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Guatemala: Army Harassment Of Civilian Communities In El Peten

Deborah Tyroler

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Residents of villages in the municipality of Sayaxche, El Peten department, recently reported that the army regularly launches mortar attacks against civilian communities in the area. The residents say the army also forces residents of Tierra Linda, Las Pozas, Las Camelas, Nueva Esperanza, El Mirador and Santa Rosa, all in Sayaxche, to pay a 29 quetzal "war tax." According to the local residents, soldiers maintain such strict control over their communities that they are unable to carry out normal farming activities and cannot cultivate sufficient food for their families. [Basic data from 11/04/91 report by Guatemala Human Rights Commission (Washington, DC)]