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El Salvador: Monument to Memory and Truth – dignifying the victims of armed conflict

The Monument to Memory and Truth is an important step towards dignifying the victims of armed conflict in El Salvador.

Amnesty International would like to express its most sincere support and admiration for the civilian organisations in El Salvador and, in particular, for the victims' families, thanks to whose untiring and persistent efforts the Monument to Memory and Truth has finally become a reality.

The monument, recently inaugurated in the Parque Cuscatlán in San Salvador, pays sincere homage to those civilians who were killed or who disappeared during the armed conflict in El Salvador (1980-1991). An 85-metre wall of black granite immortalises the names of more than 25,000 girls, boys, women and men, who were innocent victims of the conflict. "A space for hope, where we can continue dreaming and build a more just, human and equitable society" reads the inscription on the monument.

The construction of a national monument in memory of the victims of the armed conflict in El Salvador was one of the recommendations to the Salvadorean government, contained in the Truth Commission's Report published in 1993, as part of the moral compensation to victims. However, the initiative never had the support of the Salvadorean authorities, but was promoted by the *Comité Pro Monumento de las Víctimas Civiles de violaciones de Derechos Humanos* Committee in favour of the Monument to the Civilian Victims of Human Rights Violations, which brings together about a dozen Salvadorean non-governmental organisations.

Although no reliable data exists regarding the total number of victims of human rights violations during the armed conflict, it is estimated that at least 75,000 people were tortured, subjected to extrajudicial killings, or simply disappeared.

Amnesty International urges the political parties of El Salvador not to close their eyes to the demand of civil society and calls on them to acknowledge the Monument to Memory and Truth as a national monument, so that the right of victims of the armed conflict to dignity and honour finally becomes a reality for all, leaving behind the insanity of the past and fostering hope for the future.