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## **Guatemala: Defense Minister Says Indigenous Communities In El Quiche Linked To Rebels**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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On March 7, Defense Minister Gen. Jose Domingo Garcia told members of the national congress that the Communities of People in Resistance (CPR) "constitute a political and strategic platform for the actions of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG)." According to the minister, confiscated documents from rebel combatants prove that the CPRs "maintain a relationship" with the URNG, the Salvadoran Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), and "other groups within and outside the country." In a communique the CPRs denied Garcia's statements, and reiterated that their organizations are strictly civilian in nature and membership. The CPR is comprised of 15,000 indigenous Guatemalans who fled to El Quiche department highlands in 1980 to escape the violence surrounding the army's counterinsurgency sweeps. (Basic data from Agencia Centroamericana de Noticias-Spanish news service EFE, Notimex, 03/07/92)

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