

9-4-1991

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Panama: Investigations Confirm Mistreatment Of Inmates At Coiba Penitentiary

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Category/Department: General

Published: Wednesday, September 4, 1991

On Aug. 24, Attorney General Rogelio Cruz told reporters that investigations had confirmed inhumane treatment of inmates at the Coiba Penitentiary by prison guards. During a recent three-day visit, Interior Ministry forensic specialist Humberto Mas discovered several inmates who had been wounded result of beatings. On Aug. 28, Roberto Troncoso, president of the Panamanian Human Rights Committee (CPDH), said guards guilty of torturing inmates should be punished "to set an example" that such treatment will not be tolerated in a democracy. Attorney General Edwin Alvarez recently announced that seven guards would be interrogated to determine the accuracy of allegations of torture. (Basic data from AFP, 08/24/91, 08/28/91)

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