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Deborah Tyroler

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## **El Salvador: President Cristiani Proposes A Truce**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

*Category/Department: General*

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On Oct. 1, during a speech to the UN General Assembly, Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani proposed a cease-fire with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) in a bid to improve the atmosphere for peace talks. The truce would take effect as soon as the guerrillas declare a reciprocal cease-fire, Cristiani said. At a press conference later in the day, Cristiani said that Mexico, Venezuela and Spain may cooperate in a joint effort to support peace negotiations. The support effort was suggested by Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez. Cristiani also announced that he would request UN support and supervision for the 1991 legislative and municipal elections. [The International Committee in Support of the Salvadoran People (CISPES) organized a demonstration in front of UN headquarters to protest Cristiani's presence in the US, and his government's continued human rights abuses. CISPES leaders emphasized that only one of the army's 15 highest-ranking officers is not linked to human rights abuses.] The fifth round of UN-mediated peace talks between the government and rebels ended in a stalemate Sept. 18. A cease-fire arranged last year collapsed after several union halls were attacked and labor organizers were slain. The rebels blamed the killings on the government, and launched an offensive on San Salvador. In late 1989, an annual report by Jose Antonio Pastor Ridruego, a special representative of the UN Commission on Human Rights, said Cristiani's government presided over a "resurgence of torture" that included sexual abuse and beatings of prisoners, and executions of political opponents. The rebels were blamed for assassinating alleged collaborators with the armed forces, among others. (Basic data from AP, Notimex, 10/01/90)

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