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500 Salvadoran Refugees Return Home From Honduras

by Deborah Tyroler

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On March 20, 500 Salvadoran refugees left the Mesa Grande refugee camp in Honduras en route to Guanacora, Chalatenango department, and the Nuevo Obraje cooperative in La Libertad department. The repatriation program was organized by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Salvadoran and Honduran governments. At present, 1,500 Salvadorans remain at the Mesa Grande camp, which housed up 17,000 refugees in the mid-1980s. UNHCR official Guillermo Bettocchi told reporters that participation in the UN repatriation program is voluntary. He said 290 refugees returned to El Salvador on March 15, and that 160 more were scheduled for repatriation March 22. (Basic data from ACAN-EFE, AFP, 03/20/91)

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