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Salvadoran President Says Nicaragua Aiding Rebels; Calls On Regional Effort To End Civil War

by Deborah Tyroler

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At a June 2 news conference, Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani reiterated accusations that the Nicaraguan government was assisting the Salvadoran rebels. Managua has repeatedly denied providing any tangible aid to the rebels, providing only "moral" support. Cristiani said he will bring up the issue of alleged Nicaraguan intervention during the next Central American summit, tentatively scheduled for July. [Ed.: The Salvadoran and US governments have claimed Nicaragua provides arms and logistical aid to the Salvadoran rebels on numerous occasions during the past seven years. There has been and is no conclusive objective evidence of such support.] Cristiani also called for a regional effort to end the civil war in El Salvador, and said that such effort was just as important as dismantling the Nicaraguan contra forces. On May 30, the armed forces exhibited nearly 400 Soviet-designed AK-47 assault rifles, 50 Soviet-made grenade launchers and piles of other munitions. Later, in a statement on Radio Venceremos, the rebels said the exhibition was staged to implicate Nicaragua and ensure continued US military aid. The weapons and munitions displayed, said the broadcast, did not belong to the rebels. (Basic data from AP, DPA, 06/02/89)

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