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## **Third Round Of Salvadoran Peace Talks Concluded: Summary Of Events & Statements**

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Representatives of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Salvadoran government concluded the third round of UN-mediated peace talks on July 26. The talks, initiated July 20, took place in a hotel on the outskirts of San Jose, Costa Rica. (See CAU 07/25/90 for earlier coverage of peace talks.) July 23: At a news conference, UN mediator Alvaro de Soto said the two sides had commenced discussions on human rights issues without resolving the question of proposed reductions in the armed forces. July 24: Armando Calderon Sol, president of the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) and mayor of San Salvador, called for a purge of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) rather than the military. The rebels, he said, "lack the will to strive for peace," and are "psychopaths (who) kill children and plant bombs." Ruben Zamora, secretary general of the Social Christian Popular Movement (MPSC), said "the entire negotiating process will be jeopardized if the government refuses to negotiate fundamental military questions." Zamora told reporters he has received anonymous death threats in the last few days. He added that such actions are another indicator of the high level of militarization of Salvadoran society. July 25: The two delegations discussed a proposal under which a UN commission would verify protection of human rights in El Salvador. The FMLN requested that the agreement include an end to night-time abductions and forced entry of homes and public places, expansion of freedom of expression, and release of political prisoners. The government delegation reportedly insisted that the agreement include a commitment by the rebels to cease sabotage of the country's electricity grid, and attacks on military officers. The government denies the existence of political prisoners in El Salvador. A government counterproposal called for a general amnesty or legislation that would benefit both guerrillas and soldiers. FMLN leader Ferman Cienfuegos said the human rights agreement calls for an on-site commission to monitor both rebel and government abuses. He added that discussion of such an agreement constituted a victory for the rebels who had pressed for an international commission as opposed to one appointed and operated by the government. July 26: UN mediator Alvaro de Soto announced that early Thursday negotiators agreed to form an independent commission to monitor human rights in El Salvador. He said, "The accord reached today between the government of El Salvador and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front rebels doesn't close the topic of human rights, but it is a partial accord...The mission of the United Nations, which will monitor respect for human rights in El Salvador, will be under the responsibility of a director designated by" Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar. According to a document read by de Soto, both sides agreed the United Nations would work closely with existing Salvadoran human rights monitoring organizations. The agreement includes the immediate implementation of measures to "wholly eradicate the practices of disappearance, abduction and torture, arbitrary detention, and all attempts against life, security and liberty." The commission will receive testimony of abuses, have unrestricted access to all locations in El Salvador and to private interviews with any individual. In the event the FMLN or the government is found guilty of abuses, the commission would formulate recommendations. The agreement has both sides committed to respect for individual rights as recognized under Salvadoran law,

and in international treaties, including declarations approved by the UN and the Organization of American States. Among practices to be eliminated are night-time abductions, detentions executed by anonymous agents (paramilitary groups and death squads), and "capture" as a method of investigation. In addition, prisoners' rights are to be respected. The document said the commission will comprise "as many agents as are necessary," and will "enjoy broad powers to adopt any initiative it deems appropriate for the promotion and defense of human rights." According to Notimex, the commission's work would commence simultaneously with a cease-fire. [The FMLN insists that a purge of the armed forces take place prior to arrangements for a cease-fire. Among other requirements, over 200 officers accused of major human rights violations would be cashiered.] De Soto said questions related to the military will be discussed at the next round of talks, scheduled for Aug. 17-22 in Costa Rica. He added that the rights accord "without doubt helps clear the way for progress on other items of the agenda." In San Salvador, Miguel Montenegro, representative of the Permanent Committee on the National Debate for Peace (CPDN), told reporters that the agreement reached in Costa Rica was inadequate. Rather than waiting until a cease-fire is in place, he said, the UN should be permitted to immediately begin human rights monitoring and verification. The CPDN is comprised of over 70 political and civic organizations. (Basic data from Notimex, AP, 07/24-26/90; Xinhua, 07/24/90; AFP, 07/25/90)

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