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El Salvador: Civilian Judge Indicts & Imprisons Military Officers

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On March 15, civilian Judge Alcides Guandique indicted and jailed Maj. Mauricio Beltran Granados and 2nd Lt. Arnaldo Vasquez Alvarenga, accusing them of a role in the massacre of 10 peasant farmers on Sept. 21 in the hamlet of San Francisco. Judge Guandique also indicted seven soldiers for their alleged role in the killings. The indictments were handed down from the judge's office in San Sebastian, 30 miles east of San Salvador. The occasion marked the first time that military officers had been indicted for killing civilians in nine years of civil war, despite evidence of officers' involvement in the deaths of thousands. Next, Guandique's indictment and decree of provisional detention marked the officers as the first in Salvadoran history to be jailed on the order of a civilian judge. (Basic data from AP, 03/15/89)

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