

Zapatero backs Rabat plan for Western Sahara

PM says Morocco's autonomy scheme for region is "positive"

M. GONZÁLEZ / I. CEMBRERO
Madrid

Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero on Tuesday backed a Moroccan plan to grant autonomy to Western Sahara, departing from a long-held policy of supporting a UN referendum on independence for the former Spanish colony and drawing an angry rebuke from the Polisario Front independence movement.

In a meeting in Madrid with Moroccan Prime Minister Abbas El Fassi, Zapatero noted that Ra-

bat has made "serious and credible efforts" to propose a solution to the conflict that began when it occupied Western Sahara in 1975 following Spain's withdrawal. He added that Morocco's plan to grant the region autonomy within Morocco is a "positive contribution" and noted that Spain's own system of autonomous regions has been a "good experience."

The heavy hint did not go down well with the Polisario leaders, who earlier this year forced the replacement of Dutch diplomat Peter van Walsum as UN envoy to the region after he suggested they should consider autonomy and give up hopes of Morocco permitting a referendum on independence.

"[Zapatero] is clearly aligning himself in support of the occupation of Western Sahara," Bucharaya Beyun, the Polisario's delegate in Spain, said. He warned that Morocco's plan moves the conflict "further away from a peaceful solution."

Zapatero's comments in support of Rabat's plan come on the back of growing economic and commercial ties between Spain and Morocco. The Spanish prime minister signed an €520 million economic cooperation agreement with El Fassi yesterday.

Police arrest gang thought to seek targets for ETA

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Police on Tuesday arrested four alleged ETA members in raids in San Sebastián against a group suspected of supplying the leadership of the Basque terrorist organization with information about potential targets.

The four suspects were identified as Arkaitz Landaberea Torremocha, June Vilarrubia Mitxelena, Julen Etxaniz García and Saioa Urbistazu Arrieta. Landaberea is an employee of radical Basque newspaper *Gara*, which is often used by ETA as its mouthpiece. He also ran for a seat in San Sebastián city council in local elections in March 2007 in the name of a radical party that was later barred from contesting the election. Etxaniz ran for the same party, Abertzale Sozialistak, in the nearby town of Pasai San Pedro.

Police said the four have been accused of providing information about potential targets to Javier López Peña, ETA's political leader until his arrest in Bordeaux, France, in May of this year.

Their arrests add to a long list of ETA suspects arrested since the end of a ceasefire in December 2006. Since then, 365 ETA members have been taken into custody in Spain and France — equivalent to one every two days.

The drug kingpin turned over to the United States

LATIN AMERICA Ps 4 & 5

US informed Spain of CIA flight stopover

EL PAÍS, Madrid

The government has known since 2005 that at least one CIA plane taking part in the so-called rendition flights of Islamist terrorist suspects transited through a Spanish airport, but it received assurances that no prisoners were on board at the time, Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos has acknowledged.

The minister, who has insisted that to the government's knowl-



Firefighters remove one of the bodies of the construction workers killed in Tuesday's accident. / EFE

Four dead as illegal construction work on hotel ends in tragedy

Building collapse kills two Spaniards and two Moroccans

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Four construction workers were killed and four others injured when a hotel undergoing illegal renovation work collapsed in the Majorcan beach resort of Cala Ratjada on Tuesday.

Authorities said the two Spanish and two Moroccan workers were killed when a wall they

were attempting to reinforce gave way, bringing down part of the 60-year-old Son Moll Hotel. The accident occurred at 8.30am when most of the 70 workers at the site were at breakfast, a factor that authorities said probably prevented further injuries. The bodies of the dead workers were recovered by rescue crews during the morning and early afternoon.

Local officials said the Serrano Group, which had recently acquired the hotel, had been denied permission to carry out the work but had proceeded regardless despite repeated cease and desist orders. The Son Moll Hotel had been renovated twice since being built in the 1950s and had had eight floors added to the original three over that time.

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OPINION AND EDITORIAL

A changing of the communist guard

The United Left is seeking a new identity on the back of mobilization against the recession

LAST SUNDAY, the Political Council of the United Left (IU) elected Cayo Lara — the candidate who represented the coalition sector that identifies with the communist party — as their new general coordinator. The outgoing leader, Gaspar Llamazares, had announced his departure following IU's poor results in the March general election, yet the coalition's Federal Assembly, held in November, was incapable of choosing a replacement leader with enough support to head the rebuilding of IU that was agreed to at this event. The election decision was then transferred to the Political Council, half of whose members were elected at the assembly and the other half by territorial federations.

One would certainly need a map to follow the trail of all five sectors — along with their corresponding subsectors — that competed for the post. This kind of division paralyzes the group's capacity for political intervention, which was already weakened by its small institutional presence. That is why an organizational rebuilding was the priority. In such conditions, it may be the logical thing to do to return to the group's original identity — the communist one — as the most solid basis to work from.

However, these days there is an added burden that comes with being identified with this ideology, which has been refuted by practical facts in the places

where it triumphed in the past. But then came the global economic crisis, with very rapid consequences for employment, and this gave new wings to expectations of social mobilization.

The new coordinator was quick to drop a first message about the possibility of organizing a general strike against the government's economic policies, much like the one held 20 years ago against the Socialist government of Felipe González. It does not seem realistic to assume that all the jobless or those in danger of losing their employment will consider — as former IU leader Julio Anguita did at the time — that the governing Socialists and the Popular Party opposition are two sides of the same neo-liberal coin, a notion that Lara also suggested. If the general strike he is thinking about were to be presented as an alternative to the employment-oriented consensus politics endorsed by José María Fidalgo at CCOO and Cándido Méndez at UGT, then it could be on a collision course with the labor unions.

The internal dispute at CCOO between the leader Fidalgo and the number-two man, Fernández Toxo, who wants his job, leaves the door open to questions about whether there might also be a return to the past at this union. In any case, it is highly doubtful that any of it will help the IU solve its identity problems.

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to the Editor

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Criminal economy

The deregulation of the international financial system and the complete absence of state control over economic activity — which have been the flags of neo-liberalism — have caused the worst global monetary imbalance since 1929 and the first big crisis of the 21st century. Having seen these events, can we continue to call such practices legal, differentiating them from what we would call the criminal economy? Or should we begin to have the courage to call things by their name and include the financial world within this bracket too, thanks to its procedures and its effects on poverty, exploitation and violence? Is this not organized crime on the one hand, while being an essential pillar of our current system? "It is easier to rob by setting up a bank than by holding up a bank clerk," wrote Bertolt Brecht in *The Threepenny Opera*, 80 years before the global crisis. — Joan Queralt Doménech. Sant Climent de Llobregat, Barcelona.

EL ROTO



"The figures are eating each other up!"

Obama's backyard

JORGE CASTAÑEDA

When Barack Obama enters the White House on January 20, he will be facing a lot of challenges — the economic crisis, Iraq and Afghanistan just for starters. But he may also be facing challenges from a region he does not know very well, and which has become a headache for many US presidents. This, of course, is Latin America.

First up, a country important to the United States, for all the wrong reasons: Nicaragua. Daniel Ortega is supposed to have remarked not long ago that he did not intend to lose another election like he did in 1990, and that this time he would do everything necessary not to repeat the mistake. He seems to have achieved this. The opposition's accusations about electoral fraud in the recent local elections, joined to the absence of international observers, seem to make the Mexican PRI party's traditional electoral rigging pale by comparison. Everything indicates that the opposition won the mayoral races in Managua and other principal cities. After the voting, what used to be called Sandinista mobs made a comeback, breaking up the opposition's demonstrations and preventing protest against the fraud.

The problem would not be so serious were it not for the thunderous silence throughout Latin America, and in Spain too, which has greeted this outrage. Though we accept the principle that clean elections in each country are the business of Latin America as a whole, no government has protested. Whatever voices have ventured to do so have been reviled by Ortega, Chávez and their propagandists. But the opposition may succeed in obtaining the suspension of US and EU aid to Nicaragua. This would force everyone to take positions, but mainly Obama.

A similar case is that of Venezuela. In spite of huge efforts, accompanied by threats and shameless use of all the media and the public purse strings to his own benefit, Hugo Chávez is not obtaining all the electoral support he might

desire. The opposition has won in several major states and cities. If the last 10 years show anything, it is that when Hugo Chávez is bogged down, he starts lashing out blindly right and left. This time his reactions may include the nationalization of foreign companies, tighter media censorship, obstruction of elected opposition figures, constitutional change to run again in 2013 and closer relations with Russia, Iran and China.

None of this is particularly new, but in a different world context it may be a dilemma for the new administration. Ideally, Obama would prefer to continue the Bush policy of turning the other cheek; but Chávez's electoral setbacks, falling oil prices and the difficulties of his allies — Argentina, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Cuba and Ecuador — and his new adventures in nations like El Salvador, may make such continuity unfeasible.

The third problem, of course, is Cuba. The votes of second-generation Cuban-Americans helped win Florida for Obama. A sector of the Democratic Party is going to be pressing for a normalizing of relations with Havana. Obama may possibly suspend restrictions on travel and remittances. But there will be pressures in the other direction, too. The Latin Americans, along with Spain, seem to be favoring a Vietnam-type solution, of continuity for the regime — in short, lifting the embargo on Cuba without anything in return in terms of human rights or democracy. The Cuban embargo started as an executive decree in 1962, but since 1994 it has been an act of Congress, and Obama will need 60 Senate votes to rescind it.

The last thing Obama needs in the first months of his presidency is a Cuban problem — migratory, international or internal — or to find himself obliged to scrape together enough Senate votes to lift the embargo and make all the regional leaders happy. Welcome to Latin America, President Obama.

Jorge Castañeda, a former Mexican Foreign Relations secretary, teaches Latin American studies at the University of New York.

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Spain fails childcare exam, risking “a new source of inequality”

Unicef report ranks country 18th out of 25 due to failure to meet benchmarks

GUY HEDGEYCOE, Madrid

Spain is one of the worst-performing nations in the developed world, according to a new study on childcare and education carried out by Unicef.

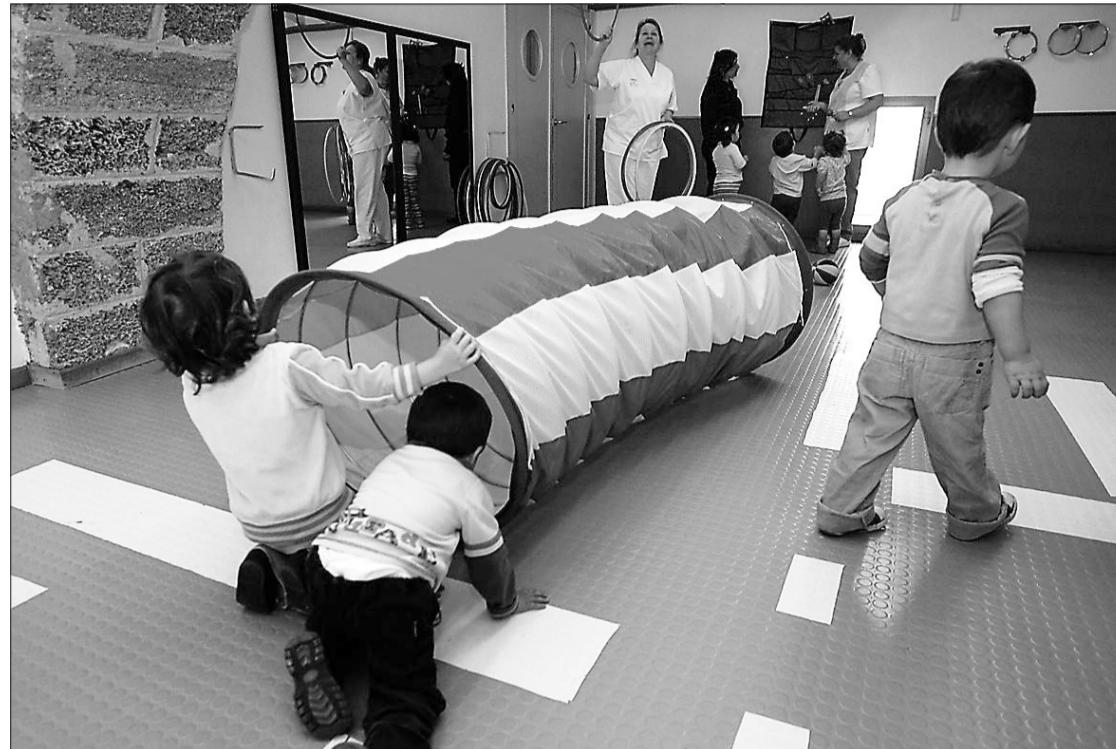
The report, entitled *The childcare transition*, looks at how the 24 countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) plus Slovenia, handle the challenges of childcare, which it sees as a relatively new phenomenon.

“Today’s rising generation in the countries of the OECD is the first in which a majority are spending a large part of their early childhoods not in their own homes with their own families, but in some form of childcare,” the report states.

Setting out 10 benchmarks, the Unicef report focuses on issues such as paid leave for parents, training for childcare professionals, government funds put into childhood services and the extent of healthcare for children. The study was presented last week in other countries across the OECD, but has not been unveiled officially in Spain.

Sweden tops the league table based on these benchmarks, meeting all 10, followed closely by Denmark, Finland, France and Norway. Spain is ranked 18th, alongside Mexico, both meeting only three of the requirements. South Korea, Portugal, Slovenia and Hungary are among the nations ranked above Spain. Australia, Canada and Ireland are at the bottom of the table.

While Spain fulfills the cited need for “subsidized and accredit-



Professional childcare can benefit children or hinder their development, Unicef has found. / EDUARDO RUIZ

ed early education services for 80 percent of four-year-olds,” as well as two requisites related to childcare staff training, it falls short in the other seven areas.

The report emphasizes how childcare can be both a positive and a negative phenomenon, depending on how it is implemented. Children’s cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social development can all be boosted or hindered by spending time away from their parents with daycare professionals, the study asserts.

“In some [OECD countries] early childhood services are almost as well established and well funded as primary schools,” it

reads. “In others, they are often muddled in purpose, uneven in access, patchy in quality, and lacking systematic monitoring of access, quality, child-to-staff ratios, or staff training and qualification.”

While the report does not go into much specific detail on particular countries, the league table of benchmarks shows that Spain fails on the issue of parental leave (it offers 16 weeks’ maternity leave at full pay). Nor does it have “a national plan with priority for the disabled,” provide subsidized and regulated childcare services for a quarter of children under three, offer a minimum staff-to-

children ratio of 1:15 in preschool education, provide “near-universal outreach of essential child health services,” or spend the required one percent of its GDP on early childhood services.

Unicef concludes that the current “childcare transition” could become “a new and potent source of inequality.”

The results of this latest Unicef study contrast sharply with a report by the agency presented in February 2007, entitled *Overview of Child Wellbeing in Rich Countries*. That study found that Spain was the fifth-best country for children to inhabit in the OECD.

The young victim of abuse who was saved by her half-sister

ANGELS PIÑOL, Barcelona

The little girl would beat her dolls, undress them, tie them up and make them face a wall in a corner. She would tape their mouths shut and then pretend to force feed them water with a toy syringe. At the age of six, Maite was acting out in her playroom what she had seen her father do to her half-sister Alba in his Barcelona apartment.

“She said it is what she had seen... but she said she hadn’t told me about it before because she was afraid he would do the same to her,” Montserrat Alba, Maite’s mother, told a court in Barcelona last week.

Maite’s father, Francisco Javier Pérez, stands accused of attempting to murder seven-year-old Alba, the daughter of his current partner Ana María Cano — another suspect in the case —

and Álvaro Luis Caldas, who, like Montserrat Alba has been called as a witness.

If found guilty, Pérez and Cano could face up to 19 years in prison for the abuse of Alba in a case that shocked Spain after the infant girl turned up bruised, beaten and fighting for her life at a Barcelona hospital in March. Her stepfather claimed she had fallen out of bed, to the utter disbelief of medical staff. He was arrested and the subsequent investigation revealed months of abuse that had gone unchecked despite the fears of social workers and teachers.

Even the police knew about what Pérez was doing to Alba, for it was in a police station where Maite, accompanied by her mother, first blurted out the details of the torture her father was subjecting her half-sister to. The police, however, did nothing



Ana María Cano and Francisco Javier Pérez, pictured at their trial. / C. B.

and Montserrat Alba, despite witnessing her daughter’s violence toward her dolls, also turned a blind eye. “Maite would come

home crying from visiting my ex. He would slap her, but not excessively. I would have put a stop to that before,” Maite said.

Valencia leader backs down on Civic Education in English

NEUS CABALLER, Valencia

The threat of a general strike throughout the Valencian public education system, which was planned for today, has finally seen regional premier Francisco Camps back down on his plan for Civic Education to be taught in the area’s schools in English.

Camps, of the conservative Popular Party (PP), who is currently on a trip to the United States, on Monday authorized schools to teach the subject — which has already been taken up by 600,000 students nationwide — in one of the region’s two official languages (Spanish or Valencian).

Camps’ insistence that Civic Education — which touches on ethics and issues such as gay marriage — be taught in English was, according to many observers, a ploy to make the introduction of the subject more difficult. The class, which was introduced by the ruling Socialist party, is widely opposed by the PP, the more Christian sectors of which see it as having controversial content.

“Important step”

Speaking for the Platform of Public Teaching, spokesperson Gemma Piqué on Monday applauded the “acceptance of the impossibility of teaching this classes in English,” and said that the agreement reached on Monday was “an important step” in normalizing relations between the school system and the regional government.

Neither did Alba’s mother try to stop the torture of her own daughter. Ana María Cano apparently witnessed the abuse but did nothing, and instead blamed the injuries Alba sustained on her ex-husband Álvaro Luis Caldas rather than on her new partner.

“I have said repeatedly that I never knew anything,” Caldas told reporters outside the court. “I know they tried to implicate me, but the proof of my innocence is that I am out enjoying the sunshine and they’re not.”

“A sickly child”

Others were suspicious but also failed to take steps to stop the abuse. “She was a sickly child — a little emaciated,” added a social services psychologist who spoke with Alba after she suffered a broken arm in December 2005. Her mother tried to blame that injury on Caldas, while she put others down to the girl being “clumsy.”

Now Alba will never lead a normal life. Barely able to speak and confined to a wheelchair, she is suffering from irreversible brain damage and remains at a special care facility in Barcelona. She will need assistance for the rest of her life.

Book thrown at Siemens for "systematic" bribery

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Siemens AG agreed on Monday to pay the US government a \$450-million criminal fine for paying off officials in Argentina and Venezuela in exchange for public contracts in those countries, the US Justice Department announced.

The German corporation along with three of its subsidiaries pleaded guilty to having violated the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA). The charges also stem from payoffs made to officials in Bangladesh.

"This is far and away the largest criminal fine [under the FCPA] in US history," said assistant US Attorney General Matthew Friedrich during a news conference in Washington. Siemens indirectly paid at least \$18,782,965 through US banks to Venezuelan officials in exchange for favorable treatment in connection with two subway projects in Valencia and Maracaibo.

In Argentina, Siemens made approximately \$31,263,000 in corrupt payments to various Argentinean officials in exchange for a \$1-billion contract in a National Identity Card project.

In a related investigation, Siemens also agreed with a Munich prosecutor on Monday to pay the German government a €250,000 corporate fine and forfeit €395 million in profits in a related investigation. "From the 1990s through 2007, Siemens engaged in a systematic and widespread effort to make and to hide hundreds of millions of dollars in bribe payments across the globe," Friedrich said.

Crisis and integration on the table as regional leaders gather in Brazil

First major international meeting for Raúl Castro as Cuban leader

S. G-D / M. D.
Costa do Sauípe / Madrid

The heads of state from 29 Latin American and Caribbean nations will meet today in Brazil to begin a multilateral summit at which regional integration, the global financial crisis and the future international role of Cuba will be the main issues on the table.

Highlighting his role as a major figure in the region, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is effectively hosting four summits in one by calling separate meetings of Mercosur, the Union of South American Nations (Unasur), the Rio Group, and the Latin American and Caribbean Countries Conference (CALC), all in the Brazilian resort town of Costa de Sauípe, 110 kilometers north of Salvador de Bahia on the Atlantic coast.

But perhaps most attention will be focused on the participation of Cuban President Raúl Castro, who will take part in a regional gathering of nations for the first time since he took office in February.

Castro, 77, arrived in Brazil on Tuesday, the opening day of the Mercosur meeting.

"The presence of President Raúl Castro at this meeting is very important for us, and I hope it is the first of a series of meetings that he will have with us," Lula da Silva told delegates of the trade bloc whose members are Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Lula wants to ensure Cuba is involved in any plans to boost regional integration in Latin America and Castro's presence contrasted with the absence of any



Cuban President Raúl Castro (left) shares a joke with Brazil's Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva yesterday. / AFP

US representatives, although Brazil maintains strong relations with Washington. The European Union will not be represented at Costa de Sauípe.

Castro and Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa were special guests at the gathering. Only Peruvian President Alan García and Colombian President Álvaro Uribe excused themselves from attending.

Softening the blow

The summit comes at a crucial time for Latin America as its economies try to soften the impact of the international finan-

cial crisis. Argentinean President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner immediately called on Mercosur nations to come up with their own strategies, independently of those being proposed by the United States and the EU.

"We should demand more proactive policies from the central economies because they are the ones that put us in this bind," she said.

Mercosur is struggling to find ways to jumpstart its regional economic partnership programs, which have been plagued by differences in policies put forth by its two heavy-

weights: Brazil and Argentina.

Argentina and Brazil were the only South American nations at the G20 summit last month in Washington.

But Lula da Silva said he was optimistic that the regional trade bloc would become a "major voice" at international forums. "We must strengthen our posture and strategies to confront the international crisis," he said.

Meanwhile, Uruguayan President Tabaré Vázquez, who has been at odds with Fernández de Kirchner, praised Brazil for "taking a leadership role" in the region.



Ecuador's President Correa says the nation's debt is illegitimate. / EFE

Ecuador's Correa sticks to guns on non-payment of foreign debt

EL PAÍS
Madrid

Ecuador refused to make an interest payment on its foreign debt on Monday, as President Rafael Correa insisted that nearly half of the \$10 billion his country owes is illegitimate.

The decision, announced by Correa on Friday, effectively puts Ecuador in default. Analysts have warned the move is likely to cut the country off from international financing at a potentially challenging time as oil prices plummet. Oil accounts for over half of Ecuadorian revenues.

"The country is a major exporter, not only of oil, but also of such things as shrimp, bananas, and cut flowers; trying to get trade finance for any of that will now be all but impossible," writes Felix Salmon in Conde Nast's Portfolio.com blog.

"This debt has already been restructured twice, and there's zero chance that bondholders will agree to it being restructured a third time. They know that Ecuador has the ability to pay, and they don't like being bullied," the analyst goes on to say.

Ecuador defaulted on its foreign debt in 1999, in the midst of an economic crisis. That debt was subsequently renegotiated with a 40-percent reduction.

Wilma Salgado, a former Correa finance minister, called the latest default "absolutely necessary to shake global consciousness into seeing how corrupt the management of the world financial system has become."

On Saturday, Correa said that he will present a proposal that would recognize some of that debt "but at a much lower price."

A presidential commission

has accused former officials and bankers of profiting irresponsibly from the bond deals that Correa questions. Monday's default applies to \$650 million worth of bonds due in 2015. Correa announced on Friday that the payments to be stopped would apply to \$510 million in bonds due in 2012, the Associated Press reported.

A third set of bonds that Correa also considers illegitimate will fall due in 2030. This package is worth \$390 million and its next interest payment is due February 15.

Former president dies

Former Ecuadorian President León Febres-Cordero died of cancer Monday. He was 77 years old.

A hardline conservative leader, Febres-Cordero and his Social Christian Party dominated

politics in Ecuador from the 1980s until recently and he served a four-year term as president beginning in 1984. A native of the coastal city of Guayaquil, he survived five bypass heart operations. In 2002, Febres-Cordero withdrew from public life because of his delicate health.

Latin America

FEATURES

Colombian cocaine cartel leader Montoya brought before US law

Bogotá extradites narcotics kingpin amid claims it is winning the drug war

M. DELFÍN
Madrid

Just three days after he was extradited to the United States, the once-powerful leader of Colombia's notorious Norte del Valle cartel on Monday went before a federal magistrate in Miami to face numerous charges related to drug trafficking.

Diego León Montoya Sánchez had been on the FBI's top 10 most-wanted list for years before his arrest by Colombian authorities on September 10, 2007. He was wanted in the United States after he was indicted for the fifth time by a Miami grand jury in relation to cocaine trafficking, obstruction of justice, witness retaliation by murder, and money laundering.

In the District of Columbia, another grand jury indicted Montoya Sánchez and other Norte del Valle cartel leaders on trafficking and racketeering charges related to the transportation of multi-ton loads of cocaine from South America to the United States.

Since his arrest, Montoya Sánchez has fought aggressively against all attempts at extradition.

President Álvaro Uribe ordered the extradition just hours after the Colombian Supreme Court gave the green light on Thursday. Wearing a bullet-proof vest, shackled in chains and escorted under a heavy guard, Montoya Sánchez was placed on a US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) plane bound for Miami. He had been moved from a heavily



Colombian drug trafficker Diego León Montoya Sánchez, who was extradited to the US on December 12. / EFE

guarded facility outside the capital to a detention center in Bogotá after the high court's decision.

"As a leader of Colombia's Norte del Valle cartel, Diego Montoya Sánchez was one of the most powerful and violent cocaine traffickers in the world," said DEA Acting Administrator Michele M. Leonhart in a Justice Department statement. "Thanks to the collaborative efforts with our Colombian

partners, this drug kingpin will no longer terrorize innocent citizens and profit from the sale of his drugs on American soil."

Considered Colombia's most powerful drug trafficking organization, the Norte del Valle cartel got its name because it operates principally in the Norte Valle del Cauca region of Colombia. According to US authorities, it is allegedly responsible for exporting more than 500 metric tons of cocaine worth

more than \$10 billion from Colombia to the United States for resale.

The cartel is also thought to be protected by illegal armed groups, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN), and right-wing paramilitary groups.

Montoya Sánchez was placed on the FBI's top-ten list on May 6, 2004. Last year, Colombian authorities captured

him in a rural area outside of Zarzal, Valle del Cauca after searching for him for years.

"No other drug trafficking case has been as significant since the Rodríguez Orejuela brothers were convicted and sentenced" in 2006 to 30 years in jail, said US Attorney Alex Acosta, who serves for the southern district of Florida. "With those convictions and sentences the infamous Cali drug cartel was effectively dismantled," he added.

Montoya becomes the third Norte cartel boss to be extradited following his brother Juan Carlos Montoya Sánchez, and cousin, Carlos Felipe Toro, both of whom were taken to Miami in 2005, convicted and sen-

"He was one of the world's most powerful and violent cocaine traffickers"

On the US market the price of cocaine is rising and purity levels are down

tenced to 21 and 19 years in prison respectively. Another brother, Eugenio, was arrested in January, extradited to the United States and is currently on trial in a US District Court.

Thought to be aged between 47 and 50, Diego Montoya Sánchez was known by various aliases, including *Don Diego*, *El señor de la Guerra* (Warlord), and *El ciclista* (the cyclist).

Colombian authorities say Montoya Sánchez's extradition comes as the price of cocaine in the United States is rising and purity levels are down, due to what they say are more successful drug eradication efforts at source.

Macabre discovery in La Plata torture center

M. D.
Madrid

While searching inside a once-secret detention center, forensic experts in La Plata, Argentina, made a grisly discovery: a pit containing at least 10,000 bone fragments suspected to be the remains of political dissidents who were tortured and killed during the country's Dirty War.

The findings confirm the testimonies of hundreds of survivors who for years had claimed that the military and police tortured, killed and burned the bodies of political opponents at the former detention center known as Arana during the 1976-1983 period. The human bones were discovered between February and September but reported last Wednesday by the Buenos Aires daily *La Nación*.

"This scientifically confirms the testimonies of the detained," said Luis Fondebrider, a forensic anthropologist who helped uncover the remains inside Arana.

It is estimated that more than 30,000 people disappeared in Argentina between 1976, when a military coup toppled President María Estela "Isabel" Martínez de Perón, until democracy was restored in 1983. There are no official figures of how many people were held at Arana, but by some witness accounts more than 5,000 were detained there.

Forensic experts discovered that bodies were apparently thrown into a pit, covered with fuel and then burned along with tires to mask the smell of burning flesh. More than 200 bullet marks were also found along a wall bordering the mass grave, *La Nación* reported. Some of the bones were not completely reduced to ash, which may allow for genetic analysis to identify the dead, said Fondebrider. But he added that it may not be possible to identify all of the victims because any prolonged exposure to fire destroys most DNA.

Human rights groups said



Campaigners, such as these Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, want the truth from the Dirty war to emerge. / REUTERS

that just the confirmation of human remains at Arana rebukes claims that torture and death never occurred at that detention center. "This is the first time there is proof that Arana wasn't only a detention and torture center, but also a center of elimination," María

Vedio, a lawyer for the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights La Plata, told the newspaper.

Former dictatorship leaders and their supporters have repeatedly denied that detainees were tortured or killed during the crackdown, which was ordered

by the military against its opponents and dissidents. Arana was one of about 10 detention centers operated by the military and police in La Plata, a university city situated south of Buenos Aires, where crackdowns on college students were particularly severe.

SPORTS

Canary Island climbers rescued from Patagonian blizzard

EL PAÍS, Madrid

Three Spanish climbers caught in a blizzard in Chilean Patagonia yesterday were rescued after being stranded for several hours on a 2,970-meter peak.

The three Canary Island natives—one professional climber, a fireman and a policeman—became stuck trying to climb the San Valentín mountain in Chile's Campo de Hielo Norte when a blizzard surprised them, destroying their camp area and carrying away their climbing material.

The rescue operation was first delayed and eventually carried out by land yesterday, as bad weather ruled out a helicopter rescue. Chilean authorities said that despite suffering mild hypothermia, the men are in good condition.

Calderón begins to eye NBA free throw record

K. R., Madrid

The Toronto Raptors lost 87-94 to the New Jersey Nets on Monday night, giving them a 10-14 record and the last-place berth in the Atlantic division. However, some good news came from Spaniard José Manuel Calderón. The Raptors' point guard had 15 points and eight assists, while extending his perfect free throw record to 58 on the season—66 overall, when added to eight-for-eight shooting at the end of last season.

Calderón is aiming to break the NBA record set by Michael Williams, who sank 97 straight shots from the foul line in 1993. He is also closing in on Steve Nash's record of 74 for current players.

Atlético sold down the river?

City Hall involvement in "shady" stadium move raises fears for club's future

R. TRAIN / D. VERDÚ, Madrid

Atlético de Madrid's board has put pen to paper on a deal that will see the club leave its current home in the south of the city, the Vicente Calderón stadium, and move to the northeast of the Spanish capital in time for the 2012-2013 season.

The move draws a line under 42 years of history at Atlético's spiritual home on the banks of the Manzanares river. Atlético inaugurated the stadium, then called the Estadio del Manzanares, on October 2, 1966, after moving from the decrepit Estadio Metropolitano.

The present-day Calderón was designated a UEFA five-star stadium in 2003 and is thus able to host Champions League and UEFA Cup finals. But the stadium itself is not the cause of club president Enrique Cerezo's itchy feet. Anchored by the Manzanares and flanked by residential buildings, the scope for commercial expansion is practically nil.

Enter Madrid Mayor Alberto Ruiz-Gallardón and the La Peineta stadium in the city's San Blas neighborhood. Designed to be the bait with which to snare votes for Madrid's 2012 Olympic bid, La Peineta, so-called because of its resemblance to a hair comb, has become a costly white elephant on the city's balance sheet. When London was awarded the 2012 Games, construction at the site abruptly ground to a halt.

On paper, it seems that both the Olympics-obsessed mayor and Atlético have struck gold. The demolition of the Vicente Calderón is necessary for the city council to construct its Rio Manzanares project, a lengthy promenade snaking around the periphery of the river that is to include a fake beach. The scheme will necessitate shifting a tract of the city's orbital motorway, the M-30, underground—another



The Vicente Calderón, which is set to be razed to the ground in 2012. / RICARDO GUTIÉRREZ

ongoing Gallardón fetish that has drawn criticism for its escalating cost. Atlético will pick up the tab for the works, and will also pay for the completion of La Peineta and the land on which it stands. The bill will come to €276 million—precisely the figure that the Vicente Calderón is valued at. In exchange for its complicity, Atlético will receive a new stadium with a capacity of 73,000—18,000 more than the Calderón can accommodate—and a parcel of land for sports facilities and commercial installations, ostensibly free of charge.

But there is a slight catch. The one-track mind of mayor Gallardón is fixed on another Olympic bid, despite the IOC's post-war habit of awarding the Games to a different continent each Olympiad. As part of the accord, the city will retain ownership of the stadium until 2016.

The spokesman for pressure group "Save the Calderón," Juan Manuel González, has expressed concern that the fiscal arrangement may increase debts, not reduce them, and has accused the mayor of "months of shady meet-

The bill will come to €276 million—the figure the Calderón is valued at

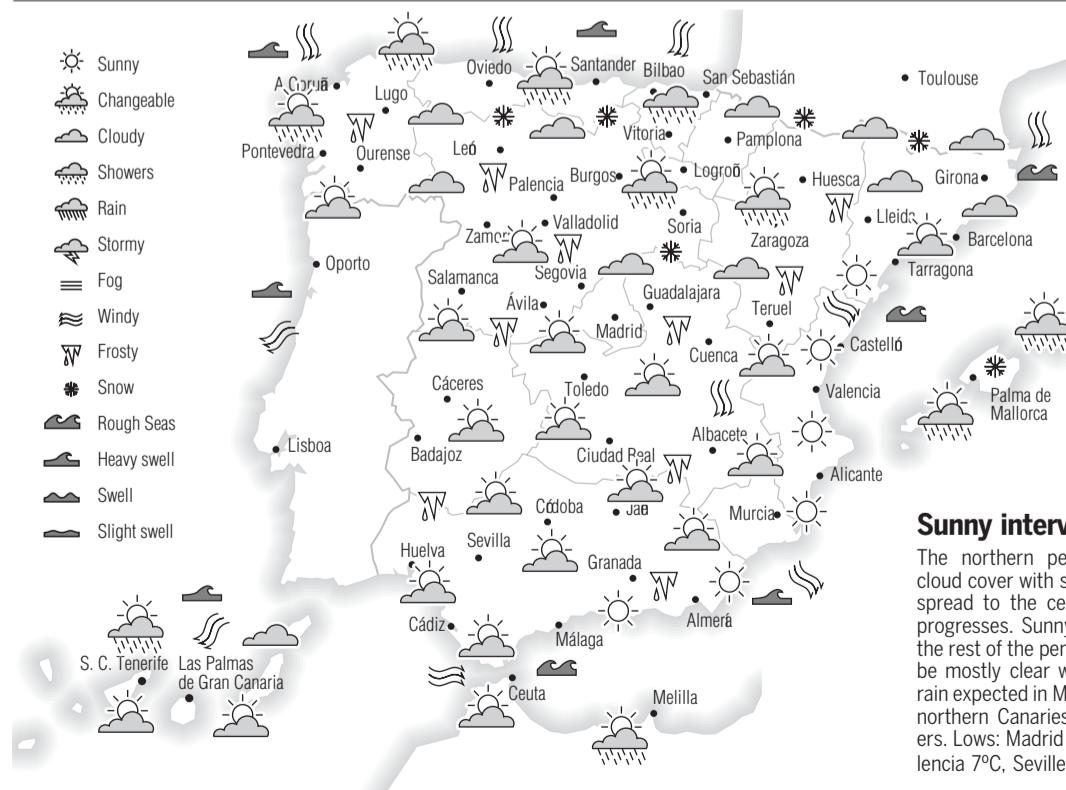
ings" and of "treating the club like dirt and looking down on its supporters."

"It's clear that the deal will not cancel [the club's] debt, nor improve accessibility. It would be easier to make infrastructure improvements and increase seating at the current stadium and

allow Atléticos to remain at home," González said.

In the event of a successful 2016 bid, Atlético will be required to hand the keys to La Peineta over to City Hall on June 1, 2015. The club will then resume control of the stadium after the Paralympics in September, 2016. In the meantime, Atlético would need to find temporary lodgings. The only stadium that would fit the bill is Real Madrid's Bernabéu—an unlikely marriage of convenience. The club has said that it could play at the "mini-stadium" at its planned sports complex in the southern suburb of Alcorcón. With a capacity of only 15,000, and the massive drop in gate receipts it represents over a season and a half of soccer, the "mattress makers" may need to become inured to lying in bed with Gallardón.

Weather: Spain today



J. L. RON

Sunny intervals and showers

The northern peninsula will see heavy cloud cover with some showers, which will spread to the central region as the day progresses. Sunny spells are forecast for the rest of the peninsula. The Balearics will be mostly clear with some early-morning rain expected in Majorca and Menorca. The northern Canaries can also expect showers. Lows: Madrid -1°C, Barcelona 8°C, Valencia 7°C, Seville 4°C, Lisbon 4°C.

Useful information

All emergencies.....	112	Barcelona93 298 38 38
Ambulance.....	061	Madrid902 35 35 70
Fire Brigade	080	Valencia96 159 85 00
Municipal police.....	092	Málaga95 204 88 04
National police	091	Palma97 178 90 99

TRAINS

RENFE	902 240 202
International ...	902 243 402

EMBASSIES

Australia.....	91 353 66 00
Canada	91 423 32 50
Ireland	91 436 40 93
New Zealand ..	91 523 02 26
UK	91 700 82 00
US	91 587 22 00

CITY WEBSITES

www.munimadrid.es
www.bcn.es
www.sevilla.org

TOURIST POLICE

Madrid	91 548 85 37
Barcelona.....	93 290 33 27
Gran Canaria	928 30 46 64

AIRPORTS

AENA (flights, customer services).....	902 404 704
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PORTUGAL

All emergencies.....	112
Breakdowns.....	219425095

MOROCCO

Police.....	190
Fire Brigade.....	150

Portuguese inflation eases to below 2%

A. S., Madrid

Consumer price inflation in Portugal dropped to well under 2 percent last month as sharp falls in fuel prices pushed down transportation costs.

The National Statistics Institute (INE) said Tuesday the consumer price index dropped 0.6 percent in November from the previous month, while the annual rate eased to 1.4 percent from 2.3 percent in October.

The INE said the monthly fall was driven by a drop of 2.5 percent in transportation costs as fuel and lubricant prices decreased by 8.9 percent. The downward pressure on the annual rate also reflected lower transportation costs as well as food and non-alcoholic beverage prices.

Core inflation, which factors out volatile fresh food and energy product prices, came in at 2.2 percent, down 0.3 percentage points from the previous month.

The INE said that the harmonized index of consumer prices (HICP), which is used for comparative purposes with other European countries, also fell to 1.4 percent in November from 2.8 percent in October.

The INE said it expects the gap between the Portuguese and the euro-area inflation rate to remain at October's level of minus 0.7 points.

The European Union statistics office Eurostat's flash estimate for the harmonized index in the euro zone for November is 2.1 percent.

Fund to hold bank asset purchase tender in February

Economy Minister happy with way program working

A. S., Madrid

The government will hold a further bank asset purchase auction in February with a view to injecting liquidity into the system and getting lending flowing again, Economy Minister Pedro Solbes said Tuesday.

The Financial Asset Acquisition Fund (FAAF) plans to buy high-quality assets issued by banks of up to an initial €30 billion in response to the global credit crunch. If need be, the program can be increased to €50 billion.

The next tender is due to be held on January 14. Solbes said the following tender after that would take place no later than the first week of February.

The first tender held in November was given a lukewarm reception by the banks, with less than half of the €5 billion in assets the FAAF was willing

to buy tendered. Banks seemed reluctant to expose themselves as being in need of funding, and were also wary because of a lack of familiarity with the auction rules. The government will announce the names of the banks taking part in the tenders with a four-month delay.

The second auction held this month was more successful. The fund bought AAA-grade mortgage-backed debt valued at €7.224 billion, 91 percent of the auction's €7.9 billion ceiling. The Treasury had received €9.65 billion in bids from 37 banks and had bought debt from 31 of them.

The December auction allowed the government to meet its target of buying back €10 billion in bank assets by the end of this year.

However, despite liquidity injections by the European Central Bank and other central

banks in Europe, interbank interest rates remain much higher than official interest rates, and banks still seem reluctant to lend to each other.

"Despite the skepticism shown at first, the government has always felt confident about this measure [bank asset purchases], Solbes said. "We only need some time for the uncertainty over the trend for European Central Bank interest rates to clear up," he added.

The government is also offering to guarantee up to €100 billion in asset issues by the country's banks and has increased the guarantee cap on bank deposits to €50,000 to bolster the financial system.

The government has also approved a series of stimulus packages to get the real economy moving again. Spain is facing its first recession since 1993.

Spain, Portugal drag euro-zone employment figures lower

EL PAÍS, Madrid

The number of people employed in the euro zone fell in the third quarter of this year as both Spain and Portugal shed jobs due to a downturn in their economies.

The European Union's statistics office Eurostat said Tuesday the number of people employed in the single-currency bloc decreased by 0.1 percent, or by 80,000, in the period July-September from the previous three months. Employment dropped

0.8 percent in Spain during the same period and by 0.2 percent in Portugal.

Spain's GDP fell 0.2 percent in the third quarter from the previous three months, the first time the economy has contracted in 15 years. The Portuguese economy shrank 0.1 percent over the same period. Unemployment in Spain has risen to over 11 percent, by far the highest rate in Europe. The figure for Portugal is more modest at 7.7 percent.

The fear of unemployment is currently the main concern for Spaniards, and Pedro Solbes said yesterday that the government's main priority was to stem the increase in joblessness.

"The government's main concern is limiting the destruction of jobs," Solbes said. He said that after creating employment more rapidly than other countries in Europe, Spain was now destroying jobs more rapidly.

Feeding on the Fed

A. S., Madrid

European stock markets on Tuesday closed higher in anticipation the US Federal Reserve would announce a further cut in official interest rates.

The Spanish stock market opened the session higher despite overnight losses on Wall Street as investors opted to factor an expected 50-basis-point cut in the US Fed funds target rate. That momentum was maintained when New York opened higher on the Tuesday as the United States registered the biggest fall in inflation in any month since 1947 of 1.7 points in November to 1.1 percent.

On the domestic front, the National Securities Commission said it estimated a total of 224 Spanish investment funds and other vehicles were directly exposed to the Bernard Madoff fraud with combined investment of €106.9 million.

The Spanish blue-chip Ibex 35 closed up 1.59 percent at its

high for the session at 9,167.70 points. The intraday low was 8,995.50 points. The benchmark index has fallen by 39.62 percent since the start of this year.

The Ibex Medium Cap was up 1.73 percent, while the Ibex Small Cap dropped 0.54 percent. The Madrid general index put on 1.60 percent to 976.05 points. Open-market deals in the continuous market amounted to about €1.8 billion.

The pattern was similar in the rest of Europe. Paris' CAC 40 added 2.07 percent, while in Frankfurt, the DAX was up 1.61 percent. In London, the FTSE put on 0.68 percent.

Among the banks, Santander added 2.75 percent, while BBVA put on 2.14 percent.

Sacyr added 3.50 percent on ongoing speculation regarding the possible sale of its 20-percent stake in Repsol to Lukoil. Repsol was up 0.94 percent.

Telefónica, which has a weighting of over 20 percent in the Ibex 35 was up 1.12 percent.

IBEX35

EQUITY	LATEST PRICE	DAILY VARIATION		YESTERDAY		ANNUAL VARIATION %	
		EUROS	%	MIN.	MÁX.	PREVIOUS	CURRENT
ABERTIS	12,14	-0,11	-0,90	12,06	12,40	-13,1	-49,79
13,23	0,20	1,53	12,94	13,34	2,9	-36,97	
ACCIONA	82,90	-0,90	-1,07	82,20	85,70	53,7	-61,77
12,37	0,12	0,98	12,25	12,69	-27,0	-26,50	
ACS	31,33	0,32	1,03	30,81	31,49	-4,8	-22,93
6,15	0,26	4,41	5,88	6,15	-14,8	-47,44	
BANCO POPULAR	5,24	0,11	2,14	5,11	5,24	-12,6	-29,28
BANCO SABADELL	6,72	0,18	2,75	6,48	6,74	4,6	-51,27
BANESTO	8,18	0,22	2,76	7,96	8,20	-20,6	-38,54
BANKINTER	6,49	0,19	3,02	6,24	6,54	5,3	-48,29
BBVA	8,60	0,18	2,14	8,33	8,60	-8,1	-48,69
18,29	0,47	2,64	17,90	18,29	48,7	-60,18	
CINTRA	5,95	-0,06	-1,00	5,91	6,10	-14,6	-39,52
CRITERIA	2,81	0,03	1,08	2,76	2,83	-1,5	-45,65
ENAGÁS	14,79	0,11	0,75	14,56	14,95	13,5	-26,01
ENDESA	27,06	0,41	1,54	26,70	27,21	1,5	-25,56
FCC	24,64	-0,01	-0,04	24,35	25,43	-33,4	-52,06
FERROVIAL	21,61	0,43	2,03	21,01	21,68	-34,9	-55,09
GAMESA	13,37	0,20	1,52	13,08	13,54	53,4	-58,19
GAS NATURAL	19,57	0,19	0,98	19,30	19,92	33,4	-51,10
GRIFOLS	12,09	0,12	1,00	11,91	12,29	52,6	-21,54
IBERD. RENOVABLES	2,87	0,05	1,77	2,82	2,90	6,6	-49,20
IBERDROLA	5,90	0,15	2,61	5,70	5,90	25,6	-43,27
IBERIA	1,84	-0,02	-1,08	1,76	1,89	8,7	-38,67
INDITEX	31,43	-0,24	-0,76	30,55	32,49	3,0	-25,20
INDRA	15,90	0,07	0,44	15,71	16,07	-0,2	-14,42
MAPFRE	2,62	0,12	4,80	2,48	2,64	-12,0	-12,72
OHL	9,79	0,19	1,98	9,56	9,94	-1,6	-57,49
REE	35,66	0,16	0,45	35,37	36,30	33,1	-17,53
REPSOL YPF	15,05	0,14	0,94	14,81	15,14	-7,0	-38,27
SACYR VALLEHERMOSO	7,09	0,24	3,50	6,90	7,32	-40,9	-71,44
TÉCNICAS REUNIDAS	18,50	0,10	0,54	18,21	18,76	50,3	-57,74
TELECINCO	8,10	-	-	8,05	8,24	-18,9	-53,74
TELÉFONICA	16,22	0,18	1,12	15,97	16,28	37,8	-27,00
UNIÓN FENOSA	17,52	0,02	0,11	17,46	17,56	23,2	13,79

Automobile sector

European passenger car sales decrease sharply in November

The European Automobile Manufacturers' Association said Tuesday new passenger car registrations in Europe fell by 25.8 percent from a year earlier. Registrations in the 11 months to November dropped by 7.1 percent. Volkswagen's Spanish unit SEAT on Monday announced temporary lay-offs that will affect up to 5,300 jobs at its Martorell plant in the Barcelona area, in response to sharp falls in demand. Other car manufacturers in Spain are laying off thousands of workers either permanently or on a temporary basis.

SOS

Food company in talks to sell more non-strategic assets

SOS Chairman Jesús Salazar said Tuesday a number of companies had contacted the Spanish food group on the possible acquisition of non-strategic assets. SOS, which is the world's leading olive-oil distributor, on Monday agreed to sell its cookies division Cuétara to Spain's Nuxtrepa for €215 million. SOS is looking to reduce its debt after buying the Bertolli olive oil brand from Unilever for €630 million.

BBVA

Bank to invest €800 million in new headquarters

The new corporate headquarters of Spain's second-biggest bank in the Madrid district of Las Tablas will be completed in 2013. However, some 6,500 employees will be transferred to the new complex in 2011.

CONTINUOUS MARKET

BIGGEST HIGHS

	%	EUROS
PRISA	19,03	0,43
MONTEBALITO	18,26	0,65
LA SEDA B	8,33	0,03
URBAS	7,14	0,01
INMOBIL. COLONIAL	7,14	0,01
RENO MÉDIC	5,88	0,01
DOGI	5,80	0,04
MAPFRE	4,80	0,12
PROSEGUR	4,51	

A place to explore the secrets of the sea

New Murcia museum shows off archeological treasures discovered in the ocean

SUSANA URRA
Madrid

Until recently, Spain had naval museums, archeology museums, maritime museums and museums about the Mediterranean. But it most certainly did not have an "underwater archeology" museum.

All that has changed with ARQUA, a state-owned institution that opened late last month in Cartagena to great fanfare. Her Royal Highness Princess Cristina, Culture Minister César Antonio Molina and a selection of Murcia's political and cultural elite showed up at the inauguration of a museum that cost more than €20.3 million to design and build and which is being touted as both "unique" and "pioneering."

The museum, officially called Museo Nacional de Arqueología Subacuática, is the result of a National Plan for the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, which the Culture Ministry launched in 2007.

By pure coincidence, this also happens to be the year that a US treasure hunting company named Odyssey Marine Exploration claimed a cargo of over 500,000 silver coins weighing more than 17 tons, as well as considerable amounts of gold, on the bed of the Atlantic Ocean. The Spanish government laid claim to this treasure, which was thought to be part of the cargo of *Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes*, a Spanish ship that sank in 1804. The case went to the courts and became a high-profile media story in Spain, creating greater awareness of the riches to be found under the sea's surface.

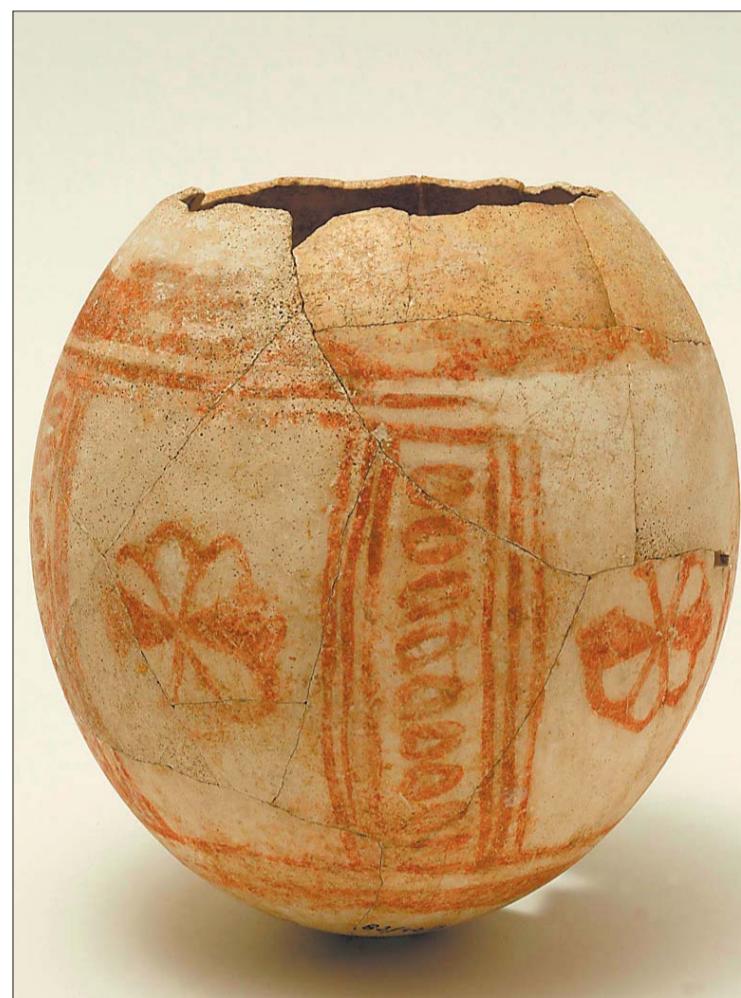
The goal of ARQUA — whose exhibits include remains of Phoenician ships found off Mazarrón, amphoras from various eras, gold ingots, anchors and even elephant tusks dating back to Phoenician times and found under the sea — is clearly educational, say its founders.

"From a strictly scientific point of view, but using an engaging language that can be easily understood by all, the public will learn what exactly constitutes our Underwater Cultural Heritage, how it is protected, how it is dug up and conserved, and what it teaches us about our past," said the Culture Ministry in a press release.

The museum incorporates state-of-the-art technology to show off its permanent collection, including hands-on material and 250 LED screens, the most ever used inside a museum in Europe.

ARQUA's most prized exhibit is the life-size reproduction of the shipwreck found at Mazarrón, which shows the remains of the ship, the objects just as they were found, and part of the safety box built to protect them from the elements.

There is also a space devoted to naval architecture and con-



A Punic ostrich egg, on show at ARQUA. / ARCHIVO ARQUA



Seventh-century elephant tusk. / ARCHIVO ARQUA

taining four segments of hand-crafted ships built using wood from sustainable forests. Two more ships hang from the ceiling, a Greek kyrenia and a Medieval coca.

True to the modern practice of creating designer buildings specifically for new museums, this one was built by the architect Guillermo Vázquez Consuegra, and the project was includ-

On show are ship remains, amphoras, gold ingots, and even elephant tusks

The most prized exhibit is the lifesize reproduction of the Mazarrón shipwreck

ed in an exhibition at New York's modern art museum MOMA called *On site: New Spanish Architecture*.

Cartagena itself is a city with strong historical links to the sea — it was chosen by the Carthaginians as their main base on the peninsula, and its name derives from them — and the museum overlooks the bay, where shipbuilding was a mainstay of the economy until the late 20th century.

ARQUA also incorporates a specialized library for researchers, a cafeteria and restaurant, and a performance hall.

ARQUA. Paseo del Muelle Alfonso XII, 22, Cartagena, Murcia. Tel: 96 812 11 66.

García Lorca joins "Generation of Google" with new websites

New portal sees 2,500 documents made available online

EL PAÍS / K. R.
Madrid

Spanish poet Federico García Lorca has gone digital, and beyond. Monday marked the inauguration of a triple-headed online initiative dedicated to everything surrounding the Granada-born poet and playwright, whose well-known work includes the poetry collection *A Poet in New York* and the play *Blood Wedding*, and who was executed by fascist forces at the start of the Spanish Civil War.

Three separate websites will offer academic studies on the writer, document his life and oeuvre, and create a digital archive of his creations and other documents, while a future project will serve as a social forum for fans and scholars of the most celebrat-

ed member of Spain's literary circle, "the Generation of '27."

On Monday, Madrid's La Residencia de Estudiantes, the place that served as the cultural and academic meeting point for Lorca and other "Generation" thinkers, such as Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel, inaugurated the García Lorca Foundation's internet portal www.garcia-lorca.org, its most modern digitalization effort to date.

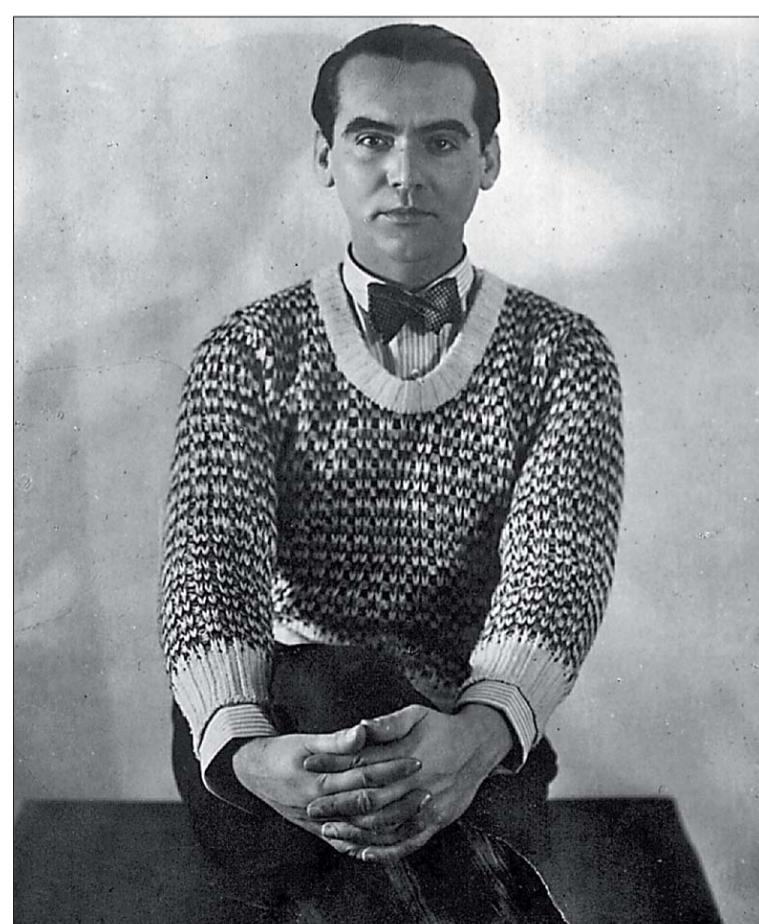
The poet's niece and president of the García Lorca Foundation, Laura García Lorca, explained that the website includes academic studies on her uncle's work by scholars such as Christopher Maurer from Boston University, and Andrés Soria, from the University of Granada.

She added that new additions to the site will be added over coming months, such as a digital

copy of the poem of which all known copies were thought to be lost, *The Crucifixion from A Poet in New York*.

In a concurrent project, the contents of the website have been added to the Miguel de Cervantes Virtual Library, which has added a new section dedicated to the poet, and which will be linked to the site Edad de Plata (also created by Residencia de Estudiantes), which collects testimonials from the intellectual history of the period 1868-1936 in Spain.

This archive will give web surfers access to approximately 2,500 digitalized copies of documents held at the Foundation's Madrid archive, including manuscripts, private correspondence, drawings, posters, programs, figures and other documents relating to the poet's life and work.



A photograph of Federico García Lorca taken in 1931.