

U.S. Department of Education
Staff Analysis
of the Annual Report Submitted by
Dominican Republic

Prepared August 22, 2002

Background

At its October 1997 meeting, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) determined that the new approval standards adopted in October 1996 and used by the Consejo Nacional Educacion Superior (CONES) to evaluate medical schools in the Dominican Republic (Republic) were comparable to those used to evaluate programs leading to the M.D. degree in the United States.

In its February 2000 report, the CONES recognized the Dominican Association for Self-Study and Accreditation (ADDAAC), the accrediting body created in 1989 to promote minimum levels of quality higher education in the Republic, as the “nationally recognized accreditation agency” for institutions of higher education and/or specific programs. Because the CONES discussed the different steps it had taken to ensure that ADDAAC would have a sound financial basis and the trained personnel to carry out its mission effectively, the NCFMEA requested that CONES discuss the activities of the ADDAAC and provide a copy of the standards the ADDAAC had established to accredit medical schools.

The February 2001 report indicated that ADDAAC activities had been suspended pending approval of a new law that would address educational oversight and evaluation. Upon approval of the new law, CONES would provide the necessary authorization to enable ADDAAC to fulfill its mission and would provide NCFMEA with a copy of the law in English.

At its March 2001 meeting, the NCFMEA reviewed the last annual report submitted by CONES. The report focused on changes that could occur, as a result of governmental elections, in the way CONES authorizes and evaluates medical schools. CONES did not address what accrediting activities, if any, it conducted in 2000 nor had it provided a copy of the ADDAAC accreditation standards as requested. The NCFMEA requested a new report for its September 2001 meeting that would demonstrate that CONES is actively engaged in accreditation activities. The report was to provide specific information on site

visits conducted, accreditation decisions reached, changes to accreditation standards, and information on the relationship between CONES and the ADDAAC.

At its September 2001 meeting, the NCFMEA reviewed the report submitted by the Consejo Nacional de Educacion Superior, Ciencia y Tecnologia (CONESCT), the name for CONES as prescribed under Presidential Decree 517-96. The report was responsive to previous requests for information and the report was accepted. The NCFMEA requested an additional annual report for review at its September 2002 meeting that would provide an overview of accreditation activities, a summary of changes to laws, regulations, standards, processes and procedures, and a schedule of upcoming accreditation activities.

Since the September 2001 meeting, the acronym used for the agency's name was changed to make it more descriptive and easier to remember in Spanish. Therefore, the acronym CONESCT has been replaced by SEESCYT. The agency's full name, Consejo Nacional de Educacion Superior, Ciencia y Tecnologia, has not changed.

Summary of Findings

Based on its review of the annual report submitted by the Dominican Republic, Department staff concludes that the SEESCYT has provided all of the information requested by the NCFMEA. Department staff also concludes that the country's actions during the past year appear to be consistent with the NCFMEA guidelines.

Staff Analysis

The Annual Report on Medical School Education submitted by the Dominican Republic consisted of the following documents:

- The Medical School Report for the Year 2002
- The 2002 Medical School Visit Schedule

Overview of accreditation activities:

SEESCYT has provided overviews of the results of its evaluation of medical schools during the calendar year 2002. The report was prepared in accordance with the agency's quinquennial evaluation of medical schools and to assess medical school compliance with Law Number 139-01 for Higher Education, Science and Technology. During the calendar year 2002, SEESCYT conducted special visits to the following ten medical schools:

- National University Pedro Henriquez Urena (UNPHU)
- Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (INTEC)
- Pontificia Universidad Madre Y Maestra (PUCMM)
- Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo (UASD)
- Universidad Central Del Este (UCE)
- Universidad Católica Nordestana (UCNE)
- Universidad Católica Tecnológica del Cibao (UTECI)
- Universidad Tecnológica de Santiago (UTESA – Santiago)
- Universidad Tecnológica de Santiago (UTESA – Santo Domingo)
- Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE)

Summary of any changes or developments in the following areas:

Laws and regulations:

The agency previously reported that Law Number 139-01 for Higher Education, Science and Technology has made changes in the legal requirements imposed on medical schools in the Republic. The agency reports that it is giving institutions some time to achieve compliance with the new law, and expects substantial compliance before the end of calendar year 2002.

Standards, Processes and Procedures:

The agency reports no changes in its standards, processes and procedures.

Schedule for Upcoming Accreditation Activities:

The agency has provided a site visit schedule for the remainder of 2002. Department staff and representatives of the NCFMEA will observe a site visit at one of the medical schools in mid-September, 2002.