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## **El Salvador: Notes On Conclusion Of Fourth Round Of U.N. Mediated Peace Talks**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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On Aug. 22 in San Jose, Costa Rica, the fourth round of UN-mediated peace talks between the Salvadoran government and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) was concluded. (See CAU 08/22/90 for previous coverage.) Alvaro de Soto, UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar's special envoy, told reporters that the next round is scheduled for Sept. 13-18 in San Jose. He added that the two sides will continue discussion on demilitarization at the September session. According to de Soto, prospects for signing a cease-fire agreement on Sept. 15 appear to be non-existent. The mid-September date had been tentatively established by the two sides at a meeting last May in Caracas. In a statement released to the press, the FMLN said, "Real negotiations must now begin" on ending the civil war. Rebel delegate Salvador Samayoa said, "Escalation of military action is almost inevitable as a result of the government's intransigence and the absence of progress...We're speaking two different languages. It is a dialogue of the deaf." Francisco Mena, a senior guerrilla field commander and member of the delegation, said, "The situation is this: we're getting nowhere in negotiations, so let's have at it with the irons." Members of the government delegation, including Justice Minister Oscar Santamaria and Col. Mauricio Vargas, said the FMLN's most recent demands on military questions constituted a "regression." Under the FMLN's proposal presented at the fourth round both the army and the rebel forces would be dismantled after a cease-fire is in place. Similar to the Costa Rican "model" of 1949, a civilian-led police force would take the place of the army. The non-army security forces, such as the National Guard and the Treasury Police, as well as all military intelligence services, would be dismantled prior to the army. The FMLN's principal pre-conditions for a cease-fire are an end to military impunity for widespread human rights violations, and a purge of the military high command to ensure subordination to civilian authority, and prevent abuses by the new police force. (Basic data from AFP, AP, Notimex, 08/22/90)

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