

3-17-1989

Salvadoran Rebel Commander On Purpose Of Military Offensive, Election Boycott

Deborah Tyroler

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen>

Recommended Citation

Tyroler, Deborah. "Salvadoran Rebel Commander On Purpose Of Military Offensive, Election Boycott." (1989).
<https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen/2850>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiCen by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.

Salvadoran Rebel Commander On Purpose Of Military Offensive, Election Boycott

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Friday, March 17, 1989

In a March 16 interview with the Mexican government's news service, Notimex, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) commander Ana Guadalupe Martinez said that the objective of rebel actions is not to obstruct the elections, but rather to demonstrate that war conditions prevail in El Salvador. The FMLN's political objective in the current military offensive, said Martinez, is to demonstrate the necessity of a negotiated solution to the war. The elections, she added, will produce continuity to the war. The rebel commander denied certain media reports which said the FMLN had discussed the possibility of declaring a truce during the elections with the Spanish government. Madrid, she said, articulated its concern that the FMLN's call for an election boycott serve to obstruct the electoral process and thus affect the civilian population. On March 12, President Jose Napoleon Duarte called on Mexico, Spain, Venezuela, Nicaragua, the Organization of American States, the United Nations, and Pope John Paul II to enter into contact with the FMLN in an attempt to persuade the rebels to withdraw the call for an election boycott. According to Martinez, Spain was the only government to respond to Duarte's request. Martinez said that the transport strike, initiated on March 16, seeks to dissuade Salvadorans from voting, since a low voter turnout would reinforce the perceived need for a political solution to the war. Meanwhile, Guillermo Ungo, presidential candidate for the Democratic Convergence, has urged Salvadorans to go to the polls. Martinez said the CD's position is "correct," in that it needs a respectable number of votes for Ungo to become a broad-based organization, and to improve its international image. Martinez said that the winner of the elections will be dealing with the FMLN in future negotiations, but that prospects for talks will differ, depending on which party's candidate becomes president. A victory by Fidel Chavez Mena would represent an "unnecessary prolongation" of the war, said the rebel commander, because 80% of the army has declared its support for continued conflict and a military victory over the FMLN. Moreover, said Martinez, the so-called "centrist" Christian Democrats would only continue President Duarte's policies, and with this, continue the war. According to Martinez, a win by Alfredo Cristiani of the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) presents greater possibilities for negotiation because the belief exists within ARENA that El Salvador "is an ungovernable country." In addition, said Martinez, ARENA is aware it would lose support by the US and the international community if it embarks on a policy of genocide. (Basic data from Notimex, 03/16/89)

-- End --