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El Salvador: Rebel Commanders Say Senior Military Officers Sabotaging Peace Talks

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At a press conference Nov. 20, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) commanders "Gustavo," "Santiago," and "Anibal" accused senior military officers of sabotaging the peace talks, including deputy defense minister Orlando Zepeda, first brigade commander Col. Francisco Helena Fuentes, and top commanders of the National Guard and Treasury Police. The rebel field commanders said that since the FMLN declared a unilateral cease-fire, certain ranking military officers "opposed to the peace negotiations" had launched attacks in rebel-controlled territory. According to the rebel leaders, the FMLN will respond to military offensives. They said, "We could machine-gun two or three soldiers, but this would not bother them. But if we destroy a high-tension tower or gasoline storage tank, that hurts them." In conclusion, the FMLN commanders said, "We demand that the government and armed forces indicated whether they want to continue the war or if they are going to seriously negotiate a definitive cease-fire." (Basic data from Agence France-Presse, 11/20/91)

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