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El Salvador: Mexican National Accused Of Collaborating With Rebels Released From Prison

by Deborah Tyroler

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June 5: The Mexican Foreign Ministry reported that free lance journalist and teacher Maria Eugenia Ochoa, arrested by National Police agents on May 31, is being held at the Women's Prison in Ilopango. She was charged with carrying false identity papers and collaborating with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). (See CAU 06/06/90 for previous coverage.) The ministry said Ochoa entered El Salvador in late January this year on a tourist visa, with the objective of establishing inter-university contacts. Salvadoran military sources said Ochoa was arrested upon "making contact" with Rafael Antonio Carballo (Roque) and Miriam Margarita Guillen (Amanda). At the time of arrest, identification documents in the name of Elsa Alferez Duran were found on Ochoa's person. The ID had been issued in Aguilares, San Salvador department. According to the National Police, in 1987 Ochoa began working with rebel solidarity groups in Mexico, and was responsible for raising funds for the FMLN. The police assert that Ochoa is a member of the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL), one of the FMLN's five organizations. June 7: A spokesperson for the Supreme Court of Justice told Notimex that Judge Tito Celada dismissed the charges against Ochoa on grounds of "lacking merit." She was released from prison into the custody of Mexican diplomats on Thursday. [Journalists pointed out that President Alfredo Cristiani was expected to arrive June 7 in Mexico City for a three-day official visit to conclude several economic cooperation agreements with the Mexican government. Cristiani's two major objectives are renegotiating El Salvador's \$77 million debt with Mexico, and to maintain and expand Mexican oil shipments to his country. At present, El Salvador receives 8,000 barrels of oil per day from Mexico.] (Basic data from AFP, 06/05/90, 06/06/90; Notimex, 06/06/90, 06/07/90)

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