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Further information on EXTRA 31/93 (AMR 29/04/93, 17 March 1993) and follow-up AMR 29/05/93 of 19 March 1993 - Legal Concern

EL SALVADOR:Amnesty law for human rights violators passed

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A law granting "broad, absolute and unconditional amnesty" to those responsible for human rights abuses was approved by the Salvadorian Legislative Assembly on Saturday 20 March 1993.

The ruling ARENA party rejected opposition demands that the amnesty be conditional on a commitment by the government to implement the recommendations of the Truth Commission (the UN-appointed body which on 15 March 1993 published its report on human rights abuses committed during the 12-year-long war).

The law, named the Ley de Amnistía General para la Consolidación de la Paz, (General Amnesty Law for the Consolidation of Peace), was condemned by left-wing opposition leaders, as well as by the Archbishop of San Salvador and Salvadorian human rights groups. "This is an amnesty that, instead of unifying the country, will divide it even more, said Rubén Zamora, leader of the opposition party Convergencia Democrática. "He who tries to ignore the past is condemned to relive it".

For the time being Urgent Action participants are asked NOT to send any further appeals regarding the amnesty law.

The research team is currently assessing the situation. Further recommendations for action will be sent out shortly.