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ENVELOPE

CDSN = LGX550 MCN = 91331/35679 TOR = 913311915
PTTCZYUW RUEKJCS4780 3311921-CCCC--RUEALGX.
ZNY CCCCC

HEADER

RELEASE IN FULL

?
271921Z NOV 91
FM JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
INFO RUEADWD/OCSA WASHINGTON DC
RUENAAA/CNO WASHINGTON DC
RUEAHQA/CSAF WASHINGTON DC
RUEADWD/PTC WASH DC
RUSNNOA/USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
RUEGATD/USEUCOM AIDES VAIHINGEN GE
RHLBAAA/USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
RUFTAKA/USAINTELCTRE HEIDELBERG GE
RUFTAKC/UDITDUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE
RUDOGHA/USNMR SHAPE BE//SURVEY//
RHDLCNE/CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK//N2/N24//
RUCIAEA/FTD WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OH//SCIR//
RUEOACC/CDRPSYOP GP FT BRAGG NC//ASOF-POG-SB//
RUWSMXI/MAC INTEL CEN SCOTT AFB IL//IN//
RUCQVAB/USCINCSOC INTEL OPS CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RUQYSDG/FOSIF ROTA SP
RUSNNOA/USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
RUEALGX/SAFE
RUEADDS/DITDS
?
271E24Z NOV 91
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2401
INFO RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 9111
RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 0112
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE 7836
RUEHMU/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA 6321
RUEHBE/AMEMBASSY BELIZE 1455
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1148
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0687
RUFHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 1007
RUFHDB/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN 0052
BT

CONTROLS

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~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~ SECTION 01 OF 02

SAN SALVADOR 14790

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

/********** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE **********/

BODY

TAGS: PHUM, PREF, ES
SUBJECT: EL MOZOTE: A TEN YEAR OLD MASSACRE IN THE NEWS

1. ~~(C)~~ SUMMARY: ON NOVEMBER 13, AUXILIARY BISHOP GREGORIO ROSA CHAVEZ AND DIRECTOR OF TUTELA LEGAL MARIA JULIA HERNANDEZ CRITICIZED THE GOES INVESTIGATION OF THE DECEMBER 1981 EL MOZOTE MASSACRE WHICH CLAIMED HUNDREDS OF CIVILIAN LIVES. THE ARCHDIOCESEN OFFICIALS ACCUSED SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT MAURICIO GUTIERREZ CASTRO OF UNCONSTITUTIONALLY INTERVENING IN AND IMPEDING INVESTIGATION OF THE CASE. ROSA CHAVEZ STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF UNCOVERING THE TRUTH IN THIS AND OTHER HISTORICAL CASES, NOT FOR REVENGE (IN FACT HE MENTIONED A PARDON), BUT TO BRING ABOUT NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES HAVE PROMISED A FULL INVESTIGATION, INCLUDING EXHUMATION OF REMAINS, WHEN SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS AND MINE REMOVAL ALLOW A VISIT TO THE AREA. AMERICAS WATCH IS ALSO INTERESTED IN THIS AND OTHER HISTORICAL CASES AND WHAT THEY DEMONSTRATE ABOUT U.S. POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS OVER THE PAST DECADE. REVIVAL OF OLD CASES WILL CONTINUE AS EL SALVADOR STRUGGLES TOWARD RECONCILIATION AND THE DECLINE IN HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS LEAVES TUTELA AND OTHERS WITH LITTLE TO DO OTHER THAN REVIVE OLD CASES AND SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS. THE FACT THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMUNITY CAN CONCENTRATE ON HISTORIC CASES IS A SIGN OF THE IMPROVEMENT ON THE OVERALL HUMAN RIGHTS CLIMATE IN EL SALVADOR. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) CLOSE TO 1000 MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN ARE SAID TO HAVE BEEN KILLED IN THE DECEMBER 10-13, 1981 MASSACRE IN RURAL MORAZAN (IN THE VILLAGES OF EL MOZOTE, RANCHERIA, JOCOTE AMARILLO, GUACAMAYA, AND LOS

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TORILES).

3. (U) ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, TUTELA LEGAL INITIATED ITS INVESTIGATION OF THE CASE IN JUNE 1990 AT THE REQUEST OF FAMILIES OF SOME OF THE VICTIMS. ON OCTOBER 26, 1990, TUTELA PRESENTED A FORMAL COMPLAINT TO THE JUDGE OF THE FIRST INSTANCE IN MORAZAN, ACCUSING THE ATLACATL BATTALION (THEN UNDER THE COMMAND OF "U.S.-TRAINED" COL. DOMINGO MONTERROSA) OF THE MURDERS OF 794 PEOPLE. AFTER INTERVIEWING 14 WITNESSES, IN MAY 1991, A JUDGE ORDERED THE EXHUMATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF THE CADAVERS BUT "DUE TO THE CONFLICT" THIS WORK HAS NOT YET BEGUN. TUTELA OPPOSED EXHUMATIONS AT THAT TIME SAYING PROPER PROCEDURES WERE NOT BEING FOLLOWED. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE APPOINTED THREE PROSECUTORS TO THE CASE.

4. (U) TUTELA CLAIMS THAT THE GOES IS NOT ONLY NOT MOVING ON THE CASE BUT IS ACTUALLY IMPEDING IT, AND THAT SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT GUTIERREZ CASTRO HAS ILLEGALLY OBSTRUCTED THE WORK OF THE LOCAL JUDGE. BY NOT ACCEPTING PROFFERED HELP FROM ARGENTINA AND AMERICAN FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGISTS, THE GOES, ACCORDING TO TUTELA, HAS SHOWN ITS LACK OF INTEREST IN THE CASE AND DISREGARD FOR A SCIENTIFIC APPROACH.

5. (U) AUXILIARY BISHOP OF SAN SALVADOR MONS. GREGORIO ROSA CHAVEZ STRESSED IN HIS PRESS STATEMENTS THAT THERE WILL BE NO RECONCILIATION IN EL SALVADOR UNTIL THIS AND OTHER IMPORTANT HUMAN RIGHTS CASES ARE RESOLVED, UNTIL THE TRUTH IS KNOWN.

6. (U) ON NOVEMBER 14, THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL REJECTED TUTELA'S ACCUSATIONS THAT THE GOES HAS NOT PURSUED THE INVESTIGATION AND THAT TESTIMONY HAS BEEN MANIPULATED. ADMITTEDLY, THE ATTORNEYS ASSIGNED TO THE CASE--TWO OF WHOM WERE DESCRIBED AS SPECIALISTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS--HAVE HAD PROBLEMS GETTING TO THE AREA WHERE THE MASSACRE ALLEGEDLY OCCURRED BECAUSE IT IS A CONFLICTIVE ZONE AND, ACCORDING TO "LATEST INFORMATION FROM THE ESAF," MINED. AS SOON AS THE AREA IS SAFE, THE ATTORNEYS PLAN TO BEGIN EXHUMATIONS WHICH IS, THE AG'S OFFICE EMPHASIZED, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOES. THE AG'S OFFICE PUTS THE NUMBER OF VICTIMS AT BETWEEN 700 AND 1,700. STATING THAT THE PHYSICAL EVIDENCE WOULD BE DELICATE AFTER 10

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/****** BEGINNING OF SECTION 002 ******/
YEARS, THE AG'S OFFICE STILL BELIEVES THEY WILL BE ABLE TO DETERMINE THE CAUSE OF DEATH BUT THAT IDENTIFICATION OF THE PERPETRATORS WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT DUE TO CONTRADICTORY TESTIMONY FROM WITNESSES.

7. (U) DR. JUAN MATEU LLORT, THE DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF LEGAL MEDICINE, ANNOUNCED ON NOVEMBER 17 THAT HIS INSTITUTE IS PREPARED IN COORDINATION WITH THE JUDGE AND AG'S OFFICE TO BEGIN EXHUMATIONS AS SOON AS THEY RECEIVE WORD THAT THE AREA IS SAFE. HE SAID THE DELICATE EXHUMATIONS WILL REQUIRE BOTH FORENSICS AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL TEAMS, AND THAT TECHNICAL/SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WOULD BE WELCOME.

8. ~~(C)~~ AMERICA'S WATCH REP DAVID HOLIDAY (PROTECT) IS ALSO STUDYING THE MOZOTE CASE. HOLIDAY TOLD POLOFF HISTORICAL CASES WILL BE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT AS THE WAR ENDS AND SALVADORANS SEEK RECONCILIATION. AMERICAS WATCH IS INTERESTED IN THE ROLE OF U.S. CENTRAL AMERICAN POLICY IN THE WARS AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF THE REGION. HOLIDAY MENTIONED A RECENT ARTICLE BY HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH DIRECTOR ARYEH NEIR CELEBRATING THE CONVICTION OF FORMER ASSISTANT SECRETARY ABRAMS FOR LYING TO CONGRESS. HOLIDAY ADDED THAT ABRAMS ALSO LIED ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS CASES, SUCH AS EL MOZOTE, AND LAMENTED THAT "THERE WILL BE NO TRUTH COMMISSION TO EXAMINE U.S. CENTRAL AMERICAN POLICY."

9. ~~(C)~~ COMMENT: REVIVAL OF THIS TEN YEAR OLD MASSACRE OF HUNDREDS OF CIVILIANS IS A REMINDER OF HOW MUCH THE REALITY OF EL SALVADOR HAS CHANGED. WITH HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS DECLINING IN BOTH NUMBER AND SEVERITY AND AN END TO THE WAR APPARENTLY NEAR, HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVERS ARE CHANGING THEIR FOCUS. IMPROVEMENTS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION AND THE PRESENCE OF OVER 100 UNITED NATIONS (ONUSAL) OBSERVERS LEAVES HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS SEEKING NEW ROLES FOR THEMSELVES. IN PRACTICE, THIS IS LIKELY TO MEAN A REEXAMINATION OF OLD CASES DESIGNED TO TARGET THE SAME OLD ADVERSARIES, THE GOES, THE ESAF, AND THE USG.

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WALKER

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ADMIN

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