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Amnesty International Denounces Sexual Abuse Of Women By Guatemalan Security Forces

by Deborah Tyroler

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In a report released Feb. 5 in London, Amnesty International denounced the practices of rape and sexual humiliation of Guatemalan women carried out by members of government security forces. According to the report, "rape has become a military tactic used in counter-insurgency operations to intimidate women," and as part of torture sessions to extract confessions. In addition, women are often raped or abused "simply...because they happen to be related to men targeted by the authorities." Amnesty International also cited Turkey, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Greece and the Palestinian territories under Israeli occupation as perpetrators of sexual violence against women. The report said many governments persistently refuse to recognize rape as a serious human rights violation. Thorough investigations seldom take place, and the few perpetrators disciplined or prosecuted usually get little more than "a slap on the wrist." (Basic data from Notimex, 01/31/92; Agence France-Presse, 02/05/92)

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