

European states bar ex-leader

THE MIAMI HERALD
MAY. 31, 2006

MANAGUA - (AP) -- Former Nicaraguan President Arnaldo Alemán, who is accused of money laundering, has been banned from 15 European countries, according to a statement released by the Spanish Embassy in Nicaragua.

The 10-year ban, issued Monday by Spain, is valid in Germany, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland, all of which signed treaties with Spain.

Alemán, who was president from 1997 to 2002, is wanted in Panama and the United States.

In Panama, he is accused of using 60 bank accounts to launder \$57 million stolen from Nicaragua's government coffers. In Miami, he faces a civil trial over allegations he purchased U.S. bank certificates with money he stole in office.

In 2003, a Nicaraguan court sentenced Alemán to 20 years in prison for fraud and money laundering.

His sentence was later reduced, and appeals courts dominated by his Liberal Party eventually granted him conditional freedom.

Last week, a Nicaraguan appeals court granted Alemán an injunction against extradition.