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## **Rapoport Center hosts Conference on El Salvador's Civil War, Apr. 17-18, 2008**

### *The Rapoport Center's fourth annual conference*

AUSTIN, Texas—The Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice hosts its fourth annual conference on “Image, Memory and the Paradox of Peace: Fifteen Years After the El Salvador Peace Accords.” The multidisciplinary conference is co-sponsored by the University of Texas’ Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, College of Communication, Department of History, Harry Ransom Center, and the Rothko Chapel of Houston. It was organized by a committee of Rapoport Center affiliated faculty, including Donna DeCesare from Communications, Ariel Dulitzky and Karen Engle from Law, and Virginia Garrard-Burnett from History. The conference begins at 4:30 pm on Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup> in the Harry Ransom Center and continues through the day on Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> with panels at the UT School of Law.

The conference theme was selected to coincide with the opening of the Harry Ransom Center's recently acquired photojournalistic documentary of El Salvador's twelve-year civil war. By drawing together a dynamic group of academics, activists, artists, and policy makers, the conference will feature thought-provoking panels from a multitude of perspectives ranging from foreign policy to visual arts. “This conference will highlight the important role that visual images often play in human rights advocacy, and will demonstrate important interactions between law, journalism and foreign policy,” said Professor Karen Engle, Director of the Rapoport Center. According to the Center's Associate Director Ariel Dulitzky, “the Salvadoran civil war will be discussed not merely as an episode of history, but as a legacy whose effects - both tangible and intangible - are obvious in the country to this day.”

The first day of the conference will take place in the Harry Ransom Center, beginning with keynote speeches by the Honorable Robert White, President of the Center for International Policy and former U.S. ambassador to El Salvador, and Mark Danner, Professor of Journalism at the University of California at Berkeley and of Human Rights at Bard College. They will consider El Salvador's civil war in relation to contemporary and global politics. Frances T. “Sissy” Farenthold will introduce the speakers and moderate a discussion between them. Attendees will then hear Susan Meiselas and Harry Mattison introduce the photography exhibition, “Inside El Salvador,” which will then be open for viewing to the public. The following day, Friday, will feature panels entitled “Reconstructing a Historical Memory of Violence and Overcoming the Effects of Terror and War,” “Conceptualizing and Using Human Rights Today: In the Shadow of War and Peace,” and “Open Wounds and Closures: Transnational Dynamics Today.” The conference will conclude with a panel on the life and legacy of Archbishop Oscar Romero, co-sponsored and organized by the Rothko Chapel in Houston.

The El Salvador conference is the fourth annual conference hosted by the Rapoport Center. The previous conferences include “The Life and Legacy of George Lister: Reconsidering Human Rights, Democracy and U.S. Foreign Policy,” which explored various themes related to human rights policy development based on the example set by Lister. In November 2005, the Rapoport Center hosted a symposium, “Representing Culture, Translating Human Rights,” which was attended by over 200 people. In February 2005, the Center held its launching conference, “Working Borders: Linking Debates About Insourcing and Outsourcing of Capital and Labor,” to examine contemporary proposals about immigration and outsourcing and to analyze the ways each implicates how we understand the dynamics between work and citizenship. The Center also convened a workshop on “Adjudicating Culture, Politicizing Law: Legal Strategies for Black and Indigenous Land Rights Struggles in the Americas” in April 2005.

The conference is free and open to the public, although attendees are strongly encouraged to register through the conference link below. Registration is required for meals and receptions. Presentations will be in English and Spanish, with simultaneous translation provided.

#### Related Links:

“Image, Memory and the Paradox of Peace: Fifteen Years After the El Salvador Peace Accords” Conference Website: [http://www.utexas.edu/law/conferences/el\\_salvador](http://www.utexas.edu/law/conferences/el_salvador)

The Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice: <http://www.rapoportcenter.org>