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El Salvador: Statements By Members Of Commission Promoting Talks Between Rebels & Government

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Aug. 10, members of a commission promoting peace talks between the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Salvadoran government said they were optimistic about bringing the civil war to an end. The commission is comprised of members of the Christian Democratic Party, the National Reconciliation Party and the Democratic Convergence. Four rounds of negotiations took place between 1984 and 1987. According to Hugo Carrillo, "We have found that the political will to dialogue exists on both sides. There are points of agreement, but there is also distance and mistrust. We of the opposition political parties are serving as promoters of dialogue in an effort to narrow that difference." Commission members met in late July with rebel commanders in Mexico City and with President Alfredo Cristiani this week. They said both sides encouraged them to continue the effort to create conditions for talks, and that they expected both sides to make "concrete gestures" to emphasize their dedication to achieving a negotiated peace. Although the commission did not discuss with either side what such measures could be, Carrillo mentioned as possibilities a rebel cease-fire and an end to a government attempt to pass legislation restricting or eliminating Salvadorans' civil rights. (Basic data from AP, 08/10/89)

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