Salvadoran Rebels Announce Willingness To Declare Christmas Ceasefire

Deborah Tyroler
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by Deborah Tyroler
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In a Dec. 3 interview with a San Salvador radio station, rebel leader Ruben Zamora said the FMLN-FDR (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, Democratic Revolutionary Front) was willing to observe a Christmas ceasefire. He added the FMLN and the FDR have always observed such ceasefire decisions, while the same could not be said for government troops. On Oct. 10, after the earthquake which nearly decimated the capital city, the rebels unilaterally suspended operations for 12 days. Government troops, according to FMLN leaders, used that time to step up counterinsurgency campaigns throughout the country. Next, according to RADIO VENCEREMOS, a ceasefire formally accepted by both sides at the request of the Vatican on Oct. 27 was violated by the military. The Salvadoran media reported that Zamora's announcement was in reply to a statement by San Salvador's auxiliary bishop Gregorio Rosa Chavez. Chavez had declared the Church would not request a ceasefire from the government and rebels this holiday season because it would be "useless."

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