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## Summary: Recent Developments On Resolving Panamanian Political Crisis

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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On Dec. 21 deposed Panamanian president Eric Arturo Delvalle arrived in Washington on board a US military plane for consultations with President Reagan, President-elect George Bush, and Secretary of State George Shultz among other senior officials. At a meeting, Delvalle reportedly threatened to resign should Washington fail to develop a plan and a timetable for forcing Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega to step down from power. On the same day, a Panamanian emissary to the US, Aquilino E. Boyd, requested that a political dialogue be initiated in order to normalize diplomatic relations before the inauguration of George Bush. Boyd denounced US recognition of Delvalle, and encouraged normalization of relations between the two countries. US officials stated that the administration is reevaluating policy toward Panama during the Reagan-Bush transition period. After returning to Panama Delvalle reportedly dispatched a letter to Noriega, dated Dec. 27 and written on Washington's Panamanian Embassy stationery. According to a document obtained by the Associated Press on Jan. 4, in the letter Delvalle offered to negotiate an end to the nation's political crisis, and proposed that both he and Noriega resign before the May 7 elections. The letter was apparently delivered via the offices of the papal nuncio. Delvalle wrote, "We can and should promote and carry out a serious and expeditious negotiation to establish a preliminary basis for national reconstruction and open the way for Panama's recovery." He added that as a result of the political crisis the government had become "incapable of providing basic public services due to a drop in Government revenue." Delvalle signed the letter "President of the Republic of Panama." A spokesperson for Delvalle said that the suggested resignation of both political figures before the May 7 elections was rejected by the military. He also said that the Voice of Liberty, a clandestine radio station would relay messages from Delvalle criticizing President Manuel Solis Palma's government when it resumes broadcasting in January. (Basic data from New York Times, 12/22/88; AP, 01/04/89)

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