

Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations

The Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations... and has the honour to refer to [the] note [of the Codification Division of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs] LA/COD/4 of 15 December 2006 concerning the item “Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives”, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/31.

In this connection, the Permanent Mission of Mexico has the honour to transmit herewith the response of the Government of Mexico, so that it may be included in the Secretary-General’s report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session.

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Report of Mexico

Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives

General Assembly resolution 61/31

May 2007

I. Incidents

On 31 March 2007, at approximately 4 a.m., a man around 25 years of age emerged from a vehicle and threw an improvised explosive device into the main entrance of the Embassy of Canada in Mexico. He then fled in the same vehicle.

The low-powered explosive hit the building immediately above the main door and burst into flames, filling the entrance and adjacent area with smoke. The device burned out without causing any damage to the premises.

The Embassy official responsible for security stated that he had the emergency telephone numbers of the Second Citizens’ Protection Unit “Embassy Service”, which had been set up specifically to protect foreign, intergovernmental and diplomatic missions and representatives. However, given the nature and outcome of the incident, he had not considered it necessary to contact the Service.

As a result, the Second Citizens’ Protection Unit did not learn of the incident until approximately 5 a.m., when it conducted its routine patrol of the area. The officers organized a search for the perpetrator but were only able to obtain a statement from a witness to the incident.

The Unit also immediately requested the assistance of the fire brigade and the Task Force Group (Special Forces), which searched the area for improvised explosive devices. Several hours later, the Embassy reported the incident to the relevant city authorities, who launched an investigation. To date, the persons responsible have not been arrested.

II. Measures already taken to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives as well as missions and representatives with diplomatic status to international intergovernmental organizations

In compliance with its international obligations, Mexico has adopted practicable measures to provide protection to the representatives and missions in question. Information on the measures taken was provided in its previous report.

III. Views with respect to measures needed to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives as well as missions and representatives with diplomatic status to international intergovernmental organizations

Diplomatic and consular missions and representatives, as well as missions and representatives with diplomatic status to international intergovernmental organizations need to be protected against well-organized individual criminals or criminal groups which may be extremely difficult to detect and identify. Unfortunately, as we have already seen, these individuals and/or groups may spend weeks or months preparing sophisticated and violent attacks which are carried out in such a way as to increase the loss of human life and the damage to property.

Articles 22, 29 and 30 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and articles 31 and 40 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations provide that the receiving State shall be responsible for protecting the premises of the diplomatic and consular missions within its territory as well as the person of the diplomatic and consular agents. Similarly, articles 1, 2 and 4 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, provide that States Parties shall cooperate in the prevention of crimes against, among others, agents of intergovernmental organizations and their official premises.

Mexico is therefore of the view that States should conduct regular exercises to identify the vulnerabilities of the agents and premises in question. After identifying the risks and priorities, States should then conduct exercises to assess whether their current security practices and procedures effectively include all practicable measures for the protection of diplomatic and consular agents and premises, thereby effectively ensuring their security, in fulfilment of the international obligations of States.

A mechanism should also be established whereby States could actively exchange information about the measures they had taken and about their practices and experiences (such as legislative reforms, elaboration of emergency plans, establishment of specialized police units, training programmes for security officers, and installation of security and communications systems).

Lastly, Mexico is ready to support any initiative to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives as well as missions and representatives with diplomatic status to international intergovernmental organizations, in accordance with international law, international practice and the national law of States.