

31 March 2016

Procuraduría General de la República
Avenida Paseo de la Reforma 211-213
Colonia Cuauhtémoc, Delegación Cuauhtémoc

RE: Initial Report of Findings by Group of Fire Experts

Honorable [REDACTED]

Please find the attached initial report of findings of our analysis of expert opinions and studies contained in the dossier of the corresponding preliminary investigation and the samples collected as well as the studies deemed necessary, which were executed in a multidisciplinary, in order to fire or controlled burning occurred in the Municipal landfill of Cocula, Guerrero, to generate the incineration of human bodies on September 26 and 27, 2014, when investigation occurred.

these initial findings, a final report will be prepared upon the completion of all the additional studies required to provide our final conclusions.

PROCURADURÍA GENERAL DE LA REPÚBLICA
de Derechos Humanos,
y Servicios a la Comunidad
de Investigación

Fire Experts
[REDACTED]

Introduction

On October 19, 2015 the Attorney General for the Republic of Mexico (PGR) and the International Group of Independent Experts (GIEI) agreed to assemble a Group of Fire Experts (GFE) to conduct a third study of the investigation and evidence collected by the PGR and the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF) to determine if a makeshift pyre of the size and configuration as described by the members of a regional cartel organization could have occurred. The GFE would be comprised of fire experts from the US, Mexico and Peru. The experts selected included:

Dr. John DeHaan

Dr. James Quintiere

Dr. Frederick Mowrer

na

as

3, 2016 the members of the GFE signed a contract for services to answer the following

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ine the presence or absence of an episode/s of fire/s at the Cocula landfill and the
eristics that can be evaluated from them.

a whether the conditions outlined in the testimonies contained in the preliminary
gation concerning an episode of a massive fire on a pyre, for a designated time duration
hours) for the fire and whether the fuel and environmental conditions, the event of
g 43 bodies (or other amount) of people during the early morning hours and during the
September 27, 2014, could have taken place in the Cocula landfill, resulting in the level of
lation of skeletal remains and non-biological matter found at the site.

sh the conditions of fuel, time and circumstances necessary to carry out such action of a
g as indicated, or establish the possible hypotheses compatible with the existing human
ins and other circumstances of significance.

Specific Objectives

1. Determine if the activities at the Cocula landfill could have resulted in a circumstance of cross contamination (correspondence principle).
2. Determine the thermodynamics of the alleged fire or multiple fires at the Cocula landfill.
3. Identify the possible causes for the evidence of fire/s at the Cocula landfill.
4. Recognize the type of evidence found at the scene (biological/non-biological) and its relation to the characteristics of the fire event or events if they did occur.
5. Analyze the environmental conditions on the night of the 26th and of the 27th of September 2014.
6. Analyze the changes to the vegetation and/or the present environment (before, during and after the fire event or presumed fire).

skeletal remains (bone fragments) recovered from the Cocula landfill, were found by PGR and the Argentinian team of experts. Both reports found that the bone fragments recovered from the site exhibited heat damage and underwent temperatures in excess of 700°C. The anthropology and odontology teams identified the remains of at least 17 adult human bodies. The fragmentary remains recovered were consistent with those produced by exposure to a prolonged fire fueled by ordinary combustibles and not a commercial crematorium. The duration and dates of the fires could not be established based on the available physical data.

3. We can hypothesize as to the conditions, amount of combustibles, time and circumstances necessary for the mass burning of 43 bodies as indicated in the statements, but only full scale testing can confirm or debunk any hypotheses developed from the statement information. The unknown factors are what fire conditions would be necessary to accomplish the destruction of a total of 43 bodies over a 16-hour period.

Specific Objectives

Cocula landfill was unsecured for at least 30 days. During those 30 days it is certainly true that unknown persons may have entered the site and/or contaminated the site by bringing other materials and/or trash including animal carcasses, or continued to remove or visible human remains, and set additional smaller fires.

A small fire fueled by ordinary combustibles has been shown to accomplish the destruction of an adult human body given enough time. A larger fire (at least in physical size if not equally in heat release rate) would be needed to accomplish similar destruction of multiple bodies. At the present, there are no experimental data on the incineration of multiple bodies at the site under these conditions on which to base projections or predictions of fuels needed to accomplish the necessary combustion.

Evidence indicates that most of the smaller areas of burn damage in the landfill may have been the result of controlled burns to dispose of trash and/or any other type of refuse normally brought by people who use this landfill for such actions. There is evidence of a considerably larger area of burn mark that indicates that a larger controlled burn occurred at the site. This larger area measured approximately 180 m². The critical area of the largest "burn" is more like 50m². This is the footprint that includes the majority of the human remains recovered. Also, the locations of most of the ignitable liquid residues and the tires. The possibility that the ash/char layer was spread out during the "recovery" process the day of the fire cannot be disregarded.

4. The fact that there were skeletal remains found within the Cocula landfill site corroborates the information obtained from the statements of the accused. It should be noted that along with skeletal remains, there was also other physical evidence found at the site that corroborates their statements including clothing remains, bullet casings, tire remains, rocks that exhibited heat damage, trees that appeared to have been cut and the presence of an abundant amount of plastic containers (bottles) within the Cocula landfill. The residues of charred wood, clothing, and tires all indicate the presence of a large ordinary combustible fire at some time. The distribution of small caliber (handgun) casings in both Zones A and B (that do not appear to have been exposed to weather) tallies with the witness descriptions of the use of handguns at the

Reference Materials

A. Documents initially received from PGR on or about February 15, 2016

1. Declarations / amplifications / reconstruction (Binder 1)

- a. Declaration of Augustin Garcia Reyes
- b. Declaration of Jonathan Osorio Cortes
- c. Reconstruction of act (Reconstruccion de Hechos) (Garcia Reyes y Osorio Cortes)
- d. Declaration of Felipe Delgados
- e. Declaration of Miguel Landa Behana
- f. Extension (Ampliacion) of declaration of Patricio Reyes Landa

2. Dictámenes (Binder 2)

Agreement for Technical Investigation – Inter-American Comm for Human Rights
Sp/Eng)

2-1: PGR: CIA Expert Report re: Fires/explosions (Sp/Eng)

2-2: Fire-Related Aspects of Events: Jose Torero (Sp/Eng)

2-3: PGR report re: plants, January 13, 2015, E. Evarista Reyes Duarte, Cristine
guilar Garcia

2-4: UNAM report on insects (entomology), V-M G. Sanchez Cordero Davila
ip/Eng)

2-5: UNAM report on soil/rock (geology) (unsigned, undated), (Sp/Eng)

2-6: PGE Criminalistics report – site exam and evidence, March 7, 2014
rtati/Gonzalez

2-7: PGR Criminalistics report – forensic chemistry results, (tires) Jose A. Montes
Jenas

2-8: PGR Forensic Chemistry results, November 3, 2014, Jose A. Montes Duenas

2-9: UNAM report re: weather conditions/satellite data, Telma Gloria Costas
Romero D.Sc.

k. 2-10: PGR Evidence list: January 20, 2015, Carlos Alberto Jimenez Baltazar
September 12, 2015

l. 2-11: PGR: Forensic Anthropology report, September 12, 2015, Carlos Alberto
Jimenez Baltazar

3. Annexes a-j from the EAAF preliminary report (undated)

D. Additional materials received since visit to Mexico on 6-9 March 2016:

1. Presentations received from Dr. DeHaan (21-March-2016):
 - a. "Effects of Fire on Human Bodies" Powerpoint presentation
 - b. "Recent Observations of Bodies in Fires" Powerpoint presentation
 2. Presentation received from Dr. Betanzos (26-Mar-2016):
 - a. "Trees of Cocula" Powerpoint presentation
 3. Additional documents exchanged among experts:
 - a. Van Pelt article "Note on Use of Pyres During the Holocaust"
 USDA report "Disposal of Carcasses," April 2005
 Photos of human pyres from World War II (obtained from the internet)
 of reconstruction interview with Garcia and Osorio (15-March-2016)
[/www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_QnT-lkSnM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_QnT-lkSnM))
- requested but not yet received (as of 29-March-2016)
- report (in English) – digital OK, with color photos
- nic copy of "Expert Reports Derived from the Investigation on the Cocula Dump, State
- zero" presentations made by PGR forensic team
- ripts of the testimonies of the detained collected by the GIDEI
- port on contents/analysis of plastic bag recovered from Rio San Juan
- n chemical analyses of control/reference samples of soil (discrimination between
- le liquids and tire remains with plot of locations)
- ientation of trees/brush cleared by Anthropology team (27-Oct-2014)
- er data for period from 01-Sep-2014 – 31-Oct-2014
8. Clarification of "Trees of Cocula" presentation regarding number of trees cut