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## **El Salvador: Reports On Rebel Commandos Requesting Definition Of U.S. Personnel & Property As Military Targets**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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In a Sept. 24 statement, the US State Department said that a communique by Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) commandos published Sept. 22 in a Salvadoran daily newspaper requested that the FMLN high command consider defining US government personnel and installations as military targets. Consequently, said the State Department, it has "taken action" to prevent rebel attacks on the embassy in San Salvador, adding that diplomats will not assume military roles. The threats, said the State Department statement, appear to be in response to "erroneous" reports appearing in the Salvadoran press on the involvement of Salvadoran policemen assigned to guard duty at the embassy in the arrest of five rebels. The statement said the Salvadoran guards were inside a police vehicle, but did not participate in detaining the suspects. Also on Monday, in an interview with a local radio station, FMLN commander Francisco Mena Sandoval asserted that at no time have the rebels considered US citizens or US government property as military targets. He said reports on FMLN urban commandos' soliciting such a redefinition of targets from the rebel general command constitute "psychological warfare, and lies." Mena Sandoval said that FMLN units know the "necessary mechanisms to solicit" whatever it may be from the general command. Publication of communiqués in newspapers, he said, is not one of these mechanisms. The rebel leader said the army was likely the originator of the phony commando communique because officers are "worried" about Washington's attitude, and its influence in the process of seeking a negotiated political solution to the war. (Basic data from AFP, Notimex, 09/24/90)

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