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Guatemala: Human Rights Attorney General Proposes Pact By Presidential Candidates To Reduce Campaign Violence

by Deborah Tyroler

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Human Rights Attorney General Ramio de Leon Carpio suggested this week that presidential candidates sign a pact condemning political violence to reduce the likelihood of bloodshed during the campaign leading up the November election. On July 19, Arturo Amiel, member of the National Center Union (UCN) executive committee, said the attorney general's idea was a good one, but that the incidence of violence will not depend on top party leaders, but mid-level leadership who "go about doing bad things." The attorney general's suggestion followed several recent explosions in Guatemala City, one in a church of "El Verbo," founded by former Gen. Efraim Rios Montt, who came to power in 1982 via a coup. Oscar Domingo Paz, of the rightist National Liberation Movement (MLN), said his party would sign a non-aggression pact. Referring to attempted candidacy of Rios Montt, president of the National Reconciliation Commission, Catholic Bishop Rodolfo Quezada Toruno, said he was concerned because the electoral campaign has been converted into "a religious war." Some 20 political parties have pledged support for 11 separate candidates, including Rios Montt. (Basic data from Notimex, 07/19/90)

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