

El Salvador to Arrest 17 Soldiers Linked to Jesuit Massacre



San Salvador, January 7 (RHC)-- El Salvador has agreed to cooperate with Interpol in the arrest of 17 former military officers linked to the 1989 massacre of six Jesuit priests in the final years of the Central American country's more than decade-long civil war.

The move aims to seek justice for the killing of six Jesuit scholar-priests, one Salvadoran and five Spanish, along with their domestic worker and her daughter on a university campus in El Salvador on November 16, 1989.

Salvadoran Human Rights Ombudsman David Morales urged the national police force on Wednesday to collaborate with Interpol to capture the accused former soldiers.

According to Communications Secretary Eugenio Chicas, the Salvadoran government is prepared to carry out the arrests if all legal requirements are fulfilled.

"We have no other way but to follow the law," said Chicas, explaining that the arrest warrants must be ratified by Spanish prosecutors and processed by Interpol for Salvadoran security forces to take action.

El Salvador's 12-year, U.S.-backed civil war left 75,000 dead and 8,000 more disappeared, the vast majority of whom were victims of the military regime's "dirty war" against political opponents, leftist

activists, and other community organizers, including many religious leaders.

According to a truth commission report, 95 percent of the violence and human rights violations in the armed conflict were perpetrated by the U.S.-backed military regime and right-wing death squads.

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