Panama: U.S. Expands Economic Sanctions

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On Sept. 12, State Department spokesperson Margaret Tutwiler told reporters that the US government had expanded economic sanctions against Panama to force Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega from power. The measures, she said, included suspension of Panamanian sugar imports, and expanding the list of Panamanian companies and individuals associated with Noriega to whom US citizens will be barred from making payments. Panama's 1989 sugar quota of 30,537 metric tons has been reallocated to other countries, said Tutwiler, resulting in close to $15 million in revenue losses to the Panamanian government. In addition, she said, the US trade representative has suspended a further quota of 23,043 metric tons to which Panama would have been entitled because of a quota increase. On Sept. 13, Cartillero Castillo, general director of the state-owned sugar company, La Victoria, said the government is seeking to divert its sugar exports to other buyers in Europe and elsewhere. He said France will purchase some of the sugar that otherwise would have gone to the US. Panama is also negotiating deals to barter sugar for fertilizers and other items in short supply. (Basic data from Reuters, 09/12/89; 09/14/89)

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