



InterReligious Task Force on Central America
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President Elías Antonio Saca González
San Salvador, El Salvador
via fax: 011.503.2243.9947

January 21, 2006

Dear President Saca:

We, members of the InterReligious Taskforce on Central America, are concerned for the safety of FMLN party supporters who were recently attacked in four separate incidents over the course of a week. Over a dozen suffered serious wounds and at least two were hospitalized due to the beatings.

The first incident was on January 10 in Armenia, Sonsonate Department, where FMLN activists were gathered at local party headquarters to begin campaign posterling. A group of ARENA members arrived at the scene and, without exchanging a word, proceeded to assault the FMLN activists. Eight activists were seriously injured, including the pregnant wife of the FMLN mayoral candidate who had to be hospitalized.

A similar incident occurred early Friday morning January 13 in the municipality of Zaragoza, La Libertad Department, when a mob of about 30 ARENA members attacked FMLN activists with rocks, machetes and sticks while the activists were doing campaign posterling on the outskirts of town. **Jaime Burgos**, FMLN mayoral candidate for Zaragoza, is among eight injured. **José Salvador Palacios**, FMLN municipal council candidate, was beaten unconscious and is currently hospitalized. At the same time, two other FMLN brigades were attacked in San José Villanueva and Ciudad Merliot, both in La Libertad.

We urge you to:

- carry out a full, prompt and impartial investigation into these attacks, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- guarantee a safe climate for the upcoming March 12 elections

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

CC: U.S. Ambassador **H. Douglas Barclay** ~ via fax 011-503-2234-2001
Ambassador **Rene Antonio León Rodríguez** ~ via fax 1-202-234-3834
Paul Degler, El Salvador Desk at U.S. State Dept. ~ via fax 1-202-647-2597
US Senators **DeWine & Voinovich** ~ via email
US Representatives **Brown, Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Tubbs Jones** ~ via email

CISPES 01/16/06 El Salvador

The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter.