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Guillermo Ungo: Washington And Salvadoran Rulers Not Serious About Peace Talks, Yet Medium-term Prospects Good

by Deborah Tyroler

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In an Oct. 15 interview with Cuban news agency PRENSA LATINA in Bonn, Germany, Salvadoran Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) leader Guillermo Ungo said the Reagan administration, and Salvadoran army chiefs and rightwing groups are not interested in pursuing meaningful dialogue with the rebels. He added that the Salvadoran ruling groups are only interested in exploiting the possibility of peace talks in the "short term," and this only for "appearances." Ungo, also deputy chairman of the Socialist International, said the Salvadoran rebels unilaterally offered a truce in the wake of the earthquake devastating the capital city for the purpose of facilitating rescue operations and relief to victims. Predictably, he added, the Salvadoran government rejected the truce proposal. The rebel leader stated that medium-term prospects for peace talks were nonetheless positive because the political control of President Jose Napoleon Duarte's government is deteriorating, the economy continues in crisis, and the US- backed military strategy is failing. According to Ungo, center and center right organizations are applying increasing pressure on the Duarte regime to engage in serious dialogue with the rebels. Next, the FDR chairman stated the US government is systematically sabotaging efforts by the Contadora Group to construct political solutions to the regional conflict. He added that the Reagan administration's strategy is supported by the governments of Honduras and El Salvador. In response to rumors about a split in FDR leadership, Ungo said such stories are being disseminated by Washington, and that they amount to little more than a pleasant "fantasy" for US strategists. Ungo was visiting Bonn to attend a Socialist International meeting.

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