

Cable 244780

Este cable hace un perfil de Ricardo Patiño. Se asegura que dos fuentes, "una altamente creíble", han alegado que Patiño obtuvo y manejó fondos venezolanos para la campaña de Rafael Correa. Y que un reporte no corroborado de otra fuente indicó que también Patiño solicitó fondos de las FARC para esa campaña.

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1/21/2010 23:21

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10QUITO33

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Embassy Quito

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SECRET//NOFORN

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06QUITO2937|07QUITO1607|07QUITO290|08QUITO1062|10QUITO5|94QUITO841

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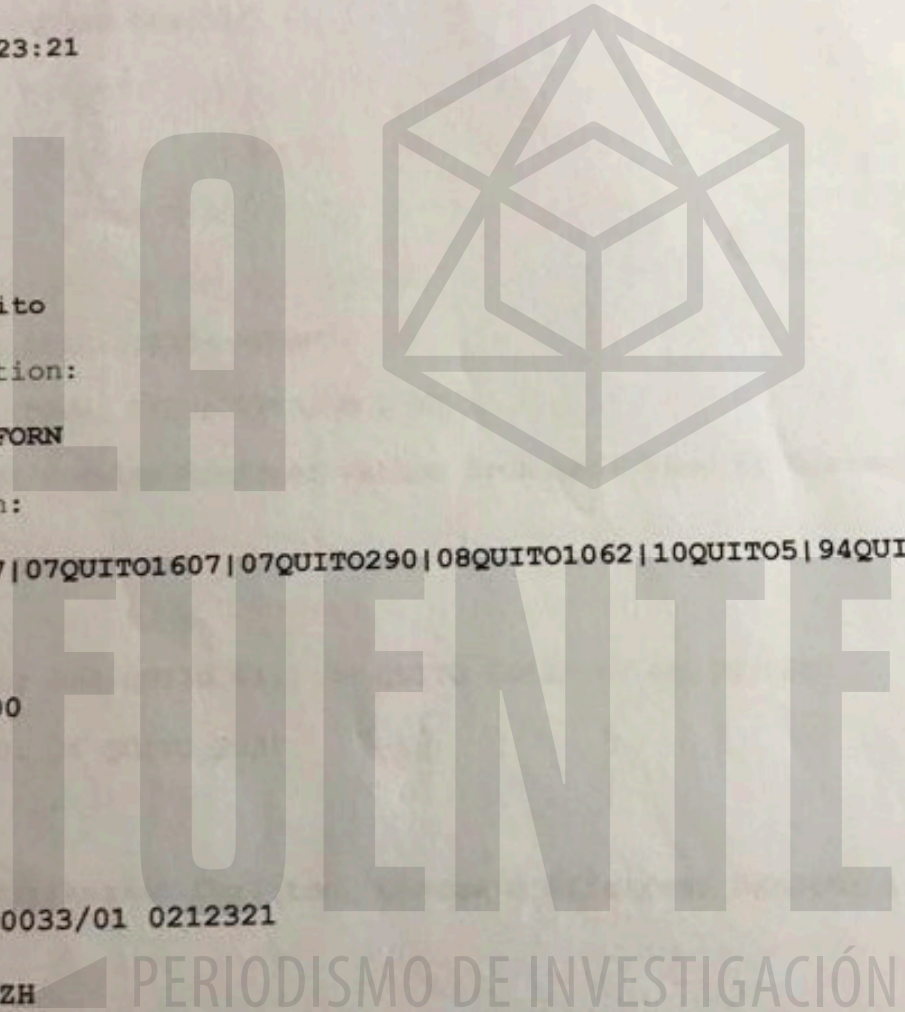
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 25X1- HUMAN

TAGS: PREL, PGOV, EFIN, PTER, EC, VE

SUBJECT: New Foreign Minister Patino from Left Side of Correa's
Circle

REF: QUITO 5; 094 QUITO 841; 08 QUITO 1062; 07 QUITO 1607

07 QUITO 290; 06 QUITO 2937

CLASSIFIED BY: Andrew Chritton, Charge d'Affaires; REASON: 1.4(D)

1. (C) Summary: On January 21, President Rafael Correa named Ricardo Patino as Ecuador's foreign minister, applauding Patino's loyalty to Correa's political project and great ideological consistency. A political fixer in Correa's small inner circle, Patino has had very limited contact with the Embassy. Patino

When Correa was Minister of Economy and Finance in 2005, Patino was his Chief of Staff and then his Vice Minister of Economy. Patino was the coordinator of the Technical Advisory Committee of the GOE's Inter-ministerial Employment Commission and an outside consultant for the International Labor Organization. He taught at the University of Guayaquil's Economics Department and the Superior Polytechnical School of the Coast.

Patino has a master's degree in development economics from the International University in Andalucia, Spain (2001). He obtained an undergraduate economics degree at the Autonomous Metropolitan University of Iztalapa, Mexico (1979). A PRESS ARTICLE REPORTED

THAT PATINO SUPPORTED THE SANDINISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT IN

NICARAGUA AFTER GRADUATING IN MEXICO.

Patino was born in 1954 in Guayaquil (which is also Correa's home town). He is married to Miriam Alcivar and they have one daughter. According to Guayaquil sources, Patino is rumored to be homosexual.

CHRITTON

CABLE ENDS

As Minister for Political Coordination, Patino has managed the Correa government's interactions with social groups, local governments, and the National Assembly. His work as the link between the Executive and the National Assembly has been criticized by the opposition and government allies. Assembly member Dalo Bucaram of the government-aligned Ecuadorian Roldosist Party (PRE) told us that Patino stood in the way of an open dialogue between the Executive and the Assembly's political parties. The PRE requested that Patino no longer serve as the link to the Assembly, but Correa ratified him in that position. President Correa's estranged brother Fabricio has called Patino a terrorist and criticized him for giving orders to the National Assembly. Patino has participated in an array of negotiations with social movements on different topics, including indigenous demands, flour subsidies, transportation issues, pensions, and street vendors' rights. A staffer with the National Electoral Council (CNE) told us that an official working for Patino called all the shots at the CNE.

PERIODISMO DE INVESTIGACIÓN

Patino was involved in establishing Committees of the Citizens' Revolution of the Proud and Sovereign Fatherland (PAIS) Alliance (ref b). He refused to appear before a National Assembly commission on that subject, arguing that it was a party, not government, initiative.

One of the goals of the Ministry of Coordination of Politics, according to its website (www.mcpolitica.gov.ec), is to establish a relationship with political parties and organizations in the region with which the government has affinity. Patino's international role included accompanying Correa to an ALBA summit; promoting Plan Ecuador and the Yasuni-ITT initiative in Europe; travel to

Venezuela and Bolivia; and speaking for the government on the March 2008 Colombian incursion into northern Ecuador.

Patino was a member of a government-appointed debt audit commission, the report of which was used to justify the GOE's decision to default on part of its commercial debt in late 2008 (ref C). He was part of a government delegation that traveled to other countries to argue that the Ecuadorian foreign debt was illegitimate. His focus on the debt issue was apparent in 1999 when Patino helped establish the Ecuadorian branch of Jubilee 2000, an international NGO calling for forgiveness of developing country debt.

Patino's performance as Minister of Economics and Finance was controversial, and he struck Embassy staff at the time as inept on economics. He stated that Ecuador might not honor its

international debt obligations, and then made the payments a few days later. In May 2007 a video became public where Patino made comments that seemed to imply manipulation of the debt market, for which he was censured by Congress (ref D). The Department of Justice and the Securities Exchange Commission initiated an investigation of him at that time (Post does not know the results). Patino's move to head the newly-created Ministry of the Coast in July 2007 isolated him from this scandal, but was considered a demotion. In theory the Ministry of the Coast oversees various sub-ministerial government offices in Guayaquil.

Former Ambassador Jewell made a courtesy call on Patino in February 2007 (ref E). During that meeting, Patino congratulated himself on the ease with which he prepared his first budget, called some debt illegitimate, and welcomed the opportunity to work with the USG on microfinance and supporting small businesses.

In 2006, Patino was the national political director for the PAIS Alliance, Correa's political movement, during the presidential campaign. Two separate GRPO sources, one highly credible, have alleged that Patino obtained and managed Venezuelan funds for Correa's campaign. An uncorroborated report from a GRPO source **INDICATED THAT PATINO ALSO SOLICITED FUNDS FROM THE FARC FOR CORREA'S CAMPAIGN.** **IN ADDITION, PATINO ENLISTED SUPPORT FOR CORREA FROM MEMBERS OF THE FORMER ECUADORIAN TERRORIST GROUP ALFARO VIVE CARAJA(REF F).**