Municipal police – Montecristi – State
protection – Relocation

15 July 2011

- 1. Please provide information about the Municipal Police of Palo Verde of the province of Montecristi. In particular, is it an official state police force or is it a local police force or volunteer or vigilante group? If this is a local police force of volunteers, what is the official state police force?**

No information was located on the Municipal Police of Palo Verde.¹ However, reports indicate that municipal forces do operate in Montecristi more broadly. There are no State police in the Dominican Republic; instead internal security is managed by the Dominican National Police in conjunction with municipal police forces.²

Municipal police

Municipal police are a legitimate part of the Dominican security apparatus and operate throughout the country. The legal framework for municipal police forces is provided in *Law 176-07 on the National Districts and Municipalities*.³ Article 173 states that municipal police are “unique and specialised police forces for municipal affairs”.⁴ The same Article notes that municipal police are “attached to the [local] council and under the immediate authority of the trustee” but also come under the supervision of the Professional Technical Secretary of the Interior and Police.⁵ Under Article 174, the municipal police are charged with “maintain[ing]

¹ Both English and Spanish language searches were conducted.

² National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2007, “*Chapter V: Police and Fire*”, “Ley No. 176-07 del Distrito Nacional y los Municipios” (Law 176-07 on the National Districts and Municipalities), (17 July 2007), available at the Municipal Police website http://www.policiaimp.com/LEYES/Ley_No_176-07%20LEY%20MUNICIPAL.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 1; National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*) http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_repdom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2. The original documents are in Spanish. Google translations can often be poor and can contain errors - as such they give only a rough indication of the contents of a document. For any further reliance on this information, a professional translation should be obtained.

³ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2007, “*Chapter V: Police and Fire*”, “Ley No. 176-07 del Distrito Nacional y los Municipios” (Law 176-07 on the National Districts and Municipalities), (17 July 2007), available at the Municipal Police website http://www.policiaimp.com/LEYES/Ley_No_176-07%20LEY%20MUNICIPAL.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 1.

⁴ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2007, “*Chapter V: Police and Fire*”, “Ley No. 176-07 del Distrito Nacional y los Municipios” (Law 176-07 on the National Districts and Municipalities), (17 July 2007), available at the Municipal Police website http://www.policiaimp.com/LEYES/Ley_No_176-07%20LEY%20MUNICIPAL.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 1.

⁵ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2007, “*Chapter V: Police and Fire*”, “Ley No. 176-07 del Distrito Nacional y los Municipios” (Law 176-07 on the National Districts and Municipalities), (17 July 2007), available at the Municipal Police website http://www.policiaimp.com/LEYES/Ley_No_176-07%20LEY%20MUNICIPAL.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 1.

municipal property and enforc[ing] laws, ordinances, resolutions, and municipal regulations”.⁶ No further details about the role of municipal forces is provided.

Although no reference to the Municipal Police of Palo Verde was located, sources indicate that municipal forces do operate in the region. For example, a July 2011 article in *Noticias Sin* refers to the Municipal Police of the Villa Vasquez, a town in Montecristi near Palo Verde.⁷ A report on the dioceses of Mao-Montecristi – which covers the provinces of Valverde, Montecristi, Santiago Rodríguez and Dajabón – details how the National Police and municipal forces operate in the area.⁸ According to the report, the National Police Northwest Regional Command is based in Mao in Valverde but “[t]here is also the Municipal Police, to support municipalities”.⁹ The report further notes that the municipal police have limited resources, few staff and are often poorly trained.¹⁰

Dominican National Police

The National Police are the main internal security body in the Dominican Republic.¹¹ According to the US Department of State, there are around 30,000 officers in the National Police.¹² The *Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04* sets out the role and objectives of the Dominican National Police.¹³ The National Police have Regional Command Offices throughout the country; forces within the region are “broken down into provincial, company, detachment, and local police post divisions”.¹⁴ According to Intelligence group Jane’s Sentinel, “[a]nti-drug operations are carried out by the National Directorate of Drug

⁶ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2007, “Chapter V: Police and Fire”, “Ley No. 176-07 del Distrito Nacional y los Municipios” (Law 176-07 on the National Districts and Municipalities), (17 July 2007), available at the Municipal Police website http://www.policiaimp.com/LEYES/Ley_No_176-07%20LEY%20MUNICIPAL.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 1.

⁷ “Asaltan y atacan cuartel policial en Montecristi” (Assault and attack police station in Montecristi) 2011, *Noticias Sin*, 4 July <http://www.noticiassin.com/2011/07/asaltan-y-atacan-cuartel-policial-en-monte-cristi/> – <http://translate.google.com.au/translate?hl=en&sl=es&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.noticiassin.com%2F2011%2F07%2Fasaltan-y-atacan-cuartel-policial-en-monte-cristi%2F> – 15 July 2011 – Attachment 3.

The article refers to “de la policía del municipio de Villa Vázquez”.

⁸ Diocesis Mao-Montecristi (undated), “*La Policía Nacional*”, Modelo de Situación Diócesis Mao-Montecristi (Model Status Diocese Mao-Montecristi) – <http://www.diocesismaomontecristi.org/modelosituaciondiocesana.pdf> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 4.

⁹ Diocesis Mao-Montecristi (undated), “*La Policía Nacional*”, Modelo de Situación Diócesis Mao-Montecristi (Model Status Diocese Mao-Montecristi) – <http://www.diocesismaomontecristi.org/modelosituaciondiocesana.pdf> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 4.

¹⁰ Diocesis Mao-Montecristi (undated), “*La Policía Nacional*”, Modelo de Situación Diócesis Mao-Montecristi (Model Status Diocese Mao-Montecristi) – <http://www.diocesismaomontecristi.org/modelosituaciondiocesana.pdf> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 4.

¹¹ US Overseas Security Advisory Council 2011, *Dominican Republic 2011 Crime and Safety Report*, 1 May <https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportPDF.aspx?cid=10942> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 5. According to the report, “[t]he constitution was changed on January 26th, 2010, which separated the powers of the National Police and the military. This constitutional change specifically identifies the military’s responsibility to maintain the country’s sovereignty, leaving the National Police, with a force of 29,627 officers, to handle the country’s internal security and the protection of its citizens (to include residents, visitors, and diplomats)”

¹² US Department of State 2010, “Background Note: Dominican Republic”, 7 June <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35639.htm> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 6.

¹³ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*) http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2.

¹⁴ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*) http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2; Nations Encyclopaedia 1989, “Dominican Republic: The National Police”, December <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-3883.html> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 7.

Control (Dirección Nacional de Control de Drogas: DNCD), made up of officers and other ranks enlisted from the national police and the armed forces”.¹⁵ News articles indicate that the National Police do operate in Palo Verde; for example, a November 2009 article in US Spanish-language newspaper *Hoy* reported on National Police counter-narcotic activities in Palo Verde.¹⁶

2. Is there any information about police recruitment; that is, could a 43 year old, with 9 years of education reach the rank of Sergeant Major in 3–4 years?

No information was located on the recruitment or promotion processes of the municipal police. The *Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04* sets out the requirements for entry and promotion of the National Police but it is unclear whether the standards are as strict for the municipal forces.¹⁷

Entry requirements for the National Police¹⁸

Since the *Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04* came into effect in 2004, all new recruits to the National Police must have completed high school – based on information in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, this is equivalent to 13 years of education.¹⁹ Articles 55 and 57 state that applicants must have a bachelors diploma (high school diploma) to be considered.²⁰ Earlier legislation did not include this entry prerequisite (only basic literacy and numeracy was required) and the 2004 Law exempts existing officers.²¹

Ranks

¹⁵ Jane’s Sentinel 2011, “Security (Dominican Republic), Security”, 21 February

<http://articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-Central-America-And-The-Caribbean/Security-Dominican-Republic.html> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 8.

¹⁶ “Policía dice ocupa más de un kilo de drogas” (Police say takes more than a kilo of drugs) 2009, *Hoy*, 22

November <http://www.hoy.com.do/el-pais/2009/11/22/303115/print> –

http://translate.google.com.au/translate?hl=en&sl=es&u=http://www.hoy.com.do/el-pais/2009/11/22/303115/print&ei=xA8RT0XkAYXgmAXGj6TTDg&sa=X&oi=translate&ct=result&resnum=13&ed=0CFAQ7gEwDA&prev=/search%3Fq%3Dpolicia%2BPalo%2BVerde%2Bmontecristi%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DX%26rls%3Dcom.microsoft:en-au%26rlz%3DI17GGLG_en%26biw%3D1839%26bih%3D873%26prmd%3Ddivnscm – Accessed 15 July 2011 –

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¹⁷ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2.

¹⁸ The following is sourced primarily from Google translations and informally translated by a Spanish speaker.

¹⁹ Encyclopaedia Britannica 2011, “Dominican Republic”,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/168728/Dominican-Republic/54444/Education> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 10. The Encyclopaedia Britannica writes: Primary education is officially free and compulsory for children between the ages of 7 and 14, although those who live in isolated areas have limited access to schooling. Primary schooling is followed by a two-year intermediate school and a four-year secondary course, after which a diploma called the bachillerato is awarded.

²⁰ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2.

²¹ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2. Article 57 states “[t]he current members of the National Police who do not enjoy these educational levels will remain in the police career”.

Article 44 of the *Institutional Law of the National Police* sets out the hierarchy of National Police ranks.²² The rank of Sergeant Major is categorised as a basic level, albeit the highest sub-grade. According to Article 44:

The ranks of the National Police includes the following levels and grades:

- a) Basic Level, with the categories: Raso, corporal, sergeant and sergeant major;
- b) Middle Level, whose categories are: cadet second lieutenant, first lieutenant and captain;
- c) Higher Level, with the categories: Major, lieutenant colonel and colonel;
- d) Level of Address, with the categories: General brigadier and major general.²³

Promotions

To be granted a promotion, National Police officers must meet the eligibility requirements set out in Article 58 of the *Institutional Law of the National Police*.²⁴ To be considered for a promotion, a police officer must “have completed four (4) years of seniority in [their] grade” and “meet the academic requirements”.²⁵ Although pre-2004 officers are exempt from the entry requirement of high school completion, “for purposes of promotion, [they] must meet the requirements for each grade”.²⁶ This suggests that all promotions, even within the basic level, require high school completion; however, this could not be confirmed. The officer must also “have passed the [required] course...and the competitive examination”.²⁷ The number of promotions granted is “determined by space available and the personnel required to meet the respective services”.²⁸ According to an April 2010 article in *Diario Libre*, 4,738 police were promoted in 2010.²⁹ The report specifies that 1,096 people were promoted to Sergeant Majors.³⁰

3. Please provide information about state protection for a person who is a former police officer involved in drug arrests.

²² National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2.

²³ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2.

²⁴ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2.

²⁵ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2.

²⁶ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2.

²⁷ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2

²⁸ National Congress of the Dominican Republic 2004, “*Ley Institucional de la Policía Nacional, No. 96-04*” (*Institutional Law of the National Police, No. 96-04*)

http://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/mesicic2_reptom_sc_anexo_5_sp.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 2

²⁹ “LF promotes 10,855 military and police” 2010, *Diario Libre*, 3 April available on the Dominican Republic website http://dominicanrepublic.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=300&Itemid=122 – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 11.

³⁰ “LF promotes 10,855 military and police” 2010, *Diario Libre*, 3 April available on the Dominican Republic website http://dominicanrepublic.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=300&Itemid=122 – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 11.

The Dominican state lacks the capacity to adequately protect its citizens from organised drug crime, due primarily to widespread corruption and government complicity in drug-trafficking. Although no information was located on the protection given to police officers threatened by organised crime, sources indicate police have been the victims of organised crimes and highlight the lack of adequate witness protection facilities. For example, in November 2008 an Assistant Director for Internal Affairs was murdered. The *Dominican Today* reported that the murder was linked to organised drug crime.³¹ More recently, in January 2011, the *Miami Herald* noted the murder of another Internal Affairs officer that had been “investigating dirty cops”.³² The 2011 US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs’ report on drug control stated that the Dominican Government needs to “address corruption issues and develop an effective witness protection program”.³³

Official involvement in drug-trafficking

Credible reporting indicates that Dominican security forces and government officials are heavily involved in drug trafficking and organised crime. In November 2010, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) reported that “[c]orruption and infiltration of the security services severely impair state efforts to curb organised crime”.³⁴ The US Department of State’s *Dominican Republic 2011 Crime and Safety Report* states that “corruption remains endemic in Dominican society” and that “[n]umerous law enforcement, military, and government officials have been implicated in a range of corrupt activities, including drug trafficking and money laundering”.³⁵ According to an article in *InSight*, in January this year the Dominican President Leonel Fernandez “made a public call to all military personnel...to resist the temptation of drug trafficking bribes”.³⁶

In late 2010, local newspapers reported that nearly 5,000 security officers had been dismissed over the preceding three years because of links to crime and misconduct.³⁷ *Listin Diario* reported that 1,200 police, 1,100 Air Force personnel and 2,300 members of the Armed forces

³¹ “Organized crime seen behind Dominican Police major’s murder” 2008, *Dominican Today*, 13 November www.dominicantoday.com/dr/local/2008/11/13/30052/Organized-crime-seen-behind-Dominican-Police-majors-murder – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 12. The article reported that the person was “gunned down at the door of her house by two unidentified men; one of them shot her point-blank three times”. Investigators speculated that it was linked to organised drug crime.

³² Robles, F. 2011, “Dominican police and soldiers are increasingly getting in the drug trade”, *Miami Herald*, 20 April <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/04/19/v-print/2175752/dominican-police-and-soldiers.html> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 13

³³ Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs 2011, *2011 International Narcotics Control Strategy – Dominican Republic*, 3 March <http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2011/vol1/156360.htm#dominicanrepublic> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 14

³⁴ Economist Intelligence Unit 2010, “Dominican Republic risk: Security risk”, 29 November http://www.eiu.com/index.asp?layout=RKArticleVW3&article_id=487632233&page_title=Article&rf=0 – Accessed 15 July – Attachment 15

³⁵ US Overseas Security Advisory Council 2011, *Dominican Republic 2011 Crime and Safety Report*, 1 May <https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportPDF.aspx?cid=10942> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 5

³⁶ McDermott, J. 2011, “Corruption in Dominican Security Forces Aids Drug Trafficking”, *InSight*, 21 April <http://www.insightcrime.org/insight-latest-news/item/806-corruption-in-dominican-security-forces-aids-drug-trafficking> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 16

³⁷ Urbaez, R. 2010, “5,000 militares y policías estaban aliados al crimen” (5000 soldiers and police were allied to the crime), *Listin*, 12 November <http://www.listin.com.do/la-republica/2010/11/12/166219/Cinco-mil-militares-y-policias-estaban-aliados-al-crimen> – <http://translate.google.com.au/translate?hl=en&sl=es&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.listin.com.do%2Fla-republica%2F2010%2F11%2F12%2F166219%2FCinco-mil-militares-y-policias-estaban-aliados-al-crimen> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 17.

were dismissed.³⁸ These figures indicated that the Government is commitment to addressing corruption but also highlight the magnitude of the problem. An April 2011 article in the *Miami Herald* reported that the current Head of the DNCD, General Rosado fired 418 of his 2,000 officers “in an effort to reduce official corruption and involvement in crime”.³⁹ The report quoted General Rosado as saying the problem is “systemic and constant”.⁴⁰ According to the *Miami Herald*:

As more Colombian drugs move through the Dominican Republic on their way to Europe and the United States, **traffickers have corrupted the very institutions charged with keeping them at bay, destabilizing already weak agencies plagued by low pay and graft.**

Entire trafficking networks have been dismantled from within the armed forces, National Police and the country’s specialized quasi-military anti-drug corps. **More than 20 percent of the National Drug Control Directorate, the country’s equivalent of the DEA [Drug Enforcement Administration], was fired last year,** underscoring the need for massive reform in a country where U.S. anti-drug aid has dwindled.

“There is no question that most of the heavy lifting in drug trafficking in the Dominican Republic is being done by the military: They are the ones who facilitate the entry of drugs,” said Miami attorney Joaquin Perez, who represents traffickers. “They get a commission, in the form of drugs, and then find someone to sell it.”

Earlier this month, **12 soldiers, including a captain and lieutenant colonel assigned to the Puerto Plata airport anti-drug agency were arrested in a scheme to smuggle 33 kilos of cocaine to Canada** in a child’s suitcase, prosecutors announced.

An internal affairs lieutenant investigating dirty cops was murdered in January. A commission that probed last year’s high profile arrest of fugitive Puerto Rican kingpin José David Figueroa Agosto recommended the dismissal of 13 police officers, including six bosses.

The issue exploded here in August 2008, when seven Colombian men were found dead in Paya, a village near Bani, a southern Dominican city. Twenty two people — **among them soldiers who posed as drug agents — were convicted of robbing the Colombians of 1,300 kilos of cocaine and then murdering them.**⁴¹

³⁸ Urbaez, R. 2010, “5,000 militares y policas estaban aliados al crimen” (5000 soldiers and police were allied to the crime), *Listin*, 12 November <http://www.listin.com.do/la-republica/2010/11/12/166219/Cinco-mil-militares-y-policas-estaban-aliados-al-crimen> –

<http://translate.google.com.au/translate?hl=en&sl=es&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.listin.com.do%2Fla-republica%2F2010%2F11%2F12%2F166219%2FCinco-mil-militares-y-policas-estaban-aliados-al-crimen> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 17.

³⁹ Robles, F. 2011, “Dominican police and soldiers are increasingly getting in the drug trade”, *Miami Herald*, 20 April <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/04/19/v-print/2175752/dominican-police-and-soldiers.html> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 13

⁴⁰ Robles, F. 2011, “Dominican police and soldiers are increasingly getting in the drug trade”, *Miami Herald*, 20 April <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/04/19/v-print/2175752/dominican-police-and-soldiers.html> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 13

⁴¹ Robles, F. 2011, “Dominican police and soldiers are increasingly getting in the drug trade”, *Miami Herald*, 20 April <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/04/19/v-print/2175752/dominican-police-and-soldiers.html> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 13

The Government has increased its anti-corruption efforts over the past two years but official corruption and misconduct remain serious problems, according to the US Department of State.⁴² The 2011 US Department of State report notes that “[t]he law provides criminal penalties for official corruption; however, the government did not implement the law effectively, and administration officials who engaged in corrupt practices were not prosecuted, although some were removed from office and others were submitted to the Office for the Prosecution of Corruption for investigation”.⁴³ According to the report, “[t]he World Bank’s worldwide governance indicators continued to reflect that government corruption was a serious problem”.⁴⁴

Police capacity and professionalism

The ability of the police force to offer effective protection against crime is seriously undermined by low levels of professionalism and insufficient resources. A comprehensive 2009 paper by the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) highlights the impact of corruption, understaffing and lack of professionalism on security and safety in the Dominican Republic.⁴⁵ According to the report “[i]t is not uncommon that military and police personnel are employed simultaneously by both public and private institutions” and this practice, “in combination with a severe lack of resources, has made the police disconcertingly under-staffed”.⁴⁶ INSTRAW reported that the “situation has gone so far that police no longer respond to calls from certain areas, leaving whole neighborhoods unsupervised and unpatrolled”.⁴⁷ In 2011, the US Department of State reported “an increase in crime and the inability of security forces to stem or combat these crimes” has encouraged the growth of vigilantism.⁴⁸

4. Please discuss the possibilities of such officers safely relocating to another part of the country.

There are no legal barriers that prevent citizens of the Dominican Republic relocating within the country. In 2011, the US Department of State reported that the “law provides for freedom of movement within the country, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, and the government generally respected these rights in practice”.⁴⁹ However, the presence of

⁴² US Department of State 2011, *2010 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Dominican Republic*, 8 April www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154503.htm – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 18.

⁴³ US Department of State 2011, *2010 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Dominican Republic*, 8 April www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154503.htm – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 18.

⁴⁴ US Department of State 2011, *2010 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Dominican Republic*, 8 April www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154503.htm – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 18.

⁴⁵ United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women 2009, “Engaging in Security: The Need for Women’s Empowerment in the Dominican Security Sector”, <http://www.un-instraw.org/data/media/documents/GSSR%20in%20the%20Dominican%20Republic.pdf> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 19

⁴⁶ United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women 2009, “Engaging in Security: The Need for Women’s Empowerment in the Dominican Security Sector”, <http://www.un-instraw.org/data/media/documents/GSSR%20in%20the%20Dominican%20Republic.pdf> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 19

⁴⁷ United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women 2009, “Engaging in Security: The Need for Women’s Empowerment in the Dominican Security Sector”, <http://www.un-instraw.org/data/media/documents/GSSR%20in%20the%20Dominican%20Republic.pdf> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 19

⁴⁸ US Department of State 2011, *2010 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Dominican Republic*, 8 April www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154503.htm – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 18.

⁴⁹ US Department of State 2011, *2010 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Dominican Republic*, 8 April www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154503.htm – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 18.

drug-trafficking networks across the country and the widespread corruption of officials by criminal groups (see Q.3), could undermine prospects of safe relocation.

Demography

The culture of the Dominican Republic is relatively homogenous, which could ease relocation. The *Political Handbook of the World* reports that “[a]bout 70 percent of the population is biracial, claiming Spanish and Amerindian or African ancestors, with small minorities (about 15 percent each) of pure Spanish and African origin”.⁵⁰ However, the “cultural tradition [of the Dominican Republic] is distinctly Spanish, with 98 percent of the people professing allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church”.⁵¹ The *Every Culture* website report, “Spanish is the official language and is universally spoken”.⁵²

Geography

The Dominican Republic is relatively small, which could both facilitate ease of relocation and simultaneously undercut the prospect of relocation offering the person a genuine increase in safety. According to the *Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations*, 2007 the Dominican Republic “has an area of 48,730 sq km (18,815 sq mi), with a length of 386 km (240 mi) E–W...and a width of 261 km (162 mi) N–S”.⁵³ For comparison, NSW is 801,600 sq km⁵⁴ and the distance between Sydney and Canberra is approximately 300km.⁵⁵

Drug-trafficking networks

Reports indicate drug-trafficking, like corruption, is a nation-wide problem.⁵⁶ (See Question 3 for information on corruption). Drug-trafficking organisations have networks across the country and the region more broadly. The International Crisis Group (ICG) reported there “are solid networks active throughout the island [of Hispaniola], including Haitians, Jamaicans, Dominicans, Colombians, Americans and Europeans”.⁵⁷ According to the ICG, “[t]rafficking from the south coast to the north and money laundering is well-organised and involves officials, including magistrates and lawyers, as well as police, former members of the erstwhile armed forces and common citizens”.⁵⁸ An article in *El Caribe* describes the

⁵⁰ Banks, Arthur S. et al. (eds.) 2010, “Dominican Republic”, *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C. http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_Dominicanrepublic – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 20

⁵¹ Banks, Arthur S. et al. (eds.) 2010, “Dominican Republic”, *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C. http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_Dominicanrepublic – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 20

⁵² “Dominican Republic” (undated), available at *Every Culture* <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Dominican-Republic.html> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 21

⁵³ Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations 2007 “Dominican Republic”, available at *Encyclopedia.com* <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-2586700154.html> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 22

⁵⁴ “New South Wales” (undated), available at <http://www.webwombat.com.au/travel/australia/nsw.htm> – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 23

⁵⁵ “Australia Driving Distance Calculator” (undated), available at *AUinfo* http://www.auinfo.com/distancercalc_process.asp – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 24

⁵⁶ International Crisis Group 2008, “Latin American Drugs I: Losing the Fight”, 14 March http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/latin-america/25_latin_american_drugs_i_losing_the_fight_final.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 25

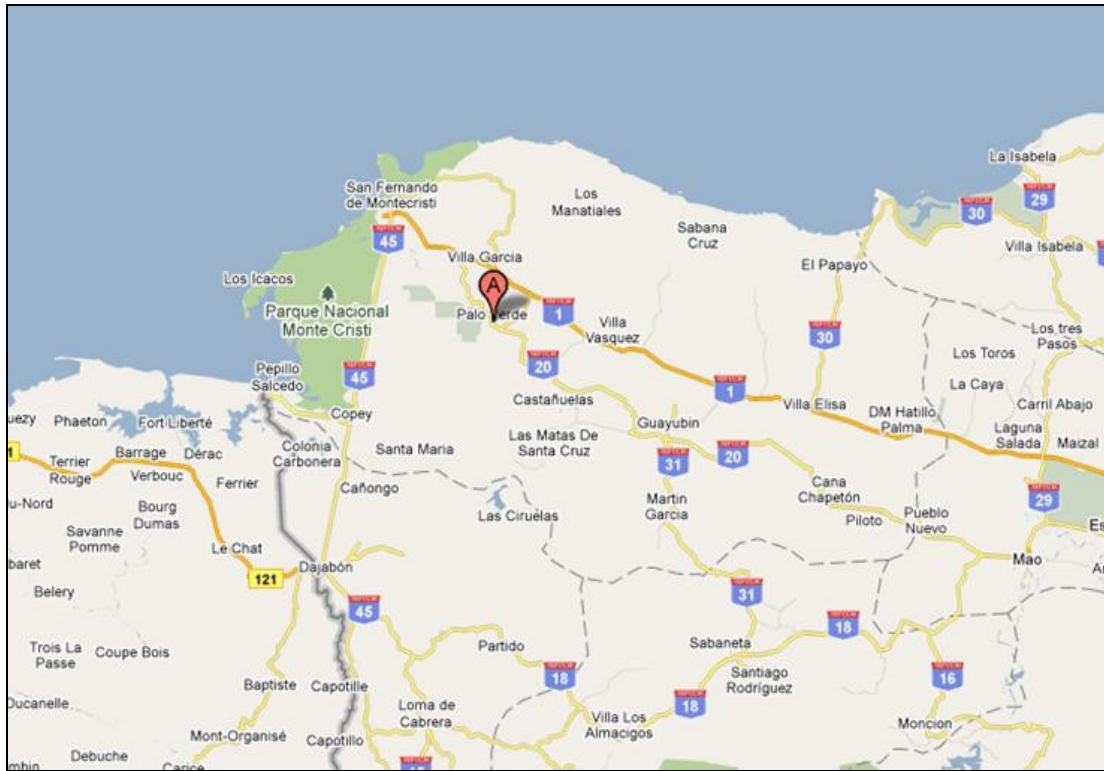
⁵⁷ International Crisis Group 2008, “Latin American Drugs I: Losing the Fight”, 14 March http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/latin-america/25_latin_american_drugs_i_losing_the_fight_final.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 25

⁵⁸ International Crisis Group 2008, “Latin American Drugs I: Losing the Fight”, 14 March http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/latin-america/25_latin_american_drugs_i_losing_the_fight_final.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 25

operations of Mexican cartels in the Dominican Republic. The article says Mexican cartels have “created logistical and operational structure[s]” with members operating “primarily in San Francisco de Macoris, Samana, Sosua, Cabarete and Santiago”.⁵⁹ The article also stated that the National Police captured members of one cartel “whose scope of operation ranges” from the provinces of Monte Cristi, Puerto Plata, La Vega and Santiago.⁶⁰

5. Provide a map of the Dominican Republic, identifying where Palo Verde, Montecristi.

Palo Verde, Montecristi Province, is located in the far North-West of the Dominican Republic.



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⁵⁹ Pina, T. 2011 “Carteles mexicanos trasiegan drogas por la costa norte” (Mexican drug cartels decanted the north coast), *El Caribe*, 15 June <http://www.elcaribe.com.do/site/nacionales/278970-carteles-mexicanos-trasiegan-drogas-por-la-costa-norte-.html> – http://translate.google.com.au/translate?hl=en&sl=es&u=http://www.elcaribe.com.do/site/nacionales/278970-carteles-mexicanos-trasiegan-drogas-por-la-costa-norte-.html&ei=5_AfTuOqIMONmQWroYG9Aw&sa=X&oi=translate&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBoQ7gEwAA&prev=/search%3Fq%3Dhttp://www.elcaribe.com.do/site/nacionales/278970-carteles-mexicanos-trasiegan-drogas-por-la-costa-norte-.html%26hl%3Den%26biw%3D1440%26bih%3D897%26prmd%3Dvns – Accessed 15 July 2011 –

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⁶⁰ Pina, T. 2011 “Carteles mexicanos trasiegan drogas por la costa norte” (Mexican drug cartels decanted the north coast), *El Caribe*, 15 June <http://www.elcaribe.com.do/site/nacionales/278970-carteles-mexicanos-trasiegan-drogas-por-la-costa-norte-.html> – http://translate.google.com.au/translate?hl=en&sl=es&u=http://www.elcaribe.com.do/site/nacionales/278970-carteles-mexicanos-trasiegan-drogas-por-la-costa-norte-.html&ei=5_AfTuOqIMONmQWroYG9Aw&sa=X&oi=translate&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBoQ7gEwAA&prev=/search%3Fq%3Dhttp://www.elcaribe.com.do/site/nacionales/278970-carteles-mexicanos-trasiegan-drogas-por-la-costa-norte-.html%26hl%3Den%26biw%3D1440%26bih%3D897%26prmd%3Dvns – Accessed 15 July 2011 –

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⁶¹ “Palo Verde, Dominican Republic” 2011, Google Maps website <http://maps.google.com.au/maps?q=palo+verde+dominican+republic&hl=en&ll=19.746024,->

Map 1. Palo Verde, Montecristi Province



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Map 2. The Dominican Republic – provincial boundaries

[71.444092&spn=1.017214,1.131592&sll=19.440694,-71.435852&sspn=2.038212,2.263184&z=10](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/dominican_republic_pol_04.pdf) – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 27.

⁶² “Dominican Republic” 2004, available at the University of Texas website http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/dominican_republic_pol_04.pdf – Accessed 15 July 2011 – Attachment 28

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