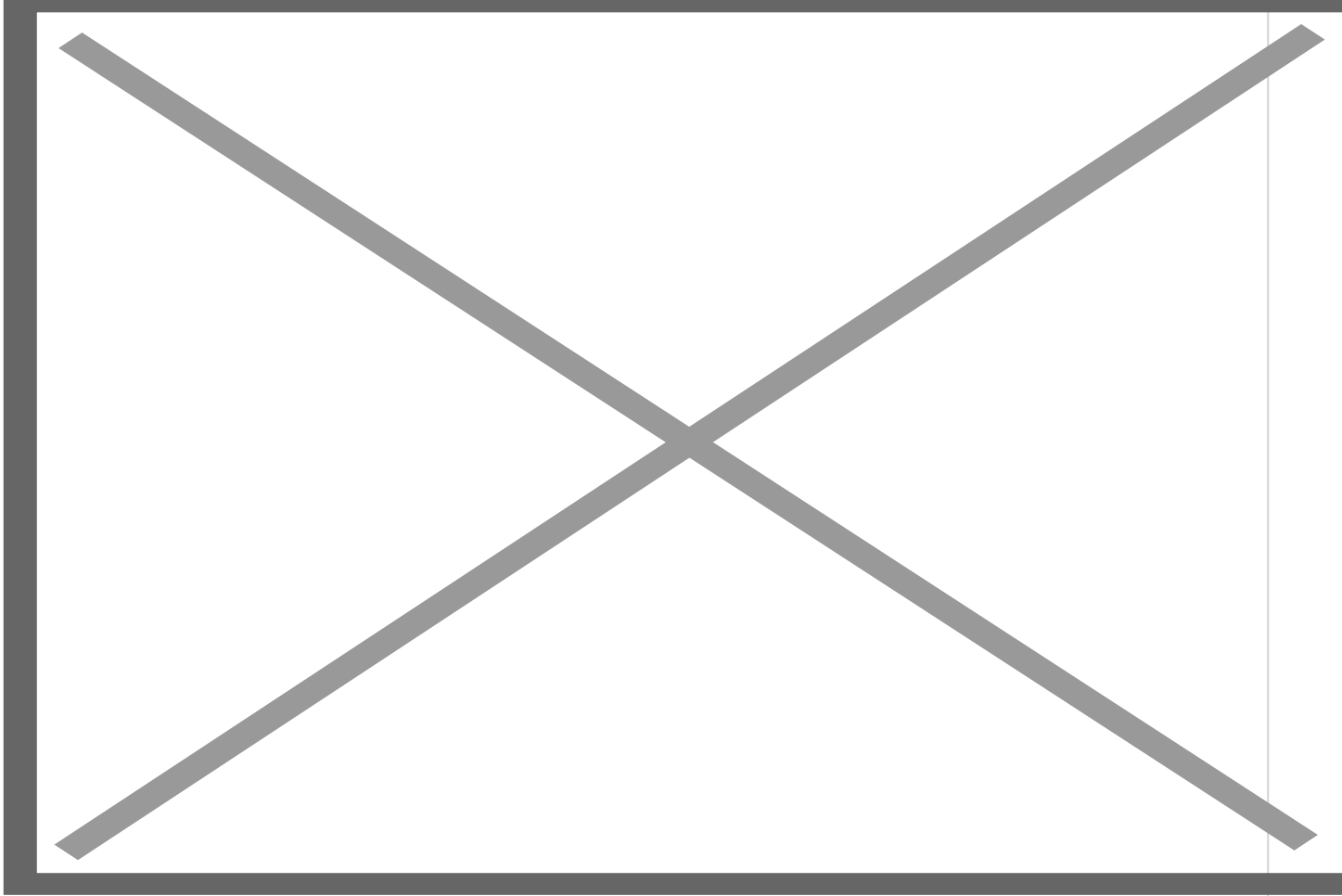


El Salvador remembers 35th anniversary of massacre of Jesuit priests

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Salvadoran women and Jesuits murdered 35 years ago at the UCA in El Salvador are remembered. After 35 years, the memory of the victims continues to drive the struggle for justice in El Salvador.

San Salvador, November 18 (RHC)-- Hundreds of students, religious and devotees gathered Saturday night to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the tragic massacre of six Jesuit priests and two female collaborators at the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA) in El Salvador, a crime perpetrated during the right-wing U.S.-supported military dictatorship (1980-1992).

The emotional ceremony included a candlelight procession through the campus, where those known as the “Martyrs of the UCA” lived and worked.

On November 16, 1989, five days after the start of the “Hasta el tope” guerrilla offensive, an elite commando of the Salvadoran army assassinated priests Ignacio Ellacuría, Segundo Montes, Ignacio Martín-Baró, Amando López and Juan Ramón Moreno (Spain), Joaquín López (El Salvador), and UCA worker Elba Ramos and her daughter Celina, both Salvadorans.

Despite the fact that Colonel Guillermo Benavides was sentenced in 1991 to 30 years in prison for transmitting the assassination order, a sentence that has been denied both pardon and commutation as it is a crime against humanity, impunity has surrounded the masterminds of this atrocity.

This commemoration takes place in the midst of preliminary hearings against 11 alleged masterminds, among them former President Alfredo Cristiani (1989-1994) and former congressman Rodolfo Parker.

In addition to Cristiani and Parker, the defendants include retired military officers Juan Rafael Bustillo, Juan Orlando Zepeda, Rafael Humberto Larios, Carlos Camilo Hernández, Nelson Iván López, Joaquín Arnoldo Cerna, Inocente Orlando Montano, Óscar Alberto León Linares and Manuel Antonio Ermenegildo Rivas Mejía; the hearing is expected to determine whether the case proceeds to trial next week.

After 35 years, the memory of the victims continues to drive the struggle for justice in El Salvador, a country that still seeks full clarification of this crime against humanity.

[SOURCE: teleSUR]

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