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DIST: 31 JANUARY 1990

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COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR

SUBJ: STATEMENT OF MAJOR MAURICIO BELTRAN THAT SENIOR
SALVADORAN MILITARY OFFICERS ARE GUILTY OF COMPLICITY
IN THE SAN SEBASTIAN MASSACRE.

DOI: SUMMER 1989

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SUMMARY: DURING THE SUMMER OF 1989, MAJOR MAURICIO BELTRAN SAID THAT HIS SUPERIORS HAD ORDERED THE EXECUTION OF THE CAPTURED INSURGENTS IN SAN SEBASTIAN ON 21 SEPTEMBER 1988. HE CLAIMED THAT THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD RELAYING THE ORDERS OF THE FIFTH BRIGADE COMMANDER, BELTRAN, THROUGH HIS LOYALTY TO THE COMMANDER, HE HAD MAINTAINED THE BELIEF THAT THE INCIDENT WAS AN INSURGENT AMBUSH. BELTRAN SAID THAT AT THE INCIDENT SITE WHERE THE INSURGENTS HAD BEEN CAPTURED, HE HAD OBEYED THE FIFTH BRIGADE COMMANDER'S ORDER TO EXECUTE THE CAPTURED INSURGENTS. BELTRAN SAID THE INCIDENT LOOK LIKE AN INSURGENT AMBUSH. BELTRAN SAID THAT THE FIFTH BRIGADE COMMANDER ISSUED SEVERAL ORDERS TO COVER UP THE INCIDENT.

HE COMMENTED THAT HE HAD BEEN IN SAN SEBASTIAN AT THE TIME AND WAS ONE OF THE SOLDIERS WHO WENT THROUGH THE INCIDENT. BELTRAN SAID THAT HE HAD OBEYED THE FIFTH BRIGADE COMMANDER'S ORDER TO EXECUTE THE CAPTURED INSURGENTS AND TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN AMBUSH TO COVER UP THE INCIDENT.

TEXT: 1. DURING THE SUMMER OF 1989, MAJOR MAURICIO BELTRAN SAID THAT MAJOR MAURICIO ((BELTRAN)) GRANADOS, WHO WAS CAPTURED BY THE "SAN SEBASTIAN MASSACRE," COMMENTED THAT HE HAD BEEN ORDERED TO EXECUTE THE SUMMARY EXECUTIONS OF CAPTURED INSURGENTS. BELTRAN SAID THAT HE HAD ALSO ORDERED THE ENSUING COVER UP. BELTRAN SAID THAT THE "MASSACRE" OCCURRED ON 21 SEPTEMBER 1988, WHEN THE FIFTH BRIGADE INFANTRY BRIGADE EXECUTED 10 CAPTURED INSURGENTS IN SAN SEBASTIAN ((1343N 8849W)), SAN VICENTE DEPARTMENT. BELTRAN SAID THAT THE EXECUTIONS WERE ORDERED TO LOOK LIKE AN INSURGENT AMBUSH. BELTRAN SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN IN CUSTODY FOR HIS ALLEGED ROLE IN DIRECTING THE "MASSACRE."

2. BELTRAN SAID THAT HIS DETENTION AND THE DETENTION OF OTHERS INVOLVED IN THE SAN SEBASTIAN KILLINGS ARE UNJUSTIFIED BECAUSE THEIR ROLE HAD BEEN ONE OF CARRYING OUT ORDERS GIVEN BY THE FIFTH BRIGADE COMMANDER COLONEL JOSE EMILIO ((CHAVEZ)) CACERES. BELTRAN SAID THAT CHAVEZ CACERES' CLAIMS NOT TO HAVE KNOWN ABOUT HIS SUBORDINATES' INVOLVEMENT IN THE KILLINGS WERE UNTRUE. BELTRAN SAID THAT THROUGHOUT HIS LOYALTY TO CHAVEZ CACERES, HE HAD MAINTAINED THE BELIEF THAT THE INCIDENT WAS AN INSURGENT AMBUSH THROUGHOUT THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE INCIDENT. BELTRAN ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE INFORMATION GIVEN IN COURT BY JUNIOR OFFICERS THAT HE, BELTRAN, HAD ORDERED THE EXECUTIONS WAS FALSE.

3. BELTRAN DESCRIBED THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO AND FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT. HE SAID THAT ON THE MORNING OF 21 SEPTEMBER, A FIFTH BRIGADE COMPANY UNDER THE COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT JESUS ((GALVEZ)) GALVEZ CAPTURED FOUR INSURGENTS IN SAN SEBASTIAN. A FELLOW OFFICER TOLD BELTRAN THAT FOLLOWING THE CAPTURE OF THE INSURGENTS, GALVEZ HAD RECEIVED ORDERS TO EXECUTE THE CAPTURED INSURGENTS; HOWEVER, GALVEZ HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE WHO GAVE THE ORDER.