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El Salvador: Court Hearings On Jesuit Murder Case To Reconvene

by Deborah Tyroler

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On May 14, Supreme Court spokespersons told reporters that the court investigating the 1989 Jesuit murder case will reconvene for eight days to hear new evidence. Judge Ricardo Zamora decided to reopen the hearings to determine whether others who have not yet been arrested and charged were implicated in the multiple homicide. A statement by former prosecuting attorneys Sydney Blanco and Henry Campos will be submitted at the hearings. According to Blanco and Campos, senior military officers either ordered or had prior knowledge of the killings. In addition, testimony provided to US authorities by former US army adviser Erick Buckland, and a technical report prepared by British investigators will be presented. Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) spokespersons claimed the rebels possess evidence that indicates Col. Guillermo Benavides was promised amnesty if he would agree to assume all responsibility for the murders, thereby not implicating any of the intellectual authors of the crime. Supreme Court president Mauricio Gutierrez said Judge Zamora would permit the Spanish government to send four legislators to serve as observers in judicial proceedings against the military officers currently on trial for the murders. (Basic data from AFP, EFE, 05/14/91; ACAN-EFE, 05/13/91, 05/14/91)

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