

St Oscar Romero: truth in the media

'The struggle today is between truth and lies. There is no middle ground'. St Oscar Romero, 11 May 1978

Headlines

C Environmental and human rights defenders face threats of persecution whilst protecting our common home.

a El Salvador: the new paradise for gold miners?

b You'll never believe where gold comes from?

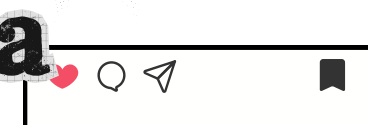
d "Mining is good for people and the economy," says new CEO of mining company.

Images

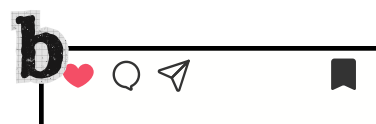


'None of us can say that we are the sole owners of the truth. No person is infallible, only God. But when we believe in him who is the source of truth and commit ourselves to him, we are persons of faith.' St Oscar Romero, 29 October 1978

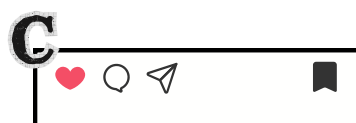
Bylines and captions



Strike gold! Mineral set to become biggest export for El Salvador in 2026.



Church to organise petition.



Our world is enduring an interrelated social and environmental crisis: protecting human rights defenders is essential if we are to answer this interconnected cry of the earth and the poor.

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a

The civil war in El Salvador, which ended in January 1992, had a devastating impact, leaving a legacy of human suffering, poverty and a breakdown of the country's social fabric. Despite a formal return to peace, El Salvador is experiencing a sharp decline with regards to the respect of human rights. Human rights and environmental defenders who challenge injustice are discriminated, harassed and criminalised. The country now has the highest incarceration rate in the world.

More than a quarter of Salvadorians live in poverty, with poverty rates being higher among indigenous and rural communities. Rural communities in El Salvador, and those who rely on agriculture to earn a living, are vulnerable to the impact of climate shocks. Water pollution and contamination remain huge challenges in El Salvador. Industries, such as large-scale metallic mining, are also responsible for further pollution of water sources. Against this backdrop, and with the introduction of a new mining law, the Catholic Church in El Salvador organised a petition of 150, 000 signatures to speak out against the return of industrial mining in late 2024. Their cry was, 'God doesn't care about gold, he cares about lives'.

b

More than a quarter of Salvadorians live in poverty, with poverty rates being higher among indigenous and rural communities. Rural communities in El Salvador, and those who rely on agriculture to earn a living, are vulnerable to the impact of climate shocks. Women often have very few options for earning a living, especially in rural areas. With few economic opportunities and limited financial literacy, women are often unable to make their own decisions or have control over their own lives, reinforcing a cycle of dependence and poverty. Water pollution and contamination remain huge challenges in El Salvador. Industries, such as large-scale metallic mining, are also responsible for further pollution of water sources. Against this backdrop, and with the introduction of a new mining law, the Catholic Church in El Salvador organised a petition of 130, 000 signatures to speak out against the return of industrial mining in 2025.

c

El Salvador's new mining law reverses hard-won environmental protections, opening the door to extraction that threatens water sources, farmland, and community safety. Local groups warn it prioritises corporate interests, weakens safeguards, and endangers vulnerable communities already facing repression for defending their land.

'Young people are prophets in their school' St Oscar Romero, 8 July 1979.