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## **El Salvador: Opposition Parties Request Immediate U.N. Human Rights Monitoring, & U.N. Supervision Of March Elections**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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On Aug. 9, El Salvador's nine opposition parties submitted a request to Alvaro de Soto, the United Nations mediator in talks between the government and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), to commence human rights monitoring, and for the UN to supervise elections scheduled for March 1991. Christian Democrat party leader Gerardo Le Chevalier told EFE that "consensus" exists among opposition parties on inviting the UN to undertake both activities. The July 26 agreement between President Alfredo Cristiani's government and the FMLN specifies that the UN would verify respect for human rights by both sides after a cease-fire is in place. According to Le Chevalier, the agreement has effectively permitted "open season" against opposition politicians. "Today, more than ever, we leaders of the democratic center are in danger, since extremists on both sides feel free to assassinate anyone who bothers them" in the period prior to a cease-fire. Next, Le Chevalier said his party "reserves the right" to refuse participation in the upcoming elections if the governing Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) "maintains its contrary attitude to negotiations of electoral matters." The party leader asserted that among the "conditions" necessary for the Christian Democrats to participate in the next elections are equitable access to the media, massive voter registration, increasing the number of national-level congresspersons in accordance with growth of the electorate, proportional representation for political parties in municipal councils, and the inclusion of political independents in the composition of observer boards for all voting locales. (Basic data from EFE, 08/09/90)

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