

NEWS RELEASE

From Congressman Joe Moakley, 9th District, Massachusetts

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Statement by Congressman Joe Moakley (D-Mass.)
before the House Committee on Rules
on U.S. Military Aid to El Salvador

(The House Committee on Rules, in consultation with the House Foreign Affairs and Appropriations Committees, today provided a rule for the consideration of the FY 1992 Foreign Aid Authorization Bill which would allow the House to delay formal action on military aid to El Salvador. House leaders anticipate such a vote in September. The following are the remarks of Rules Committee Chairman Joe Moakley.)

For the record, let me make clear exactly what we are doing here today by moving a vote on El Salvador to September.

We are keeping the pressure on both sides in the conflict. In the coming months we will monitor the negotiations, the level of violence and the progress on the Jesuits' case and then determine what is the appropriate course in terms of United States military assistance to El Salvador.

Both the FMLN and the Salvadoran Armed Forces should be put on notice.

If the FMLN deliberately stalls the negotiations; if the FMLN is assassinating civilians; if the FMLN fails to meet its international legal obligations in the helicopter case; or if the FMLN continues to get significant shipments of arms from outside El Salvador -- then that misbehavior will be reflected in the level of military assistance this Congress provides to the Salvadoran Armed Forces.

If, on the other hand, the Salvadoran Government stalls the negotiations; if the Salvadoran Army assassinates civilians and unless there is a breakthrough in the Jesuits' case -- then these facts will be reflected in the level of military assistance -- or

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lack of military assistance --this Congress provides the Salvadoran Armed Forces.

And let me emphasize my belief, at this point in time, that the cooperation of the Salvadoran Armed Forces on the Jesuits' case has not been at all satisfactory. The lies, the obstruction of justice and the general level of non-cooperation by the Salvadoran Armed Forces cannot be tolerated and I believe -- unless there is a change in that attitude -- will not be tolerated by this Congress in September.

It should also be made clear that our silence on the foreign aid bills at this time should not -- in any way -- be interpreted as a lessening in our unequivocal support for the efforts of the United Nations Secretary General in mediating the negotiations between the Government and the FMLN. And we are pleased to note that over 100 U.N. personnel will soon arrive in El Salvador to monitor human rights.

I believe temporarily withholding Congressional action on this matter will keep the pressure on both the FMLN and the Salvadoran Government to negotiate seriously an end to the war. And I would hope that the Bush Administration will follow our lead and refrain from doing anything that might jeopardize this delicate process. Specifically, I would urge that they continue to withhold \$42.5 million in FY 1991 U.S. military assistance that has not yet been obligated. I also hope that the Administration will give unequivocal and unambiguous support to the U.N. Secretary General's efforts in the negotiations.

The Administration's response in these two areas will also weigh heavily in our future deliberations on military aid to El Salvador.