Dominican Republic: Low Turn-out For First Day Of 72-hour Nationwide Strike

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According to a report by Spanish news service EFE, turn-out on July 29, the first day of a 72-hour nationwide general strike was low in Santo Domingo and other major cities. The United Workers Confederation (CTU) issued the call for walk-outs in an attempt to persuade President Joaquin Balaguer's government raise public sector employee wages by 100%. The CTU's strike received only moral support from the Dominican Liberation (PLD), Dominican Revolutionary (PRD), and Revolutionary Leftist (IR) parties. The PLD and PRD are the Dominican Republic's two major opposition parties. With the exception of low-income neighborhoods on the northern outskirts of Santo Domingo, public transport and private vehicle traffic and commerce activities were normal. The capital and other major cities have been militarized, with special attention to densely populated poor neighborhoods. Military and police sources reported normal business activities and the absence of violence in all cities. Two previous walkouts, on July 3-4 and 9-10, while peaceful, resulted in 400 million pesos ($31.5 million) in material damages. At present, civil servants earn an average of 750 pesos (US$59) per month. (Basic data from EFE, 07/29/91)

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