



**Statement of the United States of America
Concerning the Failure of Consular Notification
In the Case of Angel Breard**

November 3, 1998

On Tuesday, April 14, 1998, a Paraguayan national was executed by the State of Virginia after exhausting his legal appeals to the courts of the United States.

Mr. Breard had not been told that Paraguay's consular officials could be notified of his arrest, and that he could seek their assistance. Such notification was required by the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and should have been made by competent United States authorities. That failure to notify Mr. Breard was unquestionably a violation of an obligation owed to the Government of Paraguay.

The Government of the United States of America fully recognizes the violation of the Vienna Convention in this case, and conveys its apologies to the Government and people of Paraguay.

Recognizing that United States compliance with the requirements of the Vienna Convention must improve, the Government of the United States has undertaken efforts to better educate officials throughout the United States of the consular notification requirements. The United States intends through these efforts to ensure that the consular rights of foreign nationals in the United States are respected, and that Paraguayan and other foreign nationals in the United States are properly notified of their right to request consular assistance if they are arrested or detained. Consular notification is no less important to Paraguayan and other foreign nationals in the United States than to U. S. nationals outside the United States. We fully appreciate that the United States must see to it that foreign nationals in the United States receive the same treatment that we expect for our citizens overseas. We cannot have a double standard.

Finally, we wish to express that the Government of the United States values and appreciates the ties of friendship that join us to the Republic of Paraguay. In this respect, we express our intent to continue to work together to further strengthen the positive dialogue and cooperation between our two nations.

