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Deborah Tyroler

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## **University Of El Salvador Appeal For Assistance To Protest Government's Attempt To Restrict Academic Freedom**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

*Category/Department: General*

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[On May 25, the Secretariat of the Latin American Studies Association (Pittsburgh, PA) received the following letter from the Universidad de El Salvador.] To the International Community: The University of El Salvador would like to inform you about the Salvadoran government's attempts to restrict or suppress academic freedom and the autonomy of the country's educational institutions. The government's aim is being carried out through the Legislative Assembly. First is the "General Law of Education," an obvious threat to cultural development and which works against the rights of the nation's teachers. Next is the "Law of Higher Education," which serves as an instrument to infringe on academic freedom and university autonomy. The essence of these laws is that they are directed at placing government delegates to intervene in the carrying out of El Salvador's academic, scientific and cultural affairs. This can not be permitted: course content cannot be based upon the interests of whatever government is in power, especially when such government does not have a national development plan which reflects the...aspirations of its citizens. State intervention in academic life is a violation of academic freedom, which is a human right of particular importance to the vast majority, and should not be a privilege for the minority. Therefore, considering that democracy expresses itself through academic freedom and in the right of the public to education in an atmosphere of freedom, humanism and democracy for the people, we call on the international academic community and international solidarity organizations who monitor human rights to be offer solidarity with Salvadoran academics by: Protesting the General Law of Education and the Law of Higher Education through messages addressed to President Alfredo Cristiani, the Minister of Education, Dr. Rene Hernandez Valiente, and the President of the Legislative Assembly, Lic. Ricardo Alvarenga Valdivieso; and Publishing those messages in El Salvador's print media. We would appreciate being sent a copy of such publications. [Signed by UES president Jose Luis Argueta Antillon. Address: Universidad de El Salvador; Rectoria; Centro Comercial Don Bosco Contiguo al IVU; Apartado Postal 3110; San Salvador; El Salvador; Central America. Telex: 20794 UES. Phone: 25-7755; or 25-5271. Fax: 26-1976

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