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Salvadoran Air Force Chief Threatens To Sue Tutela Legal Director

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Oct. 11, air force chief Gen. Rafael Villamariona threatened to sue Maria Julia Hernandez, director of Tutela Legal, the San Salvador Archdiocesan human rights monitor office. Hernandez, said the general, has long promoted a slander campaign against military officers and the armed forces. In an interview broadcast by a Salvadoran television station, Hernandez linked Gen. Villamariona with the November 1989 murders of six Jesuit priests. Later, however, Hernandez said the statement was in error, due to an English-Spanish translation mistake. She said the correct translation is that Gen. Villamariona "has greater authority (seniority) than any of the military officers that can be involved" in the assassinations. The Tutela Legal director requested that the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency publish in full over 74 documents related to the murder investigation "so that the military officers who are not implicated in the assassination" can rest easy, and to promote "justice" in El Salvador. According to Hernandez, large portions of text in the documents thus far released by the Pentagon agency were blackout, presumably in an attempt to hide someone or something involved connected with the killings. (Basic data from ACAN-EFE, Notimex, 10/11/90)

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