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United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Chile Project (#S199900030)

U.S. Department of State

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WH019

PBL

Mrs. Olga Weisfeiler

EXCISE

Dear Mrs. Weisfeiler:

I am writing in response to your letter of February 13, and as a follow-up to the letter I sent last August concerning the work of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission created by the Chilean government last year to inquire into allegations of human rights violations committed during the former government.

The Chilean government recently made public the findings and conclusions reached by the Commission as a result of its nine-month investigation. Your authorization made it possible for the Commission to include the case of the unsolved disappearance of your brother Professor Boris Weisfeiler among the other cases involving American citizens that we asked it to investigate. The documentation you sent to us was forwarded to the Commission.

Unfortunately, the Commission has determined that the evidence provided was insufficient to declare that his disappearance was caused by agents of the Government of Chile. In its final report, the Commission includes his name with the group of persons about whom it was unable to form a "conviction" that their unexplained disappearance was a case of human rights abuse. This result is explained by the fact that the Commission, as instructed to by the government, adhered strictly to its mandate to inquire into the most serious instances of human rights abuses committed by agents of the state. In the case of your brother, it did not have enough information to reach any other conclusion.

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I realize that you must feel disappointed at this outcome because it does not shed any more light on the still unexplained disappearance of your brother. We are not sure what further measures the Chilean government might take in this and similar cases. However, our Embassy has informed us that the government is considering the possibility of setting up an agency to compile evidence in those cases where the Commission lacked sufficient evidence to determine a human rights violation. Failing that, further investigation of this case would have to be taken up by Chilean judicial authorities should the evidence warrant doing so.

If I can be of any further assistance, you may contact me or the Chile Desk Officer Kathryn Stevens at (202) 647-2401.

Sincerely,

Andrew D. Sens
Director
Office of Southern Cone Affairs

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