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Guatemala: Counterinsurgency Campaign Described As Continuation Of Spanish Conquest

by Deborah Tyroler

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In recent comments to Mexican daily newspaper La Jornada, Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) commander Pablo Monsanto called the army's counterinsurgency campaign "the continuation of the Spanish Conquest." Monsanto said "what the colonialists couldn't finish imposition of a central military power over a local political power today's army has come to complete." Monsanto asserted that legal recognition of the social and political forms of indigenous organization must be the basis of a "new Guatemala." According to the rebel commander, such recognition involves more than simple participation by indigenous persons in political parties. Monsanto said indigenous persons make up 70% of URNG combatants, collaborators, and supporters. (Basic data from Cerigua Weekly Briefs, 07/21-27/91)

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