

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA



## THESIS

### THE PEACE PROCESSES OF COLOMBIA AND EL SALVADOR: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

by

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June 1997

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19980102 036

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 4

| REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                          |                                                         | Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188                |                                                     |
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| Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                          |                                                         |                                                |                                                     |
| 1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                          | 2. REPORT DATE<br>June 1997                             |                                                | 3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED<br>Master's Thesis |
| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE. The Peace Processes of Colombia and El Salvador: A Comparative Study                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                          |                                                         | 5. FUNDING NUMBERS                             |                                                     |
| 6. AUTHOR(S) Diego A. Gantiva-Arias and Marco A. Palacios-Luna                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                          |                                                         |                                                |                                                     |
| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br>Naval Postgraduate School<br>Monterey CA 93943-5000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                          |                                                         | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER       |                                                     |
| 9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                          |                                                         | 10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER |                                                     |
| 11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                          |                                                         |                                                |                                                     |
| 12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT<br>Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                          |                                                         | 12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE                         |                                                     |
| 13. ABSTRACT<br>Colombia and El Salvador, two Latin American countries, have developed similar counterinsurgency processes and started similar processes of peace negotiations, between the insurgent armies and the forces of order. One peace process was concluded in 1992, when El Salvador ended the war through a political solution (Peace Accords). Salvadoran insurgent force agreed to demobilize its army and to become a legal political party, while the government accepted to make changes in the social and political structure. Colombia, after forty years of guerrilla warfare and after some failed peace talks during the last decade, is still trying to set conditions to gain peace through negotiations.<br>The thesis, while contrasting both general contexts, emphasizes their differences to explain the success of the peace process in El Salvador and the failure in Colombia. After comparing the political actors involved - the military and the guerrillas-, after studying the intensity of the conflict, and after analyzing the outcomes of the different peace processes, we arrived at the conclusion that the Salvadoran model of negotiation cannot be applied entirely to the Colombian case. Similarly, no government should try to copy the Salvadoran recipe as the remedy for its social and political problems. Any simplistic interpretation should be avoided, because it could lead to some fallacies that could also generate dangerous interpretations by the key actors in the process. |                                                          |                                                         |                                                |                                                     |
| 14. SUBJECT TERMS Colombia, El Salvador, Peace Processes, Military, Guerrillas, Intensity, conflict, lessons, negotiations, fallacies.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                          |                                                         | 15. NUMBER OF PAGES 222                        |                                                     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                          |                                                         | 16. PRICE CODE                                 |                                                     |
| 17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT<br>Unclassified                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE<br>Unclassified | 19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT<br>Unclassified | 20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT<br>UL               |                                                     |



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**THE PEACE PROCESSES OF COLOMBIA AND EL SALVADOR: A  
COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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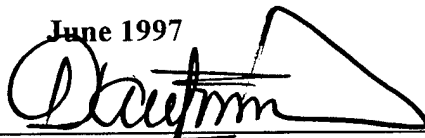
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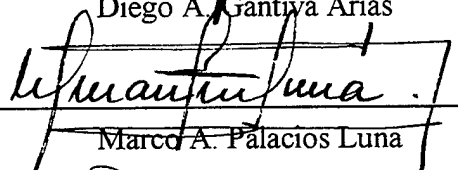
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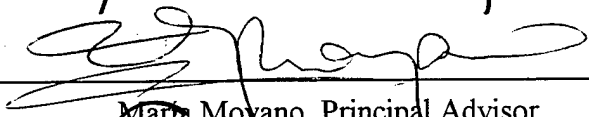


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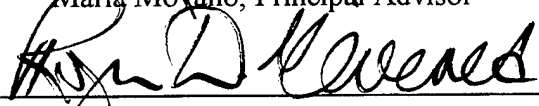


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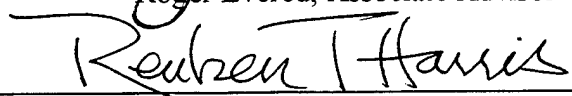
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10. The following table shows the results of the analysis of variance for the data in Table 1. The results are given in terms of the F-ratios and the corresponding p-values. The F-ratios are given in the first column, and the p-values are given in the second column. The F-ratios are given in the third column, and the p-values are given in the fourth column.

## **ABSTRACT**

Colombia and El Salvador, two Latin American countries, have developed similar counterinsurgency processes and started similar processes of peace negotiations between the insurgent armies and the forces of order. One peace process was concluded in 1992, when El Salvador ended the war through a political solution (Peace Accords). Salvadoran insurgent forces agreed to demobilize its army and to become a legal political party, while the government agreed to make changes in the social and political structure. Colombia, after forty years of guerrilla warfare and after failed peace talks during the last decade, is still trying to set conditions to gain peace through negotiations.

The thesis, while contrasting both general contexts, emphasizes their differences to explain the success of the peace process in El Salvador and the failure in Colombia. After comparing the political actors involved - the military and the guerrillas, studying the intensity of the conflict, and analyzing the outcomes of the different peace processes, we arrived to the conclusion that the Salvadoran model of negotiation cannot be applied entirely to the Colombian case. Similarly, no government should try to copy the Salvadoran recipe as the remedy for their own social and political problems. Any simplistic interpretation should be avoided because it could lead to fallacies that could generate dangerous interpretations by the key actors in the process.

Figure 1. The relationship between the number of species and the number of genera in the family Asteraceae.

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the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) and the *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM).

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

### EL SALVADOR

|         |                                                                                                                      |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANDES-  | <i>Asociación Nacional de Educadores Salvadoreños</i><br>(National Association of Salvadoran Educators)              |
| ARENA   | <i>Alianza Republicana Nacionalista</i><br>(Nationalistic Republican Alliance)                                       |
| BPR-    | <i>Bloque Popular Revolucionario</i><br>(Popular Revolutionary Bloc)                                                 |
| CRM-    | <i>Coordinadora Revolucionaria de Masas</i><br>(Revolutionary Coordinator of the Masses)                             |
| DRU-    | <i>Dirección Revolucionaria Unificada</i><br>(Unified Revolutionary Directorate)                                     |
| ERP-    | <i>Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo</i><br>(People's Revolutionary Army)                                           |
| FAL-    | <i>Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación</i><br>(Armed Forces of Liberation)                                                 |
| FAPL-   | <i>Fuerzas Armadas Populares de Liberación</i><br>(Popular Armed Forces of Liberation)                               |
| FAPU-   | <i>Frente de Acción Popular Unificado</i><br>(United People Action Front)                                            |
| FARN    | <i>Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Nacional</i><br>(Armed Forces Of National Resistance)                              |
| FARPL-  | <i>Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Populares de Liberación</i><br>(Popular Revolutionary Armed Forces of Liberation) |
| FDR-    | <i>Frente Democrático Revolucionario</i><br>(Democratic Revolutionary Front)                                         |
| FECCAS- | <i>Federacion Cristiana de Campesinos Salvadoreños</i><br>(Christian Federation of Salvadoran Peasants)              |

|        |                                                                                                                   |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| FMLN-  | <i>Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional</i><br>(Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front)          |
| FPL-   | <i>Fuerzas Populares de Liberación</i><br>(Popular Liberation Forces)                                             |
| LP-28- | <i>Ligas Populares-Febrero 28</i><br>(Popular Leagues-February 28)                                                |
| MPL-   | <i>Movimiento de Liberacion Popular</i><br>(People's Liberation Movement)                                         |
| PCS-   | <i>Partido Comunista Salvadoreño</i><br>(Salvadoran Communist Party)                                              |
| PRTC-  | <i>Partido Revolucionario de Trabajadores Centroamericanos</i><br>(Central American Workers' Revolutionary Party) |
| RN-    | <i>Resistencia Nacional</i><br>(National Resistance)                                                              |
| UDN-   | <i>Unión Democrática Nacionalista</i><br>(National Democratic Union)                                              |
| UTC-   | <i>Unión de Trabajadores del Campo</i><br>(Union of Rural Workers)                                                |

## COLOMBIA

|        |                                                                                        |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ADM-19 | <i>Acción Democrática M-19</i><br>(Democratic Action M-19)                             |
| ANAPO  | <i>Alianza Nacional Popular</i><br>(People's National Alliance)                        |
| ANC    | <i>Asamblea Nacional Constituyente</i><br>(National Constituent Assembly)              |
| ANDI   | <i>Asociación Nacional de Industriales</i><br>(National Association of Industrialists) |
| ARC    | <i>Armada de la República de Colombia</i><br>(National Navy)                           |

|           |                                                                                              |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CGSB      | <i>Coordinadora Guerrillera "Simón Bolívar"</i><br>(Guerrillas' Coordinator "Simón Bolívar") |
| CNG       | <i>Coordinadora Nacional Guerrillera</i><br>(Guerrilla's National Coordinator)               |
| DAS       | <i>Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad</i><br>(Security Administrative Department)      |
| ECOPETROL | <i>Empresa Colombiana de Petróleos</i><br>(Colombian Petroleum Company)                      |
| EJC       | <i>Ejército Nacional</i><br>(National Army)                                                  |
| ELN       | <i>Ejército de Liberación Nacional</i><br>(National Liberation Army)                         |
| EMC       | <i>Escuela Militar de Cadetes</i><br>(Army Military Academy)                                 |
| ENC       | <i>Escuela Naval de Cadetes</i><br>(Naval Cadets School)                                     |
| EPL       | <i>Ejército Popular de Liberación</i><br>(Popular Liberation Army)                           |
| ESG       | <i>Escuela Superior de Guerra</i><br>(Superior War College)                                  |
| FAC       | <i>Fuerza Aérea Colombiana</i><br>(Colombian Air Force)                                      |
| FARC      | <i>Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia</i><br>(Colombian Revolutionary Forces)       |
| M-19      | <i>Movimiento 19 de Abril</i><br>(Movement April 19)                                         |
| MAQL      | <i>Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame</i><br>(Armed Movement Quintín Lame)                       |
| MAS       | <i>Muerte a Secuestradores</i><br>(Death to Kidnappers)                                      |
| MOEC      | <i>Movimiento Obrero-Estudiantil-Campesino</i><br>(Worker-Student-Peasant Movement)          |

|       |                                                                                     |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MRL   | <i>Movimiento Revolucionario Liberal</i><br>(Liberal Revolutionary Movement)        |
| PCC   | <i>Partido Comunista Colombiano</i><br>(Colombian Communist Party)                  |
| PC-ML | <i>Partido Comunista Marxista-Leninista</i><br>(Marxist-Leninist Communist Party)   |
| PNR   | <i>Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación</i><br>(National Rehabilitation Plan)            |
| PONAL | <i>Policía Nacional</i><br>(National Police)                                        |
| PRT   | <i>Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores</i><br>(Workers' Revolutionary Party) |
| UNASE | <i>Unidad Anti-Secuestro y Extorsión</i><br>(Anti-Kidnapping and Extortion Unit)    |
| UP    | <i>Unión Patriótica</i><br>(Patriotic Unity)                                        |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### A. GENERAL AREA OF RESEARCH

Colombia and El Salvador, two Latin-American countries, have developed alike counter-insurgency processes and started similar processes of peace negotiations between the insurgent armies and the forces of order. One peace process was concluded in 1992, when El Salvador ended the war through a political solution (Peace Accords). Salvadoran insurgent forces agreed to demobilize their army and to become a legal political party, while the government accepted to make changes in the social and political structure. Colombia, after forty years of guerrilla war, and after some failed peace talks between 1984 and 1997, is still trying to set conditions to achieve peace through negotiations.

### B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

*Primary:* Can Colombia apply the same model of peace process applied to solve El Salvador's internal conflict?

*Subsidiary:* What was the influence of the armed forces' tenets and traits on their attitude toward negotiations?

What was the influence of the guerrillas' nature and characteristics on its attitude toward the negotiations?

What was the influence of the intensity of the conflict on the attitude of both societies toward the negotiation processes?

Did the procedures set for the negotiation processes influence the outcomes and how?

What was the influence of the international involvement in the negotiation processes?

### C. MAIN FINDINGS

We found several essential differences in the military of both countries, the guerrillas, the intensity of the conflicts, and the peace processes, that may explain their different outcomes.

### **1. The Armed Forces.**

These institutions show significant differences in both countries. El Salvador up to 1984, had a tradition of military interference in politics, while Colombia has had a more stable democracy and the military has been under civilian control. In El Salvador all the armed forces were transformed into a huge counterinsurgency force and were fully deployed to conduct operations all over the country, thus every soldier and officer felt the intensity of the conflict constantly. In Colombia, finishing the conflict does not seem to be a top priority of the political agenda. The military is not fully deployed and it keeps a conventional organization, in spite of the internal transformations for adapting to current public order situations.

### **2. The Guerrillas.**

They present some essential differences that have influenced their attitude toward negotiations. Unity, ideology and sources for sustainment influenced the degree of initiative related to the negotiation and seem to be some of the main factors of divergence. In El Salvador, in 1980, Fidel Castro turned the movement *Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN) into a well-coordinated front with a very well elaborated and strategic plan. In Colombia, in 1986, the formation of the *Coordinadora Nacional Guerrillera* (Guerrillas' National Coordinator), which united six guerrilla organizations, led to a few joint military actions. However, that organization is still far from the formation of a joint Staff which was an achievement in El Salvador.

The FMLN was heavily supported by the former USSR, through Cuba and Nicaragua. When the USSR collapsed, the guerrilla forces lost their main source of logistical and ideological support, and then the peace process was somehow accelerated. In Colombia the FARC, the ELN and small remanent of EPL and M-19 have relied mainly on internal resources to conduct their insurgent activities. Up to date the FARC are the major cocaine cartel, while the ELN and EPL have links with the drug lords.

### **3. The Intensity of the Conflict.**

The different degrees of intensity (reflected in the amount of people killed or wounded, in the destruction of physical and economic structures, and in general uncertainty)

Salvador the society was affected more homogeneously. The economic and social impact was far more significant. Politicians, landlords, and top military leaders perceived great danger anywhere anytime. In Colombia the problem concentrates mainly in the rural areas which allows some sectors of society to feel secure in the big cities believing that the situation is exclusively a military problem. Their economy has not come close to collapse and the social impact is less severe.

#### **4. The Peace Processes**

These followed different patterns of development. In El Salvador, the process was started by some direct talks between the guerrillas' leaders and the President of the country. During the process, military representatives were always present in all talks, only as advisers. Since finishing the war was a top priority for the government, some essential concessions had to be made. The UN played a decisive role during the whole process.

In Colombia different presidents have made intents in the last three decades for reaching peace. Some guerrilla groups (M-19, EPL, PRT) negotiated peace with the government through developments that consummated in 1989, leaving only the Marxist guerrilla groups (what is most important, the FARC and the ELN) still in arms against the government.

#### **5. The International Involvement**

This factor was more evident in El Salvador than in Colombia. In El Salvador we can find some evidence of this involvement in the amount and quality of weapons and military advisors sent to both contenders during the conflict, as well as the pressures of the UNO and other international organizations, like Amnesty International, the Red Cross, and the Catholic Church, among others, for ending the war through political negotiations. In the Colombian case, countries like Venezuela, Costa Rica Mexico and the Scandinavian nations have offered their services to help the Colombian government to find a negotiated solution. The Caracas and Tlaxcala talks with the FARC and ELN representatives are examples of some international commitment to the Colombian peace process. Nevertheless, there is not much evidence of a major involvement of superpowers or any other international instance (like the UNO or OAS) in the conflict, so far.

## D. CONCLUSIONS

We have come to the conclusion that the Salvadoran model of negotiation (if we can call it that) cannot be applied entirely to the Colombian case. Definitely not every action or decision taken by the Salvadoran actors should be adopted by the Colombians. This would be a supreme act of ignorance. However Colombians should not close the possibilities to learn and enrich their perspectives from the Salvadoran conflict.

1. Evidence in this case supports that the greater the links that the guerrilla forces had with social and political organizations, the more likely it was that the guerrillas would contemplate a political settlement that allows them to enter the mainstream politics.

2. From the military perspective, we conclude that the greater the participation the military have in politics, the more likely it is that the armed forces will be weakened by a revolutionary process and the more likely that they will have to accept political settlements even against their own corporate and personal interests. The evidence also show that armed forces can participate in the building or strengthening of a democratic system, by keeping three essential attitudes: first, to avoid interfering in the political process; second to modernize their organization to meet the military challenge of armed insurgency, and third, not to allow any member to act above the law, which they are supposed to defend.

3. We also found that the more intensely the armed conflict affect the different sectors of society, the more likely it is that the society will be willing to make concessions and to participate in a process of negotiations. In El Salvador every sector in society was deeply affected by the violence. The negotiations were a national priority and not just a political act decided by the central government. In Colombia there are still sectors of society that feel that they do not need to negotiate.

4. International meddling can and will influence the attitude of domestic actors, especially when the degree of dependence is high. In El Salvador, the FMLN was willing to demobilized its military structure only after insuring the compromise of the Salvadoran government, before the UN, to allow the FMLN to be reinserted into the political and social structure, without the danger of being destroyed afterwards, as they feared. In Colombia, it seems that the insurgents do not want to become a political movement. They either know

that if they do become a political party, they will not have enough support to survive or they just have found an attractive way of living which cannot be replaced by any international meddling or domestic settlement.

5. Any simplistic interpretation should be avoided. Pretending to conduct simplistic comparisons to suggest that identical solutions could be achieved, might generate dangerous interpretations from the key actors in the processes. Since Colombia is the country that may benefit from the Salvadoran experience, we will present some potential misinterpretations from the Colombian perspective.

*a. From the insurgency perspective.*

A superficial interpretation of the Salvadoran process might create the false idea that they can copy the behavior of the FMLN to achieve similar results. In this sense they would want to present similar demands in complex matters as the transformation or dissolution of the armed forces. They could try to increase the intensity of the violence in an attempt to bring the armed conflict to a phase of civil war. Then they would try to internationalize it and pretend to bring in external pressures on the government to achieve their political objectives, as the FMLN did in El Salvador. All this, of course would be a terrible mistake, because Colombian insurgency does not have the unity, representativeness, and international support that the FMLN had. We need to keep in mind that the FMLN invested many years of effort to build that impressive network for political and financial support.

*b. From the Colombian government perspective.*

Another misperception may be made. If president Alfredo Cristiani negotiated with the FMLN, and made considerable concessions, he could be seen as a weak political leader. He, it could be argued, let the insurgents transform the political system, setting a bad precedent to other democratic systems. This would not be accurate, because Cristiani led a country where the whole political system was being transformed, not by the action of the guerrilla force, but a convergence of national and international factors. Some transformations were simply the result of the overwhelming need to modernize the state, yet the FMLN claims victory for those changes. The conflict and the dialogues occurred within the framework of that process of transformation.

c. *From the civil society perspective.*

A superficial interpretation of the role played by the Salvadoran society, which participated widely during the process of negotiations, might invite the Colombian civil society to press for a political solution, obligating the government to make the "wrong" concessions in a desperate effort to end the ongoing bloody confrontation. In this manner, people could trade short term benefits for catastrophic damage to the democratic system, in the long term.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research is to determine whether the model of conflict resolution developed in El Salvador between 1984 and 1992 can be effectively applied in Colombia to solve the ongoing armed struggle between the guerrillas and the democratically elected government, or we could say, between the insurgents and the nation.

### A. BACKGROUND

The Latin American countries of Colombia and El Salvador have developed similar counterinsurgency processes and similar processes of peace negotiations between the insurgent armies and the forces of order. One process, the Peace Accords, was concluded in 1992, when El Salvador ended the war through a political solution. The guerrillas agreed to demobilize its army and become a legal political party, while the government agreed to make changes in the nation's social and political structures. In contrast, Colombia, after forty years of guerrilla war, and failed peace talks is still trying to set conditions for gaining peace through negotiation.

At the beginning of 1990, after seventeen years fighting against the government, one of the most belligerent guerrilla groups in Colombia, the April 19 Movement (*Movimiento 19 de Abril* or M-19), turned over their weapons, in accord with president Barco's plan. In 1991, president Gaviria signed the negotiation process with three more groups: the Popular Liberation Army (*Ejército Popular de Liberación* or EPL), the Workers' Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores* or PRT), and the Armed Movement Quintín Lame (*Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame* or MAQL). These negotiations succeeded in demobilizing about 4,000 guerrillas, but were lackluster in light of the increasing violence posed by the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* or FARC), and the National Liberation Army (*Ejército Nacional de Liberación* or ELN). This has impeded the arrival of a long awaited peace. As yet, there is still no peace in Colombia.

In contrast, the Salvadoran guerrilla National Liberation Front Farabundo Martí (*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* or FMLN) and president Alfredo

Christiani's government signed the peace accords in January 1992 that put an end to a twelve-year civil war which cost about 100,000 human lives. The FMLN was successfully reincorporated into the political life of the country, and gradually has become a major electoral force. In the March 1997 elections, the old guerrilla group, now a legal political party, won elections for Mayor in San Salvador and obtained an important number of seats in the legislative Assembly.

In both countries, the negotiations were a learning process, but the conflict situations were different. Colombia's conflict is not what El Salvador's was: the former's violence is more confused, its society and politics have not been militarized, and its armed conflict is less intense. The international environment was different, and in El Salvador, external forces such as the United States of America and the United Nations Organization (UNO) had very important and decisive roles in the final outcome. The UNO also had the power to exercise more pressure. This international dimension has been absent in Colombia. As Malcom Deas says, "Colombians have continued killing each other so much and for a long time because nobody cares."<sup>1</sup>

The Salvadoran guerrilla group, the FMLN, had greater representation than the Colombian Guerrilla Coordinator "Simón Bolívar" (*Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar* or CGSB), with a well organized and genuine "political rearguard" and a realistic political project. The FMLN built an international network for getting political and material international support, in spite of the cruel and terrorist war they were waging. In Colombia, the CGSB would support international mediation only as part of their "show off," because they were aware that their criminal characteristics related to kidnapping, extortion, and narcotraffic would make them lose international support. While Colombia faces continued confrontation, El Salvador society strives to consolidate democracy, social equity and justice, and looks towards a better future.

The goal of this thesis is not to prove any particular theory, but to consider the classical sources of social unrest. Most academic theorists and scholars have already explored the socio-economic, political, and ideological factors generating revolutionary processes. Hugh Byrne has analyzed the strategies of those involved in the struggle and the choices they made.<sup>2</sup> In his opinion, their strategies are the ones setting the relevant

dynamics of the processes. We believe that understanding the nature of the contenders and their patterns of decisions and actions can give us very useful insights to explain the different outcomes for the peace processes in both countries.

All possible socioeconomic, political, and ideological factors characterizing these two societies cannot by themselves explain the results witnessed in these two countries. Reality cannot be described from an absolute point of view; rather, it must be studied by looking at the attitudes and behavior exhibited by the opposing forces. Both the guerrillas and the armed forces considered the socioeconomic, political, and ideological factors in designing their strategies and to conceptualize the "peace" to be reached.

We assume that by looking at the participants in the conflict, we are considering the effects of those factors or variables. According to our personal experience, peace is a relative term and an evolving concept. In the case of El Salvador in the early 1980s, peace for the guerrillas meant the end of the military-oligarchy rule and the victory of communism. For the government, which in 1979 started a profound transformation of the political system, including the creation of democratic institutions, peace meant total annihilation of the FMLN. The Salvadoran government realized that, in spite of its efforts to change some social and political structures to neutralize the eternal grievances of the guerrillas, the FMLN did not change its strategies or policies and continued loyal to its objective. The only possible solution was the military defeat of the guerrillas and the formation of a genuine democratic system.

At the beginning of the 1990s we see a resultant pattern of behavior and actions, an "emergent strategy," to borrow the term from Mintzberg, from the clash of these two visions.<sup>3</sup> For all parties involved, peace meant the construction of a legitimate democracy and the end of social injustice. While all agreed in principle, after eight years of negotiation, they looked for terms to make their concessions acceptable to their combatants, intellectuals, and people in general.

However, over the last 40 years in Colombia we have not seen a dramatic transformation of the political system. The insurgent movements have been attacking obvious deficiencies in the policies of the government. The primary difference between the political environments in El Salvador and Columbia was that Columbia had a democratic

system in which the military had been under civilian control. Democracy in Colombia had been changing, adapting to new realities, especially after the Constitution of 1991. This presents a more favorable picture of the estate which has found it more difficult to accept the guerrilla movement as a pragmatic, clear, and decisive contradictor. However, the Colombian guerrilla movement, in its period of lowest political validity, had experienced the highest rates of quantitative growth and the greatest expansion of territorial presence of its history. Its proved involvement in narcotraffic has provided the necessary financial resources for this growth.

Therefore, peace in Colombia is seen by the government and the majority of the population as the destruction of the guerrillas and the strengthening of the democratic institutions. For the guerrillas, this concept actually is unclear. They claim they work on behalf of the working class and the peasants, and that they seek social justice and a legitimate democracy. But they are not representatives of people, as they call themselves. The guerrillas use a worn out discourse about social justice, nationalism, democracy, and their willingness for peace, while they kill, kidnap, extort, and terrorize the nation.

## **B. OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of the present study is to explore whether the model used in El Salvador can help to make a negotiated solution to political violence in Colombia possible, and if not, what issues deserve special consideration for future negotiations.

## **C. THE RESEARCH QUESTION**

The primary research question is: Can Colombia apply the same model of peace process used to solve El Salvador's internal conflict? The subsidiary questions are related to the objectives of the different chapters of this work and are as follows: What was the influence of the armed forces' tenets and traits on their attitude toward negotiations? What was the influence of the guerrillas' nature and characteristics on its attitude toward the negotiations? What was the influence of the conflict intensity on the attitudes of both societies toward the negotiation processes? Did the procedures set for the negotiation processes, including international involvement, influence the outcomes and how?

## **D. SCOPE, LIMITATIONS, AND ASSUMPTIONS**

### **1. Scope**

This thesis is applicable to students of social and political problems, to political scientists interested in the peace processes in these two countries, and to government officials related to political solutions for social problems. The uniqueness of this study is that it contains the points of view of members of the military officers' corps from both countries who, in different ways, have faced the problems of violence throughout their professional careers.

### **2. Limitations**

The most significant limitation has been access to official classified documents, for obvious reasons. Nevertheless, we did access enough sources to illustrate our main arguments. We include figures that have been estimated from the available information related to guerrillas' casualties, terrorist acts, and financial resources and based on our own experiences. Much of the information was provided by captured guerrillas or deserters, or by material seized during military operations. Those data are very difficult to prove.

### **3. Assumptions**

We assumed that the majority of literature available this subject has a biased perception of the national realities of the two countries, because the scars of the conflicts are still fresh on both sides. Some authors have used documents from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), leftist activists or supporters, and opposition parties as their main sources of information. We assumed that official data tends to support the governments' position. We have tried to present an objective view of the situation with the only intent of broadening the analysis.

## **E. METHODOLOGY**

This thesis is based on the study and analysis of valid literature available in both countries; official documents and intelligence reports, not available to general public; and, most importantly, on the personal experience of the authors.

The analytical techniques used were based on the continuous interaction of both authors for the interpretation of some historical data included in this work. This facilitated

the comparison between the handling of political violence in the two countries and helped to establish the intents and tendencies of the contenders about the negotiation.

## **F. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

We found several essential differences between the military, the guerrillas, the intensity of the conflicts and the processes of peace, that may explain the different outcomes of these processes. One important difference that so far has impeded the end of guerrilla war in Colombia is the insurgents' involvement in the drug business. This issue never was a concern in El Salvador, but is decisive in any future negotiation process for Columbia. The United States of America, and other countries and international organizations, do not officially recognize the cartel formed by the Colombian guerrillas. This has an enormous effect on international support to the Colombian government for the annihilation of the insurgency.

We also found many mistakes in the bibliography, not only in dates, figures or names, but in the accuracy of some descriptions. This is probably not something done on purpose, but rather the consequence of having inaccurate sources of information. Because of their profession, the authors of this thesis have witnessed many of the events mentioned in this study, from a military and personal perspective. Therefore, throughout this study, readers will find personal considerations and value judgments, probably different from the general perception.

## **G. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The following is a brief discussion of the organization of the chapters of this thesis and how each provides background to answer the research questions. Chapter II examines the Colombian and Salvadoran armed forces' origins and development, their role in national security, their relationship with civilian powers and rulers, and their role in the different dialogues and peace processes. This will allow us to analyze the causes that facilitated the negotiation process in El Salvador, and the failure of Colombian efforts to achieve a steady peace with the guerrilla groups, the FARC and the ELN, which did not accept the government proposals.

Chapter III provides a general overview of the guerrilla movements in the two countries and highlights the differences explaining the divergence between the two outcomes of the peace processes. The key question for the chapter is: What was the influence of the guerrillas nature and characteristics on its attitude toward the negotiations? We found that unity, the nature of the political-strategic project, and sources of support, were factors that most influenced the guerrillas' attitude toward negotiation. The fall of communism was crucial for the Salvadoran guerrilla but it had no effect in Colombia. The former depended on the economic support of the USSR through Cuba and Nicaragua. The latter had been involved in the drug business in addition to the other sources described in the chapter. This issue was decisive in the El Salvador negotiations.

Chapter IV answers the question: What was the influence of the intensity of the conflict on the attitude of both societies, Colombian and Salvadoran, toward the negotiation process? It compares the intensity of the internal conflicts in both countries in terms of violence, physical and moral damage, and the social and economical impact on their societies. Some statistical data is used to better explain the scope and the consequences of political violence.

Chapter V describes the different negotiation processes in the two countries, and provides an insight to the factors that could have caused the different outcomes. There were several attempts to reach negotiated solutions in Colombia and El Salvador, but only in the latter did a total peace process made it possible to end its civil war in 1992. In Colombia, a partial negotiated solution in 1990 and 1991 permitted the reincorporation of about 4,000 guerrillas, but did not end the political violence. The process of pacification does not depend solely on the good will of the government. It is a national responsibility in which the armed forces, the guerrillas, the labor unions, and the traditional parties have to accept that any negotiation process implies mutual concessions.

Chapter VI presents the conclusions of the research and answers the key question of this work. After the analysis of the guerrilla groups, the armed forces, international involvement, and the intensity of the conflict, we found are some important lessons to be

learned. Our pessimism towards the outcome in Colombia, and the optimism in El Salvador are explained in this chapter.

We are including twelve appendixes to illustrate graphically or statistically the evidence discussed through the chapters.

## NOTES

1. Bejarano, Jesús, *Una Agenda para la Paz*, (Santafé de Bogotá, Tercer Mundo Editores, 1995), p. xi.
2. Byrne, Hugh, *El Salvador's Civil War, A Study of Revolution*, (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 1996), pp. 1-9.
3. Mintzberg, Henry and King, James B., *The Strategy Process*, (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1996), p. 12.



## II. THE MILITARY POWER

After independence from Spain, the military in Latin America continued to be an important power group having a decisive role in the area's development. The struggle between the central government and its army, on the one hand, and the local *caudillos*, on the other, was a frequent issue during the nineteenth century. Because of this struggle between central and local government the Latin American militaries tended to be active in politics, believing they had a constitutional mission nobody could fulfill better than them. They later played the role of a moderating power rising above fractional struggles, preferring that civilians govern but taking over power from time to time when they proved unable to do so. In the moderating pattern, according to Alfred Stepan, the military is repeatedly called into politics to be moderator of political activity, but is denied the right systematically to attempt to direct changes within the political system.<sup>1</sup>

In the nineteenth century national military academies were established with the goal of introducing professionalism into the military. Through professionalization, the military career was designed to be a highly specialized one that taught the skills for warfare but eschewed interest in political matters. Civilians were theoretically to have complete control of the military. Yet this model of professionalism, imported from Western Europe, never fully took roots; the military continued to play politics. Moreover, the economic crisis of the 1930 inaugurated the era of military governments throughout the world, especially in the undeveloped countries. The military believed that internal order was a priority for these countries to survive, before the Communist arisen threat.

By the late 1950s and early 1960s the role of the military in Latin America changed. The success of guerrilla revolutions in China, Vietnam, Algeria, and Cuba led to a new emphasis on the military's role in counterinsurgency and internal defense. The military was expected to solve the national problems that might lead to insurgency, essentially a political, rather than a military task. Professionalism in Latin America led for a time to more military intervention in politics, not less. In some countries the "new professionalism" (or what others such as Joseph Comblin and Manuel Antonio Garretón have called the "national security" state ideology<sup>2</sup>) figured prominently in the military's self-justification of their

vastly expanded role in politics. The end result of this process was the so-called "*bureaucratic authoritarianism*."

Military involvement in politics varies from country to country. Besides the degree of military influence there is important cross-national variation in the reasons for military involvement in politics, the result of military rule, and the military's internal structure.

This chapter examines the Colombian and Salvadoran armed forces' origins and development, their role in national security, their relations with civilian powers and rulers, as well as their role in the peace processes, to facilitate later on the analysis of the causes that made possible the negotiation process in El Salvador and the failure of the Colombian efforts to arrive at a steady peace with the guerrilla groups that did not accept the government's proposals.

#### **A. ARMED FORCES' ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION**

In this section we will try to show the similarities in the origins of both armed forces and how, along with their evolution, they developed essential differences. First, they exhibited different degrees of political participation. On the one hand, during the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century, Colombian military officers played partisan politics in a democratic system, while this was not the case in El Salvador. After 1932 Colombian officers stayed away from partisan politics, remaining obedient to the civilian rule. In El Salvador from 1932 to 1979 the military replaced the civilians and maintained a military regime, necessary in their view, to guarantee the national security objectives. Second, this situation motivated different degrees of military responsibility over their respective national situations, which meanwhile produced different perceptions from the national and international public opinion. In El Salvador, within the military ranks, there was a sense of political threat coming from the national opposition and international community supportive of the insurgency. Third, the two armed forces present some structural differences and cultural factors which make the nature of internal cohesiveness particularly different.

## 1. Colombia

The Colombian Liberation Army of the nineteenth century was one of the most experienced and powerful armed forces in Latin America.<sup>3</sup> By 1819 it consisted of about 30,000 soldiers and more than 200,000 served during that period, that is, a little more than 10 percent of the population. Because of this military capability, the Liberator Simón Bolívar could obtain the two main objectives of the liberation war: Colombia's independence from Spain, and the birth of this and other Latin American countries as new states under democratic structures, whose security concept was established as a function to protect the paramount interests of the nation.

During the nineteenth century the military had a very clear and fundamental mission that remained unchanged since the promulgation of the General Francisco de Paula Santander's Military Code: to defend national independence, to maintain public order, and to support the national law and the Constitution. Active duty members of the army, as well as retired or non regular armies' generals (regional militias) were candidates and via elections arrived to the presidency, not as military but as candidates for different political movements. Thus, Colombian electoral history began with the participation of military leaders as presidential candidates, because the formation of the republic, as a consequence of the independence war, created opportunities for the military officers to enter into the political contest. This practice of launching generals to presidential campaigns was commonplace through the nineteenth century, and until the first quarter of the twentieth. Patricia Pinzón de Lewin, in her historical essay about the Colombian army and the elections, quotes Lee Simpson:

"In Colombia, differently from other Latin American countries, politics has been reserved to civilians. Though eight generals served as presidents between 1830 and 1898, only four out of sixteen presidents between 1898 and 1946 were military men and it summed only ten years. In most of Colombian history, since independence and certainly since 1900, the elite of power has been civilian."<sup>4</sup>

In the internal political framework the army was considered by the two parties, Liberals and Conservatives, as a necessary evil. Its partisan inclinations made the army an unstable force, whose ranks changed according to the incumbent government, and

promotions were made on the basis of personal courage, in the low and middle levels, but on friendship, and partisan or governmental services in the higher ranks. Military instruction was mediocre because theoretical military arts and sciences from Europe did not arrive with the same celerity as the political ideologies.<sup>5</sup>

The evolution of the modern Colombian military has involved three different phases since the administration of president Rafael Reyes (1904-1909 ). The first phase started with the installation of Reyes' government, whose central aim was to involve the military as a major player in rebuilding the infrastructure of the country that had been in large measure destroyed during the civil war known as the War of a Thousand Days (1899-1902). The government's purpose was two-fold. First, it was hoped that the people's view of the military as a non-partisan and benevolent institution would be enhanced. Secondly, the military that Reyes conceived was the only institution that was capable of taking on the task of rebuilding roads, bridges, and in general, lines of communication. It was during this phase that the Military Cadet School (*Escuela Militar de Cadetes*) at Bogotá and the Naval Cadet School (*Escuela Naval de Cadetes*) at Cartagena, were established as the army and navy academies, respectively. This effort was aided by the arrival of Prussian-trained Chilean military advisers, who also helped to found, in 1909, the armed forces staff school, the Superior War College (*Escuela Superior de Guerra*). In attempting to generate professional standards, the military reform also provided for the regularization of promotions and military pay scales based, in part, on the officers' completion of professional training programs.

The focus on Prussian or more generally European, military philosophy was intended to develop a professional military that would avoid political involvement at all costs. In keeping with this line of thinking, the government began to develop a national system of compulsory, military service, and to open military educational institutions to students across the social and economic classes of the country. In January, 1919 the military aviation was created as a branch of the army. By the mid-1920s, the current compulsory service had been adopted and an increasing number of students enrolled at the Military Cadet School came from the middle class.

The second phase was inaugurated in 1930 by an external factor, the territorial conflict with Peru,<sup>6</sup> over an area along the Amazon River. This phase involved the expansion of the military and a review of its operational practices. This dispute was significant for the development of the modern military for two reasons: first, the ranks of the military swelled with Colombians united in a national cause. In giving the nation a cause to unite around for achievement of national rather than partisan goals, the conflict was in large measure the cause for developing a professionally non-political military. The second consequence of the conflict was to force the military leadership to realize that the European mode of making war was absolutely inappropriate to the jungles of South America, and that the military had external security responsibilities for which they were ill-prepared.

Between 1930 and 1945 the military policy of the Liberal governments moved around different civil-military relations models: from the classical liberal model, formally materialized in measures such as the prohibition for active duty military to vote,<sup>7</sup> and the ideal of the military integration to society, through the "should-be" army as a cohesive force for a very highly divided and atomized society, to the government's insistence in the army's non deliberating trait.<sup>8</sup> In the late 1930s and early 1940s, during president Alfonso López Pumarejo administration, the military budget was reduced considerably. The main reason for this reduction was the no secret presidential disdain for military officers, whom he considered to be instruments of the Conservative party. A subsequent Liberal president, Eduardo Santos, was more interested in building upon the civil-military relationship. He brought a military mission from the United States, offering training and technology in return for a joint strategy of defense for the Panamá Canal.

The third period of the military's development revolved around the issues of counter-insurgency and internal security, and evolved along with the period of political conflict known as *La Violencia*. As conflict between Conservatives and Liberals intensified through the latter half of the 1940s, it became increasingly apparent that the National Police was incapable of maintaining order. The military became more and more involved in trying to maintain peace throughout the country. When Laureano Gómez was elected in 1949, he saw the military as another instrument to use against the Liberals who boycotted his election. Gómez increased the military budget by 81% within the first two years in office, and

advanced the view that the military's loyalty to the state rested on its allegiance to the Conservative party. The defense allocations represented approximately 17 percent of central government expenditures.

The military leadership was concerned about the politization of the institution, but another world event, the Korean War, provided Gómez with the opportunity to give the military leadership something else to think about. In fact, the military policy revolved around the provision, training, and support of the 3,000 Colombian troops that were committed to the UN cause. Meanwhile, however, the military was taking on an increasing role in the country's internal peacekeeping activities. This period of development of the Colombian military as the institution responsible for public order climaxed in 1953, when army General (active duty) Gustavo Rojas Pinilla carried out a bloodless coup under the banner of "government of the armed forces."

That was an opinion coup (*Golpe de opinión* was the name given by former president Darío Echandía) in the sense that the politicians, headed by the minister of Government Lucio Pabón Nuñez, and taking advantage of the illness of the incumbent president Laureano Gómez, turned over power to General Rojas Pinilla, by then Commanding General of the Armed Forces. When he was called to presidential Palace on June 12th, 1953, he was unaware of the politicians' intentions. He was told by minister Pabón that because of the internal political situation, and the inability of the president, the ministerial cabinet had decided he had to take over power to end the partisan violence. Rojas accepted the offer and next day took office.

The military benefitted more substantially under Rojas Pinilla than under preceding administrations.<sup>9</sup> When Rojas announced in early 1957 his intentions to stay in power for another four years, the economic interest groups and the Catholic Church already had prepared the general strike that would force his resignation. On May 10th, 1957, General Rojas selected a five-man military junta and resigned. Some Colombian and foreign political analysts and historians, however, affirm that the military removed Rojas from office in a bloodless coup, but others consider that he could maintain power and use the military forces against the people because he had the greatest military support a president or a Commanding

General ever had in modern Colombian history. However, he would not do it and left the country.

According to plans announced by the military junta, a transitional government turned over power to an elected civilian president in August 1958. Since then, the military have been outside politics though the senior army general officer used to be the Minister of Defense. Moreover, broad military support for the civilian leadership survived the dismissals of several popular general officers who had made public statements that challenged the traditional limits of the armed forces' acceptable political involvement. In September 1991 president César Gaviria broke the tradition and he appointed a civilian to that office. Nowadays, there are no military in the ministerial cabinet and the civil-military relations are improving because government officials and ordinary people understand that national security is not an exclusive armed forces' issue.

In the 1990s, the military education system continues to play a critical role in the formation of a professional officer corps. All officers are graduates of one of the three service academies. The exemption is the administrative officers who are graduates in different disciplines like medicine, laws, economics. They are commissioned as first lieutenants after finishing a three-month military orientation course, once they have been accepted as officers candidates. The courses for promotions are established by law and are provided at a number of schools in each service.<sup>10</sup> A selected number of officers and NCOs (*Suboficiales*) also receive advanced training in special programs for foreign military personnel, offered by different countries, but specially by the United States' military schools. Then it is understandable that the current operational military doctrine in the Colombian armed forces is highly influenced by American doctrine, specifically in the realm of conventional war. In counterinsurgency, Colombia has developed its own operational doctrine.

The Colombian armed forces comprise three armed services: the National Army (*Ejército Nacional* or EJC), the National Navy (*Armada Nacional* or ARC), and the Colombian Air Force (*Fuerza Aérea Colombiana* or FAC). These military forces are made up of some 119,000 (including 70,000 conscripts) troops in the army, 20,000 (including 6,000 marine conscripts) in the navy, and 12,000 (3,500 conscripts included) in the air force.

They represent, respectively, some 75, 12, and 8 percent of Colombian's total military personnel, and 4.2 percent of country's population, one of the lowest in the continent. Figure 2.1 shows the current organization chart of the Colombian armed forces<sup>11</sup>.

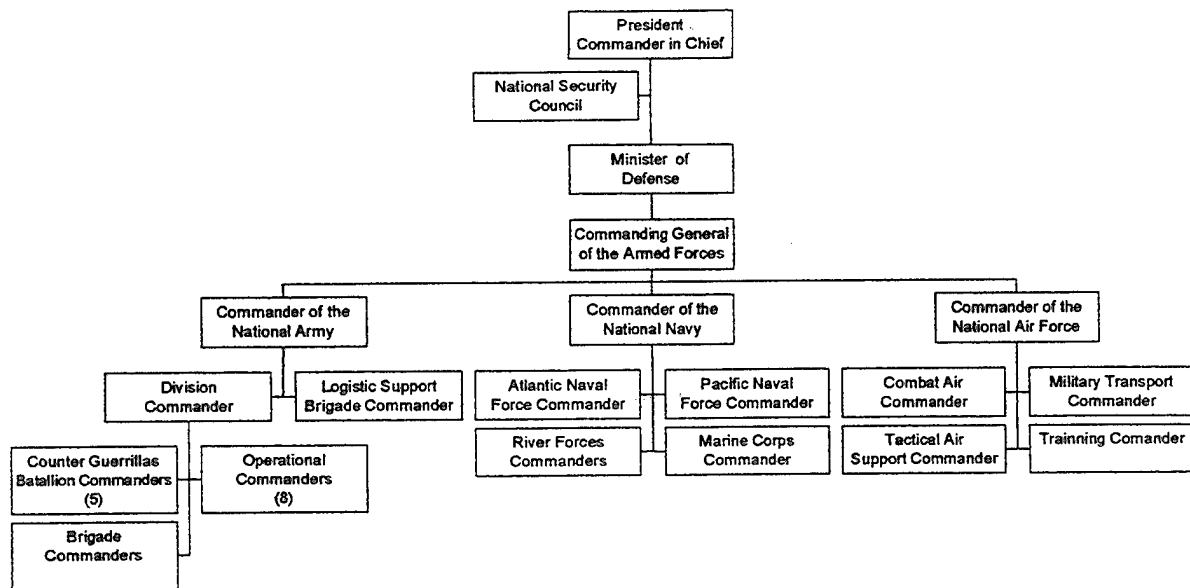


**Figure 2.1 Command Structure of the Colombian Armed Forces (1996)**

Notice that the security forces (*Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad* or DAS), are not part of the military forces.

The war effort is not exclusive of the military, but it is shared, in close coordination, with the security forces. The army bears a greater burden than the other services in this war, due to its major membership and its positioning nationwide.

## **2. El Salvador**

Since 1824 we can identify three different eras in the evolution of the Salvadoran Armed Forces. The first would be the era of the complete control of the economic elite over the armed forces (1824-1930); the second, the era of the military in power (1931-1979); and the third, the era of the military under democratic rule (1984-199). We consider the period between 1979-1983 a transition period between the military regime and the beginning of the democratic process. In this period a provisional civil-military junta governed the country.

The El Salvador army was founded in 1824 by General Manuel José Arce as the army of the regional federation called the United Provinces of Central America. Arce did this by consolidating widely scattered cavalry units, which had fought against the incursion by the army of the self proclaimed Mexican emperor Agustín Iturbide, placing these forces under a unified command. Since their foundation, the armed forces have developed gradually, aided in the late nineteenth century by the French military and in the first half of the twentieth century by German and Chilean military influence. The first French military mission helped to organize and train the force in 1825. After the federation collapsed and El Salvador became an independent country, it inherited most of Arce's troops and by 1850 the Salvadoran army had developed into a relatively well disciplined force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery.

In 1858, President Gerardo Barrios brought in another French mission. This time the militia was reorganized using a European-style model. Barrios also asked Colombia to help in this effort to improve the overall discipline of the army and the militia. In 1876 under the presidency of Francisco Dueñas, the French military mission, helped to organize the officer training school, which today still exists with the name of Capitán General Gerardo Barrios Military Academy (*Escuela Militar Gerardo Barrios*). In 1890 president Carlos Erzeta founded the military hospital, opened the Noncommissioned Officer School and employed a German military mission to reorganize and train artillery units.

In the 1880s the economic elite, commonly referred to as the coffee oligarchy, was the ruling class. The post colonial reality reflected a very strong class differentiation: the oligarchy and the peasants. The military was indoctrinated to protect the status quo of the economic elite, since the real power after independence was at their hands. This elite was a legitimate successor of the Spanish crown. It was then just normal that the armed forces at this time supported the oligarchy, which in return protected the military, helping its expansion and professionalization, as a way to insure the status quo. Even though the military were organized and trained for conventional warfare, up to the 1950s the primary function was internal security, that is, the protection of crops and control the rural population, according to the interests of the oligarchy. However, in 1906 El Salvador was involved in a brief war against its neighbor, Guatemala.

Between 1911 and 1913 President Manuel Enrique Araujo introduced substantial reforms which were decisive to shape the national security doctrine. Araujo divided the army and police functions. He helped to improve the efficiency of the army by creating a general staff, an incipient education system, and a relative efficient reserve system; in 1922 the military aviation service was created.

The great depression of the 1930s caused a critical fall in the coffee prices (the main resource of national income up to date) with disastrous impact for the Salvadoran economy, sparking off major peasant revolts in 1930-1931. Araujo was overthrown by a group of military officers concerned about the increasingly organized activism. In December 1931, they turned power over to active duty General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, former vice-president and minister of defense under Araujo. Martínez in turn, led the security forces supported by the army, to conduct the biggest mass repression against the communist-led peasant revolt, known as *La Matanza* (the Massacre), where according to Thomas Anderson between two thousand and ten thousand peasants were killed by the government's forces.<sup>12</sup>

Between 1931 and 1970 El Salvador went through a period of violent political instability. Salvadoran history records nine military coup attempts, of which seven were successful. Eight of the nine presidents in this period were military officers. The one civilian president held office for only four months before being replaced by another military officer. Apparently, the military had complete control over the government. However, it was obvious that both, the oligarchy and the military, were serving each other interests. This informal alliance seemed to contribute to maintain the general status quo and also provided about forty years of relative political stability and moderate social reforms.

In 1969 El Salvador was involved in a short war against Honduras, known in El Salvador as *La Guerra de las Cien Horas* (One hundred-hour war), from which the Salvadoran armed forces emerged victorious, although branded as an aggressor by the Organization of American States, and with a major problem in the resettlement of thousands of Salvadoran emigrants expelled from the neighboring country. This outcome worsened the socio-economic situation of the country. The government's inability to manage this crisis caused the opposition to raise again. The tensions were heightened by a decline in the coffee

prices.<sup>13</sup> This fueled a massive repression and the beginning of a strong communist-led subversion movement. The guerrilla activity increased from the mid-70s on and at the end of 1978 the insurgency developed into full-scale guerrilla warfare.

On October 15, 1979, field junior officers (colonels, majors and lieutenants) ousted the regime of general Carlos Humberto Romero and established a civil-military junta as a transitional government. The Coup Manifesto justified this action as an attempt to defend the people's right to take arms against the anarchy, violence and corruption prevailing in the country. Restoration of democracy, respect for human rights and solution to social problems were promised.<sup>14</sup> This coup was the first step in the transition process. The military tried to establish an alliance with the democratic opponents in order to broaden their socioeconomic basis. These opponents represented mostly the growing middle class and were in the process of organizing several peasant groups. However, the effort was not successful because of the different approaches, civilian and military, to solve the situation.<sup>15</sup>

In 1980 the original junta was dissolved and the government was reorganized according to a pact between the armed forces and the Christian Democratic party. The increasing number of cases of human right violations could not be controlled by this provisional government, eroding their credibility and stability. The junta was restructured several times during the internal conflict. However, socio-economical reforms were implemented, such as the law of agrarian reform (March, 1980) and the nationalization of the banking system (March, 1983). The internal war continued and prevented the solution of the human rights issue.

In 1984 general elections were held and President José Napoléon Duarte was elected. This was the beginning of the democratic process in El Salvador. From then on, the military adhered to its new constitutional obligation to stay away from political deliberation and remain obedient to civilian rule. These dramatic changes were promoted by three main factors. First, the military understood that its submission to military authority was essential to obtain US support to conduct the counter insurgency strategy. Second, a more civilian-led political stance was necessary to end the military international isolation. Third, civilian and military leadership understood that the best way to neutralize the political appeal of the

insurgency was by setting up representative civilian institutions and the infrastructure of a democratic society.<sup>16</sup>

Besides the legal frame that Salvadoran operated within, some peculiar characteristics due rather to the cultural factor developed. Richard Millet describes, as he sees it, one of the most important cultural features in the officer corps, the *tanda* system.

“Each year well over a hundred cadets are admitted to this institution, but just 10 percent graduate four years later. Brutal discipline, at times verging in sadism weeds out those lacking strength, determination and ambition. Each class (graduating from the military academy), known as *tanda*, strives to protect and advance its member's fortunes. Success for one member means success for all and failure for any, weakens the entire group. Hence they protect the less competent, more blatantly dishonest among them, viewing those outside the *tanda* system as unfit to judge the officer corps. Under this system, loyalty becomes incestuous, any group advancements rather than defense of national interests, become the ultimate goal. Officers in the security forces are bound to officers in the army through these *tanda* bonds, a tie which makes virtually impossible to discipline an officer for crimes against civilians”<sup>17</sup>

Millet also believes that for this reason the US probably had less influence over El Salvador Military Forces than any other Central American nation. In our view, Millet's analysis describes a real phenomenon, but he ignores some deeper implications and offers just a superficial interpretation. He claims complete negative consequences from this particularity. However, the performance of the officer corps in combat in the latest war against Honduras and its success impeding the taking over of the country by the FMLN presented some evidence that this characteristic contributed to defend national interests and lately the democratic process.

It is true that the formation of a Salvadoran officer implies tremendous hardship in comparison with some developed countries. The reason is somehow obvious. The armed forces of developed countries rely mainly on technology and massive logistical support. El Salvador has to rely mainly on manpower and human endurance to counter three bigger potential enemies (Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) plus the internal threat. The system is designed to make sure that only the most physically and mentally qualified will graduate. The classes were very small and the quality of leadership is very high. As a consequence the ties among the classes are very strong and their mutual support used to be almost

unconditional. These cohesiveness bothers the enemies of the system and many foreign intellectual. However this unity, sometimes responsible for the tolerance of isolated cases of abuse and human right violations, was also a guarantee for the institution to survive through the obscure and dirty war that the FMLN was conducting.

"Crimes against civilians" was a very common phrase among the leftist sympathizers, of course this would only apply to the military, not to the FMLN. The tempo of the operations and the ability of the FMLN to hide among civilians caused considerable collateral damage. Evidently many real crimes were committed by the military, which became clear after the peace process. However, as we see it, it would have been insane during the intense conflict to stop the operations to try every officer that, according to speculations of some detractors, committed crimes. The army then, would have been paralyzed and the country would have been taken over by the FMLN. Claiming that the officers were more interested in group advancements than in national security is hard to sustain. In El Salvador, no American troops fought against the FMLN. All the leadership and blood came from Salvadoran officers and soldiers.

The point we are trying to make is that (despite of all the mistakes committed or success achieved) this particularities: the *tanda* system, hard discipline and tight cohesiveness were in certain degree responsible for the attitude of the military during the war and the way the acted during and after the process of negotiation.

The structure of the armed forces included, during the conflict, the totality of the security forces, which gave even more cohesiveness to the force. On the other hand, the war effort was not shared and the armed forces faced all the responsibility for the armed conflict. Both the military organic law and article 157 of the Constitution named (and still does) the president as the commander in chief of the armed forces, consisting of the army, air force, navy, the security forces and the active reserve.

Article 168 of the Constitution empowers the president to organize and maintain the armed forces and confer military ranks in accordance with the law. The minister of defense and public security, who used to be the same person (in 1992 these responsibilities were divided into two different ministries), is in the chain of command and performs the president's command functions on a day-to-day basis. A deputy minister of defense and

public security was in charge only of fulfilling an administrative role. The Joint Chief of Staff is the senior serving officer and also the army commander, and has operational control over the navy and air force's chiefs. (See Figure 2.2)

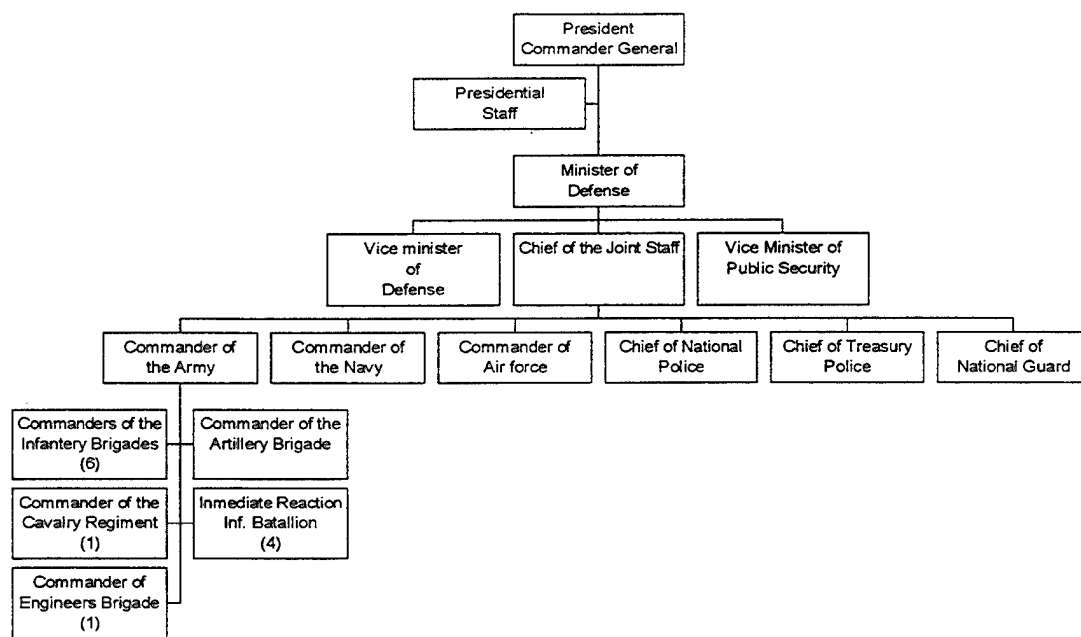


**Figure 2.2 Command Structure of the Salvadoran Armed Forces**

The vice-minister of defense and public security had also the responsibility for overseeing the public security forces' joint staff of the three former security forces: the National Guard, the National Police, and the Treasury Police. The Salvadoran armed forces, which numbered approximately 10,000 in 1979, expanded six-fold during the conflict (See Figure 2.3). At the end of the conflict in 1992, the regular armed forces totaled about 47,000 active members and the security forces some 12,600 personnel.<sup>18</sup> The Army has always been by far the dominant service. In 1991, the army had a total strength of 43,000 members, while the Air force had over 2,000 and the navy around 1,300. This numbers represented about one percent of the total population.

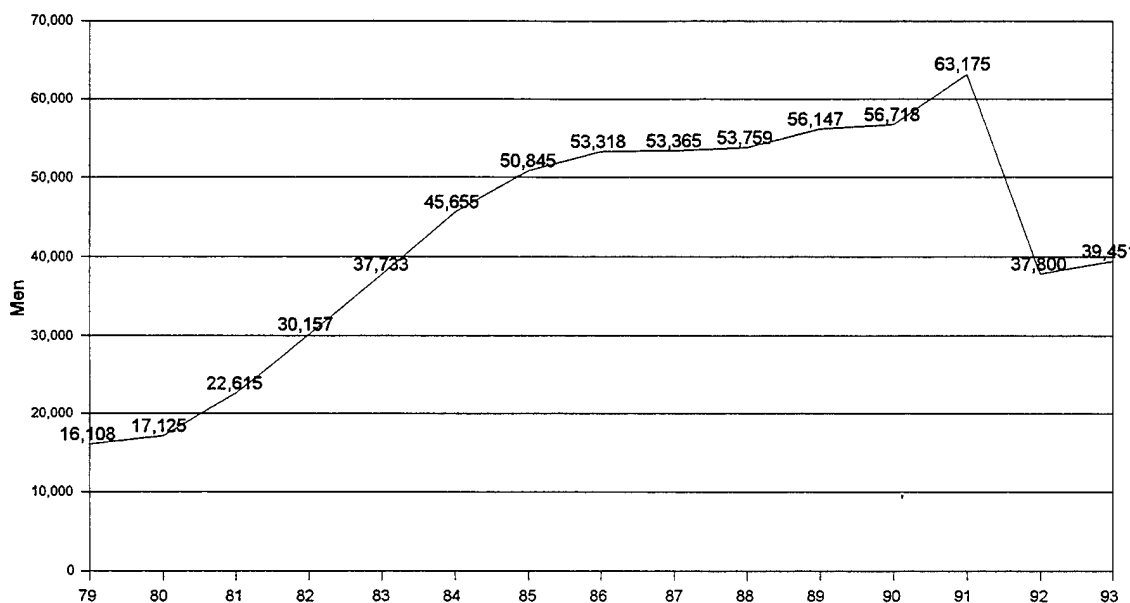


**Figure 2.3 Development of the Salvadoran Armed Forces 1979-1992**

## **B. STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this section is to present another set of differences related to the strategy, support and legal issues. During the conflict, El Salvador armed force was turned into a counter insurgency fighting force. The whole structure and doctrine for conventional warfare almost vanished. The government took the war effort as the number one priority which was reflected in the national budget. The Recruiting system had many legal inefficiencies; as a result the military had to find ways to get around the legal vacuum to sustain the war effort, even when they hurt their own image.

The Colombian Army still remains a conventional force, but they carry out the main effort against the insurgency by using a new organization of light and mobile counter-guerrilla units. The Army mainly operates in the rural isolated areas where a police effort can not be sustained. The budget in the last twenty years does not reflect a decisive support for the army's war effort. In Colombia, the recruiting system has been better organized. The armed forces has no need to twist the law, like they did in El Salvador.

## **1. Colombia**

Since 1948 the armed forces, specially the army, have been immersed in tasks to control the public order. The demands for the internal security situation occupy the virtual majority (but not all) of army activity and considerable part of the resources of the other military services as well.

The readiness for a possible confrontation with Venezuela or Nicaragua, because of territorial disputes, is not the first priority, since politicians and diplomats have decided to manage the problem; however it is still very important. The counter-guerrilla war, instead, has become the main objective of the armed forces, and even more when narcotrafficking is the main source of the insurgents' financial support. Army intelligence has analyzed the strategic plans of the guerrilla groups and has recommended the necessity of government to have presence in each square meter of the national territory. This is an official answer to the guerrilla's pretensions of having control of some regions, in order to be acknowledged in the international arena as a belligerent force.

Facing the guerrilla threat, the state has to make its presence felt everywhere in the country, using justice as the regulating force of the social relations and public force as a servant of the law. Therefore, the armed forces are changing their defensive strategy to retrieve the initiative and freedom of action, to anticipate the guerrilla intentions, and to abandon the traditional operational mode of reacting after guerrilla actions.<sup>19</sup> As a consequence, the current military training is oriented toward counter-insurgency, especially for land and air forces. Because the navy has responsibilities on the two oceans and particularly in the maritime territorial limits, especially the Nicaragua's pretensions over San Andrés and Providencia Islands, geopolitics has an increasing interest in the curricula of the naval academy and in the Superior War College.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the increased threat to national security posed by renewed guerrilla activities and the growing power of Colombian drug dealers provided the rationale for considerable increases in military expenditures. Table 2.1 shows the financial resources allocated from 1970 to 1996 to the Ministry of Defense.

| Year | National Budget | Total Defense Budget | % of GDP | Personnel  | Expenditures | Transfer | Investment |
|------|-----------------|----------------------|----------|------------|--------------|----------|------------|
| 1970 | 17.87           | 2.91                 | 2.2591   | 1667.10    | 0.61         | 0.40     | 0.28       |
| 1971 | 21.84           | 5.01                 | 3.3179   | 2075.30    | 0.61         | 0.52     | 1.87       |
| 1972 | 23.83           | 3.63                 | 1.9744   | 2248.00    | 0.53         | 0.55     | 0.38       |
| 1973 | 29.39           | 3.98                 | 1.6909   | 2362.00    | 0.77         | 0.67     | 0.26       |
| 1974 | 37.54           | 4.87                 | 1.5604   | 2941.00    | 0.77         | 0.91     | 0.35       |
| 1975 | 51.64           | 6.85                 | 1.7444   | 3781.70    | 1.08         | 1.48     | 0.63       |
| 1976 | 55.27           | 7.83                 | 1.5178   | 3975.20    | 1.23         | 1.56     | 1.18       |
| 1977 | 74.32           | 10.11                | 1.4574   | 5299.10    | 1.63         | 2.44     | 0.90       |
| 1978 | 102.12          | 13.78                | 1.1961   | 6861.20    | 3.71         | 2.29     | 1.13       |
| 1979 | 151.51          | 19.85                | 1.2975   | 9589.00    | 4.74         | 4.03     | 1.79       |
| 1980 | 199.18          | 27.74                | 1.8131   | 12253.50   | 5.70         | 7.01     | 3.15       |
| 1981 | 269.97          | 33.71                | 1.7546   | 16517.30   | 6.45         | 9.06     | 2.20       |
| 1982 | 333.70          | 41.64                | 1.7207   | 22107.60   | 6.80         | 11.02    | 2.39       |
| 1983 | 406.26          | 65.74                | 2.2213   | 31201.80   | 12.69        | 16.44    | 6.38       |
| 1984 | 536.51          | 86.93                | 2.3262   | 40175.30   | 8.98         | 20.46    | 18.56      |
| 1985 | 675.19          | 99.23                | 2.0621   | 48904.30   | 12.64        | 23.80    | 15.40      |
| 1986 | 946.26          | 128.09               | 1.9474   | 65300.00   | 11.57        | 29.38    | 23.86      |
| 1987 | 1208.26         | 169.75               | 1.9954   | 85674.00   | 18.62        | 38.39    | 29.72      |
| 1988 | 1635.89         | 243.56               | 2.1426   | 114408.70  | 28.03        | 49.36    | 55.31      |
| 1989 | 2218.88         | 315.56               | 2.1529   | 148498.30  | 30.05        | 57.85    | 83.77      |
| 1990 | 3036.52         | 355.76               | 1.8150   | 195199.80  | 40.56        | 28.92    | 97.13      |
| 1991 | 4234.10         | 453.42               | 1.7924   | 252601.70  | 81.30        | 59.37    | 67.98      |
| 1992 | 4959.61         | 679.98               | 2.0938   | 363497.20  | 127.92       | 81.73    | 118.10     |
| 1993 | 6487.50         | 1070.05              | 2.5325   | 514492.00  | 248.94       | 116.99   | 205.59     |
| 1994 | 9797.26         | 1256.01              | 2.2997   | 744540.00  | 244.41       | 182.46   | 107.69     |
| 1995 | 12201.23        | 1719.96              | 2.5040   | 953583.00  | 298.25       | 339.11   | 158.58     |
| 1996 | 16915.10        | 2347.20              | 2.7842   | 1159607.50 | 332.56       | 581.18   | 309.81     |

\* This budget was prepared by the Planning Office of the Colombian Ministry of Defense. Figures are in millions of pesos and converted to millions of US dollars at the current rate of 1,032 pesos/ dollar.

**Table 2. 1 Defense Budget**

Though the column of total defense budget increases with the years, the percentages to GDP do not. Moreover, in comparison, during the mid-1950s the Colombian armed forces received about 20 percent of the government's budget and in 1996 only 13.88 percent.

Colombia has been receiving U.S. aid for its war effort against narcotrafficking, represented in equipment for intelligence and operations. Colombia has also been receiving aid through the international Funds for Education and training (IMET) and foreign Military Sales (FMS) programs. These were canceled last year (1996) due to the decertification of Colombia by the U.S. government.<sup>20</sup>

During the past ten years, the government has been gradually increasing the number of professional soldiers. These are chosen from the best regular soldiers, who after finishing their compulsory eighteen-month period voluntarily decide to continue in the service. The goal in the army for the year 2000 is to attain 35 percent of professional soldiers to increase combat efficiency. As a matter of fact, the regular soldiers are in the service for a short time, a minimum monthly allowance, and their only incentive is the reservist card (*libreta militar*) at the end of the service to open doors in the labor market. In Colombia the reservist card is a requirement for many commercial and personal activities. For instance, nobody can buy real state properties without that card, and no one can get a passport to leave the country without having the legal document. The employers are exposed to high fines if they hire males lacking the reservist card. In June 1997 a third counter-guerrilla mobile brigade will be activated to operate in the south of the country in areas where the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* or FARC) have large coca plantations.

The intelligence organizations have been strengthened, the mobilization capability will be improved, particularly with helicopters for the army,<sup>21</sup> and patrol boats in maritime and river areas for the navy. The communications and the electronic systems are also in process of modernization. Unfortunately, the bad side of all this program is that it is only to balance the operational and financial capabilities of the guerrillas, not to surpass them this is very important in counter guerrilla warfare because, with strong military forces, able to hit the guerrillas hard, it will be possible to convince their members that the negotiation is a better guarantee to their future than the continuation of their business.

## **2. El Salvador**

The constitutional and strategic mission of the El Salvador armed forces evolved during the conflict, as the military was turning political power to civilian political

institutions. Since the end of the conflict in 1992 the institution has undertaken an essential process of modernization according to the reformed Constitution of 1992. For the purposes of this chapter we concentrate in the process of evolution during the conflict, that is between the late 1970s and 1990.

Under the 1983 Constitution the armed force mission was in general to defend the national territory and sovereignty, and to defend democracy. However since all the security forces were under the direct command of the armed forces, the latter also had the mission of maintaining public peace and security. Art. 212 describes the armed Force as a fundamental institution for national security, of a permanent character, essentially apolitical, obedient to established civilian authority, and non deliberative. It also charged the military with enforcing the no-reelection provision for the country's president, guaranteeing freedom of suffrage, ensuring respect for human rights, and collaborating with the agencies of the executive branch in promoting national development.

This new constitution sought to change dramatically the role of the military. Under old constitutions, active duty military officers could serve as presidents of the republic. The 1983 Constitution was commonly known among Salvadoran authorities as "*The Constitution for war*", because it reflected the weakness of most civilian political institutions to cope with the crisis, thus transferring most of the political responsibilities to the only institution which supposedly remained strong before the terrorist attack.

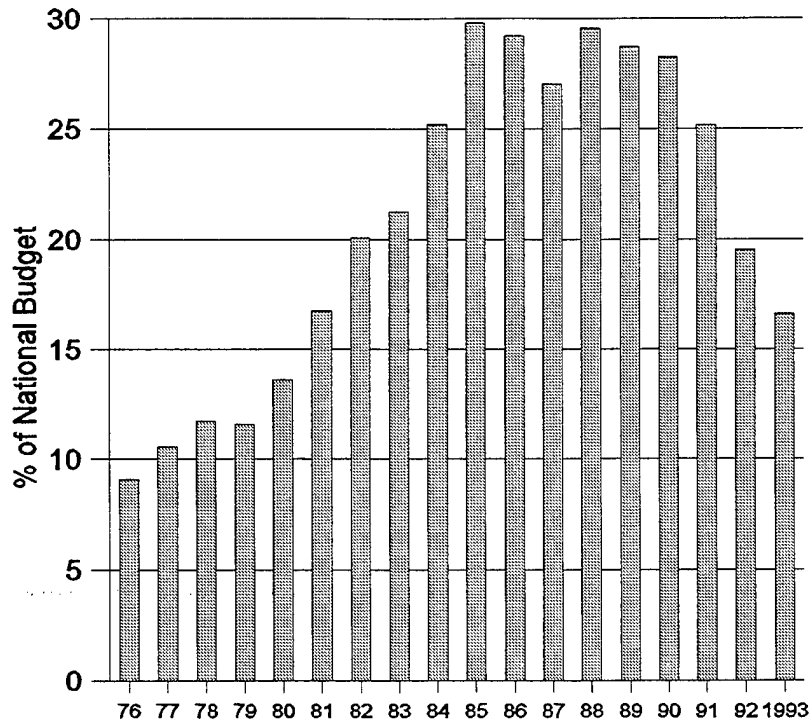
During the conflict, the El Salvador's armed forces was organized and trained using American doctrine. However in 1983, some personnel received training in other Latin American countries, particularly Argentina, Venezuela Chile and Colombia; at the School of the Americas, in Fort Benning, Georgia; at the Amphibious Warfare School in Virginia, and in Taiwan. Also, in 1983 officers and cadets began receiving scholarships from Great Britain, Belgium, Italy, Spain, and the Federal Republic of Germany. During the conflict the armed force was committed to keep the guerrilla forces from taking power by force and to preserve the incipient democratic system.

The Salvadoran Army, according to the *JANES* 1994's Catalog, is the most efficient in Central America. This army has gotten considerable experience in the counter-insurgency

operations during the conflict. The counter-insurgency doctrine was conditioned largely by U.S. operational and tactical doctrine, modified to fit local conditions and experience. Most of the equipment used was provided by the United States, but the necessary direction to counter and neutralize the innovative strategy of the FMLN was provided by the experience of the Salvadoran leadership. While U.S. military advisors intended to implement their known Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) strategy, which was soundly defeated in Vietnam, the Salvadoran armed force developed a dynamic operational and tactical doctrine which offered important lessons to the U.S. military. After 1980 the armed forces were transformed from a conventional force into a counterinsurgency force. Neutralizing the FMLN became a national priority. The defense budget reflects the emphasis that the government conceded to the military war effort.

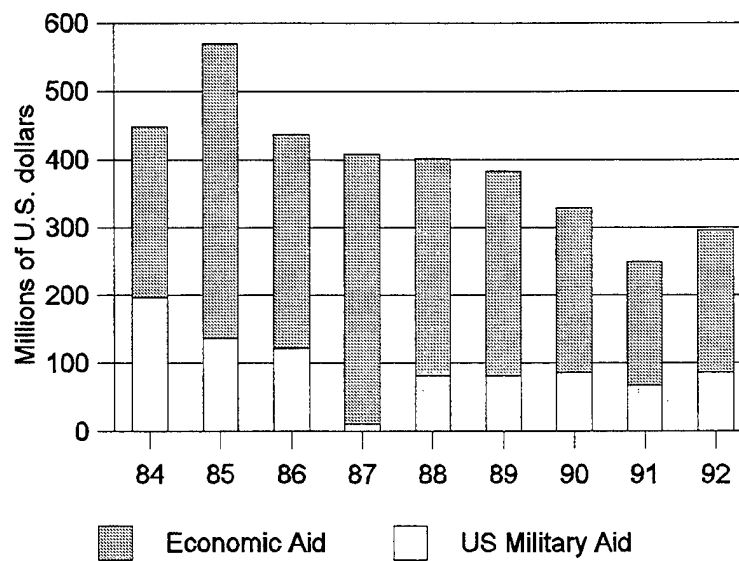
Defense budget military expenditures in the period 1945-1970 ranged from 9 to 11 percent of the national budget. During the 1980s due to the demand of the counter-insurgency operations, spending increased rapidly. The defense budget which included the public security forces increased substantially from fiscal year 1982 when it totaled U.S.\$139 million, to fiscal year 1988 when it reached U.S.\$ 204 millions. In 1986 army expenditures accounted for 71 percent of the total defense budget; air force 23 percent; and the navy 4 percent. The 1986 defense budget constituted 4.7 percent of the national product. By the late 1980s defense expenditures accounted for over 25 percent of the national budget. This numbers reflect the government determination to support the war effort to neutralize the communist attack, as shown in Figure 2.4.

Besides the internal defense expenditures, the U.S. provided large amounts of equipment and training assistance as shown in Figure 2.5. This created a dependence that was used by the government to pressure for reforms and to manipulate the conduct of civilian and military leaders.



Source: World Tables 1994, World Bank, p. 153, 252

**Figure 2.4 Salvadoran Defense Expenditures 1970-1993**



Source: PACCA. Based on International Development Congressional Presentation

**Figure 2.5 U.S. Military and Economic Aid to El Salvador ( \$millions)**

Under article 215 of the 1983 Constitution, military service for a minimum of two years was obligatory for all able-bodied male citizens between ages of eighteen and thirty, although in practice youth from wealthy background avoided military service. After 1979, the armed force had to rely mainly on the forcible recruiting. The forcible recruitment which has been many times referred as cruel and abusive by the opposition was the result of lack of proper procedural legislation. Recruits were randomly taken by force and by surprise while they were in public places or onboard of public transportation vehicles. In the 1980s approximately 12,000 young men were forcibly enlisting each year. Most of the affected families were from the poor and rural strata. Nevertheless, because of the high rate of unemployment due to the critical economic situation, the service was an attractive option for many young people.

Due to a relatively high demand, the army limited re-enlistment to 20 percent. A draftee was paid only \$80 a month compared to \$300 for a soldier who had completed a two-year tour. The point is that the armed forces had to act in some instances, not against the law but without proper laws, to maintain the war effort. That ambiguity was a vulnerability which left the armed forces in many instances without legal protection. However, most of the time, Salvadoran people conceded some degree of legitimacy to these actions. For example, as stated before, the opposition condemned the forcibly enlisting in an attempt to make more difficult for the government to sustain the military effort. Paradoxically, the "victims" wanted to stay in the service once they were in. The fact that most of the soldiers came from rural families gave the army a considerable strength, when it was combined with proper leadership. The peasants were use to the hardship that counter guerrilla warfare demanded and they knew very well the areas of operations.

## **C. THE ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES IN THE PEACE PROCESSES**

### **1. Colombia**

During the administration of president Alfonso López Michelsen (1974-1978), the government tried, for the first time, to open negotiations with the armed groups in search of a solution to the political violence. This effort was frustrated by various factors, but some political analysts and leftist writers have blamed the army of blocking any kind of dialogue

with the National Liberation Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional* or ELN), which was considered to be on the brink of total annihilation. Moreover, they say that the civil-military crisis of 1975, in which General Alvaro Valencia Tovar, then commander of the army, was relieved of his command, was a consequence of this fact.<sup>22</sup> The real causes of this episode are not related to government policies but to internal jealousies between the Minister of Defense and General Valencia. Anyway, after this dialogue failed, the country waited until 1982 to begin this negotiation process in earnest.

President Belisario Betancur (1982-1986) found the country on the edge of a generalized confrontation. To defuse the "time bomb", the government tried to implement a policy of democratic reform and a peace pact with the guerrilla. The Minister of Defense, General Fernando Landazábal, was retired in March 1984 for criticizing the Betancur administration's efforts to achieve truces with the country's guerrilla groups and for criticizing Colombia's foreign policy toward the revolutionary government of Nicaragua. Actually, the Minister advised the president that the guerrillas would have to surrender their weapons if they wanted to negotiate. But a president that before the inaugural ceremony had showed disdain for the military high command was not going to accept military advice. He demonstrated that the military were under the civilian rule.

For this reason, many authors and political analysts like Timothy Wickham-Crowley blame again the military of blocking the government's efforts:

"Military violations of the truces were justified because the army high command resisted the implication that truce-signing guerrillas should be allowed to maintain armed groups independent of the control of the national military, and rumors of a coup attempt were specially heavy in late 1984."<sup>23</sup>

For the common reader, comments like the following of Alain Rouquié, included at the end of his book about Latin American military, are misleading and deserve a special consideration:

"In November 1985 *it was the army that made the decision of attack the Palace of Justice in Bogotá, which had been occupied by the M-19 guerrillas. The refusal to negotiate led to ninety-five deaths, including eleven justices of the Supreme Court, and to a considerable weakening of the Colombian president's support*"<sup>24</sup> (italics added).

Many Colombian and foreign political analysts, when writing about the obstacles to attain peace in violent Colombia, blame the armed forces of being the "Chinese wall" in the national reconciliation process. They adopt Rouquié's position of transmitting to readers what they were told, not what they lived or knew at first hand. Rouquié's sources forgot that the order to attack the Palace of Justice in 1985 was given by president Betancur, the same person that retired General Landazábal in 1984. Broad military support for the civilian leadership survived the dismissals of several popular general officers who had made public statements that challenged the traditional limits of the armed forces' acceptable political involvement, specifically in reference to public order management. Therefore, the military leadership has been submitted to presidential decisions and have complied with the assigned role in the government's projects.

In a vicious circle, either the guerrilla leaders take for granted what politicians and analysts say about the armed forces or the latter believe what the former say. However, the truth is that presidents have retired the generals that did not want to follow the presidential policies, and this is the main argument against those that say that militarism is increasing in "one of the oldest democracies of the continent"<sup>25</sup>

The armed forces have to recognize, however, that the emergence of leftist guerrilla movements and a hemispheric context of violent anti-communism in the 1960s and 1970s produced increasing conservatism and anti-communist ideology within the Colombian military. Under this perspective, Colombian armed forces have advised different administrations about the danger of negotiating with the guerrilla groups, without demanding something in exchange, as it was the case during president Betancur's term.

The current Commanding General of the Colombian armed forces, General Harold Bedoya, warned in 1988, when he was the commander of the army's seventh Brigade, about the link between the FARC and the narcotraffickers in the *departamentos* of Meta, Guaviare, and Caquetá, and about the possibility that the guerrilla would become directly involved in the drug business. Many accused him of being alarmist, but today it is not a secret that the FARC are the first drug cartel in Colombia, after the death and imprisonment of the Cali and Medellín cartels' drug lords. Nine years ago the FARC denied they were narcotraffickers or had links with them because that was against the "Communist ethic".

For the armed forces, this is one more argument backing up their reluctance to believe in the good intentions of the insurgents. In fact, the evidence recollected during army operations prove the FARC are in the drug business. Appendix A includes copies of part of the evidence.

The military support to presidential decisions was evident during president Barco's administration when the April 19 Movement (*Movimiento 19 de Abril* or M-19), the Popular Liberation Army (*Ejército Popular de Liberación* or EPL), the Workers' Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores* or PRT), and the Quintín Lame Command (*Movimiento Indigenista Quintín Lame*) turned over their weapons and gave up the armed struggle. However, because of different interests, somebody has to play the role of the villain. Some writers are use to blaming the Army of blocking the government's intentions.

## **2. El Salvador**

Before 1984 it was unthinkable to talk about negotiation with the Salvadoran guerrillas. The armed forces were convinced that they could control the situation by repression. Besides, the guerrilla movement was referred to as a terrorist organization with no popular support. Negotiation by that time would have meant showing weakness and legitimizing the insurgents. Before 1984 it was easy for the military to sustain the war effort, for the military controlled the national resources and the government.

In 1984 President José Napoleón Duarte began a formal negotiation with the FMLN. The minister of defense and public security, General Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova, accompanied the president to the October meeting with the representatives of the FMLN in La Palma. The military initially had no intention to compromise the military power, but to arrange the FMLN demobilization. At the same time the hardliners within the FMLN demanded the armed forces capitulation and a substantial share of the power. During this period the armed forces was accused by the opposition of blocking negotiations, in order to protect their corporate interests. The main argument was that the war was a big business for the military. We think that surrendering all the national institutions, especially the armed forces, to the will of the communist movement was out of question. In this period, the military influenced strongly the negotiation process, especially because the military was

willing to fight and destroy militarily the FMLN and it was not willing to give up all the democratic transformation gained at a very high cost in lives and suffering.

In 1989, President Alfredo Cristiani formed a new commission to retake the negotiation process and included two military officers: Colonel Juan Antonio Varela and colonel Mauricio Ernesto Vargas. The national and international situation had changed. The international community had recognized that El Salvador was in its way to democratization, the military had taken a new role in society under the civilian direction and most importantly, the military and the politicians had understood that the conflict was a socio-economical phenomenon, not just a military struggle.

On the other hand the expectations of the guerrilla had changed. The FMLN, after so many failures, knew that they could not take the power by force, but still they wanted to weaken the armed forces the most, before they gave up their weapons. This forced the military to take a dynamic role in the negotiation process. They tried to avoid the excessive damage to the institution and its members, and also to make up for the new politicians that knew very little about national security. The negotiations at the end brought severe changes in the structure of the society with long term implications. The military, as we see it, participated in the effort to make these changes beneficial for the democratic institutions including the armed forces and not just to comply with the communist requirements, especially related to the disappearance of the armed forces, its worst enemy.

#### **D. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

Juan Rial has correctly sustained that the military forces are the guardian of the Status Quo that is predominant at the time of their origin.<sup>26</sup> Even though we can not affirmed that the armed forces of El Salvador and Colombia were born in a capitalistic society, these countries were linked interdependently with the counties of Western Europe which were in process of building capitalism.<sup>27</sup> So it is nor rare that these armed forces originally defended the interests of the oligarchy in the nineteenth century an at the beginning of this century.

Few civilians dispute that there was a social disorder following the early nineteenth century wars of independence. We can also say that alliances were gradually forged between economic notables and military leaders to establish what was considered political

order. At certain point in history this reality evolved in two different directions. Because of social, economic and political factors these alliances took different shapes, developing different patterns of civil-military relations.

There are many dimensions in which we could compare these two armed forces. However we need to keep in mind that we are looking for relevant criteria to explain the different attitudes toward the negotiation processes. Broadly speaking, we found four relevant differences between them: First, the degree of participation in politics, namely in the government of their countries, and the type of regime in which the political violence was generated. Second, because of the different degree of involvement in politics, both institutions had different degrees of responsibility for the social unrest, and that situation generated different degrees of political attacks against the military. Third the nature of internal cohesion and autonomy, and finally the degree of international dependence to sustain the logistical war effort.

#### **1. The Degree of Involvement in Politics**

The degree of involvement in politics of both armed forces, and the respective regimes where the violence was generated show remarkable differences. Colombia was able to build a democratic system that has been alive for the last thirty years, in spite of the multiple problems the nation has been facing, while in El Salvador, the military in alliance with the oligarchy did not let the democratic system exist. In Colombia the military has been respectful of the civilian authorities situation which will fit the *traditional model* as Nordlinger calls it, and the struggle has been taking place within a relatively stable democratic system. There is neither a militarization of the society in the normal meaning of the term.<sup>28</sup>

In El Salvador, according to the Constitution, *de iure* the political system has been a democracy, but *de facto*, before 1979, the Salvadoran regime was authoritarian. Thus, we need to talk about a process of democratization which started in 1979, because behind the democratic facade of 1912 to 1979, El Salvador was an oligarchy-military authoritarian republic where political competition took place only among economic elites. The lower class was too big and too dependent upon coffee revenues to promote reforms, and the armed

forces repressed any disaffection on the part of the Salvadoran people. The oligarchic republic needed the presence of the armed forces to survive.

Colombian society has experimented in the last thirty years, a high degree of violence, both partisan and insurgent, without reaching the intensity that experienced El Salvador in the 1980s. It might be largely to the attitude of the military in the sense that they have been devoted to their profession in this century, and have been subjected to civilian rule. The Colombian military has been only an instrumental player in this struggle. On the other hand, the Salvadoran military dominated completely the political scene before 1984.

As a result of these two different behaviors of the military, in Colombia the democratic institutions existed and were allowed to learn from the political game. These institutions became strong overtime. In El Salvador, on the other hand, the democratic institutions, were suppressed by the military in an effort to improve the situation after 1930. However the military, not being able to solve the socioeconomic situation, had to govern by command and repression. When the social explosion forced the armed forces to step aside, the society only had a weakened political structure and the civilians did not have the political experience to undertake by themselves the task of conducting the country through a democratic path at once. This situation allowed the military to keep a very strong influence over the government even after the elections in 1984.

## **2. The Degrees of Responsibility for the Political Crisis**

The different degrees of intervention in politics, gave the military different degrees of responsibility for the political crisis, thus the military of El Salvador faced more grave accusations from the national and international community. In El Salvador, the armed force was the primary target for the opposition, and in some degree for the international community and even for the oligarchy of the country.

During the war, the Salvadoran Armed Force fought two battles: the military battle against the FMLN, and the political battle against the FDR and their international supporters. This was not the case in Colombia, where the armed forces were just an instrument and the politicians who have not assumed their political responsibilities. There was a need of political self- defense for the military in El Salvador. This double battle needed a high level

of cohesion and a strong leadership, which brings us to the next difference: the nature of the internal cohesion and political autonomy.

### **3. The Nature of Internal Cohesion and Autonomy**

The Salvadoran armed forces had to stand alone to overcome all the national and international pressures. The only way to survive was to stand with a monolithic unity. The same unity that served the purpose of neutralizing the best supported guerrilla movement in Latin America, was needed to help the armed force to undertake the storm during and after the negotiation process. Moreover, and above all, it would allow the armed institution to support government decisions even at its own high cost, as we will see in Chapter V.

The unity was well kept in the Salvadoran armed force by its structural design, the strong indoctrination, and an authoritarian leadership. The totality of the armed forces, including the police were under one military command. The *tanda* system had essential implications on this issue, because it provided for almost unconditional mutual support among the officer corps. If we add to this the hard line discipline in which every officer was indoctrinated, again we have an almost unconditional "loyalty" to the institution. The mind set was to obey and that being united was the best way to protect the institution. This turn to be true. The Salvadoran armed forces faced very serious accusations, some of them justified, many of them unjustified. All the detractors would have been happy if they could have divided the institutions and abused its members. This did not happen. At the end the institution survived. The armed forces of El Salvador, ignored the formalities of the democratic system in an attempt to save the country from the Communism. The lack of proper legislation was a weakness and it was fulfill with force. As a result the FMLN was defeated, but the armed forces eventually had to pay a price.

In Colombia, the armed forces proved to be more traditional and obedient. They stayed away from political intervention. They also had a more structured organization and more well defined procedures and lines of authority. The institution has a strong political dependence. They so far have complied with civilian authority. Any hesitance from the political leaders to launch and sustain a counter guerrilla effort, result of course in military inactivity. We have not seen a civilian determination to push the military permanently to the battlefield and to keep a sustained effort to end the war. At the same time, any initiative to

end the war had to be supported by a new budget and probably a new structure and operational doctrine for the armed forces. But again this is not a military but a political decision. The military finds some consolation in saying that the war is not over because there is not political will to finish it. Obviously, keeping the democratic system in Colombia is matter of keeping the democratic institutions strong. The defense policy show us that the guerrilla movement is not seen as a critical threat for the system. According to Colombian officers the current modernization process is not enough to neutralize the guerrilla, but to balance their operational capabilities. Figure 2.6 shows the different percentages of budget allocations in comparative perspective.

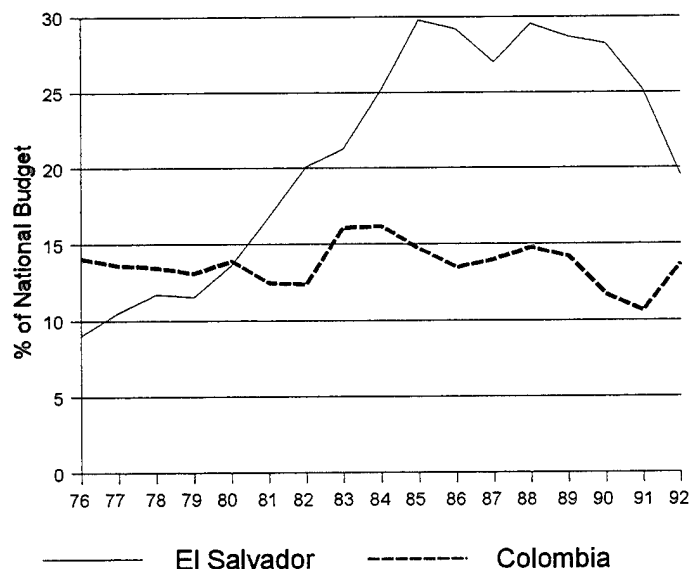


**Figure 2.6 Comparative Chart for Allocation of Defense Expenditures**

So negotiation is not a priority, nor the military feels it as a critical necessity. Even further, we are not sure if the Colombian armed forces would accept a negotiation in which the politicians ignore the high cost in lives and suffering that the armed forces have paid to destroy the guerrilla forces. In El Salvador the military was willing to pay that price, because they were buying the world recognition as a democratic and professional armed forces, and in certain degree its own existence.

#### 4. Logistical Support

The other factor that influenced the military attitude towards negotiation was the logistical support. Comparing the GDP of both countries in Figure 2.7, it is obvious that Colombia, is able to sustain an operational effort with its own means for longer than El Salvador. The latter depended mostly on US aid to wage the war. This dependence made the armed forces more vulnerable to pressures if it did not move in the democratic direction. This dependence was another force that took the armed forces to the negotiation table.

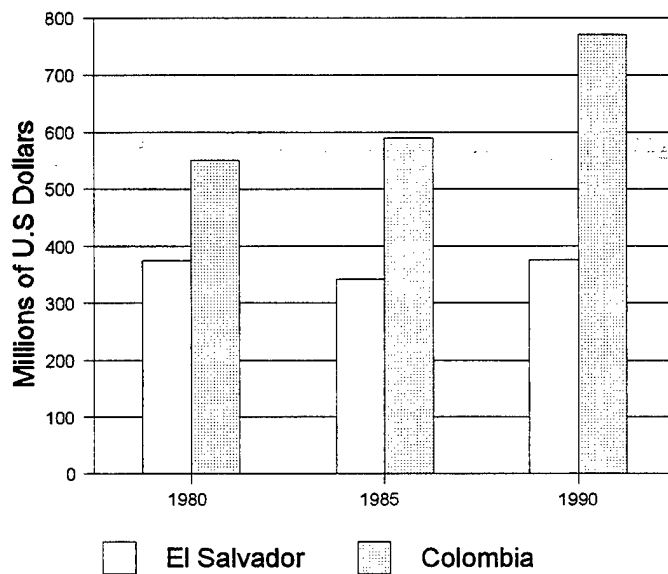


**Figure 2. 7 Colombian and Salvadoran GDPs**

As a result of the factors discussed, it has become evident that the visible level of military presence during the negotiation in El Salvador was higher than in Colombia. For several reasons the Salvadoran dialogue commission had military official representation. First of all, the military intensity, of the conflict, measured in terms of engagements, required negotiations in military matters. Second, the military was well aware that the destruction of the military institution was the main objective of the opposition. National interests as well as corporate interests required the military presence in the negotiation process.

In Colombia the military has not participated in the negotiation commissions, in spite of the guerrilla's requirements. The military high command never has attended the different talks, dialogues, and truces the government agreed with the rebels, though they have advised the government about the guerrilla strategy of using these situations to have a breath in operations. The truth is that the military does not feel responsible for the chaotic situation of the country. They also argue that the military has not been defeated, so they have nothing to negotiate with the guerrillas. For the Colombian military, if the negotiation takes place, it would be a pure political decision. They hope that this will not affect the military interests. We are not sure what would be the reaction of the military if the government decides to negotiate and in the process takes some decisions that affect the military institutional interests. Maybe the military should consider participating in the negotiation process as a part of the national power, thinking beyond the institutional viewpoint. This way, they could avoid government's possible mistakes when it pacts without demanding something from the guerrillas as in the case of Betancur's amnesty.

## NOTES

1. Alfred Stepan, *The Military in Politics*. Changing Patterns in Brazil. (Princeton, Princeton University Press. New Jersey, 1978), Part II, p.63.
2. Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics*. Brazil and the Southern Cone. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988), p.14.
3. Spanish General Antonio Morillo, after the Vargas' Swamp battle (Batalla del "Pantano de Vargas"), July 25, 1819, wrote to the King of Spain: "Give me 60,000 *llaneros* (men from the Colombian eastern plains) and I will walk victorious over Europe." Quoted by General José R. Ibañez in his book *Democracia, Seguridad, y Fuerza Pública*, (Santafé de Bogotá, Imprenta de las Fuerzas Militares, 1995), p.131.
4. Lee Simpson, The Role of the Military in Colombian Politics 1946-1953. (B.A. Thesis, Princeton, 1968) p. 3-4, in Patricia Pinzón de Lewin's *The Army and the Elections. Historical Essay*. (Santafé de Bogotá, CEREC, 1994), p.22.
5. In 1814, an army engineer Colonel Francisco José de Caldas, known in Colombian history as *El Sabio* (The Wiseman), founded the Military Academy in Rionegro, province of Antioquia. This school remained functioning until mid-1820s when was closed. Nowadays, Colombian military engineers celebrate its anniversary having as reference the date of October 4th, 1814.
6. More detailed information about this subject can be found in Chapter 5, National Security, of the Area Handbook Series' *Colombia: a Country Study*. (Washington, D.C. U.S. Printing Office, 1990), p.257.
7. Law 72 of 1930 prohibited the military vote. For a detailed information about the matter, we recommend the historical essay *The Army and the Elections*, by Patricia Pinzón de Lewin, already mentioned in note 4 of this chapter.
8. Adolfo Atehortúa and Humberto Vélez, *Estado y Fuerzas Armadas en Colombia*. (Santafé de Bogotá, Tercer Mundo Editores, 1994).
9. Colombia has been, certainly, the Latin American country that has lived less under military governments. Rafael Urdaneta and José María Melo (1854) in the nineteenth century, and Rojas Pinilla in the twentieth. That is, about seven years in total since the independence. Moreover, the military *caudillismo*, very common in the American continent in the last century, was very weak in Colombia.
10. A variety of decrees and statutes establishes the professional requirements for an officer to achieve a specific rank. These laws also spell out the minimum number of years that an officer has to remain in a rank before be eligible for promotion, the obligatory retirement age for each rank, and the maximum number of officers in each rank (*planta de oficiales*).
11. In Colombia the term "*military forces*" includes army, navy and air force services, only. When the term "*armed forces*" is used, it refers to military forces plus the National Police.
12. Thomas P. Anderson, *La Matanza: El Salvador's Communist Revolt of 1932* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971) p. 136.
13. Phillip L. Russell, *El Salvador in Crisis*, (Austin, Texas, Colorado River Press, 1984), p. 47.

14. Mario Salazar Valiente, "El Salvador Crisis, Dictadura, lucha... (1920-1980)" in *América Latina: Historia de Medio Siglo*, Buenos Aires, Siglo Veintiuno editores S.A. 1981, p.131.
15. Gabriel Aguilera, "The Armed Forces, Democracy, and Transition in Central America", in *The Military and Democracy. The Future of Civil-Military Relations in Latin America*, edited by Louis W. Goodman, Johanna S. R. Mendelson and Juan Rial, Lexington, Lexington Books, 1990, p. 28.
16. Rex A Hudson, "National Security" in *El Salvador a Country Study*, U.S. Government Federal Research Division, U.S. Army Headquarters, 1990 edited by Richard A. Haggerty, p. 206.
17. Richard Millet, "Praetorians or Patriots," in *The Central American Crisis Reader*, edited by Robert S. Leiken and Barry Rubin, Summit Books, New York, 1987, p.327.
18. Estado Mayor Conjunto de la Fuerza Armada de El Salvador, *La Fuerza Armada y los Acuerdos de Paz*, San Salvador, Imprenta de la s Fuerzas Armadas, 1993.
19. Roberto Ibañez, *Democracia, Seguridad y Fuerza Pública*, Santafé de Bogotá, 1994. p. 418.
20. Decertification is a political measure of the U.S. government for those countries waging war against the drug traffickers. The U.S. decides if those countries' efforts deserve the support of the U.S. as represented in money, weapons and technical advice. If the country is decertified, it could be subject to additional sanctions such as restrictions in trade or difficult access to the International Development Bank, etc. This measure is announced annually in the first week of March.
21. In a press interview, on 10 February 1997, Commanding General of the Army, General Manuel J. Bonett said: "Ours is the only army in the world which defends the whole country using rented helicopters."
22. Eduardo Pizarro, Revolutionary Guerrilla Groups in Colombia, in Berquist et al (Eds.) *Violence in Colombia*, p. 185.
23. Timothy Wickham-Crowley, *Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America*, Princeton, Princeton University Press 1992, p. 295.
24. Alan Rouquié. *The Military and the State in Latin America*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 405.
25. Rouquié, p. 404.
26. Juan Rial, "The Armed Forces and the Question Of Democracy in Latin America," in *The Military and the Democracy*, p. 9.
27. Louis W. Goodman, *The Military and the Democracy*, p. xiv.
28. Dr. María José Moyano has an interesting point of view about the concept of "militarism" in her book *Argentina's Lost Patrol*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1995), p. 7-8.

### III. THE GUERRILLAS: A DECISIVE ACTOR

The guerrilla movement is the other main actor in our study, and its characteristics are "*conditio sine qua non*" for the resolution of the conflicts through negotiation. Consequently, we believe that understanding their origin, nature, and trajectories is necessary to analyze their role in those processes.

The purpose of this chapter is not to present a throughout description of the guerrilla movements in Colombia and El Salvador. Our intent is to provide a general overview of both cases and to highlight the differences that, we think, explain the divergence between the two outcomes of the peace processes. We are not trying to compare the guerrilla movements in Colombia and El Salvador just for the purposes of establishing their differences. Rather, we are trying to determine what was the influence of the guerrilla's organization and patterns of leadership on their attitude toward negotiation. From our research we have found that unity, the nature of the political-strategic project, and sources for support, were the factors that influenced the most the attitude of the guerrilla movements toward negotiation. These also may be the main factors for differences in the outcomes of the negotiation process.

This chapter is divided in two main parts: a general description first, and then the analysis including partial conclusions. The first part consists of a general description of Colombia's and El Salvador's guerrilla movements: social composition, political strategy, ideology, and sources of support. The second part contains the comparison and contrast of both cases with our interpretation of the analysis to explain the role of the guerrilla movements in the negotiation processes. In the Colombian case we try to explain what each group's political strategy might be in the future.

It is important to remember that in Colombia the internal conflict is still alive, so the handling of information is more restricted. We present some results of the military intelligence analyses, supported by confidential documents of the Colombian armed forces about the guerrilla groups' actual intentions. This is very important to determine later whether there is a real desire for peace on behalf of the insurgents or whether their strategy for taking power makes the peace process only a means to an end.

In the Salvadoran case, since the armed conflict ended in 1992, we have many open sources from independent authors. Here we focus our analysis on the actual results of the guerrilla strategy, to draw some important lessons learned.

## **A. COLOMBIA**

### **1. Origins of the Colombian Guerrillas and their Structure**

The armed movement has passed from being a bit player in national life to becoming a central actor in the political scene. Colombia possesses the oldest active guerrilla groups in Latin America. Despite the diversity of their origins, they all drew on the legacy of *La Violencia*, the rampant civil war between the Liberals and the Conservatives that resulted in some three hundred thousand deaths between 1948 and 1956, and only ended to be replaced by guerrillas of the left. Besides, many rebel leaders have admitted in interviews that they were influenced by the assassination in 1948 of the populist leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán.

Moreover, Colombian guerrillas, as most of the Latin American rebels, benefited from geographical regions with insurgent backgrounds. These regions offered special condition for insurgency due to high levels of poverty, social injustice, and isolation. The Colombian guerrilla groups, as Timothy Wickham-Crowley states, "at times even chose their *foco* sites precisely because they knew that those particular regions harbored inhabitants likely to be responsive to the guerrillas' appeals for support"<sup>1</sup>.

Colombian political analyst Eduardo Pizarro has noted that the areas in which the rebels operated and continue to have a strong presence are largely the same areas in which *La Violencia* was the most intense.

"The map of the old violence and the map of the new had no substantial differences; both coincide with the map of the Revolutionary Liberal Movement (*Movimiento Revolucionario Liberal* or MRL) and the Communist enclaves, forming the map of the resistance and of national rebellion".<sup>2</sup>

There are external and internal factors that contributed to the birth of the armed revolutionary movements in Colombia. We can mention at least two external factors: first, the Cuban Revolution made three fundamental contributions to the mechanics of these

movements in the country and also in Latin America, by establishing that: 1) popular forces can win a war against an army; 2) it is not always necessary to wait until the conditions of revolution exist; the insurrectionary enclave can create them; 3) in underdeveloped Latin America the field of armed struggles must be fundamentally in the countryside. With this doctrine in mind, there were no pretexts for not initiating the revolution. The second external factor was the Chinese-Soviet rupture during the early 1960s, which led to the Communist party splitting into two wings: the Communist Party of Colombia-Marxist-Leninist (*Partido Comunista de Colombia-Marxista-Leninista* or PCC-ML) headed by pro-Chinese communists, and the Colombian Communist Party (*Partido Comunista Colombiano*, PCC) headed by the traditional and orthodox Communists. Each wing would have its own armed branch.

A very complex array of factors on the internal front made it possible for the guerrilla groups to come into existence and, above all, to consolidate themselves. The Colombian Communist party's position on the possibility of a peaceful road to revolution created opposition of some radical urban groups that criticized reformism and pacifism and favored armed struggle and electoral abstention.

The different origins, their social composition, their ideologies, objectives, strategies, tactics, and the very conflicts that served to spark their emergence, all differ greatly. In Colombia one cannot speak of "guerrilla movement" in the abstract. Rather, one must speak of "guerrilla movements" in the plural, given the extreme heterogeneity and dispersion of the armed insurrectionary groups. This is a very important issue that explains why dispersion continues to be the guerrilla groups' dominant characteristic, in spite of the efforts for unification during almost two decades. For brevity purposes we will call guerrilla movement the totality of the guerrilla groups.

We have selected the four largest and most important guerrilla organizations: the FARC<sup>3</sup>, ELN, EPL, M-19. Other small groups had a very short life and disappeared from the national scene because of their internal weaknesses and the government's decisive action. The M-19 abandoned the armed struggle in early 1990 to participate in civilian politics. Still, in early 1991, the FARC and ELN were able to launch a major military strike, aimed at derailing the meetings of a newly elected National Constituent Assembly (*Asamblea Nacional Constituyente* or ANC) which included the M-19 delegates.

## 2. The FARC

This is the largest guerrilla group in Colombia. There are two characteristics that identify them before public opinion. On the one hand, the group identifies itself with peasants' self-defense process, in such a way that it has always been linked to armed colonizations. On the other hand, this guerrilla group, since its beginning, has maintained a very close link to Communist party, from which guerrillas received direction until the end of the Cold War.

Timothy Wickham-Crowley states that this guerrilla group provides a special case, in the sense that it did not need to build bridges between the guerrillas and the peasantry because the founding members were peasants. "It is highly misleading to speak of urban, upper-class guerrillas trying to establish rapport with rural, lower-class peasants. FARC's leadership at this time was drawn largely from peasant leaders thrown up in self-defense areas..."<sup>4</sup>

Army intelligence files state that the FARC were founded in 1966 by Manuel Marulanda Vélez, a.k.a. *Tirofijo* (Sure Shot) and other members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Colombia (PCC). In consequence, the FARC embraced the PCC's Soviet-style Marxist-Leninist ideological orientation. The FARC's early members were communist ideologues as well as non-Communist peasants, many of whom had been active during *La Violencia*. Thus, the FARC did not arise --as it is the case of the ELN-- from a strict voluntarist decision or as a mechanical effort to transplant the Cuban Revolution. They had an insurgent background.

Their objective has been to take the power through the armed struggle, using all the "fighting means", ideological, political, economical, and social. In 1984 they created its own political party, Patriotic Union (*Unión Patriótica* or UP), that won elections for mayors in different small towns at the end of the 1980s, but in the last years has not succeeded in the political arena.<sup>5</sup> One important reason for its political failure is that it is the political wing of the FARC, and people are afraid of supporting them.

Since their origins in 1966, when as many as 500 armed militants and several hundred peasants were recruited as self-defense groups, the FARC have increased their membership up to 6,500 men under arms and 15,000 part-time activists in the rural and

urban areas. They enjoyed a resurgence during president Betancur's administration (1982-1986). Indeed, those numbers were only exceeded by the Salvadorans, of all other guerrilla movements in Latin America in the last thirty years. The main reason for this resurgence was Betancur's naiveté (in spite of the military recommendations) believing the FARC's good intentions. The truces between the government and the insurgents, as well as the governmental amnesties permitted this guerrilla group to recover itself at all levels, benefiting from Betancur's orders to the Army of not patrolling certain areas to facilitate the process <sup>6</sup>. Figure 3.1 displays the current organization of this guerrilla group. They grew from 2000 men on arms and 18 squads in 1982 to almost 4,500 men on arms and 35 squads in 1986.

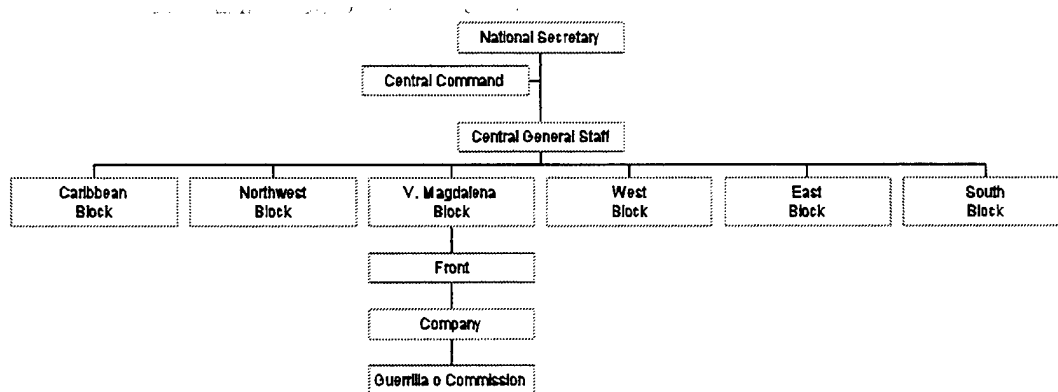


**Figure 3.1 Organization Chart of the FARC**

How has the FARC arrived to their current situation of economical and military capability? We have to differentiate two sources of support: external and internal. In the late 1960s they received some initial organizing help from Cuban and Chinese instructors<sup>7</sup>. In the early years of insurgency, the PCC financed the FARC through the fees of party memberships and the quotas "voluntarily" established by unions', workers', and farmers' associations, handled by the Communist party. Some cattle's raisers and farmers gave their support "in kind". With the time, the FARC have come to rely on mechanisms such as extortion, kidnaping, blackmail, and drug trafficking to finance their activities. Somehow, different sectors of the Colombian economy have been affected by the guerrillas' common crimes. Among these crimes, the FARC's narcotrafficking business deserves a very special

mention. In fact, Army intelligence documents reveal that in 1995 this guerrilla group received \$US 5.25 billion<sup>8</sup> under this concept. This is an important source to sustain the sixty squads, to invest in the country and abroad, and to finance false organizations in countries like Mexico and Switzerland, to obtain support for their cause. This bond with cocaine business and, recently, with poppy cultivation is a double-edge weapon because it generates huge incomes though reduces legitimacy. Moreover, it has done more difficultly the pacification process because it set in motion greater interests and increases the cost of demobilization. Table 3.1 shows a summary of the sources of revenues for the FARC and other guerrilla groups.

| Source                | FARC            | UC-ELN          | EPL           | OTHER       | TOTAL           |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Extortion             | 2,601.50        | 2,116.00        | 218.87        | 227.21      | 5,163.58        |
| Rustling              | 172.50          | 47.50           | 45.00         | N.A.        | 265.00          |
| Assaults              | 658.50          | 828.70          | 0.17          | 0.49        | 1,487.86        |
| Kidnaping             | 300.00          | 330.00          | 22.00         | 75.00       | 659.50          |
| Narcotraffic          | 777.00          | 216.00          | 122.20        | 0.16        | 1,116.50        |
| <b>Total Income</b>   | <b>1,908.00</b> | <b>1,422.20</b> | <b>189.37</b> | <b>8.15</b> | <b>3,528.86</b> |
| <b>Total Expenses</b> | 24.20           | 28.20           | 6.72          | 0.06        | 59.57           |
| <b>Net Income</b>     | 1,883.80        | 1,394.00        | 182.65        | 8.09        | 3,469.30        |
| Investments           | 133.58          | 86.58           | 6.73          | 0.80        | 227.69          |

\* Source: Jesús La Rotta. Finanzas de la Subversión Colombiana.

(Figures in US dollars)

**Table 3.1 Colombian Guerrillas' Revenues during 1994**

In 1986, the FARC (their intent was to demonstrate that they were the strongest of the guerrilla groups) organized the so-called National Guerrilla Coordinating Board (*Coordinadora Nacional Guerrillera* or CNG), which was restructured in late 1987 as the "Simón Bolívar" Guerrilla Coordinating Board (*Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar* or CGSB). It reunited six guerrilla groups: FARC, ELN, M-19, EPL, PRT, and Quintín Lame. Although they attempted to carry out joint military operations with at least one other

guerrilla group, the effort failed, reportedly because of difficulties caused by ideological differences.

The FARC's role in the peace processes was spelled out in the accord signed between members of the group and the Government's National Peace Commission at FARC headquarters in La Uribe in March 1984. This was part of president Betancur's attempt to reach peace through negotiation. Because of the violation of the truce by various FARC squads (*cuadrillas*), by engaging in such activities as kidnaping and blackmail, government announced that the truce had been broken in some departments. The FARC have not been serious during these dialogues with the government and always have blamed the armed forces for blocking the FARC's "good and patriotic" intentions of arriving to lasting peace.

In late 1980s, while FARC continue to refuse the government's call to disarm, an obligation that never was incorporated in the terms of the truce reached with the Betancur administration, "this guerrilla group in turn, called for a lifting of the state of siege, the elimination of the death squads, an end to alleged human rights violations by the armed forces, and the implementation of a number of political and economic reforms".<sup>9</sup>

The FARC political and military objectives, thirty years after the foundation of the group, have had no substantial changes. Today, they are developing the "strategic plan" known as Bolivarian Campaign for a New Colombia (*Campaña Bolivariana para una nueva Colombia*), announced in May 1989, whose main points were: to increase the number of squads to 80, the number of men in arms for each squad to 400, for a total of 32,000 combatants through the end of 1996. The document sets the guidelines for "taking over power" in the near future.<sup>10</sup>

After 1990 and the demise of Communism some changes occurred inside the FARC, but apparently they continue with their orthodox ideology before the grass-roots, while accumulating wealth as any capitalist industry. In the military realm, the FARC are trying to demonstrate that far from being defeated or having converted into simply common criminals, they have certain combat and maneuver capabilities to resist for many days, and under a unified command, whichever open combat in the countryside with the army. In the way they have managed the situation of the sixty army soldiers they kidnaped on 30 August

1996, the FARC want to show a high operational capability that allows them not only to have a big number of "prisoners of war" for a long time, but to conduct also military actions in different regions of the country.

In the urban areas the FARC continues to promote strikes and demonstrations against the government, usually through infiltration of guerrillas inside the mobs to conduct agitation, sabotage, and shooting in the streets to provoke the public force reaction. Immediately after, they accuse the government of being enemy of the people, of violating human rights, and therefore they justify their fighting against the political system.

### **3. The ELN**

This guerrilla group was founded in the department of *Santander del Sur* (South Santander) in July 4, 1964 by a group of university students who had traveled to Cuba and had become convinced of Che Guevara's *foquismo* theory. Its first leader was Fabio Vásquez Castaño, a former bank cashier who had been a victim of La Violencia in the department of Caldas. The former *Fidelista* Worker-Student-Peasant Movement (*Movimiento Obrero-Estudiantil-Campesino* or MOEC), clearly provided the ideological and organizational base for the ELN.<sup>11</sup> Of the twenty-four founders, fourteen were peasants, two were doctors, one a Spanish missionary and seven students, a distribution suggesting that the middle class dominance may not have extended to the rank and the file of the ELN. However, whatever the class composition, the ELN generally has maintained strong peasant support.

The group has operated mostly in northeastern and central Colombia and its ranks have attracted such notables as radical Roman Catholic priest Camilo Torres Restrepo. Its current leader is Manuel Pérez (a.k.a. Poliarco), a Spanish-born Catholic priest. The second in command is a peasant, Nicolás Rodríguez Bautista (a.k.a. Gabino), well known for his cruelty toward soldiers and peasants supporting the regular army.

While decidedly Marxist (*Castrista*) in its ideology, the ELN has become closely associated with Colombia's petroleum industry and its attacks have focused on disrupting the flow of crude oil through the pipelines leading to the coast and in the exploratory drilling sites. His allegedly reason is that petroleum is a national resource that should be managed as such, not by foreign oil companies. This effective economic sabotage, as Pizarro says, has

not increased its political support. The population' acceptance for the revolution is now more distant than never.<sup>12</sup> Because of the atrocities it has committed, the ELN is the most radical, cruel, and human rights violator of all the guerrilla groups in Colombia.

In the 1960s the group received Cuban money, advice, arms and training. However, one norm in that guerrilla group established that the combatants had to win their first weapon in combat, by "recovering" it from dead soldiers. Between 1966 and 1972, in what we can call a period of creation and establishment, the ELN consolidated politically and militarily as a rural guerrilla group with urban commanders. In 1973, after Army operation "Anorí" in the country side, the ELN was decimated and the survivors started to operate in some cities through the urban support networks, financing its activities in the guerrilla way, that is, through criminal activities such as kidnaping, bank robberies, and blackmail. The ELN rose phoenix-like out of these ashes after receiving the ransom from a German oil company, the Manesmann, which payed about five million dollars in 1975 to rescue two engineers, kidnaped by the guerrilla group. That was the beginning of a new stage. Today, the ELN has the same sources of financing as the other subversive groups, as it is shown in Table 3.1

The period between 1973 and 1982 is considered a stage of internal reorganization (in 1978 there were only about 36 guerrillas in the rural area). A national direction was created for preparing the ELN's First National Meeting. From 1983 to 1989 the group consolidated and developed its political project. It grew up in members and squads, oriented to the conformation of a regular army "to dispute terrain to the enemy". In this strategic rectification stage, in December 1986 to be exact, the group launched its key campaign:

"Awake Colombia ...the oil is being stolen" (*Despierta Colombia....Te están robando el petróleo*). The squad *Domingo Láin* operating in the eastern oily region of Arauca, turned to be the key element in the development of its new strategy. The region would be the biggest source of financial support and political inspiration for the ELN. Its main target would be the multinational oil companies working in a joint venture with the Colombian Petroleum Company (*Empresa Colombiana de Petróleos* or ECOPETROL).

The ELN was the only major guerrilla group that did not sign the 1984 cease-fire agreement<sup>13</sup>. For the organization, a negotiation proposal is only a complement to global tactics of accumulating forces to seize power. Negotiations are only a way to legitimate

what they have already gained in the confrontation. Today the organization (see Figure 3.2) has 31 rural squads or groups, with an average of 70 men each; four mobile companies, averaging 50 men each, and twelve urban groups, supported in the large cities by "urban militias".

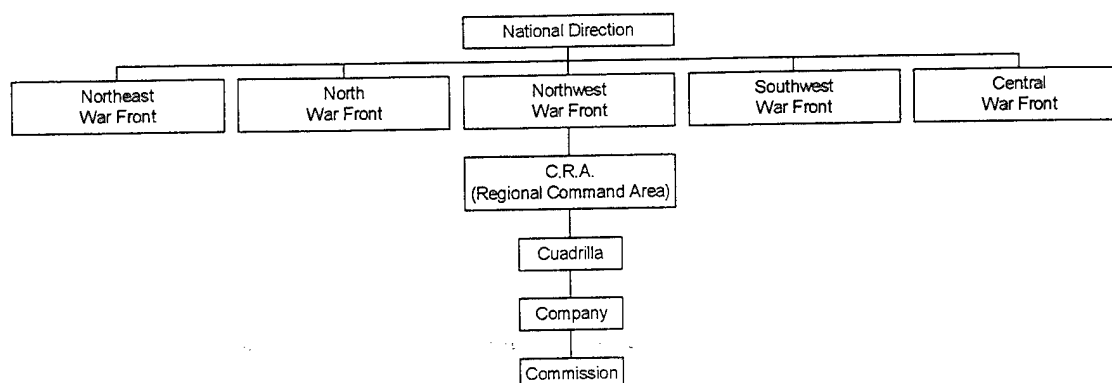


**Figure 3. 2 Organization Chart of the ELN**

These are young people living in very poor communities (*barrios*) and who prepare the logistical and operational support for the terrorist activities. According to the Army's available data, the ELN has approximately 3,500 members on arms and about 30,000 people considered rural and urban clandestine supporters (See Table 3.2).<sup>14</sup>

| GROUP | 1978  | 1982  |       | 1986  |       | 1990  |          | 1994   |         | 1996  |        |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------|--------|---------|-------|--------|
|       | QTY.  | QTY.  | %     | QTY.  | %     | QTY.  | %        | QTY.   | %       | QTY.  | %      |
| FARC  | 1,200 | 1,800 | 50    | 4,000 | 233   | 5,800 | 383.33   | 6,800  | 466.7   | 5,700 | -16.18 |
| ELN   | 190   | 230   | 21.05 | 1,800 | 847.4 | 2,600 | 1,268.42 | 3,150  | 1,557.9 | 2,500 | -20.63 |
| EPL   | 100   | 350   | 250   | 1,400 | 1,300 | 1,250 | 1.150    | 550    | 450     | 450   | -18.18 |
| M-19  | 750   | 300   | -60   | 1,200 | 66.7  | 1,200 | 66.7     | 100    | -86.7   | 80    | -20.00 |
| TOTAL | 2,240 | 2,680 | 19.64 | 8,400 | 275   | 9,650 | 330.80   | 10,600 | 373.2   | 8,730 | 289.73 |

**Note:** Years correspond to the beginning (end) of presidential terms. Last right column indicates reduction in relation to 1994.

**Table 3.2 Insurgency Growth (Men)**

ELN's current objectives were established in its First National Military Conference in July 1995: 1) Reorganization of the combat units, similar to the regular army. It includes the creation of the "Officers School" and the "Guerrilla War College". 2) Total reject to holding talks with the government because the recent impeachment of president Ernesto Samper indicates that he does not represent national interests. 3) To gain an international image, they have to improve the so-called War Code, to increase the human rights enforcement (for the government, of course, because the ELN has conducted a disinformation campaign to blame the government for doing "state terrorism"<sup>15</sup>).

#### 4. The EPL

The Popular Liberation Army was the only major guerrilla group with a Maoist political ideology, which had the central idea of a prolonged popular war. The birth of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (PC-ML) and later, of its armed branch, the EPL, was determined by several factors, common to the pioneer guerrilla groups (radicalization of urban sectors, the Cuban Revolution, the exclusion from participation in the National Front Agreement or *Frente Nacional*, which established that the two parties would succeed one another in the presidency from 1958 to 1974), but specially for the Chinese-Soviet rupture.

On December 17, 1967, the first PC-ML guerrilla unit or *foco* was formed in the northeast of the department of Antioquia, under the leadership of Pedro Vásquez Rendón and Francisco Caraballo (the latter in prison since 1994). The period 1972-1978 was a difficult time for the EPL. Pizarro says:

"In subsequent years the PC-ML and the EPL were often on the verge of total extinction. This situation was due in part to the scope of the military offensives launched against them in the 1960s and in part to the deep schisms that affected them internally, resulting in separate groups such as the Marxist-Leninist League, the Marxist-Leninist Tendency, and the urban group Pedro León Arboleda, PLA."<sup>16</sup>

In April 1980 the group broke with Maoism and its sequels. In 1984, the EPL was one of the groups to sign the ill-fated truce agreements with Betancur's government.<sup>17</sup> In 1985, in the third national conference of combatants, they moved to the conception of an army. Therefore, they decided to consolidate the 10 rural and urban squads, which made them to pass "...from small groups of 30 people, with the strength we could acquire during

the truce, we had the possibility of conforming columns of 100 and 150 guerrillas, and we began to introduce technical elements...We grew up to 400 percent.”<sup>18</sup> In May 1987 the EPL subscribed an agreement with the FARC and in September of the same year participated in the creation of the *Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar* (CGSB). In the tenth conference of the PCC-ML, in February 1990, they realized the necessity of the political solution of the negotiation to legalize the party. But then the contradictions are evident between the fraction that supported negotiations and those that opposed them. The split was evident when in March 1991, the group headed by Bernardo Gutiérrez signed a peace agreement, turned over the weapons and entered to civilian political life. They adopted, with the same letters, a new name: Hope, Peace, and Liberty (*Esperanza, Paz y Libertad*). According to its leaders, the guerrilla group joined to negotiations as the result of an internal and healthy debate around the dynamics the country was living. They did not join because they were defeated. Francisco Caraballo fraction continued in the mountains and joined to the CGSB. It is still fighting against the government.

The EPL has currently a regional staff, three rural squads, and five urban groups, with a total of 450 members on arms. It is operating in four out of thirty Three-Colombian departments, with special presence in northern Antioquia (banana plantations in Urabá region).

In 1994, after the capture of its leader Francisco Caraballo, the organization faced a crisis. At the end of the year, the EPL did its “Fourth National Conference of Combatants” with the following objectives: 1) to avoid the demise of the group; 2) to propose the guerrilla groups unity in order to receive economic support from FARC and ELN (it seems that its finances are not good, in spite of the figures in Table 1; 3) to support the dialogues with government but only as a tactic to handle and solve the internal crisis and to obtain benefits without compromising to demobilize or turn over the weapons; 4) to get economic resources from kidnaping and extortion to multinational firms (the EPL shows here its nationalist label). Table 3. 1 shows that in 1994 the EPL had an income of about \$ 310 million dollars, derived mainly from common crimes, and \$122 million from narcotrafficking. This is more than enough to sustain an Army Brigade during a year.

## 5. The M-19

This movement traces its origins to the allegedly stolen presidential election of April 19, 1970, when the National Popular Alliance's (*Alianza Nacional Popular* or ANAPO) candidate, former president General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, barely was defeated by the candidate of the Frente Nacional, the conservative Misael Pastrana Borrero. With very sound knowledge, because he is the brother of the late M-19 leader,<sup>19</sup> Pizarro states that the movement was a merging of one sector that had been expelled from the Communist party and the FARC, and a sector that came out of the socialist wing of ANAPO.<sup>20</sup>

The M-19 ideological orientation was a mixture of populism and nationalistic revolutionary socialism. By 1985 the group was estimated to have about 1,700 members, making it the second largest guerrilla group in the country.<sup>21</sup> This group was mainly conformed by middle class people and had strong support among the Colombian urban lower classes in the early 1970s. During the 1980s, when they conducted operations in the rural areas, the majority of the combatants were peasants, Indians, and unemployed workers. However, they had also intellectuals and cultivated people.

With the theft of the Liberator Simón Bolívar's sword and spurs from the exhibit in his villa in 1974, the M-19 showed everyone that the movement was not manipulated from the outside and that the historical heritage had to be present in all the revolutionary activities. In the last week of 1978 the M-19 made a robbery in an army arsenal. Two months later, the Army recovered all the material but the publicity for the guerrilla was immense. In February 1980 the seizure and occupation, for two months, of the Dominican Republic's Bogotá embassy, gained to the group international attention. On November 4 and 5, 1985, in its most spectacular operation, the M-19 seized the Palace of Justice in Bogotá, but the forty members of the guerrilla group died after a hard battle with the Army and the Police. Pizarro says:

"By behaving in this manner, the M-19's importance as a protagonist on the national level was characterized more by its "lucky hits" than by its shaping of a political-military movement with grassroots support and a solid organization. A sui generis movement, in spite of its ups and downs, the M-19 produced a revolution in the heart of the guerrilla movement after the taking of the Dominican embassy." <sup>22</sup>

Finally, at the end of 1989, the group signed a peace agreement with the government of president Virgilio Barco. The pact called for national dialogue and reforms (longstanding goals of M-19), amnesty, and an end to the M-19's insurgency against the state. Carlos Pizarro became a presidential candidate but was killed by agents of Medellín Cartel. He was replaced by Antonio Navarro Wolf, who was third in presidential elections. He was offered the Ministry of Education and accepted.

Today, there is a small group, which did not accept the peace agreement and who kept the arms and is in the mountains fighting against the government. The so-called Bateman Cayón group, with only 120 men under arms, does not have a flattering future.

To summarize, Colombia's guerrillas have been the weakest political challenge to incumbent regimes of what Wickham-Crowley calls the second-wave movements<sup>23</sup>. By the late 1960s there were already unity talks among guerrillas, and even announcements of imminent or actual unification in 1973, 1978, and 1981. In 1988 they formed an umbrella group to negotiate with the government over democratization, yet the ELN and EPL continued to hedge their commitments to the new organization. After the M-19 turned over their weapons in 1990, they participated in that year national elections. There, they exceeded by far the expectations of its well-established Liberal and Conservative rivals in those elections, which were held to create a constituent assembly. When that assembly was about to meet in early 1991, a combined effort of FARC and ELN launched a major military offensive to protest their exclusion from the political process. Clearly, unity was an impossible dream for Colombian insurgents after a quarter century.

### **C. EL SALVADOR**

#### **1. Structure and origins of the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front (*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* or FMLN)**

The guerrilla movement in El Salvador has its origins in two main sources: The Salvadoran Communist Party and some radicalized religious activists. The catholic groups were rooted in the Christian base communities, and their ideas were sustained by the Liberation Theology. After several divisions due to political and ideological differences, five

political-military insurgent organizations were formed. These groups had also mass organizations and military structures under their control as shown in Appendix B. These military structures resembled regular infantry units, as shown in Appendix C.

The FMLN was the political-military organization that served as the umbrella for the mentioned five militant insurgent organizations. The FMLN was directed by a five-person directorate. Theoretically each organization was equally represented in this directorate. This command structure was known originally as the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (*Directorio Revolucionario Unificado* or DRU) and was based throughout the entire war in Managua.<sup>24</sup> Later, the name DRU was changed to General Command (*Comando General* or CG).

In reality, the People's Revolutionary Army (*Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo* or ERP) and the People's Forces of Liberation (*Fuerzas Populares de Liberación* or FPL) were the most powerful and had the most influence in the directorate. The ERP and the FPL had the largest and most experienced organizations so this situation was tacitly accepted by the other groups. Later in the war, the ERP gained the advice and direction of the Cubans. Since then, the ERP controlled the access routes along which arms were shipped to the Salvadoran guerrillas.

In 1980, the Cubans and Nicaraguans advised the FMLN to follow the Nicaraguan model of insurrection. However, in El Salvador, some major problems had to be solved before Cuba and Nicaragua could play a major role. Perhaps the greatest problem was that the insurgent organizations had substantial differences and spent much energy arguing and fighting among themselves. In early 1980, the Cuban General Directorate of Intelligence (*Dirección General de Inteligencia DGI*) the Cuban Intelligence Service, representative for El Salvador, organized a meeting of the Salvadoran insurgent organization in Managua, Nicaragua. He made a simple, but powerful proposal. The Cubans and Nicaraguans would provide the logistical support and massive military training for the Salvadorans, on the condition that they unite and form a single, coordinated opposition front as the Sandinistas had. The logistical support was supposed to be given by using the same channels that had been used for the Sandinistas.

In spite of the mentioned differences and bitter feelings among them, the Salvadoran insurgent organizations agreed to the Cuba conditions. They quickly formed a united front and the name chosen for the front was the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, shortened to the Spanish acronym FMLN. To carry out this insurrection, the FMLN focused their efforts, in the next few months, to create a powerful military structure, supposedly able to defeat the Salvadoran armed forces.

Some captured insurgents' documents show that they had planned to create a military apparatus of approximately fifteen thousand men completely equipped with an entire array of light infantry weapons. While there was not shortage of recruits, the FMLN had a serious lack of adequate weapons and trained personnel. Cuba agreed to a massive training program. Thousands of Salvadoran guerrillas would be trained in Cuba over the next few months for the coming insurrection. This would be one the most massive training of Latin American guerrillas undertaken by the Cubans in such a short period of time. Several hundreds more would then return to El Salvador to provide the hard core of the fifteen thousand-man guerrilla apparatus. Training the Salvadorans would be relatively simple, but arming them was much more complicated.<sup>25</sup>

There were considerable quantities of weapons stored away from the old Nicaraguan revolution pipeline, however, there were not enough to arm fifteen thousand Salvadorans and simultaneously other revolutionary organizations in the hemisphere. This quantity of weapons was presumably available from the communist block, but there were two main reasons for not getting them. First such a massive display of these weapons would automatically reveal the involvement of the communist world and provoke the intervention of the United States. Second, the ammunition and parts for Western weapons, could be conveniently captured from the enemy. So the weapons had to be of Western origin, and they had to be on par or better than current-issue weapons of the Salvadoran military. To solve the problem, the Handal brothers, Shafick and Farid, representatives of the communist party in El Salvador, went on a world tour to secure the international aid and weapons that the FMLN needed to rapidly build up the guerrilla and secure the political and financial aid to operate this army for several years. Captured documents show that the FMLN was able

to secure money, weapons, and offers of training from much of the communist world. Key among these was the support offered by Vietnam. Vietnam had large stocks of weapons that had been left behind by the US military or captured from south Vietnam in 1975. Vietnam offered to deliver large numbers of these weapons to Cuba, which would then insert them into the established pipeline to the Salvadoran Guerrillas. Cuba pipeline and the flow of weapons and resources from the communists countries guaranteed the FMLN a continual logistical support. This support was one of the key elements of the FMLN's military success, and allowed it to continue insurgent operations for twelve years of war.<sup>26</sup>

The first major action of the FMLN was the January 1981 "Final Offensive". However, this offensive failed to be final and it turned to be just the beginning of one of the most intense internal conflicts in Latin America history. The military organizational structures that emerged from that offensive were essentially those that remained constant throughout the entire conflict.

In 1981, the FMLN was counted on an estimated calculated to twelve thousand armed members, three thousand short of their goal. At their peak (1983-1984) they may have had as many as fourteen thousand armed members. However, through battle casualties, attrition, and the changing nature of the war, when hostilities ceased there were only between six and eight thousand armed guerrillas distributed among the various factions on five war fronts. The different groups were unified under the General Command (CG). The five military commanders of each of the five FMLN factions made up the General Command of the FMLN. General strategy and tactics were established in meetings of the CG, then each of the factions' commanders would pass the orders onto their respective organization. In the beginning, the different factions were loathed to cooperate with each other, but by the late half of the 1980s cooperation was very high, and the distinctions between factions' were negligible. However, the factions did maintain their separate command structures and organic units through the conflict.

The DRU had two political organizations that were subordinate to it. The first was the umbrella front known as the Popular Revolutionary Block (*Bloque Popular Revolucionario* or BPR). This front was composed of all the internal political organizations that were struggling for a revolution. Essentially, the BPR coordinated the political action

of the mass organizations in El Salvador. This included protests, marches, rallies, strikes, stoppages and so on. The BPR lost importance soon after the 1981 final offensive, as all of the important cadres had been stripped from the various fronts groups to be incorporated into the regular guerrilla forces. This left the mass organizations leaderless for several years, and the BPR fizzled out of existence. However, mass organization returned in force after 1985 and played a major role in the FMLN's strategy through the end of the war.<sup>27</sup>

The last component of the FMLN was the international political front known as the Democratic Revolutionary Front (*Frente Democrático Revolucionario or FDR*). The FDR was composed of supposedly independent political parties and leaders that had left El Salvador for a variety of reasons. While they were not directly part of the FMLN, they supported the idea of a leftist government in El Salvador. Although they did not openly advocate violent revolution, they felt that the FMLN was a preferable alternative to the government of El Salvador. Guillermo Ungo and Ruben Zamora were the prominent figures in this group. These politicians used their contacts and prestige to gain international recognition for the FMLN from Western nations, and were responsible for setting up a worldwide network of support groups to keep El Salvador in the headlines and pressure the United States to cut aid to the Salvadoran government. The FDR was able to attract the support of several important governments, such as Mexico, Spain and France. Because of this, the FDR was initially a very important ally of the FMLN. However, overtime the FDR found itself quickly being coated by the guerrilla and shoved aside as the DRU/CG imposed its criteria on the international posture of the anti government forces. By 1988, the FDR ceased to exist when Rubén Zamora and Guillermo Ungo returned from exile to El Salvador to run in the elections. However, while the FDR ceased to exist, its international network did not, and the CG took over this network and continued to use it through the end of the war.<sup>28</sup>

## **2. FMLN Strategy**

The FMLN had divided the Salvadoran territory into four fronts which they considered as their basic military structure. Three of the fronts are named after the leaders of the 1932 insurrection and one named after Anastacio Aquino, leader of the peasant and Indian insurrection of 1832. (See Appendix D). The general term for overall FMLN's strategy was "Prolonged Popular War". This term, borrowed directly from Asian

revolutionary thought, particularly Ho Chi Minh, did not have the same meaning to the FMLN as it did to the Vietnamese. Basically, the FMLN implemented its strategy of prolonged popular war with three different operational modes: guerrilla warfare, maneuver warfare, and attrition warfare. The FMLN was flexible with these three operational modes, and combined all these elements on the five fronts. Basic to all these modes was the idea of nonlinear military tactics.<sup>29</sup>

During the early 1970, the insurgent organizations had experienced serious internal arguments about which strategy to follow, causing the original separation of the movement in the mentioned five factions. Finally, the FMLN's military strategy was a product of three major lines of thought on revolutionary processes, corresponding to the three of those factions. During this time, the operational mode of Popular Prolonged War consisted of violent mass action supported by urban terrorist cells, but every group had its own style. In 1980, the Cuban ultimatum of unity or no aid, brought the five factions back together. The resulting strategy of this unity was the product of the integration and compromise of the three major strategic lines of thought of the major FMLN factions. The three major divisions of strategic thought within the FMLN were represented by the ERP, the National Resistance (*Resistencia Nacional* or RN), and People's Forces of Liberation (*Fuerzas Populares de Liberación* or FPL). The remaining two organizations (PCS and PRTC) did not have much influence in the shaping of the overall FMLN's military strategy.

### **3. The ERP**

The ERP at that time viewed the revolution as a series of stages leading to mass insurrection. It also favored making alliances with all the "democratic sectors", including workers, peasants, broad sections of the middle class, and the "democratic army officers". The ERP tended to be initially fiercely nationalistic and critical of the Cuban presence and influence in Nicaragua.<sup>30</sup> However, at the end the ERP was most influenced by Cuba, Nicaragua, and the guerrillas of South America, especially the Peruvian and Colombian. They viewed the government as weak and the population as ready to revolt if given the opportunity. All the population needed was an extra shove. To the ERP this shove would be shocking military action that would prepare the way for total insurrection.

The ERP did not believe in the necessity to politically organize the masses. Its priority was on military action, particularly spectacular military action, capable of infusing the masses with revolutionary euphoria to the point of insurrection. For the ERP, mass action was only a means of gaining new recruits, and a cover for its military action.

#### **4. The RN**

The RN's line of thought was completely opposed to that of the ERP. The RN also viewed the governments as weak, however it felt that the best way to overthrow the government was not through military action, but by the masses action. "It based its model more on the U.S. civil-rights protests of the 1960s, and on El Salvador's own experience in 1944 when General Maximiliano Hernández was overthrown by a broad based public protest."<sup>31</sup> The most important activity had to be organizing labor and trade associations and developing alliances between these and newly created groups for mass acts of civil disobedience and protest.

Military action was seen as a means of magnifying the propaganda value of a march or protest. Besides, it was used as a means of protecting activities of mass action against police or military units trying to control or suppress acts of civil disobedience. The value of military action was its enhancement of political action, not so much as a means of destroying the enemy. The RN felt that in the face of mass action, the enemy would eventually find it impossible to govern and collapse on its own. Purely military operations were relegated to a secondary or support role. Of the three strategic lines of thought, the RN strategy was probably the least influenced by foreign political thought, and the most authentic Salvadoran.<sup>32</sup>

#### **5. The FPL**

The FPL had not developed any indigenous strategy, basically it was a copy of Vietnam's guerillas. The FPL was convinced that Central America, and specifically El Salvador, would become the United States' next Vietnam. They believed that the United States would never allow a second Nicaragua and that before allowing this, it would intervene directly with military force. The FPL envisioned the invasion by Salvadoran guerrillas in the hills and mountains of Chalatenango and Morazán. "If the war lasted long enough, the United States, as it had in Vietnam, would be forced to withdraw because of

internal political pressure, and the guerrilla forces could then pick up the pieces and take power.”<sup>33</sup>

The FPL concentrated their efforts in two tasks. The first was to establish the infrastructure of resistance in the remote areas. This included creating guerrilla and militia units, establishing base camps and fortified regions, organizing the civilians in the area to support the war effort by establishing shadow government structures, setting up committees of production, and recruits to the guerrilla organization. Often this was done under the guise of religious programs that were administered by radical priests. The FPL believed the lesson of Vietnam was that if the war dragged on long enough, and public pressure was brought to bear on the U.S. government, it could not sustain a counter-insurgency war overseas.

The second task was to establish international support groups, particularly in the United States, to disseminate guerrilla propaganda and pressure the U.S. government to stay out, or get out of El Salvador. The FPL organized a number of support groups in the United States and around the world for this purpose. These support groups would play a key role in the revolutionary struggle.<sup>34</sup>

Bracamonte and Spencer have identified three key factors that assured the FMLN's survival. We think that two of them are relevant for our study: (1) the massive amounts of foreign aid, training, and technical assistance received; (2) its operational flexibility. They wrote about the support received by the FMLN:

“The guerrilla effort in the El Salvador was, without comparison, the best-funded, best-organized, and best-supported guerrilla war ever fought on the American continent. Literally every guerrilla faction in Latin America, with the exception of Peru's Shining Path, contributed to the war with money, weapons, and personnel. In addition, the FMLN received guerrillas from the PLO, the Basque ETA, and other worldwide terrorist organizations. These efforts were eclipsed by the training, money, and weapons provided by Cuba and Nicaragua, but they were still significant to the war effort. Cuba and Nicaragua acted as clearinghouses for assistance from abroad. Prominent among foreign donors was Vietnam, which provided weapons and limited training until late in the war, the Soviet Union, which provided funds and political training; East Germany, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Algeria, Angola, and others, all of whom made donations of money, weapons, and advice.”<sup>35</sup>

Operational flexibility refers to the way the FMLN conducted their operations. It was evident that they had learned from many guerrilla movements. The authors have established that:

“Past Latin American guerrilla organizations (with the exception of the Sandinistas of Nicaragua) had failed miserably in their attempts to foment revolution. One of the main shortcomings was that military operations (strategy and tactics) had been tied to the current ideology, and operational failure were viewed as the product of externalities, not poorly conceived operations and tactics. The FMLN never fell into this rigidity; instead it was dynamic and flexible in its approach. This may have something to do with the fact that among the five organizations there were at least three different strategic and tactical approaches to guerrilla warfare. After the initial failure of the insurrection strategy in 1981, the FMLN adopted a flexibility rarely seen in previous guerrilla groups. All subsequent strategies adopted by the FMLN were combinations of the three tendencies mentioned above, the difference being the priority given to anyone tendency at a given time. The FMLN would change the priority depending on the current strategic situation. This strategy flexibility brought with it the adoption of flexible tactics. The FMLN had an enough flexible ideology that it could pick and choose between what worked and what did not work; it was quick to recognize failure and discard unsuccessful tactics.”<sup>36</sup>

#### **D. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

As stated in our introduction unity, the nature of the political-strategic project, and sources of support, were the main factors that influenced the attitude of the guerrilla movements toward the negotiation processes and they also seem to be some of the main factors of divergence for the different outcomes in the two countries.

Unity was an essential difference. Deciding to negotiate meant giving up major initial commitments. In both cases, there were thousands of men and women convinced that the armed struggle was necessary and the only way for bringing changes and a better life for their people. This perception was build through a long process of political and military indoctrination, and the undeniable reality of social injustice in both countries. The tasks of reverting those minds to accept negotiation was gigantic. The only way to hold together these movements under the severed changes taking place in their national realities was

through strong leadership. In El Salvador, in 1980, Fidel Castro turned the movement (FMLN) into a well-coordinated front with a very well elaborated strategic plan.

The FMLN, despite their differences, had developed a joint doctrine and they were used to operating under a unified command structure. When the time came for negotiation, their structure allowed the general command to make the use negotiation as another element for their strategy and to ensure compliance across the whole organization. According to their practice the decision made by their general command was legitimate. The members of the FMLN accepted the negotiation as the legitimate best alternative and supported, at the end, all terms in which the peace agreement was signed. Comandante Miguel Castellanos explains: "At that time, when unity was planned, all the organizations had to make concessions, on the political level and in the strategic line, as well as in logistic aspects."<sup>33</sup> When the final cease-fire was accorded, this was never broken, that is a clear evidence of compliance in despite of the different possible feelings of FMLN members.

In Colombia, in 1986, the formation of the National Guerrilla Coordinating Board (*Coordinadora Nacional Guerrillera*) led to a few joint military actions but, the GNC is still far from being a joint Staff which was achieved in El Salvador. Colombian Guerrillas have never been able to overcome their differences and apparently did not have any incentive to come together. When the world situation changed their divergences became even greater and particular interests began to arouse. The M-19, believed that the time to negotiate had come and accepted to participate peacefully in politics, while the FARC has become one of the most important drug cartels. No single structure for political or military command and control was ever recognized. So the Colombian government has to deal with different interests and fragmented leadership. Negotiation then, has to be done in different dimensions which make them very difficult to succeed.

The nature of the political-strategic project looks very different. Every organization under the general command of the FMLN had links with political organizations and "popular" organizations which gave the FMLN a wide representation within the society, at least before the international community. This representation gives to the guerrilla movement a sense of legitimacy, a sense of a national project seeking objectives beyond particular interests. This commitment while made the movement stronger, it also has made

the FMLN more vulnerable to the change in the national and international environment.

Somehow the Government of El Salvador started to promote changes under internal and external pressures. Little by little, the FMLN abandoned their original positions. The presence of leaders like Handal, the secretary of the Communist party, and the contributions of non guerrilla politicians Ungo and Zamora --who for a long time during the war were the visible, political and "democratic" (as they called themselves) faces--, were important factors that helped the FMLN to shift from the military effort to the political struggle. This shift was forced by the fact that the armed forces of El Salvador defeated all the attempts to take over the control of the country by force. At the end the FMLN understood that the armed struggle had to be considered, not anymore as the final objective but merely as an element of pressure for negotiation.

The Colombian guerrillas have never had the international prestige of the guerrilla movement in El Salvador. The Colombian guerrillas have not built a powerful political representation internally nor internationally. Probably this has certainly made them weaker but, at the same time has made them less vulnerable to the changes in the world environment. The *Coordinadora Nacional Guerrillera* has suffered the demobilization of four of its six organizations and the remaining two most important, the FARC and the ELN, are going currently in different directions. It is clear that none of them has a real capability of mobilizing serious mass movements nor significant sectors of the Colombian society, not even by terror. They are standing as solitary groups with a lot of power for terrorism but they are not seen as representatives of the interests of the Colombian society. The Colombian guerrilla movements are well aware that if they decide to negotiate they will be only negotiating their own interests and probably their own survival. They are not in a position to negotiate in the name of the whole society, like the FMLN was seen during the peace process and before the elections of 1994.

Sustainment became a decisive element for the attitude of the guerrilla movements toward negotiation. In El Salvador, before 1980 the different guerrilla groups were seen as a legitimate hope for change within the country for the lower classes and the main resource for sustainment came from local support groups and obviously from extortion, robbery and from the equipment taken from the armed forces. This was not enough to serve the ambitious

purposes of the movement. After 1980 The FMLN was heavily supported by the former USSR, through Cuba and Nicaragua. When the USSR fell down, the guerrilla forces lost its main source of logistical and ideological support, and then the peace process was somehow accelerated.

In Colombia the FARC, the ELN and small remanent of EPL and M-19 have relied mainly on internal resources to conduct their insurgent activities. Up to date the FARC are the cocaine cartel number one, while the ELN and EPL have links with the drug lords. The changes in the international environment have had no dramatic effect on their operations. Sustainment is not a problem for Colombian guerrillas, at least, they can survived indefinitely from drugs' revenues. On the contrary, these groups have found their activity financially rewarding as a way of living. As long as the Colombian government does not pose a real threat to their existence, the Colombian guerrilla, in relation to the sustainment, has no incentive to negotiate.

## NOTES

1. Timothy Wickham-Crowley. *Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America*. p. 137.
2. Eduardo Pizarro. Revolutionary Guerrilla Groups in Colombia, in Berquist et al. (Eds.), *Violence in Colombia*, p.175.
3. In the Colombian Army's official documentation, letter C in the acronym stands for "Communist" to identify the rebel organization's ideology.
4. Wickham-Crowley. p. 145.
5. The FARC applied through and through the Communist strategy of combining all the "fighting means". Thus, the Patriotic Union was only the way to project themselves at the legal level. However, they have never thought of turning over their weapons.
6. For the FARC the truce has been only a tactical space that would permit them to gain legitimacy and to strength their influence to another zones by augmenting the number of their squads.
7. Wickham-Crowley, p. 89.
8. Colombian Army Intelligence Department. *Information about Drug Traffick*. Sept.1996. Briefed to U.S. Congress by Colombian Officers, in a special hearing.
9. Colombian Army Intelligence Department. *Information about Drug Traffick*. Sept.1996. Briefed to U.S. Congress by Colombian Officers, in a special hearing.
10. Colombian Army Intelligence Department. *Planes y Proyecciones de los Grupos Subversivos*. FARC- ELN-EPL (Santafé de Bogotá, Comando del Ejército, Junio 1996), p. 5.
11. Timothy Wickham-Crowley. p.28.
12. Eduardo Pizarro. p. 178.
13. Walker, in *Colombia: A Country Study*, p. 306.
14. Jesús La Rotta. *Las Finanzas de la Subversión*, p.83.
15. People use to say in Colombia that this is a typical example of the popular saying: "Birds shoot the shotguns" (*Los pájaros les tiran a las escopetas*).
16. Eduardo Pizarro, p. 179.
17. Few weeks before signing the truce with Betancur's government, the EPL leaders considered that the official peace was a demagogic banner. Therefore, they would go to face the

negotiation, dialogues, and the peace agreements as a step to their military strength for the war. See Fabio López de la Roche, *El Ejército Popular de Liberación, del XI Congreso del PCC (ML) a la dejación de armas y el reencuentro con la Sociedad en 1991*. (Informe de Investigación ) CINEP, Diciembre, 1991.

18. Fabio López de la Roche, in Mauricio García Durán , *De La Uribe a Tlaxcala. Procesos de Paz*, (Bogotá, CINE, 1992), p. 43.
19. Eduardo Pizarro is a brother of the former M-19 leader Carlos Pizarro. Three out of the four children of former Rear Admiral Pizarro joined the guerrillas in the 1970s.
20. Pizarro. Revolutionary Guerrilla Groups in Colombia, in *Violence in Colombia*, p.183.
21. Walker, in *Colombia: A Country Study*. p. 304.
22. Pizarro. Revolutionary Guerrilla Groups in Colombia, in *Violence in Colombia*, p.184.
23. Wickham-Crowley. p.293.
24. U.S. Department of State, *The Guerrilla Movement in El Salvador* (Washington, D.C. July 1987).
25. FMLN: Informe y Análisis Visto desde el Exterior (Managua, March 11-13, 1981, seized from guerrillas in 1981), quoted by José A. Moroni Bracamonte and David Spencer, *Strategy and tactics of the Salvadoran Guerrillas. Last Battle of the Cold War, Blueprint for Future Conflicts*, (Wesport, Praeger Publishers, 1995), p. 4.
26. Gabriel Zaid, "Enemy Colleagues : A Reading of the Salvadoran Tragedy", *Dissent* (Winter 1982) quoted by Bracamonte and Spencer, p. 5.
27. Marco Antonio Grande, "Frente de Masas del FMLN" , in *Analysis Review No. 13, Vol. 2*, San Salvador, Universidad Nueva San Salvador, January, 1989.
28. Bracamonte and Spencer, p. 6.
29. Ibid p. 6.
30. Robert S. Leiken and Barry Rubin, *The Central American Crisis Reader*, (New York, Summit Books, 1987), p. 321.
31. Bracamonte and Spencer, p.14.
32. Ibid. p.14.
33. Ibid. p.15.
34. Michael Waller, *The third current of Revolution. Inside the ' North American Front' of El Salvador Guerrilla War*, Council For Inter-American Foundation. University Press of

America, Inc. Maryland, 1991. In this book the author presents, with impressive details, the support network that the FMLN developed within the United States to obtain political and financial support for their terrorists actions. See also Bracamonte and Spencer, p.15.

35. Bracamonte and Spencer, p.7.
36. Ibid. p. 7.
37. This was the pseudonym used by Napoleón Romero García, a former FMLN commander. He left the movement and was assassinated by the FMLN in January, 1989. This quote comes from the book *The Commandante Speaks*, (Boulder, Westview Press, Inc., 1991), edited by Courtney E. Prisk, p. 23.

#### IV. THE INTENSITY OF THE CONFLICT

The intensity of an armed conflict, more than just material destruction, has a moral and psychological impact on society. This impact certainly contributes to shape the attitude of people to find ways to end the suffering and destruction, especially if they are not convinced of the legitimacy and validity of this violence. One important difference between Colombia and El Salvador, that is necessary to define, is the society's degree of tolerance or supportiveness toward a political negotiated solution. We believe that this attitude is closely related to the intensity of the conflict.

Guerrillas' actions in both cases were means to pressure government and society. In El Salvador, the armed conflict was prolonged and intense and it also spread all over the country, affecting every single sector in society. Every actor was deeply affected. The armed forces was taking heavy casualties and it was also under national and international political pressure. The FMLN was also reporting considerable number of casualties and they were rapidly losing support of the population, which was vital for their survival. The Salvadoran Economy was bordering the chaos and threatened to collapse. The political sector was also threatened and the governability of the country was reaching a critical stage. In this conditions, one easily understands the society's level of supportiveness of the negotiation dynamics, even when they meant making significant concessions.

Figures about dead, wounded, and mutilated people as well as displaced to other countries, indicate whether political violence corresponds to minor clashes and skirmishes or to a real civil war. In El Salvador, more than one-million were displaced, about 30,000 of armed forces and over 30,000 of FMLN members died or were wounded in twelve years of confrontation. All this clearly indicates that it was a war, irregular but war anyway, whose dimensions have to be judged having in mind that El Salvador's population is one sixth of Colombia's.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, in Colombia, even though the conflict has lasted for more than forty years, it has remained relatively isolated. The guerrillas has not been critically damaged and they do not really depend on the support of the people. The military is a stable organization

which has not reported considerable losses in human lives. The economy and political sectors have not been damaged so bad as to say that they are close to collapse. This lack of urgency in the Colombian society has allowed them to be more skeptical about the negotiation. Politically speaking, both contender seem to believe that there are more benefits in continuing the struggle than in setting the peace through negotiation.

We do not pretend to present an exhaustive description of the conflict's consequences. They are both intense. By no means we are trying to capture all the suffering of these people. Rather we have selected some relevant data to illustrate a broad image of the magnitude of these conflicts, and to stress the main differences in their impact on their respective society.

We will present a general overview of the escalation of the violence, then some of the most significant actions and reactions of the contenders and their related consequences in human casualties, damages to the economy, and the social and political impact. To put this facts in context we will relate them to the strategies of the contenders and to certain notorious time frames in every country.

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the intensity of the conflicts in terms of violence, physical and moral damage; and social and economical impact on the societies of Colombia and El Salvador, to determine the effect their attitudes toward negotiations. We intent to demonstrate that the conflict in El Salvador was more intense than it was in Colombia, and that this intensity contributed to the achievement of the peace accords between the Salvadoran government and the FMLN in 1992.

## **A. COLOMBIA**

### **1. The Escalation of Violence**

During Betancur's administration (1982-1986) there were changes in violence dynamics. The armed forces, which were accused of repression during Turbay's administration (1978-1982) and were undervalued by Betancur, frankly disagreed with presidential management of the peace process. In 1984, the military operations were even more intensive than before 1982. The consequence was the escalation of the armed conflict as guerrilla's military capability also increased because of the huge resources the rebels were

receiving by extorting oil multinational companies. Besides, the signed truce with government made them double their membership and augment the number of their squads nationwide.

Throughout 1983 and the beginning of 1984, however, M-19 escalated its military actions, notably in southern Colombia, leaving a heavy toll of victims. The FARC, for its part, extended its influence into numerous regions. Claiming thirteen fronts in 1982, it established fourteen new fronts over the following months. "All the guerrilla movements, says Daniel Pecaut,<sup>2</sup> understood that they must negotiate from a position of strength." The FARC was the first group in signing a cease-fire in June 1984. M-19 and EPL signed only two months later. The ELN never did.

The guerrillas' weak willingness to achieve a negotiated peace was broken by military pressure and by the rejection of dominant sectors to the camps guerrilla groups fostered in urban popular "barrios". Only the FARC, following their principle of "combination of all means of fighting", could maintain themselves between a legal political work and their effort to consolidate their military power, in the way they established in the Eight Years Plan (1983), which should lead them to build the revolutionary army and to the creation of a provisional government. Patriotic Union party and *Casaverde* (Greenhouse) were the two symbols of this double way.<sup>3</sup> In the socio-economic realm, they concentrated in infiltrating different sectors, in taking advantage of every urban or rural conflict, and in increasing kidnapping and extortion. They also increased their links with narcotraffickers.

One of the most spectacular guerrilla's action, that measure the escalation of violence, was the seizure of Justice Palace by the M-19 on 5 and 6 November 1985, which left approximately one hundred persons dead, among judges, military personnel, government officials and civilians.

## **2. The Self-Defense Groups' Violence**

The guerrilla crimes -kidnapping, billeting, and homicide- which whipped some agricultural and cattle raising lands, were the basis to develop a counter- insurgency project consistent in the conformation of private self-defense groups. These groups, illegally armed, began to be called "paramilitary" by guerrillas. Their mission would be to eradicate any issue related somehow with subversive groups. The influence of several factors in the late

1970s and early 1980s, however, gradually caused the self-defense groups to shift tactics away from defense and toward preemptive attacks against the guerrilla groups, eventually earning them the sobriquet "death squads".

The presence of large narcotraffick organizations in those regions would facilitate largely the development of those private groups that assumed by themselves the maintenance or the re-establishment of their particular conception of public order. Many paramilitary groups, especially those in areas under the influence of narcotraffickers, would developed in the next years a varied armed organizations to defend the drug dealers interests. If it is true that in the past there was an alliance for cooperation between narcotraffickers and guerrillas, the former were subject to extortion by the latter which produced and armed confrontation between both criminal organizations. This situation brought serious consequences for the maintenance of the public order in those regions they shared, particularly in Middle Magdalena and Antioquian Urabá.<sup>4</sup>

### **3. Death Squads' Targets and Tactics**

The drug industry is central to the self-defense units' transformation into *death squads*. Leaflets dropped at a Cali soccer match in 1981 heralded the transition from self-defense from guerrilla attacks to death squads attacks against the rebels. The group making the announcement was MAS, or *Muerte a Secuestradores* (Death to Kidnappers), which had the avowed intent to put an end to kidnapping and extortion of cartel members and associates by guerrillas. Over the next three months, MAS claimed more than 100 assassinations in retribution for M-19's kidnapping of the sister of a cartel member. She was released unharmed in February 1982.

According to the Minister of Justice, in 1988 there were some 140 death squads operating in the country. During this time, Colombia was once again experiencing what Paul Oquist, speaking of *la violencia*, called a partial "breakdown of the state"<sup>5</sup>. Simply put, this breakdown meant that with a high probability of impunity, individuals or groups could pursue their goals (land, money, justice, and so on) through violence. In reference to this matter, Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline state:

“There simply was little likelihood that the Colombian law enforcement system would catch criminals or that the courts system would try them. The lack of public order worsened during the Barco years, when homicide became the major cause of death. While violence was coming from drug dealers, guerrilla groups, and death squads, the majority of the crime was unrelated to any of those groups. Colombia seemed to close observers to be in the “abyss”, “screwed”, or “at the edge of chaos.”<sup>6</sup>

The confrontation between guerrillas and narcotraffickers impacted the armed conflict because the parties involved looked for a greater capability to produce human and economic damage, by the clandestine acquisition of sophisticated weapons, communication systems, and transportation. The phenomenon commonly known as “paramilitarism” brought the “anarchyization” of the conflict as well. If at the beginning its purpose was the elimination of the guerrillas and their support networks, little by little it aimed against everyone that opposed to narcotraffick such as journalists, priests, members of the armed forces, judges, and government officials, among others. Table 4.1 shows the distribution of the attacks among levels of the government for the drug industry and the death squads before the Gaviria’s negotiation with the traffickers.<sup>7</sup> With the creation of the National Police Elite Corps in 1988, and through joint operations with DAS and the Army, the government disarticulated those criminal groups.

| Level of Target | Drug Traffickers | Death Squads |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| National        | 83 %             | 3 %          |
| Departmental    | --               | 10 %         |
| Local           | 17%              | 87 %         |
| Total           | 100%             | 100%         |

\* Source: Kevin J. Riley. p.23

**Table 4.1 Assassinations Among Levels of Government**

The violence has been correctly perceived as an attack on the political structure of Colombia. But the violence is also an attack on ordinary people. Policemen, security officers, union activists, and people with sympathies for the political left all died in great numbers

throughout the latter half of the 1980s. The death squads are by far the most important factor behind the rise in civilian murders. They are responsible for more than 90 percent of the murders of civilians. Civilians' share in the total of death squads murders climbed from less than 5 percent of the total in 1986, and less than 15 percent in 1987, to around 60 percent for 1990 and 1991. Each year, approximately 85 percent of the civilian deaths occurred in massacres. The number of massacres (more than five people assassinated in one action) moved upward during the period as they became a more organized and institutionalized force. The number of massacres fell only in 1989, the year in which legal and law enforcement attention was briefly focused on death squads. Figure 4. 1 shows this criminal behavior.

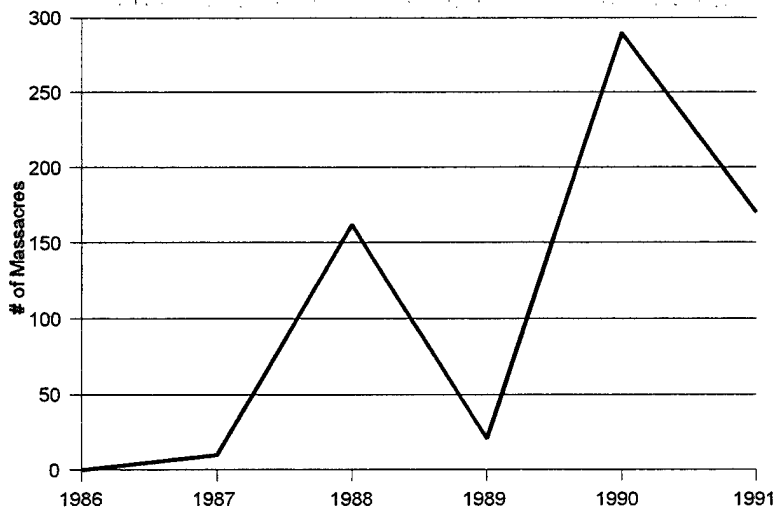


**Figure 4. 1 Death Squad's Massacres**

In contrast to death squads, the drug lords were responsible for only about 6 percent of the civilian death total. Yet here again, there has been a significant change in tactics. Prior to 1989 the drug industry rarely killed civilians because the latter were for the trafficker like a shield against government pressure. The change in tactics was the way to terrify the public into pressuring political leaders to support drug industry objectives.

#### 4. Terrorism

We define terrorism as the criminal activities set directed to obtain not an economic benefit, but to demonstrate the capability of inflicting a considerable social damage in case of not giving up to the criminals' demands. According to Martha Crenshaw, "terrorism against the state is a specialized form of organized political violence. Terrorist act result from decisions made by individuals who are members of identifiable organizations with distinctive characteristics."<sup>8</sup>

In the last decade (1987-1997) Colombia has suffered a double kind of terrorism: insurgent-terrorism, and narco-terrorism. The latter arose as the answer of drug dealers to government's offensive to eradicate this criminal phenomenon. Its initial objective was to force society to accept living together with business and negotiations of the narcotraffick. The main terrorist tactic was the selective assassination of everyone who spoke or operated against narcotraffick interests.

The social phenomenon of *sicarios* (hired assassins) appeared and it was just as alarming as any other form of violence. They are gunmen at the service of the highest bidder. They have no loyalty or adherence to any of the organized groups. They were the material authors of the murders of ministers, an attorney general, policemen, military, journalists, judges, politicians, and human rights defenders.

In contrast, death squads murders are concentrated at the local and departmental levels. Unlike the drug lords, the death squads less frequently attack security personnel, judges and legislators, and more frequently attack local officials such as mayors, union heads, and party leaders. *Union Patriótica* members were repeatedly targeted for assassination and have claimed to have lost more than 2,000 party members since the party formed in the mid 1980s.

Years later and facing the government and society's pressure, narcoterrorism modified its objective: to force the government to derogate the extradition treaty with the United States. They mixed the selective murder with the use of explosives in populated urban areas to cause massive deaths. The target were common citizens totally unrelated to governmental, judicial, or military business. The damages affected mainly private property. But the drug lords also wanted to initiate talks with the government in the same conditions

as the guerrilla groups. They were looking for negotiation, pardon, and reinsertion. To obtain this they appeal to a third terrorist tactics: kidnapping relatives of government's high officials with influence over their decisions. Appendix F shows the behavior of terrorism from 1987 until 1996. The valley or decreasing in 1990 was due to the expectations of the traffickers about the new government's offers, which included a guarantee against extradition in exchange for a confession of all crimes.

The government never seriously considered a negotiation process with the drug barons. These barons had to take the only possible way: to surrender to be prosecuted by Colombian justice, avoiding their extradition to the United States. Some went to jail, but others died fighting against the government. Neutralization of narcoterrorism left a by-product: many criminals that used to receive high pay, when realized that they were alone, without leaders, without organization, began by themselves to commit crimes that required good training and skills like bank robbery and kidnapping.

The insurgent-terrorism is used by the guerrilla groups that conform the CGSB as a means or negotiation tactics within their strategy of revolutionary war against the state. Or the government accept their demands or they start a terrorist campaign against the infrastructure and the economy. As the state cannot agree with everything they ask for, then guerrilla's answer has been a series of terrorist acts which have made difficult government's efforts to negotiate peace.

During Barco's administration (1986-1990) Colombia faced two wars: one against guerrilla groups and the other against narcotraffick (see Table 4.2).

| RESPONSIBLE                                            | 1988           | 1989           | 1990           | 1991            | TOTAL           |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Guerrilla Groups (%)                                   | 866<br>(65.6)  | 612<br>(40.3)  | 690<br>(47.6)  | 1,341<br>(62.5) | 3,509<br>(54.6) |
| Narcotraffick, Private Justice and Organized crime (%) | 454<br>(34.4)  | 907<br>(59.7)  | 760<br>(52.4)  | 800<br>(37.4)   | 2,921<br>(45.4) |
| TOTAL (%)                                              | 1,320<br>(100) | 1,519<br>(100) | 1,450<br>(100) | 2,141<br>(100)  | 6,430<br>(100)  |

Source: Peace Advisor Office. In García Durán's *Procesos de Paz*, p. 261

**Table 4. 2 Colombia: Two Wars (1988-1991) Armed Actions**

In 1989 and 1990 drug cartels were the main agents of violence, above guerrilla actions. Patriotic Union (UP) members were killed by rightist groups (*paramilitary*) in retaliation for guerrilla attacks. Though most of these crimes were committed by common citizens, guerrillas blamed the army as responsible for them. However, this never was an institutionalized or official policy of the armed forces or the government, but isolated cases that were punished by the army itself through the standard procedure of court-martials.<sup>9</sup> The possible connection between elements of the police and the armed forces with those bands is not a matter to be treated lightly, nor can be easily proven. For a variety of reasons, however, the public has been anxious about the matter, especially for the guerrilla groups accusations. Therefore, it behooves the government to make every effort to clarify the situation if it wants to avoid the definitive failure of the pacification process. It would have incalculable consequences for the generalization of a dirty war.

Political assassinations continued during Barco's administration. Three presidential candidates were killed: Liberal Luis Carlos Galán, ADM-19 Carlos Pizarro, who had participated in the peace process, and UP's Bernardo Jaramillo. In each case the murderer was a *sicario* under narcotraffickers' orders. On the other hand, the growth of guerrilla squads consolidated. The income from criminal activities allowed them to improve their military equipment and to increase the number of combat units. In operational terms, ELN began to make terrorist acts against national economy in the oil sector. This turning in tactical procedures put it in thresholds of terrorism. (See Appendix F).

## **5. From Dialogue Intent to Frontal War**

Gaviria's government (1990-1994) began with many projects for the guerrilla groups and for the narcotraffickers. He convoked the National Constituent Assembly (*Asamblea Nacional Constituyente* or ANC), which would be an argument against the armed struggle. He invited the belligerent guerrilla groups to negotiate and offered concessions such as the ratification of Geneva Protocols I and II, and accepting an international supervision of the peace process. The CGSB answered with an open letter to public opinion where they threatened with the initiation of a violent political stage, if the National Constituent Assembly is convoked without "consulting" the guerrilla movement. Moreover, they conditioned their participation in the negotiation process to their participation in the ANC.

Gaviria also began negotiations with Medellín cartel's narcotraffickers, which allowed reduction of the most significant violent actions. Political assassinations reduced slightly, but fighting against guerrillas increased, in spite of the negotiations with the four groups M-19, EPL, PRT, and MQL. The proposals did not mean suspension of military operations. Armed forces had respected the concentration sites for those groups in the peace process, but simultaneously had developed operations against the FARC and ELN. The army increased its efficiency mainly through the two Mobile Brigades, whose operational results included more dead guerrillas and the siege of some guerrilla squads in the countryside.

The CGSB stroke back army operations by attacking infrastructure and economy, especially after the army raid against *Casa Verde* (Green House) on 09 December 1989. The increment of war actions in 1991 was notorious, exceeding 1988 top figures. In 1992, the average guerrilla actions would be 100 a month. (See Figure 4.2).

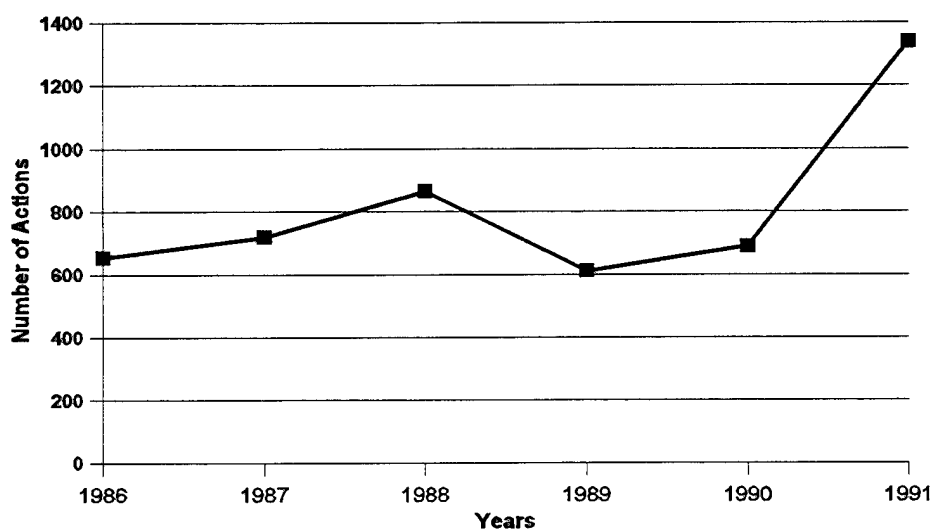


**Figure 4.2 Guerrilla Actions**

In January 1990, the FARC made public some documents that reflected the ambiguity of their political position. In one document they proposed that the president call people on a plebiscite to convoke a National Constituent Assembly for the preparation of a new Constitution. In another document which filtered to public opinion, the FARC announced a plan called "Bolivarian Campaign for a new Colombia" where they established

FARC's preparation for a total offensive to seize power in 1997.

Between January and August 1990, the FARC had maintained a low operational level when compared with the ELN (an average of 14.6 actions per month). This situation changed in September when they increased to 25 actions per month, until November. Finally, guerrilla military operations increased in December, after the Casa Verde raid, up to 56 war actions. ELN, on the contrary, was more active year along, especially in the first semester, with an average of 34 actions per month; during the second semester reduced to 26.6 actions per month, having December the least number of operations. In the case of ELN its intense military operating war related to electoral process. In fact, February, March, and May were the months with the largest number of war actions. The increment once Gaviria took office in August 1990 was due to the pressure both guerrilla groups exercised to be accepted in the ANC.

November 1990 was the starting point for the intensification of guerrilla actions, as the expression of its tactics of combining all the "means of struggle". As guerrilla movement was ousted from democratic fight, it increased armed struggle as a way of gaining presence at national level, and of making government feel its military capability. The CGSB, they said, was not a defeated guerrilla, ready to negotiate under any condition, as M-19 did previously, and other groups were doing at that time. On November 10, guerrilla attacked the advanced headquarters of an infantry battalion and assassinated its commander, a lieutenant colonel, and other commissioned officer, NCOs, and soldiers. Some other were taken prisoners. On the next day, in the south of the country, they perpetrated the most cruel and barbarian action by killing nine children while traveling in a bus. Reaction of the media, the citizenry and the government was immediate. The Guerrillas looked like assassins. The war they were waging never would be won by killing innocent people. Government stopped direct negotiations and conditioned any dialogue to the liberation of the civilian and military kidnaped by the guerrilla, and to the unilateral cease-fire.

With the always same discourse, guerrilla spokespersons blamed the government for the deteriorated order public situation; they blamed also armed forces of conducting aggressive operations against peasants in different areas nationwide. Some days later, the CGSB insisted in a bilateral truce for an indefinite time. They said that disagreements about

the kind of truce to be adopted to initiate the talks have frustrated the dialogue possibilities. The Minister of Government (currently Minister of the Interior) reminded guerrilla groups that the due date for those interested in participating in the ANC was close. The CGSB leaders said that they wanted to have serious talks with those members of the Assembly who would be elected on 9 December 1990.

The same day of the elections, the army launched a great offensive against *Casa Verde*, the guerrilla headquarters. The government established in this way that the constitutional reforms would be initiated with the guerrilla groups that turned over their weapons and quit fighting. Those who continued on arms would be reduced by force. The government wanted to beat FARC leadership to consolidate by force the strike that by the facts (*de facto*) guerrilla received in its legitimacy. Next day guerrillas manifested publicly that they understood that the government had canceled the possibilities of a negotiated solution, and that it would be responsible for that. They, of course, announced the begin of a war with unpredictable consequences.

From then until mid January 1991, the CGSB carried out 84 criminal acts in 18 departments, where 64 members of the armed forces and 26 civilians were killed by the rebels; they caused large damages to national energetic and communications infrastructure. The national petroleum company, or ECOPETROL, valued its losses during January in \$130 million because of insurgent-terrorism. During the year tactics of insurgent terrorism consisted of criminal acts against petroleum industry, --especially destruction of pipelines and installations--, crude oil spilling with its sequel of exports reduction, ecological damages against electric, transportation, and communications sectors.

In May they seized Venezuelan embassy in Bogotá to pressure the government to initiate a direct dialogue. During the Caracas talks on 3 June the CGSB representatives warned that the purpose of the negotiation was not guerrillas' demobilization in exchange of political concessions, but the search of solutions to Colombian problems. In other words, they spoke "on behalf of" the people. But who gave them this right? Nobody. In July, while the nation celebrated the promulgation of the new Constitution, the CGSB launched a terrorist offensive that destroyed electric towers, bridges, gasoline and oil pipelines, and aero-navigation networks. Seven departments in the Caribbean coast suffered energy ration,

about 90,000 families were left without natural gas, and big regions in the Eastern plains were isolated from the rest of the country for the blowing of bridges. One runway in Cartagena airport was made useless by a bomb.

The citizens in most of departments made popular demonstrations against the guerrilla's terrorist actions. In early August, Manuel Marulanda a.k.a. *Tirofijo (Sure-Shot)*, chief of the FARC, sent to Colombian Communist Party a videotape where he said: "Comrades, we are close to the seizure of power. Guerrilla is still valid, and by using our weapons we will take power."<sup>10</sup> These declarations were in the opposite direction to the Caracas talks and negotiation process. In September, the CGSB attacked the escorts of the president of the Congress and killed seven persons in his party. In the following months they kidnaped former ministers and politicians,<sup>11</sup> blew several financial institutions allegedly in favor of economic openness. Appendix F show the tendency of kidnapping between 1976 and 1992. Appendix G presents statistics about Colombian guerrillas' actions.

Government set 15 March as the due date for the demobilized groups participated in the ANC. The CGSB understood this legitimacies game, and therefore, increased its war actions in the eve of the inauguration of the Assembly. On 5 February 1991, they conducted about 50 simultaneous actions nationwide, with the neat objective of sabotaging the legislative corps. Facing this situation, civil society began to pressure to find a negotiated solution with the rebels. There was a rising tendency in terrorism. From 1987 to 1990 it was mainly Narcoterrorism; in 1991 and 1992 it was predominant insurgent.

In 1992 there were 1104 cases of terrorism, which represented an increment of 19.22 percent when compared with the 926 cases in 1991. During the two periods the operational characteristics are the same, and the groups involved are organized crime and guerrilla groups. Therefore, the most affected areas were those where guerrilla, private justice groups, and narcotraffickers were present and conducted operations.

## **6. National Strategy against Violence**

On 19 May 1991, the government made public its strategy to face armed violence, on the basis of three main purposes and five very broad policies. *The purposes* were: 1) to guarantee government's armed institutions the monopoly of the use of force; 2) to recover the state's capability to administrate justice through the investigation and punishment of

crimes; 3) and, to broaden nationwide the institutional presence of the government.

The general purpose of this presidential initiative was to invalidate political violence, especially armed struggle. The plan had objectives covering different areas: social, political, economic, judicial, and military. Somehow, it intended to resolve some problems government recognized as its duty and not the result of a negotiation with insurgent groups.

With the annihilation of the Medellín and Cali cartels, terrorism reduced considerably in the big cities. However, it is not an overcome problem because insurgent "urban militia" have taken the place. In fact, "conflict urbanization" has been one of the main objectives of the insurgents, and therefore, this kind of terrorism is not going to disappeared in the short-term. In 1994, terrorism cases increased in 84.19% compared with the previous year (1352 cases in 1994 versus 734 cases in 1993). Some bomb-cars in Bucaramanga and Cúcuta in March 1997 were a work of ELN's urban militia, trying to create confusion in the citizenry.

The FARC and ELN have continued strengthening their influence over local authorities, at municipal level. Killing and resignation of mayors have been two modes guerrilla groups threaten population in the countryside, especially in those very far areas with no presence of public force. Through these methods guerrillas try to demonstrate, in violent way, the validity of the armed struggle. In the last three years (1994-1997) government has lost its legitimacy because of the well known "*Process 8,000*" that linked narcotraffick financial support to Ernesto Samper's presidential campaign. All this has benefited the position of guerrilla groups about corruption in politics, and made insurgent leaders declared that they were not going to negotiate with the incumbent government. Thus, the possibility for peace in Colombia is, at least on the guerrilla side, closed until 07 August 1998 when the new president will take office.

## **B. EL SALVADOR**

The intensity of the conflict in El Salvador cannot be described by just looking at numbers. The human and economic loses were significant, but the conflict also attacked and damaged the deep roots of society, its values, its faith. However, the Salvadoran people were never brought to theirs knees and they not only said no to communism but also to any kind of illegitimate repression.

The conflict in El Salvador needs to be seen from the social and economical perspectives, because their impact was decisive to shape the negotiation process and the future of the republic. We will present these perspectives using two frames: the escalation of the violence and the social-economical impact upon Salvadoran society.

### **1. The Escalation of Violence**

El Salvador death and injury rate climbed to over 36,000 people by 1982, and by 1992, almost 100,000 people had lost their lives. The war precipitated a variety of forms of violence which are important in understanding the effect of the protracted conflict<sup>12</sup>. One type of violence, in the one generated directly by insurgency and counter-insurgency-operations, when the government troops clash against guerrillas. The purpose of these operations is to win ground, control the populace, and eventually win the war. When guerrillas clashed with troops, many people died, both, intentionally and accidentally.

Terrorism was a second and more widespread type of violence used by the left wing and right wing extremists. Terrorism was used as a tactic for killing trained personnel of the opposite side and for forcing the adversary into submission. The FMLN used terrorism to force excesses on the incumbent government to erode their public support. In El Salvador a death threat from the guerrilla was enough to make people flee. This type of violence also was intended to paralyze the economy. The FMLN, blew up electrical power grids and bridges, destroyed crops, burned buses, blocked highways, ambushed railroad cars and bombed buildings. Salvadoran guerrillas also used terrorism to frighten away foreign capital and businesses, to encourage flight of money from the nation's economy, to cast an aura of fear over soldiers and security forces, to persuade villagers into supporting revolution, and to encourage defection from the armed forces.

A third kind of violence is the crime of opportunity, which accompanies all unstable situations. Just as looting inevitably follows natural disasters; theft, kidnaping, and holdups had followed the political chaos in El Salvador. Personal and impulsive crimes were easily committed when large quantities of guns are accessible, and law enforcement is almost nonexistent. The existence of this type of violence is what makes very difficult to keep an accurate record of specific terrorist activity.

In El Salvador the areas of operation of the FMLN and the armed forces were superposed and the whole country was witnessing combat and destruction, especially in the last years of the conflict. As we stated in Chapter III, the guerrillas in El Salvador presented a united front after 1980. They developed a unified military strategy considering the whole territory as the theater of war. The military strategy of the armed forces and FMLN changed over time and every phase developed different degree of military intensity, however the society as a whole was kept under continuous and increasing pressure and terror.

Before the violence escalated to take the dimensions of a civil war, there was a period of systematic repression from the old guard of the government, which was trying to suppress a communist revolution. Later the armed forces, with the aid and the pressure of the U.S. government evolved into a professional counterinsurgency force holding democratic principles.

The FMLN developed its own strategy over a period of twelve years of armed conflict, and not only did it apply the lessons of such conflicts as Vietnam, Angola, Rhodesia, and others, but also provided with modern weaponry from individual rifles to ground-to-air missiles. It developed a sophisticated communication net and secrets codes that gave it a greater command and control ability. This is also allowed it to develop an efficient logistical apparatus, which sustained the organizations throughout the course of the war.<sup>13</sup> The military strategy of Prolonged Popular War went through important changes, a product of the actions of the armed forces.

We have divided the conflict in four phases or periods. These phases are directly tied to the change in the military strategy. Death Squads terrorism, war of movement, war of attrition and peace negotiations.

*a. Death Squad Terrorism and Organization of the FMLN, (1970-1980)*

After the military coup of 1979, the military-dominated junta saw elections and political and economic reforms as the key to legitimate government but it was either unwilling or unable to call a halt to the repressive measures that were being employed to staunch the war.<sup>14</sup> The efforts of these reform-minded officers to demand fundamental distribution of political and economical power, were countered by members of the oligarchy

and more conservative officers who, on the back of the government, initiated a campaign of terror and assassination against activists of the reform movement. Hundreds of corpses turned up every month. These killings were charged to the government security forces and paramilitary death squads. According to Linda Robinson, the coup by reformist officers had convinced many in the wealthy class that the military had abandoned them as the protectors of their privileges, so they looked elsewhere for protection. Landowner, she says, funded these death squads to fight the expropriation of their lands, which had been mandated by the 1979 coup-makers.

The Maximiliano Hernández Martínez Anti-Communist Brigade (named after the general who led the *matanza* in 1932) and other such groups claimed the responsibility for many of the deaths, which peaked at about eight hundred a month in the early 1980s. This group claimed to have executed five leaders of the FDR in November 1980 and warned "the priests who have an affinity for the terrorist Marxist bands that they will have the same fate if they insist in their sermons on poisoning the minds of Salvadorean youth".<sup>15</sup>

The levels of abuse correlated closely with the rise and fall of the war's intensity. In 1980 and 1981, the threat was insurrection, with the cities as the main battle field. The Right's reaction resulted in the deaths of a majority of the nearly ten thousand who died in 1980.

The National University, which is autonomous by law, was occupied by the National Guard in 1980 and remained closed until 22 May 1984. During 1983, three professors were killed and twenty students were captured or disappeared.<sup>16</sup> This had a strong impact on the intellectual national and international community which accused the government of violating the right to free press and expression.

The operative model in this period was guerilla warfare that basically consisted of the means by which to organize the insurgent structure. Every combat action was oriented toward the organization of the military cadre and the support infrastructure

#### ***b. War of Movement: Conventional Tactics (1980-1984)***

During this period, the war in El Salvador reached its operational peak. In January 1981 the newly united guerrilla front, the FMLN, launched a military "final offensive" designed to trigger a popular insurrection to overthrow the conservative regime.

The main cities of the country came under attack, but Salvadoran Armed Forces was able to beat back the offensive, and the lack of popular support was the main factor of failure. After this failure, the FMLN concentrated in building its guerrilla armies and securing sanctuary. When the left next attempted national mobilization (combined with significant military actions) in 1983 and 1984, its adherents again met with widespread repression. Thus far from being unpredictable or continuous, right-wing abuses escalated only when the threat of insurrection arose.<sup>17</sup>

The operative model in these period was the war of movement. This model was based on concepts of regular warfare. During this time, the military side of the insurgent organization was made up of platoons, columns or detachments, battalions, and brigades. The strategy of the FMLN during this time was to liberate territory through what it called decisive battles, where the military side of equation predominated, particularly in rural areas of the nation. However, at the same time, acts of terrorism in urban areas zones also increased. All the military effort was aimed at liberating territory to support a diplomatic effort garner support and international recognition for itself as a legitimate belligerent. The units which faced each other were large size. At the same time, the Salvadoran armed forces reached their peak in terms of growth and professional development.<sup>18</sup> The armed forces were able to neutralize the brigade and battalion size elements of the FMLN.

The terrorism continued to punish Salvadoran society, the government repression was also considerable, however some changes took place especially because of international pressures. According to the data presented to the University's Center of Information of the *Universidad Centroamericana* (Central American University), located in San Salvador, for 1983 and the first months of 1984, in comparison with 1982, there were quantitative changes.<sup>19</sup> (See Table 4.3)

| YEAR             | KILLED | KIDNAPPED/DISAPPEARED |
|------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| 1982             | 4,419  | 1,045                 |
| 1983             | 2,375  | 1,336                 |
| 1984 (to 31 May) | 496    | 322                   |

**Table 4.3 Victims of the Left and Right Extremists**

The government and the FMLN, blamed each other for these victims. One way or the other, the Salvadoran society was victimized by the high levels of political violence.

During this period the economic sector of the society suffered considerable attacks from the FMLN. This situation affected indirectly the general population. This effects were rapidly translated into hunger, poverty, unemployment and more general unrest. During the early 1980s, for example, the economic production declined dramatically. The growth rates achieved between 1984 and 1988, could not even equal the level of economic activities experimented in the 1970s, in despite of the massive aid coming from friendly countries. In the agriculture sector, the main resource income of the country Coffee and Cotton suffered important losses. In 1984 the coffee harvest saw a 35 percent decline in production. The main coffee grower association said there was U.S. \$360 million less for taxes and salaries, and a 49 percent reduction from the previous year. The cotton harvest declined by 34 percent.<sup>20</sup> In August 1983, the Planning Minister informed the Assembly that the cost of the damage from the armed struggle had surpassed U.S. \$597 million. The Chamber of Commerce issued a report recounting the social losses due to violence between 1979 and 1983<sup>21</sup> as shown in Table 4.4.

| DAMAGE                        | AMOUNT      |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Schools closed                | 1,950       |
| -Students affected            | 10,000      |
| -Teachers affected            | 1,500       |
| Decline of due paying workers | 43,374      |
| Displaced persons             | 250,000     |
| Buses destroyed               | 1,250 (35%) |
| Railroad track damaged        | 66%         |
| Bridges destroyed             | over 75     |
| High tension towers           | 32          |

Source: "Costos Sociales" *Procesos* review 135, San Salvador, UNSA Press, Dec 1983. p. 34

**Table 4.4 Damage Caused by FMLN's Terrorist Actions (1979-1983)**

The urban insurrection was quelled in 1984, and war moved to the countryside as rebels found refuge in the northern and eastern parts of the country. This year, President José Napoleón Duarte took office, the military with the aid of the United States had achieved a high degree of professionalism and the military leadership was committed to respect human rights and democratic values. However, many sectors of Salvadoran society still resented the past violence it had witnessed and suffered from the old military tendency.

*c. War of Attrition (1985-1989)*

After the armed forces neutralized the large units of the FMLN, the guerrilla rethought its war plan within Prolonged Popular War and basically adopted attrition warfare. The main targets of this strategy were the army and the most important national economic zones. Attrition warfare consisted largely of mine warfare in which the massive use of explosives caused an unprecedented development of homemade weaponry, which was within the means of any guerrilla and militia unit. These weapons became a forces multiplier in both the rural and the urban areas.

To develop this operational change, the FMLN implemented what it called the "Strategic Dispersion", with the objective of diminishing the great number of casualties the armed forces had been inflicting. Battalions and brigades dispersed into platoon-size units in the areas of the greatest guerrilla persistence. During this time, peace talks were more frequent, but were used as a diversionary tactic to allow the rebuilding and rearming of the guerrillas with weapons that caused even greater escalation. Such was the case with the acquisition of ground-to-air SA-7 and SA-14 missiles, weapons that curbed the use of the Salvadoran air forces and army mobility. At the end of this period, the FMLN launched the long-awaited Strategy Counter-Offensive, "Until the limit," with the objective of winning a significant victory. However, this offensive was contained by the ability of the armed forces, but especially because of the lack of popular support.<sup>22</sup>

In 1985, the new air tactics developed by the air force encouraged a shift in guerrilla's tactics, such as movement into urban areas and an increased resort to kidnapping.<sup>23</sup> Militarily, the move to the cities meant creating urban organizations that could attack soldiers (including U.S. personnel), officials and installations. This kind of combat reduced the effectiveness of air warfare but, it was likely to escalate the intensity of violence

and counter violence in the major cities.<sup>24</sup>

The urban activities of the FMLN fell into three categories: attacks by urban terrorists on military targets, attacks on high profile civilians, and non-violent strikes and other protests. We offer just some of the main terrorist actions to illustrate the FMLN activity during this period.

In June 1985, guerrillas raided an outdoor café, in the capital, killing four marines from the U.S. Embassy, two American businessmen and seven Latin American civilians. The most dramatic kidnapping was of President Duarte's daughter in September 1985. The insurgent exchanged the president's daughter and twenty three kidnapped Christian Democratic mayors for rebel prisoners-including a number of important leaders-that had been captured by the military.<sup>25</sup> The café raid followed a number of other guerrilla's attacks including one on a prison near the capital in which guerrillas freed scores of people, many of them political prisoners.

In 1989 the FMLN increased its political warfare. The guerrilla launched widespread terrorism against the electorate in the 1989 presidential election. In an attempt to destabilize the government, the FMLN assassinated 8 mayors in 1988 and sent word to the others that the same thing could happen to them if they remain in office. By early March 1989, 131 out of 262 mayors had resigned, leaving 50 percent of the Salvadoran cities and towns without municipal chiefs. The FMLN has also targeted justices of the peace for the same treatment.<sup>26</sup>

Beginning in November 1988, the FMLN launched terrorist attacks (mostly bombings), in San Salvador, against the headquarters of the National Guard, the Armed Forces Joint Staff, the Treasury Police, The National Police, the Navy Command, and the Presidential House. During this period the FMLN forces also attacked guard posts and garrisons around the country. Most of the attacks caused minimal damage and few casualties, although thirty five people- mostly civilians were wounded in the attack to the Joint Staff installations.

In May 1989, after an attack on a bus in which eight civilians were killed, the FMLN issued an apology but also warned civilians to stay clear of military and security facilities. While not military successes, these attacks signaled an escalation in the war and

raised the level of tension among the populace. The FMLN also stepped up its assaults on high profile civilians associated with the government or conservative circles.

In January 1989, the house of former Defense Minister Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova's mother was attacked. Shortly thereafter, on February 16, a former top FMLN commander, "Miguel Castellanos" (his real name was Napoleón Romero García) who had defected from the FPL four years earlier, was killed.

On March 15, Francisco Peccorini Letona,<sup>27</sup> a conservative Jesuit intellectual, was murdered. The editorial Director of the conservative journal *Análisis* Carlos Ernesto Mendoza, lost his arm in April 5 bomb attack on his house while he was having lunch with his family. On April 12, the Attorney General Roberto García Alvarado was killed by a sophisticated explosive affixed to the roof of his car directly above him. In the same month, the home of Vice President and Interior Minister Francisco Merino, was also bombed. Merino was in the United States at the time, but a child in the house was wounded.

Most of the killings were not widely reported in the United States. But on June 9, 1989, Antonio Rodríguez Porth, the cabinet-ranked minister of the presidency and top intellectual of ARENA (the party in government), was machine-gunned, along with his bodyguard. The killing did receive the attention of the media, and some U.S. congressman began to focus on the pattern of assassinations in El Salvador, which suggested that there was a campaign to strike at the brain of the Right.<sup>28</sup>

On June 30, the head of the Institute of International Relations, ARENA party leader Edgar Chacón, was shot while driving in San Salvador with his wife. On July 19, another director of Chacón's Institute was shot and wounded. Col. Robert Armando Rivera, the Chief of the Fire Department, was assassinated on June 26. The FMLN said that Rivera qualified as a military target since the former head of the National Military Academy was performing covert intelligence functions.

Almost six months after the ARENA Government took office--on November 11, 1989-- the FMLN launched a massive offensive that clearly had been planned well in advance. The guerrillas took over many neighborhoods of the capital and other major cities, obligating the government forces to engage in block-by-block fighting. As the scope of the offensive became apparent, the government restarted the use of massive but selective forces.

However the FMLN hid behind the populace causing hundreds of civilian casualties. The guerrilla withdrew after about a week, only to reappear in the wealthy neighborhood of San Salvador, as it to make the high class to feel closely the effects of the war.

By launching those generalized offensives in the main cities and conducting the assassinations of political figures. The rebels had tried to demonstrate their strength, but they also realized lack of support for a generalized insurrection. As many as one thousand people died and thousands more were wounded. The assassination of prominent conservatives resumed with the murder of former Supreme Court President Francisco José Guerrero on November 28. The guerrilla offensive did not bring the government to its knees as expected by the FMLN but it did demonstrate that, while both sides could continue inflicting damage, neither could win the war by the military means.<sup>29</sup>

#### *d. Peace Negotiations, 1990-1992*

This period was characterized by the search for a settlement to finally end the conflict. This was motivated by lack of popular support and because of the effects of the fall of the communist model took away the ideological foundation of the Salvadoran revolutionary movement. During this time period the FMLN continued its military actions using rapid concentration to attack an isolated target, and immediate dispersion after the action to avoid the army reaction. This period was also characterized by the increase in sabotage of the national economy and the illegal occupation of property, and an increase in kidnapping and other terrorist acts. Despite all of the FMLN's strategic adjustments, it was never able to carry out its dream of a violent revolutionary triumph and total control of the state.

### **2. The Social and Economical Impact**

Besides the cost in lives and injuries, the conflict was responsible for the deepening of the problems of poverty, unemployment and the impossibility to fulfill basic needs of the population. According to the data offered by the Salvadoran Ministry of Planning, at the beginning of the 90s, two third of the Salvadoran population, around 3.5 millions were poor, and about a third of those, about 1.5 millions lived in conditions of extreme poverty.

The pattern of social behavior had also suffered deviations due to the armed violence. The disintegration of the Salvadoran families is one of the main effects of the conflict, with

its multiples social and educational consequences. Another phenomenon was the external and internal migrations of families which abandoned their original homes, mostly children and housewives, trying to run away from violence.

The economy crisis reached its deepest crisis in 1988. Analysts believed that a catastrophic collapse was imminent if a process of stabilization did not begin immediately, overall peace was an urgent necessity if the economy was to be recovered in a short term and a long term development was to be possible. Due to the conflict and the consequent reduction of the levels of investment, the labor market was very limited to absorb the increase in the labor supply, especially in the urban areas. This provoked an unprecedented increase in the informal economical activities, increasing the levels of underemployment. The conflict struck directly the level of production of goods and services, and also the normal development of the activities of the society, in general. This was due not just to the destruction of the physical, productive and social, infrastructure; but also by the of unstable climate generated, which limited the savings, the levels of investment and consequently, the capacity of generating employment and production. The damage caused to the infrastructure during the period 1980-1990, is estimated a over U.S. \$1.5 billion. (See Table 4.5)

Another social impact was the degradation of the value system, because of the failure of the church to remain out of the conflict. The Salvadoran society has had a Catholic tradition, this was the main source of ethical strength. During the conflict, this particular characteristic of their value system weakened very intensely. The Church and religious persons in general were supposed to offer spiritual hope. Far from this they turned into instrument to wage the war.

In El Salvador, as in the rest of Latin America, the Roman Catholic Church has always played a significant role in politics. Father Jon Sobrino, a Jesuit priest affiliated with the Jesuit University in El Salvador, wrote a fascinating piece called "Death and hope for Life". In it, he indirectly argues for the legitimation of insurgency, the prolonged struggle, and the war of liberation by elements of the Catholic Church. This was an important factor in the guerrilla strategy of prolonged conflict because it gave moral sanction to the process. Moreover, the world had paid little attention to El Salvador until three momentous events occurred: the killing of San Salvador's Archbishop Oscar A. Romero on 24 march 1980, the

murder of four American church women on 3 December 1980, and the killing of several Jesuit priests and two lay women at Jesuit University in November 1989.<sup>30</sup>

| SECTOR               | DIRECT COSTS   | INDIRECT COSTS   | TOTAL COSTS      | RECONSTRUCTION COSTS |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Electric Energy      | 63.7           | 191.113          | 254.813          | 310.590              |
| Telecommunications   | 84.768         | 242.269          | 327.037          | 340                  |
| Water supply         | 5.768          | 351.910          | 357.891          | 375                  |
| Railroad tracks      | 25.270         | 66.393           | 91.663           | 77                   |
| Bridges and roads    | 65.364         | 233.342          | 298.706          | 285                  |
| Airports             | -----          | 26.152           | 26.152           | 36                   |
| Seaports             | -----          | 26.554           | 26.554           | 26                   |
| Transportation       | 43.637         | 50.704           | 93.341           | 66                   |
| Education            | 2.125          | 8.9              | 11.025           | 12.5                 |
| Health               | .125           | 17.5             | 17.625           | 17.7                 |
| Municipal facilities | .25            | 1                | 1.250            | 1.250                |
| Housing              | 5              | 15               | 20               | 23                   |
| Agriculture          | 32.75          | 20               | 52.750           | 57.5                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>328.757</b> | <b>1,250.837</b> | <b>1,579.807</b> | <b>1,627.54</b>      |

Source: Ministry of Planning. El Salvador's Government

(Millions of U.S.\$)

**Table 4.5 Accumulated Cost of the Damages of the Armed Conflict**

Rafael Menjivar,<sup>31</sup> in his analysis of Salvadoran politics, sees the church as a tactical instrument in the Central American war. "The CIA," he observed, "counsels not to attack the church as an institution, but instead to establish a division between progressive and those who are not." In his view, "having identified communist priest who are betraying the evangelical message of Christ, the CIA would then be able to kill or persecute the clergy in the name of the Unification Church founded by the intent of winning the war against communism". Thus, religion came to be a moral sanction for the justification for prolonged struggle for both sides, the government as well as the guerrillas.<sup>32</sup> This was another element

that eroded the value system of the society. This damage can not be measured, but it undeniably, exists. At the end of the 90's it was clear for the armed forces and the FMLN that a military victory was not possible. However they felt threatened, not just in the battlefield, but in their homes. The battlefield indeed was found everywhere within the country.

The political and economic elites have experienced the intensity of the struggle, and of course the lower classes were tired of violence. They all realized that it was time to make concessions and saw the negotiated peace as the only alternative to survive and bring the country back on its feet. Even though there are still problems related to social injustice, the people of El Salvador decided to look for solutions in the democratic process instead of continuing with a fratricide war that far from improving the living conditions, was only offering more terror, destruction and fear.

### **C. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

The intensity of the conflicts in Colombia and El Salvador has to be analyzed from the perspective of the several groups in every society: the armed forces, the guerrilla movements, the political sectors, the economic sectors and the people in general. After all, some of these groups were the ones responsible for the violence generated, suffered from it, and pushed, supported or resisted the peace negotiations.

Before analyzing these groups, we need to consider some general factors affecting the development of the conflict, namely geography and population. These important factors, although not directly related with the intensity of the conflict, they contributed to shape the effects' magnitude of the war over the population.

Colombia has an area of approx. 1,138,914 Km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 33,424,000 for density of 29.3 h/km<sup>2</sup>. In its southern territory Colombia has large extensions of virgin jungle inhabited mainly by Indian tribes. El Salvador has an area of 21,040 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 5.5 million for a density of 256 h/km<sup>2</sup>. There are no jungles and no Indian tribes in El Salvador.

With an area about 54 times larger, with jungles and a population only 6 times bigger than El Salvador's, Colombia has more space and conditions for guerrilla forces to develop in isolated areas, thus allowing military operations to take place mainly in those

areas which are evidently more protective for the guerrilla groups. In despite of urban terrorism, most of the military operations are conducted in the jungle. The Colombian Army was small compared to El Salvador's during the conflict, in relation to the territory. The air mobility of Salvadoran armed forces was very much higher than Colombia's, considering the number of helicopters available, given that this is an strategic capability to conduct modern anti-guerrilla warfare. El Salvador had over 50 helicopters fully operational while Colombia had just about 25.

This relative isolation of the military action, has prevented in high degree the number of innocent victims among the populace. In El Salvador, most of the military actions were developed close to populated areas, besides the fact that the FMLN brought the war to the cities in an attempt to achieve a general insurrection and to pressure the government to make concessions.

Table 4.6 presents a summary of the main variables we have discussed. The numbers are estimated from the several sources consulted. Authors differed in the exact numbers, but overall, according to our experience, this figures are a fair representation of the two realities. Refer to appendix E for a detailed report on human casualties.

| <b>VARIABLES</b>          | <b>COLOMBIA</b>             | <b>EL SALVADOR</b>         |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Guerrillas' Offensives    | None                        | Two major offensives       |
| Location of the action    | Generally isolated          | Affected all the territory |
| Military casualties       | 10,000 (10 % of the forces) | 30,000 (49% of the forces) |
| Guerrilla casualties      | 18,000                      | 30,000                     |
| Civilian casualties       | 16,000                      | 60,000                     |
| Economic Impact           | High but not critical       | Close to collapse          |
| Social impact (displaced) | 150,000                     | 1.5 million                |
| Governability             | Acceptable                  | Very difficult             |

**Table 4.6 Comparative Perspective of the Conflicts in Colombia and El Salvador**

## **1. Violence from the Right's Extremists**

In El Salvador during the late 70s and early 80s, the society experienced high levels of violence from the left and right extremists. The old guard of the military and the some government officials, in an attempt to prevent general insurrection, punished the society with systematic and in some instances, brutal repression. This polarized the society and contributed to increase the levels of violence. Colombia has not developed this massive level of repression, as it happened under the military dictatorships of the Southern cone and Central America. The dirty war has functioned outside the executive, though the government's enemies blame it of tolerant. The massacres had been a retaliation form for the guerrillas or death squads, but unfortunately they have involved civilians. Though we can argue that the war had been kept between the armed forces and the guerrilla. However, the people have began to understand that the counter-insurgency war commits every citizen, not just the armed forces. In El Salvador, from the beginning of the conflict most of the people were affected in one way or another and they were also terrorized by both the right and the left extremists.

## **2. The Military**

In El Salvador, all the members of the armed forces, faced the enemy in the military operations and also in the cities, and their families were threatened and attacked. That is a pressure soldiers can not get used to. For more than ten years the military units were taking casualties, living in the field and facing the dirty mine warfare. In 1989 the armed forces had to fight in the main cities with no rest for about 12 days. Even though the battle was won those images of damage and death of innocent people, relatives and friends; caused an important impact in the attitude of the armed institution which was trying to minimized the effects of the war on the population and the economy. The balance of the conflict left around 30,000 between dead and wounded, that is equivalent to 40 infantry battalions neutralized in 12 years (See Appendix E). Many officers and enlisted were killed at home and many families were hurt while their relative military was chasing guerrillas. Every operation was a new hope to finish the conflict, and they ended up every time with more casualties and no trace of a military victory. The weaponry and equipment became scarce. Gradually the military, came to realize that this was not a military struggle exclusively but a social

phenomenon. This conflict had to be resolved by other means, it demanded social reforms, economic growth and political settlement. The members of the Institution were tired of uncertainty, because the load of the armed forces was not just the violence itself, but all the national and international pressures. Military leaders decided to support the political attempts to solve the problems even though they knew that the armed forces had to pay a high price in the short run. Eventually all the concessions would pay off by increasing the prestige and professionalism of the armed forces in the long run.

In Colombia, due to the size of the country, most of the time, the main areas of guerrilla operations have not been close to the main cities. The military has the assignment for its members of "Public Order" as a especial category which means counter insurgency. Not all the military personnel is in that category, so we may argue that not all the military personnel are under continuous pressure. The anti-guerrilla operations are being conducted by a small percentage of the Army and the casualty rate so far has not reached the level that it did in El Salvador. The guerrilla groups in Colombia, as a general rule, does not target military families in the cities. We may argue that the armed forces is not placing all its potential to defeat the guerrilla, probably because it has not become a national priority as it had in El Salvador. The Colombian Armed Forces have faced the government's lack of political willingness to finish this bloody war, which have been reflected in the cuts of the military budget.

### **3. The Economic Sector**

The economy in El Salvador was hurt really bad. The only reason because it did not collapse was the massive economic aid coming from the outside. The agriculture sectors and all the public services were reporting huge damages that could not be sustain any longer without international support. This support was not certain and the destruction had to be stopped. The economic classes view the peace negotiations as the best way to avoid economic collapse and also to start increasing profits. As we will see in chapter V they got involved and started to support those negotiations. In Colombia the economy has suffered, but not with the magnitude of El Salvador's.

#### **4. The People**

In El Salvador, the people were victimized by the three types of violence described. Guerrilla war, terrorism and common delinquency. They were in the middle of crossed fire during the major offensives launched by the FMLN. They witnessed the assassination of respected and loved citizens, children and many innocent people, knowing that anyone could be next. The FMLN when it did not find support among the people did not care anymore about hurting them, as long as they pressure the government to negotiate. The people in the countryside was living in terror due to the mines used indiscriminately by the guerrilla which caused about 3,000 victims among civilian population. Both the FMLN and the government were finding difficult to get support to conduct any kind of violence. People wanted peace desperately and they demanded it through the media, and through civil organizations which also got involved in the process.

In Colombia, regular people have never been exposed to these levels of violence, and they are somehow indifferent, in relative terms, to the political game, even to the war itself

#### **4. The Guerrilla**

The high mobility and effectiveness achieved toward the end of the conflict, posed a permanent and credible threat to the guerrilla forces in El Salvador. The geography and the size of the country did not offered advantages to the FMLN. Insurgents felt threatened, they were taking casualties every day and during the last battle for the capital they lost hundreds of men, and several tons of weapons. They were a exhausted guerrilla movement and they knew that they could not have defeated the armed forces, especially when the lack of popular support was so evident.

In Colombia, the size and geography of the country is advantageous for the guerrilla forces besides they do not depend on popular support to exist. They can coexist with the armed forces as long as the military is not given the means to defeat them.

## NOTES

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6. Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline, *Latin American Politics and Development*. (Boulder: Westview Press Inc., 1996), p.191. The authors explain that the metaphors are from, respectively, former president Misael Pastrana, quoted in Andrés Oppenheimer, "Rising Violence Rips Colombia," *Miami Herald*, June 12, 1988; *En qué momento se jodió Colombia* (Bogotá, Editorial Oveja Negra, 1990); and *Al Filo del Caos: Crisis Política en la Colombia de los Años 80*, ed. Francisco Leal Buitrago and León Zamosc (Bogotá, Tercer Mundo Editores, 1990).
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13. José A. Moroni Bracamonte and David E. Spencer, *Strategy and Tactics of the Salvadoran FMLN Guerrillas*, (Westport, Praeger Publishers Inc., 1995), p.37.

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16. Jack W. Hopkins, *Latin America and Caribbean Contemporary Record* Vol III, 1983-1984, (New York, Holmes and Meier Publishers Inc., 1985), p.525.
17. Jack W. Hopkins, *Latin America and Caribbean Contemporary Record*, Vol III, p.525 .
18. Bracamonte and Spencer, p.38.
19. Hopkins, p. 525.
20. Ibid. p. 531.
21. Ibid. p. 531.
22. Bracamonte and Spencer, p. 38.
23. At this time the armed forces had acquired around 50 helicopters and they were using the same tactics used in Vietnam by U.S. military : Air bombardments and air mobile operations.
24. Martin Diskin and Kennet E. Sharpe, "El Salvador", in *Confronting Revolution*, edited by Morris J. Blachman, William M. Loeogrande, and Kennet Sharpe, (New York, Pantheon Books, 1986), p. 80.
25. Robinson, p. 90-91.
26. Bynum E. Weathers, "LIC, Strategy, and Forces configuration in Guatemala and El Salvador", in *Responding to Low Intensity Conflict Challenges*, edited by Stephen Blank, Lawrence E. Grinter, Karl Magyar, et alt. (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, Air University Press, 1990), p.158.
27. He had been the head of Estudios Centroamericanos (ECA) Magazine of the Jesuit University of Central America in the 1950s, and frequently published articles elaborating anti-communist and conservative doctrine.
28. Robinson, p.92.
29. Ibid, p.97.
30. Schmidt, p. 333
31. Rafael Menjivar was the spokesman for the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR). His analysis of the situation of El Salvador was originally published in El Salvador in 1981, and later published in *Revolution and Intervention in Central America*, edited by Marlene Dixon and Susanne Jonas (San Francisco, Synthesis Publications/CM Associates, 1993), p. 68-69.
32. Schmidt, p.333.

## V. THE PEACE PROCESSES

To be successful, any negotiation process should begin with a genuine will of reaching a real solution based on mutual confidence. Negotiation requires a willingness to compromise, and both sides must make concessions. Neither side should expect to get all it originally wanted, not even if the objectives are modest. If both sides negotiate in good faith, they can always find a fair solution, especially when the negotiators represent broad interests within a given society. The trade off between peace and justice will be always present in social conflict resolution, and there is always a point where the contender can agree. Negotiation denotes a process that is different from tacit bargaining or other behavior that regulates conflict. As Charles Iklé puts it "negotiation is a process in which explicit proposals agree on an exchange or on the realization of common interest where conflicting interests are present".<sup>1</sup>

The peace processes in Colombia and El Salvador are very complex. There are many political and social variables involved. This is obviously not an attempt to analyze in detail all the variables that came into play. We are offering a general overview, and hopefully emphasizing those elements which allow us to illustrate the main differences that led to the different outcomes in the two countries' negotiation processes. In both countries there were several attempts to reach negotiated solutions.

In Colombia, there have been several attempts to stop political and guerrilla groups' violence. The fact that the guerrilla movement has not demonstrated a monolithic unity, has made the government to negotiate in different places, under different circumstances, and with different people. The first attempt to negotiate was made in 1974 and it was not successful. In the following years other attempts were made, some of them with a successful outcome and others with failure. Periods of negotiations are easily identifiable because they are related to presidential terms. The incumbent president and the guerrilla leaders have talked about negotiation as the way to stop violence but without arriving to an agreement. The former has been concerned about his defense before the accusation of financing his presidential campaign with narcotraffickers' money. The latter have been busy trying to

develop their insurgent plans and committing the crimes they are used to. Therefore, in 1997 Colombians are still waiting for a lasting peace, after the imprisonment of terrorist narcotraffickers and the dismantling of drug cartels. However, remaining guerrilla groups continue killing soldiers, and civilian people, and posing a threat for the normal development of individuals and the country as a whole.

In El Salvador, on the other hand, definite periods can be identified. These periods coincided with two different presidents' administrations, in which successive efforts were made to reach peace accords with a one definite and unique contender. The nation is now trying to consolidate little by little its democracy and the old guerrillas are in different ways part of the establishment, looking for the achievement of their objectives by the legal and political means. People enjoy today a peace that after five years seems to be durable.

Every process developed their own dynamics, which we will try to describe. Different factors have been critical for the outcome in the Salvadoran case and for the four completed negotiations in Colombia. Other factors have avoid the attempts to sign peace with the FARC and ELN in Colombia and today they still remain critical. The international involvement and Catholic Church mediation were important in El Salvador to arrive to the final solution, while in Colombia only the second has maintained a standard profile and has been always ready to help in the negotiation, especially because the leader of the ELN is a former Spanish Catholic priest.

#### **A. COLOMBIA**

Colombian history since the 1930s has been marked by almost continual violence, which one could argue is the by-product of the repeated and generally frustrated attempts by the country's marginalized sectors and emerging social forces to gain a greater share of Colombia's abundant wealth. A major part of this struggle has been the inability of these social forces to gain significant access to the political system. With legitimate channels closed off, many Colombians from 1960s on resorted to violence in the form of the revolutionary groups we analyzed before, to gain their objectives. The consequences have been negative in the economic, political, and social realms, both in the national as in the international arena. Many attempts have been made to stop this fratricide struggle. Even

though, the Colombian conflict has not become a civil war, this is unfortunately the international perception.

In this section we describe the different attempts made by Colombian presidents in the last twenty years to stop violence, mainly the subversive violence that is responsible for the country's lagging in the economic and international realms. There were truces, negotiations, amnesties, and incorporation into democratic life of some guerrilla groups. The FARC and ELN groups have been reluctant to do so.

### **1. The First Intentions to Negotiate**

During the administration of president Alfonso López Michelsen (1974-1978), the government tried, for the first time, to open negotiations with the armed groups in search of a solution to the political violence. According to sociologist Eduardo Pizarro,<sup>2</sup> various factors frustrated this effort. Among them, he mentions the systematic blocking of the military to any kind of dialogue with the ELN, a group considered being on the brink of total annihilation, after "Anorí" operation in 1973-1974. We described this episode in chapter II. After this dialogue failed due to the inflexibility of the military establishment, the country would have to wait until 1982 to begin this process in earnest.

During the government of president Julio César Turbay Ayala (1978-1982), guerrilla actions, especially those instigated by the M-19, reached new, unexpected levels compared with the previous decade. It was during this period, for example, that the M-19 stole hundreds of weapons from an army's arsenal in northern Santafé de Bogotá and engineered the taking of the Dominican embassy. The government sought to resolve the situation through an authoritarian response. It put into effect the draconian National Security Statute that expanded the arrest powers of the armed forces, and placed punishment for a variety of crimes under the jurisdiction of military tribunals. In addition, in an attempt to impede the guerrillas' use of the press to gain publicity for their cause, the media was subjected to strict censorship. Finally, Turbay invoked the state of siege provision of the Constitution.

Throughout 1979 and 1980, politicians opposed to government, independent writers, leftist organizations' spokespersons, the guerrilla groups themselves, and Amnesty International charged the government policies allowed the military to carry out arbitrary arrests, torture, and "disappearances" in the campaign against subversion. In 1981 Turbay

extended an offer of political amnesty to the guerrillas; despite public disavowals and continued fighting, government and guerrilla leaders held secret amnesty negotiations until March 1982. Because it imposed too many conditions to the insurgents, the terms of the amnesty were finally rejected by the guerrillas.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the military also rejected it because they reportedly feared that it would demoralize the troops. Nevertheless, the government lifted the state of siege on the eve of the presidential elections in 1982.

## **2. The Betancur's Peace**

### ***a. Background***

In August 1982, most of the M-19 leaders were in jail, the FARC had only twenty-seven armed bands, the ELN was almost disappearing and the EPL conducted a limited activity. Conservative president Belisario Betancur (1982-86) was elected on a platform that included a commitment to peace. He immediately declared his willingness to reach a truce with the guerrillas.

### ***b. The Government's Offer***

To accomplish its objective, the government tried to carry out a policy of democratic reform and a peace pact. The presidential idea, according to Pizarro,<sup>4</sup> was to be developed in five steps. At the beginning of his term,<sup>5</sup> the president convoked a multiparty political summit (September 8, 1982) to discuss political reform. Subsequently, he formed a peace commission (September 19), and he passed an amnesty law (November 19). The government signed a truce agreement with the main guerrilla movements (March and August 1984), and, finally, during 1984 and 1985, a series of legislative proposals was presented to the Congress of the Republic, oriented toward cementing the democratic advances. Thus, the new president opened the doors to a larger political participation by the insurgents, gave them many guaranties, and broke all the regulations in security matters. His former Minister of Defense, army General Fernando Landazábal would write later:

“...tolerating in every action the subversive boldness and arrogance, (Betancur) amnestied, forgave, pardoned all the insurgents; he took away the reasons and arguments for their armed struggle but did not ask anything from them.”<sup>6</sup>

Law 32 of 1982, best known as the *Amnesty Law*, did not, however, require the guerrillas to disarm. This was a major point of omission that would doom this first stage of the peace process though it initially appeared to hold enormous potential. The law offered *unconditional* amnesty for all acts of rebellion and all acts connected with it. It excluded only the murder of defenseless persons, atrocities such as indiscriminate murder or disfigurement, and gratuitous acts of violence such as rape. The line to be drawn between ordinary criminal activity and actions connected with the rebellion, was an issue of some debate. Combat actions presented no problem, but murders and kidnaping were a hot issue. If they were excluded, the amnesty would not be acceptable by the guerrillas who have routinely engaged in both. To solve this obstacle, the law excluded the murder of defenseless persons. Nevertheless, the government had tacitly recognized that the assassinations of government officials had been part of the guerrillas' efforts to take power, and might therefore be considered as part of the rebellion.

Government had also recognized that murders of ordinary persons have been carried out in the course of bank robberies, to extort money and to eliminate informers. Thus these murders were committed by the guerrillas to obtain economic support, money and weapons, and to maintain clandestinity. Therefore, they had to be considered as connected with the rebellion.<sup>7</sup> The government decided to include kidnaping, recognizing that the guerrillas used the ransoms to finance the purchase of weapons. Kidnapping was deemed to be a political act because it had a political motive. Recognizing assassinations and kidnaping as political acts and part of the armed rebellion was a way to legitimize them.

While these political and legal issues were the daily subject of the people's talks, the general concern was the negative response of the guerrilla groups. The agricultural industry was clearly in a crisis, and rural investment was low due to the insurgents' activities in the countryside. In the opinion of the National Association of Industrialists (*Asociación Nacional de Industriales*, or ANDI), one of the most influential economic groups in the country, the elimination of the illegal farming and rural unemployment could be possible only after the guerrilla problem had been resolved.<sup>8</sup> At that moment, the drugs trafficking industry was consolidating and introducing about two billion dollars per year into the

country, but this was considered a minor problem when compared with subversive violence. It would be necessary the assassination (30 April 1984) of the minister of Justice by the narcoterrorists to force the government to recognize the challenge to its authority posed by them.

In 1984, the ANDI supported the agreements between the government and the FARC and M-19 groups. Its main concern was the condition of the national economy, because foreign investment was stagnating, industrial development was very low, and therefore, the foreign debt and the deficit were growing. In October, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) asked the government for drastic adjustments if the country expected additional loans. As a consequence, the industrial groups considered that the national interest demanded long and painful measures to recuperate the economy and to maintain the autonomy of the country.

Betancur's initiative was a disaster. He was a political maverick who never enjoyed the support of the country's elite or the military. The army was hostile to the process from the beginning and most business elites and the majority of the traditional politicians came to share this view.<sup>9</sup> The main reason for the position of the armed forces and especially the army was the arrogance and disdain Betancur showed before the military perception of the internal security. From the perspective of the Colombian military, the worst feature of the agreement was that it did not obligate the guerrillas to surrender their weapons. We can also add all the political, legal, and moral considerations around the crimes included in the Amnesty Law.

One year after Law 32 of 1982, about 200 allegedly M-19 guerrillas and others taking advantage of the situation, after recovering freedom traveled to Europe with government's support.<sup>10</sup> Another guerrillas who were in jail went back to the mountains, and few remained in the big cities as the political wing of the guerrilla. A new party and legal organizations appeared in the political arena: Patriotic Union (*Unión Patriótica* or UP) as the legal branch of the FARC; To Fight (*A luchar*) as a political group of the ELN; and People's Front (*Frente Popular*) as the political representation of the EPL. The FARC sent two guerrillas to the Congress as member of the parliament, and the security agency (*Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad*, DAS) provided the bodyguards for the two,

besides the authorized guerrillas bodyguards who were also amnestied. The government never knew exactly the number of allegedly amnestied guerrillas because the procedure lack of enough control mechanisms. Meanwhile, in the mountains and in the countryside, guerrillas continued with the usual crimes though they tried to blame “unknown groups” as the authors of violence because they wanted people believed their good intentions towards peace and respect for the agreement.

*c. The Response*

What did the guerrillas give to the government in exchange? The guerrillas response to this project was the gradual development of two different strategies by the FARC and the M-19: “democratization” of the war, and “guerrilization” of democracy, respectively. In spite of their differences, in both cases one can find a qualitative and quantitative leap beyond earlier positions. Table 5.1 shows a comparison between these two strategies.

|                   | <b>FARC</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>M-19</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Strategies</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Growth in the countryside</li> <li>2. Movement from the agrarian to the urban through political action</li> <li>3. Appeal to social sectors excluded from access to land, credit and commerce.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Growth in the cities.</li> <li>2. Movement from the urban to the rural through military action.</li> <li>3. Appeal to marginalized social sectors in the city, especially professionals and underemployed</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Goals</b>      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Control of territory as key to control of population.</li> <li>2. Political route, including participation in elections.</li> <li>3. Involvement of people in politics to move on later to other forms of struggle.</li> <li>4. Maximum use of the principle: “War is continuation of politics using other means”.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impact population regardless of territorial control,</li> <li>2. Use politics to mobilize population to military action regardless of position on electoral politics.</li> <li>3. Involve the guerrilla in the nation in order later to involve the nation with the guerrilla.</li> <li>4. Use of the principle: “Politics is continuation of war using other means”</li> </ol> |

Source: Vladimir Zabala’s scheme, quoted by Hernando Pizarro, Violence in Colombia, p.186-187

**Table 5. 1 Guerrillas’ Strategies and Goals**

Two factors converge to explain this phenomenon: primarily, the guerrilla groups were very active in the political arena, after passing from the limitations of the “armed propaganda” to the generation of political proposals to the society, which was

expecting the guerrillas' performance. Secondly, there were during the last decade many social movements in the process of organization, such as the Community Action's National Coordinator (*Coordinadora Nacional de Acción Comunal*), and the National Organization of Colombian Indigenous Peoples (*Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia*, or ONIC), among others. In other words, guerrillas were going to take advantage of these organizations that were at the stage of national organization by that time, to use them as vehicle for their own maneuvers.

In July 1984, government officials and M-19 guerrilla leaders signed a cease-fire agreement in Corinto, in Cauca department. It did not mean the demobilization of the guerrillas. It was only a period to explore possibilities for peace. By late 1985, however, the accord unraveled. Charging the government with, among many other things, a systematic violation of the truce provisions and failure to implement key political reforms that were part of the cease-fire agreement, the M-19 returned to the armed struggle. In October 1985 guerrillas wounded the incumbent Commanding General of the Army, General Rafael Samudio Molina. The end of Betancur's peace plan came dramatically when the M-19 seized the Palace of Justice on 5 November 1985, and about a hundred people died including 11 Supreme Court Judges, army and police members, and the whole guerrillas inside the building. After this operation, recognized as a failure by the M-19 itself, this group reduced its activities. Some analysts surmised that its membership base had declined.

In the aftermath, only the FARC clung to the moribund peace process, but its twin strategy of pursuing both political and military objectives left the Patriotic Union (UP) militants vulnerable and hundreds of them --including two presidential candidates-- were killed. The FARC eventually cut its ties to the UP and intensified guerrilla warfare (in fact, they never stopped fighting during the process, but reduced, apparently, its operations) arguing that they had learned a bitter lesson that to this day has left them reluctant to enter into negotiations that require cease-fires.

To sum up, during the term of Belisario Betancur the guerrillas increased their power under the auspices of the government. The armed forces were forbidden to patrol in certain zones of the country, and, as a consequence, the billeting (*boleteo*), extortion, and forced recruitment of peasants by the guerrilla groups became a daily happening. Insurgents

continued to demand a unilateral cease-fire by the armed forces while using the dialogues to gain time and reorganize. Guerrilla movement used the bilateral truces of 1984 and 1985 to double its squads and the areas where the insurgents had influence over the population (see Table 3.2 ).

Publicly, and according to their old and worn discourse, they reaffirmed their political will to negotiate, but blamed the armed forces and "*other obscure forces*" of being the enemies of the peace process. From the military point of view, the president tied the hands of his best legal support, favored the escalation of violence, and was primarily responsible for the social and political situation of the country. They saw the most obvious result of this amnesty in the increase of FARC guerrillas from 18 armed bands in 1982 to 35 in 1986, which represents the highest percentage (51%) of increment this group has never had; the other groups had the growth we showed in Table 3.2. The desired objective, peace, never was achieved, in spite of the truces, cease-fires and amnesty. The FARC, however, had created their political branch, Unión Patriótica, that would be for them the Guinea pig that would permitted this insurgent group to participate in politics without turning over weapons.

### **3. Barco's Peace Process**

#### ***a. Background***

Liberal President Virgilio Barco (1986-1990), like his predecessor was interested in stopping the chronic and endemic violence by eliminating what he believed would be its main cause: absolute poverty. He designed the National Rehabilitation Plan as the expression of government's political will. It was the solution for some national problems and basic necessities so citizens could rely on civilian authorities and on institutional actions. The Plan intended to create development opportunities in those regions where economic disarticulation, institutional absence and poverty developed a lack of social balance that very often was expressed in conflicts carried out through non institutional ways.

Although the Barco administration committed to the peace process initiated by Betancur, Barco de-emphasized dialogue with the guerrillas and --in October 1987-- centralized the peace program in his office by making his new peace commission that was

called Permanent Advisory Council on Political Rehabilitation, Reconciliation, and Normalization.

The government's intent was to prove the guerrillas that there was an official will to cooperate in the pacification efforts and that the government was given a positive response to the requirements of subversive groups. Thus the guerrilla, one more time, was committed to stop kidnapping, robberies and other crimes. The government was concerned about its public image and for the press editorials, as well as the guerrilla conditions to begin peace talks. One of the guerrillas' conditions was the destruction of self-defense groups that they began to call *paramilitares*. This way, the guerrilla would obtain two things: first, to stop their enemies through the governmental action, and second, to recover the areas they used to control before the self-defense groups' birth.

As a consequence, the armed forces received the additional mission of fighting narcotraffickers and the self-defense or paramilitary groups, as their priority. This was a strategic and tactical gain for the guerrillas, who began to recover morally and physically, because all the military effort was addressed toward their enemies. This period corresponds to the growing of the FARC and ELN, mainly.

On May 29, 1988, the M-19 kidnapped the former presidential candidate and active Conservative politician Alvaro Gómez Hurtado, as a way to pressure the government to open talks. By that time, the M-19 was leading the CGSB and had conducted a campaign called "Peace to Armed Forces and War to Oligarchy." Once they released Gómez on July 20, the Colombian Independence Day, the M-19 obtained from the government the summon for a national dialogue summit. This was a compromise for all the political, social, and economic organizations of the country.

#### ***b. The Peace Processes***

The government, on September 2, 1988, published its peace initiative, consisting of three phases: Reduction of tension (*Distensión*), Transition, and Incorporation into democratic life. Only the M-19 accepted the government plan. Government talks with the FARC made little progress, however, owing to the FARC's unwillingness to disarm, and to its continued guerrilla and terrorist attacks.

The *Reduction of tension phase* consisted of the following issues: A

government proposal to Congress of the Forgiveness Law, beginning of dialogue between the government and the M-19, temporary location of the guerrilla, cessation of billeting (*boleteo*) farmers and landowners, cessation of extortion, and kidnapping by the M-19, as a requirement to continue to the next stages, and the beginning of congressional public hearings to discuss constitutional and parliamentary reforms.

The *Transition phase* established deployment of guerrilla groups to the selected location, cessation of terrorist operations by guerrillas, and cessation of patrolling by army troops during the guerrilla deployment. During this phase the government selected the village of Santo Domingo, in Cauca department, as the place for concentration of guerrillas during the talks.

The *Incorporation into democratic life* phase included stimulation for political activity, protection measures for the guerrillas for the possible retaliations by relatives of those people killed by M-19, temporary financial support, forgiveness application, lifting of the state of siege, and constitutional reform. This initiative was designed for all subversive groups, and the government could negotiate with each group, independently. The Ministry of Defense was in charge of designing the structure of this phase.

### *c. The Response*

After many difficulties, this plan was executed. In early 1990 the M-19 guerrillas, who had often been intransigent in previous negotiations with Colombian governments, turned over their weapons to representatives of the Socialist International and gave up the armed struggle, while planning participation in the next national elections. A new party, Democratic Action M-19 (AD M-19), was born. The former guerrilla obtained a relative success in March 1990 elections, exceeding the results of the other leftist organizations, demonstrating the popular acceptance of its submission to peace process. After the assassination of its leader Carlos Pizarro, his second-in-command Antonio Navarro Wolf was a presidential candidate and the AD M-19 party converted into the third political force in the country. The new president appointed Navarro as Minister of Health and he accepted. The M-19 face then the challenge of fulfilling the political space of a democratic left, but at the same time it had the exigence of turning itself into a political apparatus

capable of responding to the increasing expectations about its performance.<sup>11</sup>

The EPL, the indigenous guerrilla Quintín Lame, and the PRT followed M-19 example in the next months. They would sign the final agreements during the first semester of the next presidential administration. Only the Marxist guerrilla groups, most importantly the FARC and the ELN, continued fighting against the government.

President Barco finished his term on August 7, 1990, leaving the country with one guerrilla group incorporated into democratic life, and one additional political party. He left also three other guerrilla groups ready for the surrender of their weapons. At least, in this aspect of his initial peace program, he could offer a positive result, increasing the hope of ending violence. Nevertheless, the armed forces were deprived of the operational and a legal frame they needed to win the war against subversion. In fact, by forbidding the military to judge subversives as it used to be the procedure, the government and the Congress permitted the release of guerrillas and supporters once in the hands of civilian justice.

The presidential attempt to fight the narcotraffickers' violence was not successful, and the endemic plague of violence would not end. On the contrary, Colombia would see the beginning of a new terrorist violence by the FARC and ELN guerrillas. This would be the challenge for the new government.

#### **4. President César Gaviria's Strategy against Violence**

##### ***a. Background***

On August 7, 1990, Liberal party candidate César Gaviria Trujillo, the youngest president in Colombia's last 150-year history, took office. In his inaugural address, he offered dialogue to violent groups seeking their demobilization and disarming, and their incorporation into civil society so they might pursue their political objectives through peaceful means. In other words, he wanted to continue the peace process policy initiated by his predecessors. In relation to narcoterrorism, he said that he would take the direction of all actions of the military forces, the Administrative Department of Security (DAS), and the National Police, to deter the terrorists and to stop their barbaric acts. Besides, Gaviria reinforced his strategy by convoking and organizing the National Constituent Assembly, to produce the reform of the 1886 Constitution that would serve as an argument to invalidate the armed struggle, because the government would open the Colombian

political system, providing space for groups who have resisted the lure of traditional parties. Colombia would have in place a constitutional framework that would permit the institutionalization of a more representative, participatory, and equitable political system.

**b.     *The Government's Offer***

Meanwhile, the EPL signed the peace treaty similar in many respects to the one that successfully reined in the M-19. The other two groups, the Quintín Lame and the PRT, also turned over the weapons. Flushed with success, Gaviria attempted to complete the peace process by renewing talks with the FARC, a dissident EPL front, and the ELN, who had united in the CGSB. He made also the following unilateral offers to guerrilla movement: ratification of Protocols I and II of the Geneva Convention, the acceptance of international supervision, the creation of political guaranties' climate for demobilized guerrillas, a high-level and direct negotiation, and the conformation of a prominent-persons commission (*La Comisión de Notables*).<sup>12</sup> Its function would be exploratory, to prepare a temptable agenda for the negotiation.

The government in turn, conditioned the beginning of the talks to the suspension by guerrillas of all criminal and terrorist activities, --particularly kidnapping and extortion as a sign of good faith. These two crimes had, by the late 1980s, become a major source of funding for the guerrillas, and the government's insistence on their cessation became the principal sticking point. Drug trafficking was also a growing revenue source for the guerrilla groups.

**c.     *The Response***

The CGSB's response came immediately. They said that if the National Constituent Assembly (Asamblea Nacional Constituyente or ANC) is summoned without consulting the guerrilla movement, they would initiate a stage of political violence. They also conditioned their participation in the negotiation process to their participation in the ANC. In September 1990 the CGSB held the First Summit of Guerrilla Coordinating Board's Commanders. During this meeting, FARC's ideologist Alfonso Cano sent a message to the government saying that they need a wider participation in the ANC, and that some points for the negotiation would be in the agenda for the Constituent Assembly. These points were: demilitarization of the country, end of the dirty war and the paramilitarism, the purge of the

the armed forces, nationalization of the natural resources, and creation of mechanisms for an economic and international policies without dependency.

In the summit conclusions, the CGSB decides to concrete a war proposal by creating a unified guerrilla army with only one strategy but multiple commands. This project will reunite 48 FARC squads (5,800 guerrillas), 22 ELN columns (1,800 guerrillas), and the dissident EPL (100 guerrillas). There are, however, some squads that did not share these conclusions and were interested in negotiating peace.

The proposals from both sides, the government and the guerrilla, did not mean that military operations were canceled. Between September 25 and November 20, 1990, there were 53 FARC and 48 ELN guerrilla attacks. That made it clear that subversion was not interested in stopping its violence. Each time they offered a cease-fire the country awaited a new offensive. They wanted to show their military power to the government and the nation, because they were not a defeated guerrilla ready to negotiate for anything, as with M-19 and the other groups. Nevertheless, government established clearly before the public and the FARC and ELN guerrillas that the armed forces will be positioned throughout the nation, and that the government would never accept the insurgency requirement of taking troops out those places under guerrilla influence.

Consequently, on 09 December 1990, the same day of elections for the National Constituent Assembly and the anniversary of Colombian infantry, the army launched a big operation against the FARC headquarters in the place known as *Casaverde* (The Green House), where many times not only the presidential committee for dialogue but other guerrilla leaders had assembled to plan strategies about peace or war. The army achieved only a marginal success because no important guerrilla leader died or was captured during the operation. However, it proved that the FARC were vulnerable and that the guerrilla groups could not continue using indefinitely their old strategy of asking for peace while waging war. Government established that it would begin the institutional reforms with those groups that had signed the peace agreement, and that it would reduce by force those who insisted in war.

The military operation caused a violent response by FARC's squads in different places of the country. From December 10, 1990, to mid-January 1991, the CGSB

committed 84 terrorist actions in 18 departments where 64 members of the armed forces and 26 civilians died; several pipelines were destroyed, there was a blackout in several villages, and some communications and patrol boats were dynamited. ECOPETROL, the national petroleum company, calculated its losses during the first month of 1991, because of guerrillas' terrorism, in \$130 million dollars, equivalent to the losses in the pipeline *Caño Limón-Coveñas* (the longest in the country) which was blown up several times. *Tirofijo* (Sure Shot), the legendary head of the FARC, asked for suspension of the military operations and the return of the army to the barracks, as the condition to initiate talks.

*d. Caracas and Tlaxcala*

After many intents, government and guerrillas, agreed to initiate the talks in Caracas starting on June 1, 1991. From then to November 1991, there were four rounds of talks. Negotiations were difficult and slow, and in between there was an increment of the armed struggle in the country. In two rounds of talks, held outside Colombia for the first time, the CGSB adopted and stuck to a list of 12 demands that included a suspension of the "dirty war", a halt to military expansion, international verification of any accord, personal guaranties for any guerrillas who wished to joint the political process, and a national dialogue on economic and social reforms.

The reason for negotiating in a foreign country was to avoid a cease-fire situation that neither the guerrilla wanted nor the military. In fact, the guerrilla on one hand argued that the past experience of 1984 and 1985 had left them lessons for the violations of the truce by the armed forces. The military, on the other hand, remembered the growth of the guerrilla during the Betancur's administration.

There were two key obstacles in the Caracas negotiation rounds. The first was the arrogance of the guerrillas that permanently under esteemed the government's unilateral proposals, arguing that they would consider only those things that would be the result of a bilateral negotiation or agreement. The second obstacle was the bilateral cease-fire. The government wanted to have guaranties that the cease-fire was not going to be used as an element to obtain strategic advantages by the guerrilla as in 1984 and 1985.

The first round of the talks (June 3-15) made it clear that the guerrilla's good will, was dubious. Guerrillas clearly used negotiations to show off instead of arriving at

convenient agreements. They did not want to give up in what is their strength, that is, their mobility. Therefore, they did not agree to locate in fixed places, and the negotiators could not arrive to an agreement in the cease-fire issue.

In the second round (June 20-25) the parts arrived to an agreement about the ways (national and regional) to verify the cease-fire, and to find the international verification of the process. Because it was convenient that the ANC approved some points of the agenda, and to make some consultations, the official negotiators went back to Colombia. During the break in July and August 1991, the government decided to stop the individual and regional initiatives to negotiate peace with guerrilla groups. In fact, it forbade those initiatives, recalling that the only two persons authorized for this process were the Minister of Interior and the Peace Advisor. Besides, the government conformed an advisory commission with representatives of all political parties and groups. To complete his reforms and to show good will for the peace negotiations, president Gaviria appointed a civilian as Minister of Defense. This had been an old requirement of the guerrilla movement.

In the third round (September 4-10), the guerrillas made clear the thesis that they were negotiating with the government at the same level, power to power, on the basis that there were military and political stalemates (several political writers call *empate militar negativo* the military stalemate), and convinced that they were equivalent powers.<sup>13</sup> The CGSB insisted in being ready for the cease-fire, but in two stages: first, to end hostilities and offensive actions, and second, to localize the squads in the "distension areas". The government, however, was not ready to discuss a cease-fire formula that would not infer some degree of localization. Besides, it discounted any possibility to exchange persons in hands of guerrillas for political prisoners, that was the guerrillas' proposal.

In the fourth and last round (October 30- November 10), without arriving to an agreement, the government and guerrilla representatives made a balance of the negotiations, which was written in two documents: one analyzing the general process of Caracas talks, and the other, a compromising act with the agreements and the divergences still existing in the process. In a cease-fire accord, the disagreements are related with the war logic: paramilitary, kidnapping, place for the concentration of guerrillas, and presence of public force. In fact, these issues are source of disagreement because in a covered way

each actor continue betting to war. Therefore, mutual resistance to make concessions appear to avoid reduction in the respective military power. In the guerrilla case it is clear in its mobility issue. In the military, the exigence to have physical presence nation wide. (Annex A shows the differences between the government and the guerrillas' representatives in the Caracas talks).

In 1992 there were changes in the official peace policy, with the presidential appointment of Horacio Serpa Uribe as the new Peace Advisor and the creation of the Social Policy Council. That was an important card for the government that put the prestige of Serpa on a stake. He won his prestige when he was Minister of the Interior and member of the Constituent Assembly, and therefore, president considered Serpa's political ability could be helpful in the relationship with the guerrilla spokespersons and with the politicians who were ready for a greater protagonism after the Constituent Assembly.

By that time, the Salvadoran negotiation represented a pressure, as positively as negative for the Colombian process. It was positive, in the sense that it showed the possibility to arrive to an agreement in spite of the differences. However, it has a negative sense because that negotiation would represent an invitation for the Colombian guerrillas to escalate the internal conflict to reach a military equilibrium that would permit the guerrillas to negotiate with advantages. That is the reason the guerrillas have always wanted to mitigate the costs of a confrontation policy at the national level with regional agreements that would permit them to consolidate their local presence and control.<sup>14</sup>

When the conversations restarted in March 1992 in Tlaxcala, Mexico, in spite of the large concessions of the government to the guerrilla movement (acceptance to change the agenda, acceptance that the discussion of the agenda could not be conditioned to the actual cease-fire), the guerrilla attitude revealed two things: first, that there were deep and internal discrepancies between the FARC and the ELN guerrillas because of the whole negotiation process, which threatened the military unity of the Guerrilla Coordinating Board (CGSB). Secondly, the CGSB, betted to the deterioration of the social climate while waiting that the social unrest it forecasted would turn into a favorable element to its negotiating position.

The government became particularly intransigent on the kidnapping issue after former Minister Argelino Durán Quintero died while being held captive by the dissident front of the EPL. Gaviria suspended the talks indefinitely in October 1992 and ordered the military to begin a major offensive against the guerrillas: his defense minister even boasted that the rebels would be defeated in 18 months. This did not occur and, with the change in government in 1994, came a change in policy. The pendulum swung once again back in the direction of a negotiated settlement. Refer to Appendix H for detailed information.

In summary, the end of the dialogues in Tlaxcala made evidently the exhaustion of the model of negotiation opened during Barco's administration. The model exhausted itself from both perspectives of the government and the guerrillas. From the point of view of the government, because the official programs supporting the peace proposal had limitations. The new Constitution (1991), though it was a great advance, was not going to solve all the problems of legitimacy neither the political openness, as the government intended. Reinsertion of demobilized guerrillas had presented problems, the Rehabilitation Plan bureaucratized, and some other policies were not working properly. There were, then, a great distance between the political discourse and what had actually achieved. From the guerrillas' perspective, the socialism crisis and the negotiation in El Salvador made them to bet to the military option which day by day is less legitimate.

### **5. The Samper's Peace Policy**

Liberal president Ernesto Samper Pizano (1994-1998) made peace a prominent plank in his platform and on 17 November 1994, he unveiled a new peace initiative; he predicted it would lead to permanent peace. The most significant difference between Samper's proposal and those of his predecessors was his decision to negotiate without first having a cease-fire in place. He said:

"Colombians should be advised that, as long as the peace process lasts, acts of violence will continue to occur...the day that acts of war cease together, peace will have been achieved".<sup>15</sup>

Samper also announced new negotiations would be discreet and could involve neutral mediators. As a sign of good faith, he said he would ask Congress to pass legislation putting

Colombia in compliance with the Geneva accords and the 1977 protocol on human rights. 1996 arrived with new air for peace process, because the government was promoting a new negotiation model with the insurgents, where demobilization and cease-fire were not conditions to talk as in the previous negotiations. Law 104 of 1993, that included this issue and some political and judiciary changes, was extended in December 1995 for three more years.

Thus, in January 1996, while the Peace High Commissioner Daniel Garcia-Peña tried to contact dissident M-19 fraction "Batemán Cayón", the Minister of the Interior made the announcement of governmental decision to talk to so-called paramilitary or self-defense groups. One of these groups, the one operating against guerrillas in department of Córdoba and Urabá banana region, proposed a "trilateral" dialogue among government, guerrillas, and self-defense groups. Moreover, they invited FARC and ELN guerrillas to sit down at the negotiation table. The eternal Colombian Communist party's secretary, Gilberto Vieira, 78 years old, said the proposal was a nonsense and that it would be, if accepted by the government, the legalization of those groups.<sup>16</sup>

In 1996 the ELN already said it was willing to enter negotiations, and for the first time it has made known its demands. In a radio message intercepted by Colombian intelligence, ELN second-in-command Nicolás Rodríguez Bautista, alias "Gabino", listed 12 demands, including a reduction in military spending, the elimination of military impunity, and the replacement of neoliberal economic policy with a "model of industrial stimulation."<sup>17</sup> Other points deal with foreign debt, illicit enrichment, and foreign petroleum contracts.

The FARC also has expressed its willingness to negotiate, although it has not made known its demands in similar fashion. With the attack to a military base in the south of the country on 30 August 1996, and the kidnapping of sixty soldiers, the FARC intent to pressure the government to negotiate with the intervention of international organizations. They want to be recognized as a belligerent force in order to achieve a status similar to the FMLN in El Salvador, and to gain international support to their cause.

## **6. The Government and the Regional Talks**

Government has always been reticent to regional or decentralized dialogues in matters related to political (insurgent) violence. It forbade many years ago the regional

authorities (governors, mayors) to negotiate with armed movements about peace processes or the armed struggle itself. They were allowed to deal with the economic and social matters, meanwhile these proposals would come from legal and legitimate representatives of civil society. It meant that guerrillas' proposals cannot be accepted in isolated way. In other words, direct conversation would be a privilege of the central government that wanted to have the reins of the process.

In fact, the government has argued that because each guerrilla group has a central command and the fractions always comply the orders of their heads, the negotiation has to be built at that level. To accept the regional talks is to give the insurgents the opportunity of handle or manege the local authorities to obtain the guerrilla group's objectives for a specific region. Nevertheless, who guarantees that the neighbor guerrilla is not going to that region to commit crimes if the negotiation were made with another group? Or who guarantees that the guerrilla that negotiates in one region holds its promise and does not commit crimes in that region but sends its members to the next region? Appendix I is part of president's Barco program *Iniciativa para la Paz* (Peace Initiative) where government fixed its position in this issue. The following governments have maintained the same policy in this matter.

Many scholars and political analysts do not share the government's position about regional dialogues. In some way, they favor the guerrilla persistence in this matter when they say that the problem is very complex, because it is not only the armed struggle but also the social and economic problems of each region which is on stake. They forget, however, that the guerrillas' strategy in the different negotiation processes has always been: 1) to pretend the negotiation table provide them with the audience they have been incapable of gaining after many years of fighting the government; 2) to pretend that the civil society make them spokesmen of its interests; and 3) to obtain by force the summoning capability they have been unable to build through political means.

According to Jesús Bejarano, a former Peace Commissioner and Colombian ambassador to El Salvador government, the regional talks can be suitable to climates peace in order to attenuate the local social conflict factors.<sup>18</sup> But the point is if the local authorities should convene with the guerrillas, via regional talks, the government's decisions at national,

departmental, and municipal level, as if the guerrillas were a counter power. We can think of the consequences of doing this, for example, with the allocation of public investment, which would end, indubitably, legitimizing the armed struggle without any compromise on behalf of the guerrilla side. It would be like looking for a temporary tranquility but not for the definitive and permanent peace.

To summarize the Colombian situation, we can say that there have been many attempts to bring peace to the country during the last twenty years but the government has had to negotiate with different groups separately. The conformation of the CGSB was more a publicity issue to show the strength of the guerrilla movement than the exhibition of a true and internal unity. During the last fifteen years, since the agreements signed by Betancur administration, interaction between government and guerrillas has been done in two levels: that of negotiation and the that of the war, crossed at the same time by the variable of public opinion and legitimacy. The negotiation processes with M-19, EPL, Quintín Lame, and PRT, were the demonstration of political will by all the actors and especially of the guerrilla leaders that went to the end in spite of the obstacles represented by the murders of many guerillas. But it obeyed also to the fact that those groups were decimated, and tired of waging a war they were losing.

Some personalities of national life like politicians, industrialists, the Catholic Church, unions and ordinary people have helped in different ways to make possible peace. They have been always present in the different commissions conformed in different administrations. However, the results have made people oscillate between optimism and pessimism, because it is clear that there are social forces and dynamics that tend to consolidate the way toward peace but there are also other forces that set the obstacles to achieve it. The FARC and ELN continue to fighting systematically against whichever government and every time they have arguments to commit crimes, to destroy natural resources, and to appear before the public opinion as the only answer to all the evils of the country. Their actions speak for them and people do not believe their worn out discourse. The peace process in Colombia, therefore, has been a partial solution to social and political unrest. After the political failure of M-19 in the last five years, the FARC and ELN have more arguments to continue within their strategy of a protracted war.

## **B. EL SALVADOR**

In early 1980s it was unimaginable that El Salvador's armed conflict would end through a political negotiated solution. The physical and psychological damage was so huge and deep that the two contenders were thought as unwilling to walk away with all its losses and forgive and forget all the hate and pain caused by its enemy. However, that peaceful end became a reality. Every body had to pay a price for this unique ending of the war. This process of peace was not made of just the good will of the Government and the FMLN (we will use FMLN-FDR to stress the presence of the recognized political component of the movement), but it was shaped by many variables that were not under the absolute control of any actor.

In 1984, President José Napoleón Duarte began a formal negotiation process with the FMLN-FDR to bring all Salvadorans together to find a peaceful solution to the armed conflict. Over a period of four years, President Duarte tried unsuccessfully to consolidate the peace talks. After the first meeting, several other meetings took place, but essentially they were merely continuations of the one in La Palma.

When Alfredo Cristiani, the candidate of the right-wing ARENA party, was elected president in March 1989, many observers feared that hope for El Salvador's peace and democracy had to be postponed, if not abandoned. This fear was related to the historical hard-line anti communist reputation of this party.<sup>19</sup> In his inaugural speech, President Cristiani belied those fears and indicate that he, personally, wanted a political settlement with the FMLN-FDR. A series of wide ranging negotiations between Cristiani's government and the FMLN-FDR began in 1989 and culminated with the peace accords signed in Mexico City on January 1992.

In El Salvador, two negotiation periods took place: President Duarte's negotiations (1984-1988), and Cristiani's negotiation period (1989-1992).

### **1. President Duarte's Negotiations (1981-1988)**

Duarte's election brought the first era of formal peace negotiations. With the support of the military and the involvement of all segment of society, President Duarte invited the FMLN-FDR to the negotiating table to discuss the end of the Salvadoran armed conflict. The

most important meeting of this period took place in 1984 in La Palma, a small town in the Department of Chalatenango. Its importance resided in that for the first time since the war started, the government and the FMLN-FDR came together to debate over a negotiating table.

*a. National Factors*

From the government standpoint, an open, flexible and enthusiastic attitude was kept. Despite the unsuccessful outcome, Duarte had many political triumphs, such as the accords to "humanize" the conflict, as a direct result of the meeting of Ayagualo,<sup>20</sup> the exchange of prisoners, and the declaration of amnesty during the civil war.<sup>21</sup> However, Duarte failed to create a completely trusting environment and a dynamic peace process in which both sides felt comfortable with the other's negotiating positions. This distrust was somehow promoted by the presence of U.S. military advisers in the country, the influence of national and international actors in the government decision-making process, and the divided position of the FMLN. Duarte's final achievement was the signing of the Esquipulas II Accords in 1987, that later changed the context of the negotiation process.

The position of the FMLN-FDR's negotiating commission was divided, little consistent and kept a very negative attitude throughout the peace talks. The FMLN wanted a military solution and the FDR wanted a diplomatic-political solution. These two tendencies prevailed every time they came to the negotiating table. Probably the FMLN and the FDR promoted each other's position. This attitude was seen for the first time after the unsuccessful meeting of Sesory in 1986.<sup>22</sup>

As we discussed in previous chapters, during this period, the military had taken a different role in the government. Political decisions were left to civilians, the presence of the military in the negotiating meetings, technically speaking, was meant to provide military advice to the president. Obviously, the military still had strong influence in the president's decisions for two main reasons. First, at this point, the military was playing the most important role in the nation's effort to defend the democratic system. Second, most of the civilian institutions had been weakened by the terrorist attacks.

The military position was heading toward the strengthening of the democratic system. They had understood that the causes of the national crisis had deep social-economical roots, and truly believed that the solution of the conflict was not going to come through a military victory alone. In that sense, the advice of the armed forces at this point was to continue building the necessary democratic institutions and to force the FMLN to participate into them. The government invited the Catholic Church to participate in the negotiation process. They played a role of mediator in the negotiation process and formulated and developed schedules, agendas and conditions for each party before they came to the negotiation table, and offered proposals to overcome the negotiation barriers.

***b. International Factors***

El Salvador was caught in the snowball effect created by the East-West confrontation. The Cold War, which had fueled the continuity of the armed conflict, came to a dead end. The endless support of the Communist Countries and the European Union for the FMLN, and the millions of dollars in support from the United States for the armed forces and the government created a stalemate. These factors will be further discussed in this chapter.

***c. Reasons for Failure***

Duarte's peace efforts failed due to several factors. The negotiating commission of the insurgent movement was a vicious circle of internal disputes between the FMLN and the FDR, making their position inconsistent over the negotiation table. The armed conflict was clearly part of the classic East-West confrontation causing the war to come to a stalemate. Neither the government with the U.S., nor the FMLN with the Communist party wanted to give up their commitment to the military solution. The FMLN-FDR was not cooperative, they believed that the military victory was possible and they could not overcome their internal conflict. Most of the political society remained uninvolved, leaving the governmental party, the Christian Democratic Party (*Partido Demócrata Cristiano* or PDC), alone in the politics. Neither elite consensus nor unity occurred in this period.

## **2. President Cristiani's Negotiation Period (1989-1992)**

When Cristiani came to office in 1989, many political events were taking place around the world that created a favorable negotiating environment. Some of these events were the fall of the Berlin wall; Gorbachev's controversial Perestroika; the election of the President George Bush; and the beginning of the end of the Cold war. During the first year of the ARENA Government, the negotiation process experienced major changes. In his inaugural speech, President Cristiani promised the Salvadoran people that his government would stop the expensive and bloody war. He also offered to immediately resume the peace talks with an adequate negotiation method and within a constitutional framework, as intended previously by Duarte. The Cristiani proposal had basically five negotiation points.<sup>23</sup>

- To analyze feasible mechanisms to generate a permanent, and serious debate between the democratic sector and the FMLN-FDR.
- To create a government dialogue commission with democratic personalities. This commission would contact those persons designated by the FMLN to formulate a work plan. Also, they would discuss the necessary aspects to achieve the incorporation of all social sectors to the democratic process , and the mechanisms for a better representative democracy.
- Once the debate started, it could not cease unilaterally by any motive; until a concrete solution to the conflict was presented to any organization of higher political decision (i.e., the U.N. or the O.A.S.).
- The Government, at all the stages of the negotiation process, would be in constant conference with national socio-political forces, such as political parties, worker organizations, the Church and others.
- To propose that the peace talks take place outside El Salvador, especially in other Central American nation.

Cristiani's dialogue was similar to the President Duarte's. The difference was that Cristiani's negotiation procedures made the peace talks more dynamic and flexible to agreement. Additionally, this framework allowed for popular acceptance of a political solution and participation by both parties. As a result, the peace talks resumed in 1989. The procedures and proposals were almost identical to those used by Duarte, but again, several national and international factors influenced the outcome of Cristiani's peace process.

*a. National Factors*

National and international organizations feared that Cristiani government would reject a political solution to the conflict and push for a military victory. On the contrary, Cristiani convinced the far right, the FMLN moderates, and the United States that he was sincere, honest, and capable of imposing his political decisions. His attitude motivated the FMLN to come to the negotiation table, even though they still had doubts about his right-wing political tendencies, meaning, extreme anti-communist and pro-military.

Cristiani recognized that El Salvador's economic hopes for recovery were tied to U.S. Congressional support. Therefore, he and his government continued to push for a political solution. Cristiani knew that a political solution was the only way to continue to receive economic aid from the United States even when political and military events challenged the peace talks.<sup>24</sup>

Important changes also occurred in the FMLN-FDR. In 1988, the leadership of the FMLN began to seriously evaluate its politico- military goals and strategies. The conditions that took them to conduct a reevaluation were the chaotic results of the general offensive of 1989 and the negative outcome obtained by FMLN's delegates, who visited different countries to obtain support for their cause (Mexico, France, Nicaragua, and Cuba).

The message to the FMLN was that a military victory was far from imminent and that the FMLN should adopt and stay supportive of a political settlement. Internally, the FMLN realized that their military power and political influence was declining.

The fall of the Berlin wall, the economic changes under Mikhail Gorbachev, and the crumbling of the Marxist-Leninist political system also sparked two changes in the FMLN. First, Joaquín Villalobos said that "the rebels were not dogmatic socialists but were demanding solutions to the country's problems within a Western style democracy". This statement gave way to a drastic shift in the ideological perspective and direction of the FMLN general command. For years they used the classic Communist discourse, where the only alternative was to achieve the "dictatorship of proletariat", suddenly they were talking about democracy as a viable solution. Second, Soviet international policies shifted extremely when the Soviet government said that it would not continue to support any revolutionary movement. This gave even more reasons for the FMLN to question their capability to

continue their military operations. Villalobos' modified positions made evident an ideological division between two tendencies of the FMLN's general command: Orthodox communists and Social-Democrats. Two symptoms of this division were that: 1) the FMLN openly defied Villalobos' attitude and continued its military operations; and 2) the negotiation process was seen by some FMLN commanders as a political instrument to prolong the war, and by others as a way to obtain full power of the government.

Military actions, such as the 1989 and 1990's offensive, showed the government that the FMLN-FDR was trying to negotiate from a position of strength. Clearly, the FMLN continued to use military actions every time their interests were threatened by the peace process. When the armed force made efforts to stop the escalation of the conflict, the FMLN took a harder and less flexible position over the negotiation table. They retaliated by pressing the issue of the purge and reduction of the armed forces.<sup>25</sup> This created uncertainty and confrontation between the two negotiating commissions and caused a stalemate in the peace talks.

Changes also took place in the military. There was a philosophical split within the military between moderates, who showed flexibility toward the peace talks, and others that look at the negotiation as a kind of weakness. This division became evident after the signing of San José I, II, and III in July- September, 1990.<sup>26</sup> Despite this potential division, the armed force's leadership recognized that a conflict resolution must have had a social basis and that a military victory was going to be too expensive in every sense, if possible at all. Consequently, the original military strategy was expanded to a national strategy to reach a peaceful resolution of the conflict. A military commission advised the government, mainly on issues related to the military element of the counterinsurgency war. At this point the military had committed terrible mistakes, as the assassination of the Jesuit priests in San Salvador in the first week of November 1989, and the alleged corruption among high ranking officers. The influence of the military had been weakened by national and international pressures.

The civilian sectors had changed their attitude also and the FMLN continued their efforts to mobilized the masses. The insurgents created the Permanent Committee of the National Debate (*Comité Permanente del Debate Nacional* or CPDN) in an attempt to

bring in all those national organizations that had rejected their communist ideologies in the past years. This committee also sought to promote civil society's involvement in the negotiated settlement through violent demonstrations. Most of the Salvadoran civil society had different view. They went to the polls on five different occasions (1989-1991) and believed that military actions were not the appropriate solution to the socio-political problems of the country. The Salvadoran people reaffirmed this position after the 1989 offensive when they did not support the FMLN's armed attack on the Capital. By 1990, after this armed offensive in November, most of the Salvadoran people pushed the government and the FMLN to end the armed conflict through a peaceful negotiation. During this period the Church was replaced in its role of mediator by the United Nations. The Catholic Church opted to support the left and the CPDN. They all were inspired by the Liberation theology.

Opposition parties, in a natural effort to weaken the party in government came to support the negotiating position of the FMLN and pushed for political reforms in the peace accords. The government obtained limited support, but it managed to demonstrate its serious effort to attain political and judicial reforms in the accords. Political parties played a vital role during the negotiation period. The most relevant evidence took place in September 1990 with the Inter-Party Dialogue Commission Agreement, which asked for a revision of the rules governing the March 1991 legislative and municipal elections. These changes expanded the size of the legislative assembly from sixty to eighty four seats and created more openings for the leftist candidates. The Salvadoran political parties supported the negotiations in April 1991 and proposed a constructive formula for the role and function of the truth commission, and stood together to ward off FMLN efforts to change the procedures for constitutional amendment.<sup>27</sup>

***b. International Factors***

In January 1984, the Kissinger Commission's report<sup>28</sup> provided a consensus framework for U.S. policy toward El Salvador. The report had different political emphases within Washington, D.C. (Congress stressed Human Rights considerations and the Reagan administration emphasized support for the Salvadoran Armed Forces). This consensus held until 1989 when new administrations took office in El Salvador and the United States. The Bush administration clearly announced to the Salvadoran Government that a negotiated

Bush's administration clearly announced to the Salvadoran Government that a negotiated solution was the only way to stop the armed conflict.

After the leftist military offensive of 1989, the United States also admitted that the civil war did not have a military solution. Assistant Secretary of State Bernard W. Aronson stated at a congressional hearing that "El Salvador needs peace, and the only path to peace is at the negotiating table."<sup>29</sup> Those words showed a significant shift in the U.S. position toward the Salvadoran armed conflict. Aronson recognized that the Reagan policy of isolating the FMLN militarily had failed and that it was time to pursue peace through dialogue. Many other United States officials agreed with Aronson. In testimony before the Senate, Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, stated that "In El Salvador, we believe that this is the year to end the war through a negotiated settlement that will guarantee a safe political space for all Salvadorans".<sup>30</sup> A week later, General Maxwell R. Thurman, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Southern Command, endorsed talks between the Salvadoran government and the FMLN to end the armed conflict, and stated his belief that the parties were on that course.<sup>31</sup>

Changes in the former Soviet Union played a larger role. In January 1989, the former Soviet Union announced to the FMLN that they could not afford military and economic aid and that the FMLN should pursue negotiations with the Salvadoran government.<sup>32</sup> The Soviet Glasnost and Perestroika seemed to reinforce this trend. Mikhail Gorbachev's determination to improve relations with the United States prompted a dynamic withdrawal from Central America. The Soviets halted arms shipment to the Nicaraguan government in January 1989 and called on the FMLN to seek support from western nations. This convinced the FMLN to come over to the negotiating table.

During the offensive of 1989, the FMLN competed with the collapse of the Soviet Empire for world attention. The Eastern block was moving away from totalitarian regimes and centralized economies. Cuba, a key FMLN ally, was becoming increasingly isolated from its communists allies and the Soviet Union's new thinking was prompting the FMLN to moderate its ideology even further. The November 1989 Malta summit showed Washington, D.C. how far Moscow was willing to go to assure that it was not militarily supporting the FMLN. According to a French news report in late 1989, the Soviets told

Cuban and Nicaraguan high ranking officials to stop supplying arms to the FMLN.<sup>33</sup> After the Malta summit, President Bush accepted Soviet claims that they were not directly supplying the FMLN and were pressuring their allies to stop arms shipment to El Salvador.<sup>34</sup>

The turnabout in U.S. policy toward El Salvador was accomplished by Congress in 1990, after the United Nations committed itself to play a major role in the negotiated settlement of the Salvadoran civil war in April 1990. Consequently, in October 1990, the U.S. Congress tied any military and economic aid to El Salvador not only to human rights issues, but to progress in the negotiation process. After this shift in U.S. policy, both sides tried to sell their positions to the U.S. Government and to other governments around the world. Cristiani's administration tried to distance itself from the right-wing party foundation and said they were committed to a negotiated solution. The FMLN offered to talk and to moderate their negotiation position. The Bush administration, at the end of 1980 and the beginning of 1990, put El Salvador on the back burner, due to events in Panama and Nicaragua. Events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe occupied the spotlight of U.S. foreign policy. In the end, the United States played a helpful but tangential role in support of the negotiation process.

The U.N.O also played an important role. Throughout the negotiation process, the U.N.O. was actively involved and acted, at least in theory, as an impartial arbitrator. They helped set the deadline for the signing of the peace accords and the schedule for their implementation. The United Nations Observers Mission for El Salvador (*Misión de Observadores de las Naciones Unidas para El Salvador* or ONUSAL) would have the role of overseeing and supervising the implementation phase of the peace accords.

In summary, with the limited support received by the mentioned national and international factors in the first period, the outcome of the process was unsuccessful. With the positive change in the behavior of those factors, the second phase of the process managed to be a successful event ending in the signing of the peace accords in Mexico on 16 January 1992. The Salvadoran conflict brought in many outside actors such as the United States, the former Soviet Union, regional influences (especially Venezuela and Mexico), rebel supporters (Cuba and Nicaragua), and some western European powers. These external actors often overwhelmed the locals with their own concerns, interests, and

agendas. Some of these actors, if not all, tried to micro manage the Salvadoran crisis through diplomatic, economic and military means but, in the end, it was the Salvadoran people who determined their own fate over the negotiating table.

### C. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

From the preceding information we can draw an interesting comparison between the two negotiation processes. As we stated in our introduction, there are three dimensions in which these processes can be analyzed: The definition or unity shown by the contenders, the degree of participation of the civil society and finally, the degree of international intervention.

The unity of the Salvadoran guerrilla allowed the process in El Salvador to be clearly defined as one. The only insurgent organization that the Salvadoran government had to deal with, was the FMLN-FDR. Despite of their initial differences, they consistently kept coming to the negotiation table as one movement. On the side of the government, there were only two tendencies one under Duarte's and the other under Cristiani's administration. This situation gave continuity and a defined direction to the process. In contrast, in Colombia, the negotiation had been fragmented in relation to the insurgent organizations represented in the various processes, and also through the time the negotiations have been taken place. In this sense, in Colombia there has not been one negotiation process, but at least nine, which has taken several directions. During the President Betancur's administration, there were negotiations with the FARC, the M-19, EPL, ADO and some detachment of the ELN.

During Barco and Gaviria's administrations there were negotiations with the M-19, EPL and Quintin Lame. This fragmentation has not allowed the Colombian government to get a final and total peace agreement. It has been extremely difficult for the Colombian government to accommodate and respond to multiple demands, especially when the table is being used by the guerrillas to strengthen its image and definitively not to end the conflict. Some analysts argue that the Colombian government has not been able to identify and exploit the essential differences among the guerrilla groups. But on the other hand, the misguided management of the peace process disconnected the armed movement, in large part, from intellectuals and from volatile public opinion.

Currently, government and guerrillas let know each other their peace intentions. The military also want to participate in order to obtain the release of 60 army soldiers and 10 marines, kidnaped by the guerrilla in August 1996 and January 1997, respectively. The former Colombian Attorney General Alfonso Gómez Méndez argues that peace processes have failed in Colombia because of the lack of active participation of the armed forces, the lack of societal conscience (no "civil" society as if there were a sharp split between civil and military societies) about the problem, and because neither human rights nor socio-economical scopes of peace agreements are included as subjects of the negotiation agendas.<sup>35</sup>

The second difference is the degree of participation of the civil society in the very process. In El Salvador, in the second period, during Cristiani administration (1989-1992) a high degree of participation of domestic actors, other than the government and the armed forces, existed. Political parties, the Catholic Church, some important economic sectors and other sectors of civil society, represented in non-governmental organizations participated in the process. These organizations added new dimensions to the process, either to support the government side or the insurgent side. Colombia has not experienced this phenomenon. As we analyzed in chapter IV, in Colombia the political, economic and religious sectors of society has not been affected in the same degree as in El Salvador. The civilian sectors in Colombia do not feel the urgent need to participate, we argue, because they do not feel the threat that they felt in El Salvador.

The process of pacification is not dependent solely on the good will of the guerrillas or on the offensive military operations. It is a national responsibility in which labor unions, traditional parties, and the rightist groups have to accept that the negotiation process implies mutual concessions.

Colombia's current process, resembles the first period of Duarte in El Salvador (1984-1989) when the government and the military were left alone in the negotiation process (even though they should be seen as one actor, we stress that differentiation, because the military in this period, enjoyed a high degree of autonomy and they were not so convinced that negotiation was the best alternative).

During the period of President Cristiani (1989-1992) the domestic actors changed their attitude, which made possible the end of the conflict. The military understood that the conflict was a social phenomenon, and contributed to design a national strategy, instead of pretending a sole military victory, which proved to be virtually impossible. The Church step aside to let the United Nations serve as a mediator, hoping to obtain more international credibility for the process. Civil society also understood that the end of the war was a national responsibility and decided to pressure and contribute to gain the peace through a national dialogue. They had a common and vital objective: survival. In El Salvador, a failure of the negotiation process was unacceptable, because after the failure, the next step could have been serious disintegration of vital institutions and arguable catastrophic damage to the economy. In this sense, in Colombia, the domestic actors have not sufficient incentive so far to change their attitude.

The third element is the degree of international intervention. Both countries were affected by the United States foreign policy on the one hand, and the communist influence on the other. However the degree of these influences were evidently very different. In Colombia, the government has not been pressured to come to the table as it was in El Salvador. The United States designed a whole strategy, according to its interest to promote and to force the dialogue. This strategy was based among others, on democratization and human rights issues, which has had different impact in the two cases. As a matter of fact, Tlaxcala and Caracas, were the first evidence of the conflict "internationalization", which is highly criticized by Colombian political analysts, who believed that by doing this, the Colombian government is strengthening the insurgents' image. The United Nations has not intervened in Colombia, and the United States has not pressure the government to negotiate, arguably, because they do not perceived a significant threat to its national interests.

Colombia has to submit proofs about the FARC's connection with the narcotraffick, as producer, carrier, or protector, in order to gain the United States interest and help to destroy the guerrillas. Colombian Army has evidence that was submitted to Congress during the hearings preceding the decertification.

From the Guerrillas perspective, in El Salvador, the FMLN was pushed to the negotiation table by the drastic political changes in its communist supporters. Logistical

support was dramatically reduced and the ideological discourse was vanished. While in Colombia, the guerrilla movements maintained a high degree of autonomy, which has always been reinforced by the narcotrafficking organizations.

We need to keep in mind that the attitudes of the national and international actors were highly influenced by the intensity of the military confrontation, and the nature of its objectives as described in the previous chapters.

## NOTES

1. Fred C. Iklé. *How Nations Negotiate*. (New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1987), p. 3-4.
2. Hernando Pizarro. Revolutionary Guerrilla Groups in Colombia, in Charles Berquist et al. *Violence in Colombia*, (Scholarly Resources Inc. Wilmington, Delaware, 1992), p.185.
3. Diego Gantiva, *Subversive Violence in Colombia*. (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1992), Essay for the class Research in Low Intensity Conflict (LIC), p. 7.
4. Pizarro, p. 186.
5. In Colombia the beginning of the term is August 7 , anniversary of the Boyacá battle which sealed the nation's independence in 1819.
6. Fernando Landazábal, *El Precio de la Paz*, ( Bogotá, Planeta Editorial Colombiana, 1988), p. 54.
7. Diego Gantiva, *Subversive Violence in Colombia*, p. 7.
8. Juan F. Román. *Guerrilla Violence in Colombia: Examining Causes and Consequences*. Thesis, (Monterey, Naval Postgraduate School, 1994), p. 59.
9. Jenny Pearce, Colombia: Inside the Labyrinth (London, 1990), p.175. Quoted by Lawrence Boudon, in *The Guerrillas and the State: The Role of the State in the Colombian Peace Process*, Latin American Studies, issue 28, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 282.
10. In Colombia the offer of taxicabs, scholarships to study in Europe , and other gifts to the amnestied guerrillas, made many people upset with the government. The common saying was that it was better to be an insurgent than to live within the law. As a consequence, many citizens without a criminal background asked the government to give them some help in the same way as the insurgents. Many people took advantage of the situation and declared themselves to be guerrillas.
11. Mauricio García, *De la Uribe a Tlaxcala. Procesos de Paz*.(Santafé de Bogotá, CINEP, 1992), p. 115.
12. This Commission was conformed by two former presidents, the Prime Cardinal, the chairman of the most powerful association of industrialists (ANDI), and the general director of the number one newspaper in Colombia, *El Tiempo*.
13. Jesús Bejarano. *Entre los Laberintos de la Paz y Las Anchas Avenidas de la Democracia*. Political Essay, (Santafé de Bogotá, CINEP, 1993), p. 25.
14. Mauricio García, p. 236.
15. "Diálogo sin plazos ni treguas: gobierno". *El Tiempo*, 18 Nov.1994, p. 3A.
16. "Diálogos, si o no ?", in *Cromos*, weekly magazine. Santafé de Bogotá, 15 January 1996, p.32.
17. "Doce Puntos de Negociación del ELN", *El Tiempo*, 9 Noviembre 1994, p. 15A.

18. Jesús A. Bejarano, *Una Agenda para la Paz*. (Santafé de Bogotá, Tercer Mundo Editores, 1995), p. 137.
19. The ARENA party was founded by retired Major Roberto D'Abuisson. The party started with a prestige of having an extremist anti-communists line of thought. He was accused by the FMLN, and by the *Tutela Legal del Arzobispado* (The San Salvador Catholic Church's legal office) of being responsible of organizing the right-wing death squads, and also of the assassination of Archbishop Arnulfo Romero on 24 of March 1980. These charges were never proved, still the opposition always used these arguments to discredit the Arena party, before the public opinion.
20. See Appendix K, The meeting of Ayagualo, 1984.
21. See Appendix K, The meeting of Caracas, 1987.
22. See Appendix, Sesory 1986.
23. *La Prensa Gráfica*, San Salvador :El Salvador, 16 June 1989, p.1.
24. See Appendix K, The Offensives of 1989 and 1990.
25. See Appendix K, the Meeting of Oaxtepec, 19 June 1990.
26. See Appendix K, The Negotiation Proposal in San José.
27. *La Prensa Gráfica*, San Salvador, El Salvador, 13 June 1991, p.1.
28. The Kissinger commission report of 1984 (The National Bipartisan Commission on Central America) favored the State Department Strategy: El Salvador was important to U.S. interests; a victory of the FMLN was unacceptable; fighting the guerrillas should be left to the Salvadoran armed forces, with heavy U.S. financing.
29. Assistant Secretary of State Aronson, prepared statement before the House Foreign Affair Sub- committee on Western Hemispheric Affairs, on 24 January 1990.
30. Secretary of State Baker, prepared statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "U.S. Foreign Policy Priorities and FY 1991 Budget request," Current Policy No. 1245. (Washington, D.C. Bureau of Public Affair , U.S. Department of State, February 1, 1990).
31. Testimony of General Thruman, Commander in Chief U.S. Southern Command, stenographic transcript of hearing before the committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, February 8, 1990.
32. *The Washington Post*, January 24, 1989, p. A15.
33. *The Washington Post*, November 30, 1989, p. A37.
34. *The Washington Post*, December 4, 1989, p. A1.
35. Alfonso Gómez Méndez, "Por qué la Paz no está con nosotros ?", especial essay for *Suplemento Dominical* (Sunday issue), in *El Tiempo*, Santafé de Bogotá, 12 January 1997.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

Before we present any argument we need to admit that there cannot be two identical societies. There is a wide range of current or potential differences in geography, history, value system, and culture in general. Since conflicts are the result of opposing values and/or interests generated within these different societies, it would be fair to say that it is very unlikely to find two conflicts with identical characteristics.

In our study, we have realized how within the societies of Colombia and El Salvador, particular socio-political, economical and ideological factors have influenced in different ways the patterns of decisions and actions of the main actors. The pattern of civil-military relations is one of the most notable difference. In Colombia the military participation in politics was a phenomenon that took place at the end of the last century and at the early stages of the current century. In El Salvador the military intervention is a relatively new phenomenon which started in 1931. Both countries have suffered, in different degrees, the same situation but at different time periods. It is evident that in El Salvador this happened at the "wrong" time, given the fact that Democracy was the global tendency and that Communism was trying to exploit every possible sign of authoritarianism and social injustice.

Both countries developed powerful insurgent movements, arguably, rooted in the popular claims for social justice, democracy and respect for human rights. For many reasons these movements evolved in different ways. The actions taken by the incumbents governments, and the influence of external actors had different effects in the development of the conflicts.

In El Salvador, in a relative short period of time the FMLN turned into the most powerful guerrilla force in Latin America, but was not able to defeat the Salvadoran government U.S.-supported strategy, and the efficiency and adaptability of Salvadoran armed forces. At the same time the insurgent movement lost its ideological and logistical support from the communists countries. The FMLN military structure had to vanish because it did not represent the Salvadoran's ideals of getting peace and justice. However the FMLN by giving up its military aspiration and communist ideology, turned into a powerful political party. The FMLN has kept its name as a way to symbolize, before its members continuity

of its existence. But the truth is that the original movement is dead. The military structure disappeared and its ideology is not communist anymore but it is contained within a democratic frame.

In Colombia, the armed conflict has lasted for over forty years, but its intensity has been relatively low. The way the Colombian government has managed the situation, (perhaps by accident, without a defined strategy) has not allowed the guerrilla to develop as they FMLN did. Changes were promoted in the political system to counter the insurgency's claims. The military was kept out the political decisions, avoiding the possibilities to be attacked and weakened from the political arena. The guerrillas have not been able to maintain generalized uncertainty, nor have they brought the violence to a phase of civil war.

Since the development and dynamics of these two conflicts are not identical, it follows that the processes to end them are also very unlikely to be so. Finishing the conflicts would mean the solution of essential opposing interests. These interests are rooted in the factors causing the current violence, which happen to be different in both countries.

We have come to the conclusion that the Salvadoran model of negotiation (if we can call it that) cannot be applied entirely to the Colombian case. Definitely not every action or decision taken by the Salvadoran actors qualify to be adopted by the Colombians. This would be a supreme act of ignorance. However we should not close the possibilities to learn and enrich our perspectives from the Salvadoran conflict.

#### **A. THE FALLACIES OF INTERPRETATION**

Any simplistic interpretation should be avoided. Pretending to conduct simplistic comparisons to suggest that identical solutions could be achieved, might generate dangerous interpretations from the key actors in the processes. Since Colombia is the country that may benefit from the Salvadoran experience, we will present this potential misinterpretations from the Colombian perspective.

##### **1. From the Insurgency Perspective**

A superficial interpretation of the Salvadoran process might create the false idea that they can copy the behavior of the FMLN to achieve similar results. In this sense they would

want to present similar demands in complex matters as the transformation or dissolution of the armed forces. Even further, they could try to increase the intensity of the violence in an attempt to bring the armed conflict to a phase of civil war. Then they would try to internationalize it and pretend to bring in external pressures on the government to achieve their political objectives, as the FMLN did in El Salvador. All this, of course would be a terrible mistake, because Colombian insurgency does not have the unity, representativeness, and international support that the FMLN had. We need to keep in mind that the FMLN invested many years of effort to build that impressive net for political and financial support.

## **2. From the Colombian Government Perspective**

Another mistaken perception may be encountered. If President Alfredo Cristiani, negotiated with the terrorist of the FMLN and made considerable concessions, he could be seen as a weak political leader. He, it could be argued, let the insurgents transform the political system setting as bad precedent to other democratic systems. This would not be accurate, because Cristiani led a country where the whole political system was being transformed, not by the action of the guerrilla force, but a convergence of national and international factors. Some transformations were simply the result of the overwhelming need to modernize the state, yet the FMLN claims victory for those changes. The conflict and the dialogues occurred within the framework of that process of transformation.

## **3. From the Civil Society Perspective**

A superficial interpretation of the role played by the Salvadoran society, which participated widely during the process of negotiation, might invite the Colombian civil society to press a political solution, obligating the government to make the "wrong" concession in a desperate effort to end the ongoing bloody confrontation. In this dimension, people could trade short term benefits for catastrophic damage of the democratic system in the long term.

## **B. LESSONS LEARNED**

There are some important lessons to be considered, related to the guerrillas, the armed forces, the international meddling, and the intensity of the conflict.

1. Evidence supports that in this case, the greater the links that the guerrilla forces had with social and political organizations, the more likely it was that the guerrillas would contemplate a political settlement that allows them to enter the mainstream politics. This is the case of the FMLN, that abandoned the military effort, but they were somehow sure that the political arena was open its members. As the current events in El Salvador have shown, the FMLN had, and took advantage of, the opportunity to bring its political agenda to the democratic debate and let the people decide. The Colombian guerrilla do not have those links. The opportunity for survival can not be placed under the democratic frame, but under indefinite clandestineness and alliances with the organized crime.
2. From the military perspective, we conclude that the greater the participation the military have in politics, the more likely it is that the armed forces will be weakened by a revolutionary process and the more likely that they will have to accept political settlements even against their own corporate and personal interests. The evidence also show that armed forces can participate in the building or strengthening of a democratic system, by keeping three essential attitudes: first, to avoid interfering in the political process; second to modernize their organization to meet the military challenge of armed insurgency and third, not to allow any member to act above the law, which they are supposed to defend.
3. We also found that the more intensely the armed conflict affect the different sectors of society, the more likely it is that the society will be willing to make concessions and to participate in a process of negotiation. In El Salvador every sector in society was deeply affected by the violence. The negotiation was a national priority and not just a political act decided by the central government. In Colombia there are still sectors of society that feel that they do not need to negotiate. It seems that for some people, negotiating would bring worse consequences that continuing the conflict. If that should be the case in Colombia, it would be appropriate to formalize an strategy to end the conflict by other means, not just remain in a reactive situation where the guerrillas may be tempted to exercise its initiative.
4. International meddling can and will influence the attitude of domestic actors, especially when the degree of dependence is high. In El Salvador, the FMLN was willing to demobilized its military structure only after insuring the compromise of the Salvadoran government before the UN, to allow the FMLN to be reinserted into the political and social structure, without the danger of being destroyed, afterwards as they feared. In Colombia. It seems that the insurgents do not want to become a political movement. They either know that if they do become a political party, they will not have enough support to survive, or they just have found an attractive way of living which cannot be replaced by any international meddling or domestic settlement.

### C. CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Negotiations in revolutionary processes should be considered only when they are genuine building blocks for strengthening democratic systems. Negotiators need to be aware of that negotiations are powerful tools to enhance political and military capabilities of the guerrilla movements. However negotiation processes can also be used to obtain serious compromises and to discredit insurgents before public opinion. Government should recognize when dialogue is a genuine effort to end the conflict and when this is just a tactical maneuver to gain time or strength to keep the war going.

The best way to isolate and defeat insurgents, is not by the means of military actions alone. Governments need to identify and to correct structural deficiencies in the systems. They need also to legitimize their actions by creating environments where every sector of society is heard, respected and taken care of.

In both cases it was proved that the more positive changes were made in the political system, the weaker the guerrilla movements got, basically due to the fact that the people did not support illegitimate claims from the insurgents. However, military actions in the short run will strengthen the position of the contenders in the negotiation process. If a the government decide to negotiate it must cause enough damage to the insurgent military structure to insure credibility and respect. This formula will certainly be applied by the guerrilla as the FMLN did in El Salvador and the Colombian guerrilla has started to do in 1997. The government should carefully apply enough military pressure on the neuralgic centers of guerrilla forces, so that they face the dilemma : negotiation or extinction.

If a government is sure of its legitimacy and prestige they should not be afraid of internationalizing the conflict, because the guerrilla will be exposed to international criticism. They will also be obliged to accept formal compromises which will make them more vulnerable to public opinion. Insuring international political and financial support should be a priority for the governments. The FMLN in El Salvador demonstrated how important it is to have an international network to insure international political and financial support. While Salvadoran government showed us the dangers of not having them. The government need to build an international net with official and non official missions to look for political and financial support, and to counter the campaigns of disinformation that

insurgents are used to conducting. This needs to take into account adynamic attitude of the diplomatic missions and the dissemination of literature containing current information to influence the public opinion.

It is necessary to discredit the thesis of military tie. Armed forces are not intended to destroy guerrilla forces, but to preserve political systems. Insurgencies are social phenomenons rooted in socio-economical and political deficiencies. If these deficiencies disappear, the probabilities that the insurgents will lose social and ideological support will increase, and they will probably become simply outlaws and delinquents as the narcotraffickers. Narcotraffic is a variable that only plays in Colombia. If a crime like narcotraffic is essential to the Colombian guerrilla movement, because it is its biggest source of financial support, it is very unlikely that guerrillas are willing to change this status overnight. They will probably not be willing to leave their strongholds. These are literally "kingdoms" in the jungle. Guerrillas would not go to the cities where they feel like just regular people, and where they would probably feel in danger, unless being in the jungle becomes more dangerous (which should be the government's objective).

It is regrettable that there is no formula to solve a conflict with the complexity of a revolutionary process. The strategist facing this kind of conflict needs to use his deep instinct and experience to make sense out of the complexity of the situation. With this study we can only pretend to provide a little more amplitude to the analysis to make sure that the leaders do not overlook some essential considerations in the process of making strategical decisions.

We believe that, for an strategy to succeed, it must first exist. This strategy must be conceived and implemented. Doing nothing might be the right strategy, as long as it is a genuine decision with perfect understanding of its implications. The worst thing a government can do is not to have an strategy to counter the insurgency's, and to be reactive during the whole conflict.

People will always demand peace, people deserve peace. But before a government considers negotiating with the enemy, in order to recover the peace, this government would need to negotiate with its people the price (assuming they know) they are willing to pay. From then on, politicians, the military, and any other actor in the contest, must subordinate his interests to the interest of the whole society. That means: In a complex society where there are many deficiencies, once those deficiencies have been recognized, everybody must be willing to pay a price to correct them, as an investment for a better future.

**APPENDIX A. COLOMBIAN ARMED FORCES' REPORT ABOUT  
GUERRILLAS' INVOLVEMENT IN NARCOTRAFFIC\***

**CONTENT:**

- 1. Information about drug traffic**
- 2. Guerrilla Financial Information.**
- 3. Copy of a handwritten document about coca paste general entries of guerrilla squad XV.**

**\* This document was presented in March 1997 to the U. S. Congress' Anti-Narcotics Committee by General HAROLD BEDOYA PIZARRO, Commanding General of the Colombian Armed Forces.**

## INFORMACION NARCOTRAFICO

1. NARCO-TERRORISMO  
(CARTEL DE LAS FARC)

Aunque se hacía evidente desde tiempo atrás que los vínculos entre la subversión y el narcotráfico eran un hecho, es en 1982, cuando se produce el primer documento escrito por las FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Comunistas) que menciona el tema. Este documento corresponde a la Séptima Conferencia Nacional Guerrillera, en ella se da como concepto frente al problema del narcotráfico que las *cuadrillas* (organizaciones guerrilleras de 100 miembros aproximadamente), deberían "mantener un equilibrio entre la producción de coca y cultivos de *economía familiar*" y realizar un especial trabajo de masas con los cultivadores de hoja de coca con el propósito de ganarlos para la revolución.

El equilibrio de producción, no obedecía a la preocupación de las FARC por el costo de la canasta familiar de los campesinos cultivadores de hoja de coca, quienes dada la confianza en la comercialización del producto, sus buenos precios, etc. habían dejado casi totalmente los cultivos tradicionales dándose el caso que en muchos sectores de los territorios nacionales la yuca, el plátano y además productos de consumo regional que anteriormente se cultivaban en todas las fincas, se traían ahora por avión desde el interior del país.

Esta situación representaba un problema a la organización guerrillera especialmente cuando concentraba un gran número de hombres.

Son muchos los casos en los que se presentaron combates entre el Ejército y grupos armados, principalmente de las FARC, dedicados a

INFORMATION ABOUT DRUG  
TRAFFIC1. NARCO-TERRORISM GROUPS  
(THE FARC CARTEL)

Although the obvious link between subversive groups and drug traffic was factually evident from a long time ago, the first document produced by the FARC (standing for Communist Revolutionary Armed Forces) which mentions this subject openly came into the light in 1982. This document was elaborated during the Seventh National Guerrilla Conference and it contains the guiding principles assumed by the *cuadrillas* (guerrilla squads conformed by approximately one hundred combatants) in front of the drug traffic issue; the *cuadrillas* are ordered to "preserve the balance between the production of cocaine and the *economía familiar* (family consumption) crops" and carry out a special indoctrination work among cocaine-leaf raisers to have them on the side of the revolution.

Such a concern about the balance in the products cultivated was not originated in the FARC's interest to protect the peasants' economy. The starting end of the string was the trend among the countrymen to nearly abandon the production of traditional crops to produce cocaine leaf because of their great confidence in the easy marketing of the product, the good prices they used to get, and some other advantages which made that some food items -yucca, *plátano*, etc. and other consumption goods which once used to be produced locally -in the regions which were known as *los territorios nacionales* (literally, the national territories, i.e., the farthest territories from the see of the Central Government) were to be brought by airplane from the central regions of the country.



defender laboratorios de narcotraficantes. Estos les pagaban el impuesto acordado, mientras que los pequeños cultivadores y comerciantes estaban obligados a cancelar el llamado gramaje, cantidad de dinero que deben aportar por cada gramo de coca que se produzca. Los cabecillas de las cuadrillas de las FARC no se contentaron con los dineros que recibían por este concepto y deciden entrar en el negocio de la droga y es así como Jacobo Arenas (líder ideológico de esa organización, ya fallecido), ordena robar a los narcotraficantes; en uno de los casos una cuadrilla de las FARC roba más de 200 kilos de coca a Carlos Leder (caso que Leder mencionó en una entrevista televisada por un noticiero nacional).

En los mapas Nos. 1 - 2 - 3 y 4 podemos apreciar la coincidencia existente entre las zonas con cultivos ilícitos y la ubicación de los grupos narco-subversivos.

El diario "El Mercurio", de Santiago de Chile, en su edición del domingo 25 de febrero de 1996, publica un artículo del señor Miguel Posada -director del Centro de Análisis Sociopolíticos-; que se refiere a la alianza existente entre el narcotráfico y los grupos terroristas.

Such a trend posed a big problem for the guerrilla organization because a great number of men were concentrated in the coca leaf production labor.

A significant number of combats between the army troops and illegally armed groups, mainly the FARC squads, has involved guerrilla units whose main task is to protect and defend laboratories belonging to diverse kinds of drug traffickers who pay a previously fixed tax to the guerrillas. Petty raisers and traffickers have to pay the so-called *gramaje* - a given amount of money paid per each gram of cocaine produced. The FARC squad heads were not fully satisfied by the money they obtained this way, so they made up their mind to take on the drug business by themselves and Jacobo Arenas (ideological leader of the organization) sent orders to steal the *merchandise* from the traffickers. Thus, in only one case reported, a FARC squad took over two hundred kilograms coke from Carlos Leder. Leder himself spoke about the incident in a television interview for a news program.

On maps 1 - 2 - 3 and 4 we can appreciate the existence with in the zones the culture of illicit drugs and the different locations of narco-guerrilla groups.

The daily newspaper "El Mercurio" from Santiago Chile, in their edition of 25 february 1996, published an article from Mr. Miguel Posada, Director for Center for Analysis on Social - Politics; in which he referenced the alliance between the narco-traffickers and the terrorist groups.

## 2. FINANZAS DE LA GUERRILLA

## 2. GUERRILLA FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**E**stos documentos, algunos escritos a máquina, otros en computador y otros tantos manuscritos son pruebas de irrefutable valor que muestran como las FARC se han convertido en un CARTEL.

Se observa allí que se dedicaron no sólo como en los primeros tiempos a cobrar el gramaje y el impuesto por seguridad a laboratorios, sino que poseen sus propias zonas de cultivos de hoja de coca, sus cocinas de procesamiento, sus laboratorios de purificación, sus pistas y la comercialización en el exterior.

En septiembre de 1995 en el balance de la reunión plenaria del estado mayor del bloque sur, reunión a la que asistieron los cabecillas de las cuadrillas 2, 3, 13, 14, 15, 49 y 61, las cuales delinquen en Caquetá, Huila y Putumayo; emiten ordenes a sus secuaces, las que incluyen: "se cobrará por kilo de base \$ 25.000 y de cristal \$ 35.000 (hace 10 años se viene cobrando \$ 5.000 menos y la devaluación sigue creciendo)" (Anexo No.1). En cumplimiento de esto transmiten a las cuadrillas sus "planes financieros" que no son otra cosa que las instrucciones por escrito a un grupo de bandidos para que reunan dineros con destino a la organización delictiva mediante la coordinación con los mafiosos, los dueños de laboratorios, comisionistas (recolectores de pasta de coca que trabajan por comisión a los dueños de los laboratorios), cultivadores de coca, ganaderos, comerciantes y toda aquella persona o entidad que realice actividades económicas en la región. Esta coordinación establece la cantidad de dinero que deben aportar por periodo de tiempo o cantidad de producción, el incumplimiento del acuerdo a que se llegue da como respuesta de las FARC, la pena de muerte.

**T**he documents seized along with this material, some of which were typewritten, some others computer-printed, and even some others handwritten, constitute valuable and irrefutable evidence to demonstrate that the FARC have really turned into a real CARTEL.

These documents let us see the transition made from charging the *gramaje* fee and a safety tax on account of the protection given to the laboratories in the early period to the owning of areas devoted to producing coca leaves, processing *cocinas* (small laboratories), landing-strips, and a net to market the drug abroad.

In September, 1995, in the balance made after the plenary meeting of the Southern Block Staff (Annexed 1), the commanders of the second, third, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, forty-ninth, and sixty-seventh squads that perform their criminal acts throughout the territories of the Departments of Caquetá, Huila, and Putumayo sent orders to their comrades in order to: "charge \$25,000.00 per kilogram cocaine paste and \$35,000.00 per kilogram cocaine crystal (Starting ten years ago, amounts \$5,000.00 lower have been charged, and the devaluation process goes on)". To make their plans operational, the Staff Commanders sent to their squads what they considered to be their "financial plans" -a set of written instructions for the guerrilla combatants to help gather money to support their revolutionary cause- by coor-dinating their actions with drug mafia members, laboratory owners, commission agents (cocaine paste collectors who work on a commission basis for the laboratory owners), coca leaf raisers, cattle raisers, business people and any other person

cifra sirve para realizar un cálculo de lo que recibiría la organización en el transcurso de un año.

Tomando como referencia estos ingresos y teniendo en cuenta que la **cuadrilla 15** contaba con dos comisiones financieras: la comisión del "Caguan" y la del "15". Multiplicamos por dos la cantidad de dinero que recibe por año cada comisión para tener una apreciación de cuanto reciben aproximadamente por cuadrilla y nos daría una cifra de US\$ 10'500.000 dólares este dinero corresponde solamente al recibido por concepto de coca sin contar con los secuestros, boleteos, extorsiones y los llamados impuestos etc. El bloque recibiría US\$73'500.000 dólares y las FARC en total US\$ 514'500.000 aproximadamente. (Gráfica No. 1)

Estas cifras son bastante aproximadas a la realidad si se analiza que existen frentes del cartel de las FARC que reciben mucho más dinero como lo son los ubicados en el departamento del Guaviare, Vichada, Guainía y Vaupés.

Un informe del "pleno del estado mayor del bloque sur" (Anexo 9) realizado en el Caquetá traza como objetivo obtener mediante retenciones de carácter económico (secuestros) ocho mil doscientos millones de pesos, US\$ 8'200.000 aproximadamente. Además menciona que las cuadrillas 14 y 15 en solo dos actividades financieras obtuvieron US\$ 2'016.500, los que entregaron a los cabecillas de las FARC y en octubre de 1995 tenían US\$ 1'442.000 por entregar como parte de la cuota de los 4 millones de dólares que por fase (periodo de tiempo de 6 meses) el llamado estado mayor de las FARC les había impuesto.

En la agenda manuscrita (Anexo 10) del cabecilla de la cuadrilla 15 (alias Arturo Medina), menciona que esta posee entre otros elementos de infraestructura:

STATEMENT information contained therein usually corresponds to cocaine and, in some other cases, to collaboration, i.e., the tax imposed on the traders, stall-keepers, and any other inhabitant whose current activity does not have anything to do with drug traffic. Another piece of information -quays- records the fees charged on canoe and launch proprietors who operate along the rivers.

Only one of the commissions in charge of developing the "financial plan" gathered US \$1'750,000.00 in a four month lapse as appearing in the Caguan Overall Income Roll (Annexed 8). The projection for a whole year indicates that this commission would obtain as much as US \$5'250,000.00. These figures are just an indicator of the amounts of money picked up by the guerrilla organization during a year.

Based on the figures computed for the Fifteenth Squad, which had two financial commissions -the Caguan commission and the 15th commission-, that is, multiplying for two the amount of money received by each commission, we obtain a rough figure of US \$10'500,000.00 per squad which is the money picked on account of cocaine production alone. This does not include the money received as payments for kidnappings, *boleteo* (compulsory contributions demanded by means of written notes or *boletas*), extortion operations, and *taxes*, etc. Altogether, the block income sums up to US \$73'500,000.00 and the FARC reaches a great total US \$514'500,000.00 approximately (Graphic No. 1)

These figures are rather rough because the FARC cartel has many different fronts whose incomes differ notoriously. Some of them gather even more money than the ones analyzed here; take for instance the guerrilla units operating in the Departments of Guaviare, Vichada, Guainía, and Vaupés.

In a report entitled "Plenary to the Southern Block Staff" (Annexed 9) sent from

frente 30 de las FARC comprimida y envasada en recipientes metálicos en los que se simulaba exportación de piña para ser enviada a Alemania.

Se ha detectado que el bloque sur ha impuesto el cultivo de la amapola en 18 municipios del Huila, destruyendo 18.800 hectáreas de bosque alto andino. El Ejército en el mes de marzo ha destruido 88.5 hectáreas sembradas de 635.000 matas de amapola.

Para las actividades de protección de laboratorios las FARC vienen empleando campos minados, francotiradores, una excelente red de comunicaciones, así como hostigamientos y emboscadas a la fuerza pública y ataque a aeronaves, lo que les ha permitido derribar aviones y helicópteros, todo esto da mérito para calificar a las FARC como el cartel del narcotráfico más grande, poderoso e importante del país. (Ver fotografías anexas).

Los demás grupos guerrilleros también tienen participación en estas actividades que les arrojan importantes sumas de dinero como se calcula en el cuadro No. 2.

Con parte de estos dineros financian organizaciones encargadas de divulgar sus planteamientos y realizar un trabajo de manejo de imagen a nivel internacional como es el caso de México y Ginebra.

In January, 1996, a communication was intercepted. The message sent by an attorney representing some people who are members of the Cali Cartel to an unknown listener said that the FARC Thirtieth Front and the heads of the Cali Cartel were planning a joint effort to commit terrorist acts against government facilities and officials (Annexed 13).

During the month of February, a number of military operations were launched against the FARC Thirteenth Front -named after *Cacica La Gaitana* (a XVIth Century indian chief)- (Annexed 14 - Map No. 6) in the southern region of the Department of Huila. In the course of these actions, several financial plans similar to the ones seized from the Fifteenth Squad were found; this is a clear proof of the activities that the guerrilla organizations are carrying out concerning poppy crops and opium processing (Annexed 15 - 16); likewise, a system of communication code keys referring to cocaine paste and poppy was seized (Annexed 17), as well as over 40 tons marihuana belonging to the Thirtieth FARC Front. It is worthy remarking that the marihuana seized was compressed and packed in metallic containers in an effort to disguise the drug load as a pineapple shipment to be exported to Germany.

As a result of the operations in the area, it has been discovered a measure imposed by the FARC Southern Block which obliges peasants to cultivate poppy fields in eighteen different municipalities in the Department of Huila; this has brought along the destruction of 18,800 hectares of High Andean Forest (18). During the month of March, the army destroyed 88.5 cultivated hectares where 635,000 poppy plants were sown.

The FARC organization uses many different mechanisms to protect their laboratories and cultivated fields. They have mined huge land strips, they have sharp-shooters corps, they have established an excellent communication network

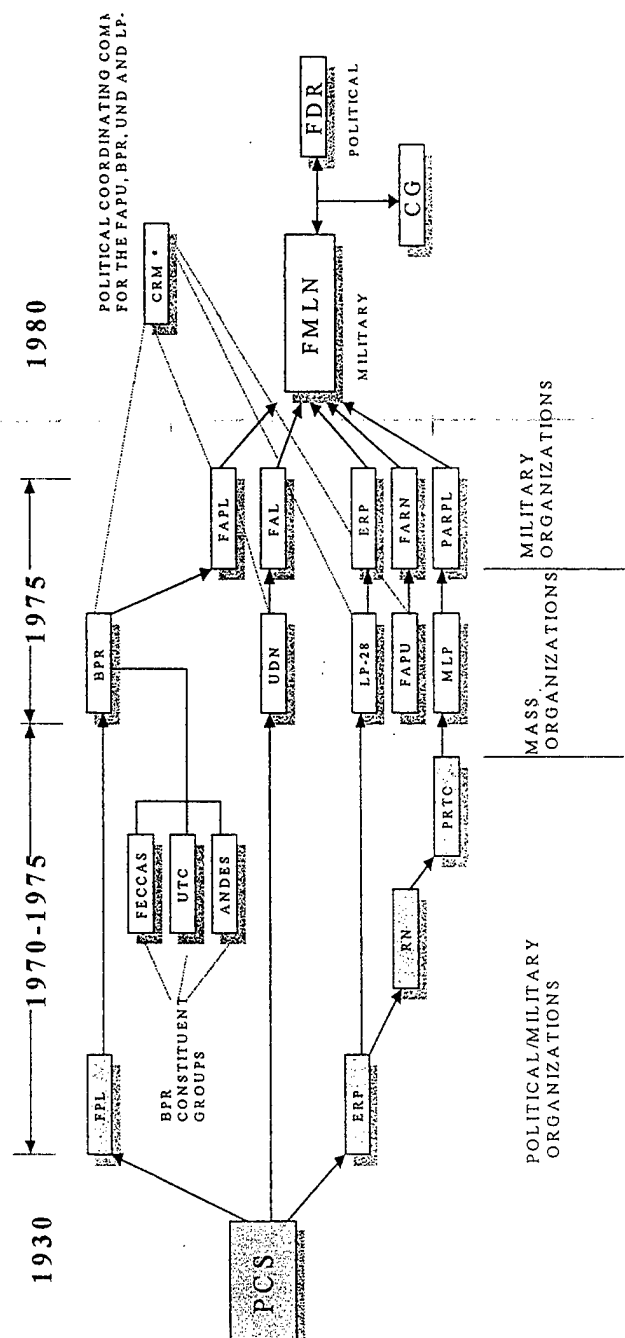
FUERZAS ARMADAS REVOLUCIONARIAS DE COLOMBIA EJERCITO DEL PUEBLO  
FARC-EP

FRENTE XV JOSE IGNACIO MORA  
PLANILLA DE CONTROL DE ENTRADAS GENERALES

| fecha    | No.Cta | Donante   | Detalle                   | Entrada  | Saldo     |
|----------|--------|-----------|---------------------------|----------|-----------|
| 11/14/95 | 1      | Isidoro   | porconscto de coca        | 4000000  | 11000000  |
| 11/14/95 | 2      | Fajardo   | porconscto de coca        | 3000000  | 87000000  |
| 11/14/95 | 3      | Flaca     | porconscto de coca        | 1000000  | 35000000  |
| 11/14/95 | 4      | Miguel    | porconscto de Haja coca   | 1000000  | 112500000 |
| 11/14/95 | 5      | Guadalupe | porconscto de cocina      | 2000000  | 144000000 |
| 11/23/95 | 6      | Isidoro   | porconscto de coca        | 13000000 | 52500000  |
| 11/23/95 | 7      | Oslando   | porconscto de coca        | 3000000  | 57500000  |
| 11/29/95 | 8      | Isidoro   | porconscto de coca        | 6000000  |           |
| 11/29/95 | 9      | Ne gro    | porconscto de coca        | 2000000  |           |
| 11/29/95 | 10     | M/Feito   | porconscto de coca        | 3000000  |           |
| 11/29/95 | 11     | Mosco     | porconscto de coca        | 5000000  |           |
| 11/29/95 | 12     | Guadalupe | porconscto de cocina      | 1000000  |           |
| 12/6/95  | 13     | Isidoro   | porconscto de coca        | 7000000  |           |
| 12/11/95 | 14     | Mosco     | porconscto de coca        | 2000000  |           |
| 12/14/95 | 15     | Isidoro   | porconscto de coca        | 4000000  |           |
| 12/14/95 | 16     | Mosco     | porconscto de coca        | 2000000  |           |
| 12/14/95 | 17     | Sesquese  | porconscto de calefacción | 2000000  |           |
| 12/14/95 | 18     | petepulo  | porconscto de coca        | 500000   |           |
| 12/27/95 | 19     | Mosco     | porconscto de coca        | 2000000  |           |
| 12/27/95 | 20     | Chispico  | porconscto de coca        | 1000000  |           |
| 12/27/95 | 21     | Frente de | porconscto de coca        | 2000000  |           |
| 12/27/95 | 22     | Oslando   | porconscto de coca        | 1000000  |           |
|          |        |           |                           |          |           |
|          |        |           |                           |          |           |
|          |        |           |                           |          |           |
|          |        |           |                           |          |           |
|          |        |           |                           |          |           |
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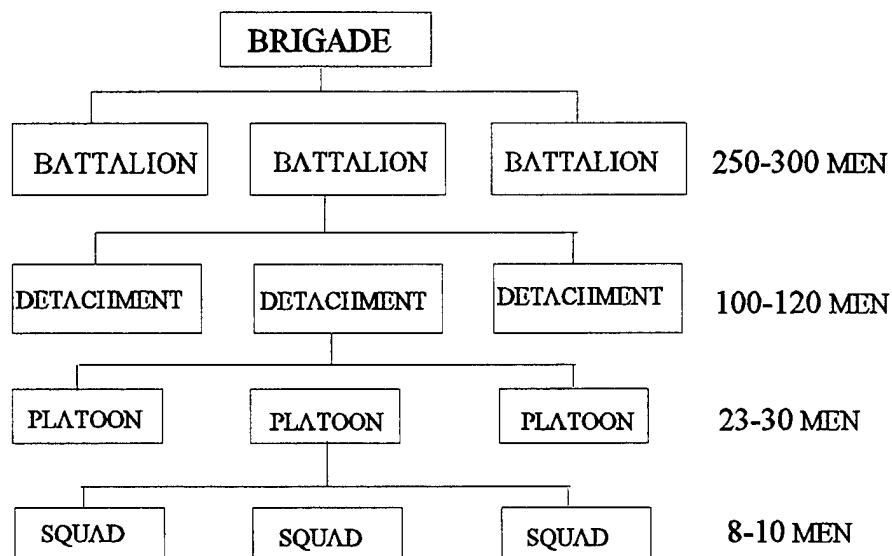
## APPENDIX B. SALVADORAN INSURGENT ORGANIZATIONS



Source: Department of Intelligence C-II Joint Staff of El Salvador's armed forces



## APPENDIX C. MILITARY STRUCTURE OF THE FMLN



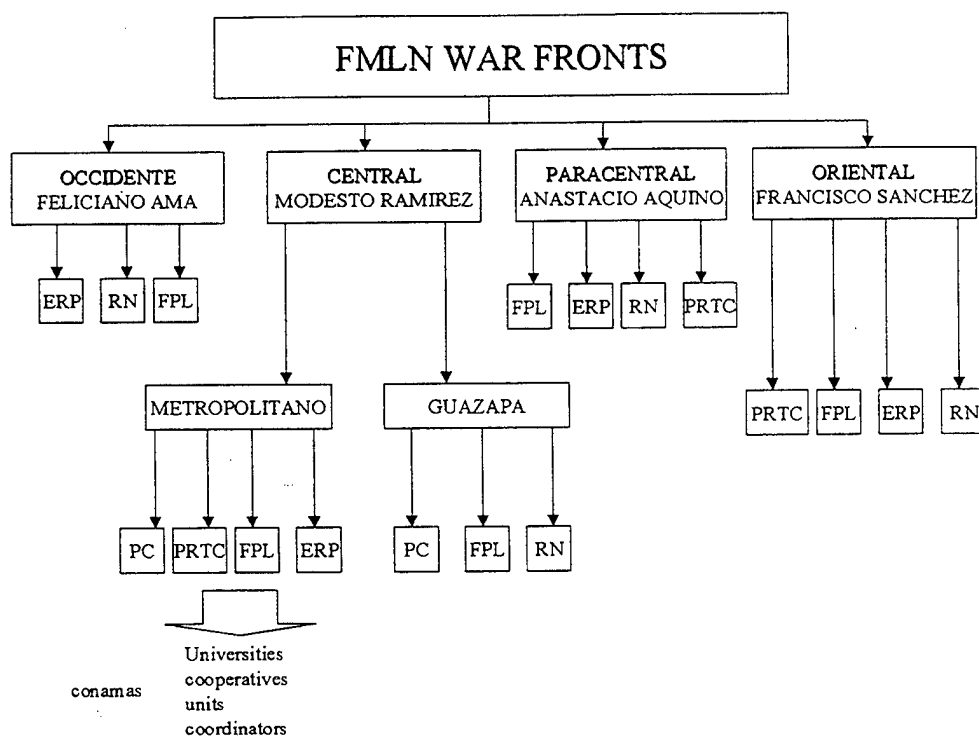
Every organization within the FMLN had a separate military structure, its own "guerrilla army" composed roughly as shown bellow.

| <b>Organization</b> | <b><i>Military Structure</i></b>             |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| FPL -               | <i>"Felipe Peña Mendoza"</i> Battalion Group |
| ERP -               | <i>"Rafael Arce Zablah"</i> BRAZ Brigade     |
| PCS -               | <i>"Rafael Aguiñada Carranza"</i> Battalion  |
| PRTC-               | <i>"Luis Adalberto Diaz"</i> Battalion       |
| RN-                 | <i>"Carlos Arias"</i> Battalion              |

**Source:** Department of Intelligence C-II, Joint Staff of El Salvador's armed forces.



# **APPENDIX D. ORGANIZATION OF THE FMLN'S WAR FRONTS.**



Source: Department of Intelligence C-II Joint Staff of El Salvador's armed forces.



# APPENDIX E. SALVADORAN HUMAN LOSES

Table E.1 Military Casualties.

| YEAR  | KILLED IN ACTION |          | WOUNDED IN ACTION |          | MISSING IN ACTION |          | ASSASSINATED<br>OFF DUTY | TOTALS |
|-------|------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|--------------------------|--------|
|       | OFFICERS         | ENLISTED | OFFICERS          | ENLISTED | OFFICERS          | ENLISTED | BOTH<br>CATEGORIES       |        |
| 1981  | 14               | 561      | 35                | 64       | 2                 | 1        | 38                       | 715    |
| 1982  | 22               | 1000     | 64                | 1800     | 1                 | 173      | 15                       | 3075   |
| 1983  | 15               | 1309     | 43                | 1900     | 3                 | 346      | 20                       | 3636   |
| 1984  | 29               | 874      | 35                | 1502     | 0                 | 166      | 105                      | 2711   |
| 1985  | 4                | 543      | 41                | 2051     | 0                 | 61       | 5                        | 2705   |
| 1986  | 7                | 439      | 10                | 389      | 0                 | 20       | 36                       | 901    |
| 1987  | 17               | 556      | 57                | 2337     | 0                 | 24       | 71                       | 3062   |
| 1988  | 15               | 542      | 60                | 2281     | 0                 | 7        | 13                       | 2918   |
| 1989  | 26               | 1006     | 133               | 3604     | 0                 | 14       | 36                       | 4819   |
| 1990  | 23               | 655      | 93                | 2599     | 0                 | 6        | 712                      | 4088   |
| 1991  | 16               | 423      | 34                | 1614     | 0                 | 0        | 36                       | 2123   |
| 1992  | 0                | 6        | 0                 | 19       | 0                 | 0        | 47                       | 72     |
| 1993  | INA              | INA      | INA               | INA      | INA               | INA      | 40                       | 40     |
| TOTAL | 188              | 7,353    | 570               | 20,096   | 4                 | 818      | 1,174                    | 30,203 |

Source: Department of Intelligence C-II Joint Staff of El Salvador's armed forces

INA = Information Not Available.

## APPENDIX E. SALVADORAN HUMAN LOSSES

**Table E.2 Civilian Casualties**

| YEAR  | KILLED | CAPTURED/DISAPPEARED | TOTALS       |
|-------|--------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1980  | 10,000 | INA                  | 10000        |
| 1981  | 5,000e | 1,045                | 1050         |
| 1982  | 4,419  | 1,336                | 5755         |
| 1983  | 2,375  | 332                  | 2707         |
| 1984  | 1000e  | INA                  | INA          |
| 1985  | 9 *    | INA                  | INA          |
| 1986  | 167*   | INA                  | INA          |
| 1987  | 143*   | INA                  | INA          |
| 1988  | 178*   | INA                  | INA          |
| 1989  | 1,500e | INA                  | INA          |
| 1990  | 62*    | INA                  | INA          |
| 1991  | 75*    | INA                  | INA          |
| 1992  | 332*   | INA                  | INA          |
| 1993  | 188*   | INA                  | INA          |
| TOTAL | 10506  | 2713                 | <b>13219</b> |

These numbers are based on the different authors cited through the text. Most authors agree that the total number of civilian casualties add about 60,000.

\*= Department of Intelligence C-II Joint Staff Of El Salvador's armed forces

e= estimate

## APPENDIX E. SALVADORAN HUMAN LOSSES

**Table E.3 Salvadoran Guerrillas Casualties.**

| YEAR         | KILLED IN ACTION | WOUNDED IN ACTION | CAPTURED    | SURRENDERED | TOTALS       |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1979         | 1000e            | 500e              | INA         | INA         | 1500         |
| 1980         | 2000e            | 900e              | INA         | INA         | 2900         |
| 1981         | 2539             | 453               | 109         | 230         | 3331         |
| 1982         | 2225             | 469               | 53          | 125         | 2872         |
| 1983         | 2040             | 387               | 79          | 212         | 2718         |
| 1984         | 1637             | 605               | 369         | 945         | 3556         |
| 1985         | 1030             | 590               | 304         | 283         | 2207         |
| 1986         | 649              | 600               | 81          | 184         | 1514         |
| 1987         | 878              | 565               | 14          | 32          | 1489         |
| 1988         | 1000e            | 500e              | INA         | INA         | 1500         |
| 1989         | 2500e            | 900e              | INA         | INA         | 3400         |
| 1990         | 900e             | 500e              | INA         | INA         | 1400         |
| 1991         | 1000e            | 500e              | INA         | INA         | 1500         |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>19398</b>     | <b>7469</b>       | <b>1009</b> | <b>2011</b> | <b>29887</b> |

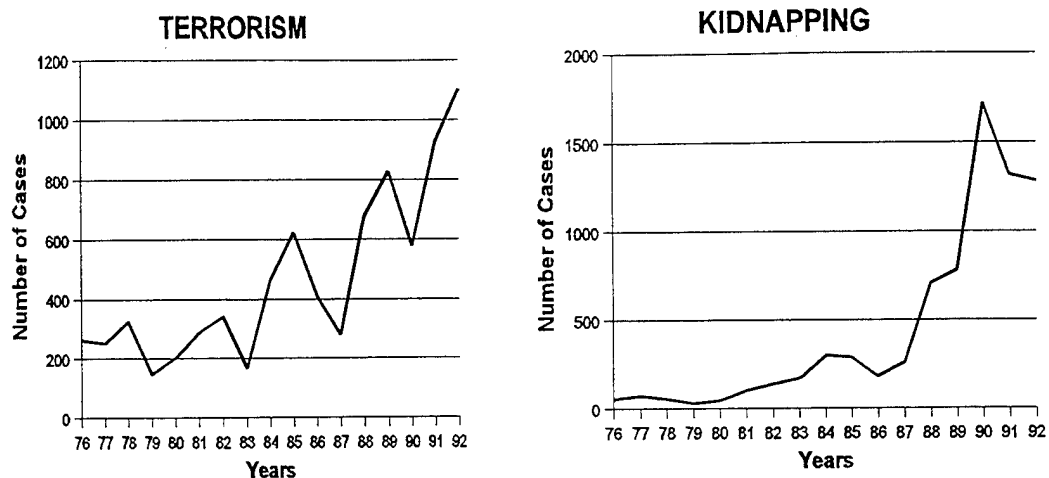
**Source:** Department of Intelligence C-II Joint Staff Of El Salvador's armed forces

e= This estimates were based on the experience of LCDR Palacios Luna who studied many official and non official reports in his tour as the head of the planning office of the "Operations" Department C-III of the Joint Staff in the period 1994-1995.

1911-12

1912-13

## APPENDIX F. TERRORISM AND KIDNAPPING TRENDS IN COLOMBIA



| YEAR | KIDNAPPING | TERRORISM |
|------|------------|-----------|
| 1976 | 55         | 262       |
| 1977 | 71         | 251       |
| 1978 | 54         | 326       |
| 1979 | 29         | 147       |
| 1980 | 44         | 202       |
| 1981 | 99         | 287       |
| 1982 | 136        | 342       |
| 1983 | 167        | 165       |
| 1984 | 299        | 458       |
| 1985 | 286        | 624       |
| 1986 | 180        | 412       |
| 1987 | 259        | 279       |
| 1988 | 709        | 677       |
| 1989 | 781        | 829       |
| 1990 | 1717       | 577       |
| 1991 | 1320       | 926       |
| 1992 | 1282       | 1104      |

Table F.1 Data for Terrorism and Kidnapping Tendencies



## APPENDIX G. COLOMBIAN GUERRILLAS' ACTIONS

**Table G.1 Guerrilla's Actions**

| AÑO                               | 1992       |            | 1993       |            | 1994       |            | 1995       |            | 1996       |            | 1997      |            | TOTAL       |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| TYPE                              | FARC       | ELN        | FARC       | ELN        | FARC       | ELN        | FARC       | ELN        | FARC       | ELN        | FARC      | ELN        |             |
| SMALL TOWNS ASSAULTS              | 6          | 4          | 2          | 5          | 27         | 4          | 14         | 2          | 29         | 5          | 7         | 1          | <b>106</b>  |
| AMBUSHES                          | 43         | 31         | 29         | 18         | 42         | 16         | 22         | 12         | 37         | 10         | 9         | 2          | <b>271</b>  |
| ATTACKS TO MILITARY INSTALLATIONS | 73         | 52         | 41         | 23         | 61         | 15         | 54         | 27         | 78         | 51         | 12        | 16         | <b>503</b>  |
| CHECK-POINTS                      | 87         | 52         | 30         | 19         | 116        | 85         | 45         | 29         | 54         | 33         | 4         | 6          | <b>560</b>  |
| KIDNAPPING                        | 546        | 254        | 260        | 191        | 180        | 149        | 261        | 270        | 292        | 41         | 45        | 60         | <b>2549</b> |
| TERRORISM (1)                     | 224        | 178        | 38         | 159        | 94         | 161        | 57         | 112        | 117        | 205        | 21        | 18         | <b>1384</b> |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                      | <b>979</b> | <b>571</b> | <b>400</b> | <b>415</b> | <b>520</b> | <b>330</b> | <b>453</b> | <b>452</b> | <b>607</b> | <b>345</b> | <b>98</b> | <b>103</b> | <b>5373</b> |

**Source:** Army Intelligence Report. March 1997. Via FAX

(1) It includes attacks to petroleum infrastructure.

**Table G.2 Killed and Wounded in Guerrillas' Actions**

|                  | 1992        | 1993        | 1994        | 1995        | 1996        | 1997       | TOTAL        |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>KILLED</b>    |             |             |             |             |             |            |              |
| * ARMED FORCES   | 311         | 319         | 243         | 263         | 436         | 85         | <b>1657</b>  |
| * POLICE         | 465         | 263         | 117         | 182         | 150         | 38         | <b>1215</b>  |
| * GUERRILLAS     | 1432        | 1210        | 909         | 800         | 853         | 236        | <b>5440</b>  |
| * CIVILIANS      | 2080        | 1436        | 1119        | 870         | 739         | 88         | <b>6332</b>  |
| <i>SUBTOTAL</i>  | <b>4288</b> | <b>3228</b> | <b>2388</b> | <b>2115</b> | <b>2178</b> | <b>447</b> | <b>14644</b> |
| <b>WOUNDED</b>   |             |             |             |             |             |            |              |
| * ARMED FORCES   | 623         | 446         | 565         | 444         | 660         | 157        | <b>2895</b>  |
| * POLICE         | 106         | 326         | 369         | 254         | 250         | 47         | <b>1352</b>  |
| * GUERRILLAS (1) |             |             |             |             |             |            |              |
| * CIVILIANS      | 802         | 886         | 416         | 534         | 402         | 82         | <b>3122</b>  |
| <i>SUBTOTAL</i>  | <b>1531</b> | <b>1658</b> | <b>1350</b> | <b>1232</b> | <b>1312</b> | <b>286</b> | <b>7369</b>  |

\*Source: Army Intelligence Report. March 1997. Via FAX

(1) This figure is not in records. Guerrillas usually take wounded with them.

# APPENDIX G. COLOMBIAN GUERRILLAS' ACTIONS.

**Table G.3 Captured and Surrendered Insurgents (1992-1997)**

| GRUPO  | 1992 |     | 1993 |     | 1994 |     | 1995 |    | 1996 |     | 1997 |    | TOTAL |     |
|--------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|----|------|-----|------|----|-------|-----|
|        | C    | S   | C    | S   | C    | S   | C    | S  | C    | S   | C    | S  | C     | S   |
| FARC   | 439  | 27  | 813  | 135 | 708  | 80  | 738  | 55 | 909  | 104 | 149  | 12 | 3756  | 413 |
| ELN    | 355  | 23  | 653  | 47  | 721  | 12  | 675  | 25 | 654  | 18  | 120  | 2  | 3178  | 127 |
| EPL    | 130  | 47  | 234  | 27  | 143  | 6   | 100  | 2  | 79   | 301 | 4    |    | 690   | 383 |
| M-19   |      |     | 15   | 1   | 10   |     | 7    |    | 9    | 1   |      |    | 41    | 2   |
| OTHERS | 1751 | 5   | 1720 | 2   | 2107 | 2   | 2006 |    | 1171 |     | 187  |    | 8942  | 9   |
| TOTAL  | 2675 | 102 | 3435 | 212 | 3689 | 100 | 3526 | 82 | 2822 | 424 | 460  | 14 | 16607 | 934 |

\* C= Captured S= Surrendered

Source: Army Intelligence Report. Marc 1997. Via FAX.

## APPENDIX H. VIOLENCE AND PEACE IN COLOMBIA (1978-1992)

| GOVERNMENT                     | VIOLENCE EVOLUTION.                                                                                                                                                                    | PEACE OFFICIAL POLICY.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | GUERRILLAS PEACE STRATEGY.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TURBAY</b><br>(1978-1982)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Repression</li> <li>* M-19 urban presence</li> <li>* MAS (1981)</li> </ul>                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* No talks.</li> <li>* Ineffective Amnesty.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* M-19 leadership for peace.</li> <li>* Tactical meaning for peace.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                  |
| <b>BETANCUR</b><br>(1982-1986) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Paramilitarism Growth.</li> <li>* First war against narcotraffick.</li> <li>* Political violence (UP).</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* National Dialogue</li> <li>* Peace Commission</li> <li>* Truce Agreements (No ELN).</li> <li>* Establishment and military opposition.</li> </ul>                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Negotiations to wide political space.</li> <li>* War preparation (growth)</li> <li>* War economy.</li> </ul>                                                                                  |
| <b>BARCO</b><br>(1986-1990)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Narcoterrorism</li> <li>* Dirty war</li> <li>* Increasing of the fight against the guerrilla; actions against economic objectives.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Peace Policy institutionalization</li> <li>* PNR: marginal and poor zones.</li> <li>* Peace Initiative</li> <li>* Negotiation with M-19.</li> <li>* Processes with EPL, PRT, MQL started.</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Guerrilla Coordinator Board.</li> <li>* FARC: dialogue and fighting.</li> <li>* M-19: demobilization.</li> <li>* EPL, PRT, MQL demobilized also.</li> <li>* ELN: no to talks.</li> </ul>      |
| <b>GAVIRIA</b><br>(1990-1992)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Narcotraffick's violence reduced</li> <li>* Growth of guerrilla activities.</li> <li>* Dirty war continues</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* End of EPL, PRT, MQL negotiations.</li> <li>* Talks with drug lords.</li> <li>* More flexible scheme to negotiate with CGSB.</li> <li>* Strategy against violence.</li> <li>* Civilian Minister of Defense.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Military struggle as the way to gain weight in the negotiations.</li> <li>* Internal discussion on the validity of armed struggle.</li> <li>* Efforts to channelize social unrest.</li> </ul> |

\* Source: Mauricio García Durán, *De la Uribe a Tlaxcala, PROCESOS DE PAZ*, p. 52.



# **APPENDIX I. CARACAS TALKS. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND GUERRILLAS.**

| GOVERNMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | GUERRILLA (CGSB)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Hostility.</b><br>*Those activities derived from regular guerrillas' operations (terrorism, kidnapping, armed recruitment, extortion, threats) and those derived from military confrontation (checkpoints, supplies control)                                                                                                                                              | *Stop actions against civilians (state terrorism. Bombing, shooting, checkpoints, arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, kidnapping, tortures, billeting, blackmail, violations, supplies control).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Verification.</b><br>*Demands defined settlement for the guerrillas, to be possible.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | *Settlement is not necessary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Process Evaluation.</b><br>*Negotiators should not be part of the Evaluation Commission                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | *Evaluation Commission should be in the negotiation table.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Paramilitarism.</b><br>*Government confirm its policy against para- military. It renews its compromise to:<br>1. Submit reports of actions against paramilitary groups.<br>2. Investigate the possible guerrilla's report.<br>3. Accord with the CGSB specific actions in areas cleared by guerrillas.<br>4. Other subjects would be considered in point 3 of the agenda. | 1. Government should report to the country state actions against paramilitary groups.<br>2. Official announcement that paramilitarism promotion is not government's policy.<br>3. Immediate actions against paramilitarism.<br>4. Explanation to public opinion of the document the CGSB will present about the subject.<br>5. Creation of an international commission to investigate paramilitarism in Colombia.<br>6. Purification of the armed forces members who were involved with the paramilitary groups.<br>7. Regulation banning foreigners to instruct paramilitary.<br>8. Suspension of the military immunity (fuero militar) to avoid impunity in human rights violations.<br>9. Review of military doctrine about national security. |
| <b>Kidnapping.</b><br>*Immediate release of kidnapped citizens by guerrillas, without concessions by the government.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Compromise to find solutions to kidnapping made by guerrillas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Captive Military.</b><br>*They are not prisoners of war. Immediate release.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | It would be necessary to discuss the army treatment to captured guerrillas and accord a procedure code.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Guaranty for guerrilla's spokespersons.</b><br>*It would apply in the design of a located cease-fire.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | *It would apply in any type of cease-fire.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Public Force presence.</b><br>*In located cease-fire, its presence is not negotiable but the stay conditions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 1. Government should retire offensive detachments.<br>2. Cease-fire does not mean that small towns would be without police.<br>3. In cease-fire situation, both-side troops cannot be in the same place.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

\*Source: Mauricio García. *De La Uribe a Tlaxcala. Procesos de Paz*, p. 232-233.



## **APPENDIX J. PRESIDENT VIRGILIO BARCO'S 'INITIATIVE FOR PEACE' PLAN.**

### **SECTION IV. REGIONAL TALKS FOR LIVING TOGETHER.**

Regional conflicts and unrest are very often easier to identify in their causes, in their implications, and in their components. Therefore, many factors different from subversive actions are usually actual causes of violence. Among them one can mention common delinquency, terrorist groups with different inspirations and objectives, and the conflicts for controlling productive resources such as land and mines. Regional talks should be oriented toward these different causes of violence.

People living in areas affected by disturbing situations must assume, with responsibility and civilian courage, the appropriate solutions for living together. Political and social forces have criteria and initiatives that can certainly contribute to eradication of those disturbing factors. That collective solidarity can isolate those people that use violence -any type of violence- to impose or suppress political ideas, to protect interests, patrimonies or privileges, or to defend by themselves in an illegal or illegitimate way.

#### ***Actions and Procedures.***

1. Simultaneously with the initiation of the development of phases considered in the Peace Initiative, regional authorities will continue looking for feasible solutions to local disturbing factors, using regional agreements.

2. The government will establish mechanisms for institutional coordination at the highest level, through which it compromises to receive and process the possible solutions to specific cases of regional violence. These talks should be a sound expression of the citizenry against violence. Government expects open and sincere participation of the spokespersons of the political parties and movements, of the Church, of labor unions, of peasants, industrialists, indigenous, merchants, cattle's raisers, and overall, participation of all political and social forces of the regions.

3. The government through its agents, that is, governors, intendants, and commissaries<sup>1</sup>, will facilitate the achievement of those talks. Attorney General's Office should cooperate with regional authorities.

4. Ministries of Government<sup>2</sup>, National Defense, and Justice, the presidential Advisors for Defense, Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights, and Reconciliation, Normalization and Rehabilitation, and the DAS<sup>3</sup>, have everything ready to endorse the campaign against all forms of violence by using actions and measures promptly and efficiently.

## NOTES

1. Before the approval of the new Constitution in 1991, Colombia's political division included 23 departments, 5 intendancies, and 5 commissaries or national territories. The new Carte established 33 departments.
2. This Ministry changed its name in 1994 to Ministry of the Interior.
3. It stands for *Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad* (Security Administrative Department). It is the equivalent of the American FBI.

## APPENDIX K. THE SALVADORAN NEGOTIATION MEETINGS (1984-1992)<sup>1</sup>

### 1. President Duarte's Negotiation Period (1984-1989)

#### a. The meeting of La Palma (15 October 1984).

On October 8, 1984, President Duarte's speech to the United Nations delineated a peace initiative, and invited the FMLN-FDR to the first in a series of peace talks of October 1984. Duarte's Peace initiative had two objectives: to discuss a detailed negotiation process that would incorporate the FMLN combatants into El Salvador democratic system and to invite the left to participate in the upcoming elections. Duarte's initiative came about after a series of proposals and mediation offers made by various national and international actors between 1981 and 1984. The outcome of this meeting was the creation of a mixed negotiating commission responsible for the analysis of the peace proposals presented by both parties, the development of a mechanism by which all segments of the Salvadoran society could be incorporated into the peace process, and the study of a plan by which peace could be reached in a short time.

#### b. The meeting of Ayagualo (30 November 1984)

During the initial meeting, the government and the FMLN presented their basic demands. The government proposed steps to humanize and reduce the level of conflict. President Duarte asked for the elimination of assassinations, kidnaping, threats, attacks in rural and urban cities, and reprisals against the families of government and armed forces personnel. He also demanded an end to the sabotage and destruction of private property, commercial and industrial establishment, and government property.

As a counterproposal, the FMLN-FDR presented their *Propuesta Global de Solución Política Negociada para la Paz* (Broad Proposal of Negotiated Political Solution for Peace) in which they outlined three separate phases. Phase one called for the creation of political condition and basic individual rights to find a negotiated solution, an agreement to promote human rights, the elimination of United States influence, and arms buildup.

Phase two demanded the suppression of hostilities against the insurgents, the participation of the FMLN-FDR in the government, a discussion regarding the cease-fire agreement, and the return of thousands of FMLN refugees. Finally, phase three called for constitutional reforms, a reorganization of the armed forces, and the announcement and scheduling of national elections.

With the framework of this negotiation meeting, the FMLN returned to the countryside and restructured its revolutionary strategy. The FMLN developed a new strategy that allowed its guerrilla units to confront the armed force in terms of a conventional war. In 1984, the FMLN organized its combatant units around military-strategic areas in which the FMLN's general Command planned to concentrate their military actions. The FMLN's strategy of organizing mass demonstrations became a second priority for the command. Despite the increase in logistical support from Cuba and Nicaragua, guerrilla units felt harmed by the armed force. The United States supplied the training and the weapons to direct effective military operations against the FMLN concentrations.

Evidently, the guerrillas could not afford to fight in a conventional war. Therefore, the FMLN formulated a new military strategy that aimed to use mass demonstrations in conjunction with military actions, as was done in the early 1980s. With these activities, social agitation, increased from 1984 to 1986 and the peace talks were stopped.

**c. The unsuccessful meeting of Sesory (19 September 1986)**

This meeting was a new negotiation attempt but it failed due to the absence of the FMLN's delegation. In late 1986, the FMLN presented a new negotiation strategy to the Salvadoran media called "Political offer of the FMLN-FDR" (*Oferta politica del FMLN-FDR*). Here, the left demanded a search for the means of conflict resolution, an opening of political participation in the government, a cease-fire, and the respect for human rights. During this year, the FMLN developed a new war strategy called Counter-Offensive (*Contra-Ofensiva*) which established action lines for its military and mass organization. With the use of political and labor movements, the counter offensive was framed in a deepening of the military activities and mass demonstrations. These mass activities had the goal of creating an environment of insurrection in the capital, and then carrying out violent actions. These types of actions increased in 1987 but the government neutralized them. This caused the FMLN to suffer a blow in its actions lines, and obligated the mass demonstrations tactic to accelerate. Due to the loss of the armed forces presence around the country, the FMLN grew stronger here.

By early 1987, the FMLN-FDR general strategy was divided into two main alternatives: The Extended Popular War and the Negotiated Agreements. Each of these alternatives had different characteristics. The extended Popular War had the military objective to obtain force accumulation. The Negotiation alternative became a parallel strategy to the military and the mass actions. The involvement of the FDR in this strategy was to achieve political integration to win popular integration to win popular elections in 1989. Evidently, in 1987 the FMLN was committed to a military solution and the FDR preferred a negotiated solution to the armed conflict. This division prevailed throughout the negotiation process during Duarte's peace talks.

By mid-1987, two political events took place in the country that had great relevance for the political structure. First, on May 26, the FMLN-FDR announced a double proposal to President Duarte and the High Command of the Armed Force that outline the idea of political solution. Second, on August 7, The Agreements of Esquipulas II <sup>2</sup> (*Los acuerdos de Esquipulas*) were signed by the Central American presidents. These agreements contained new elements that influenced the peace talks. The most relevant were: a debate initiative with all unarmed national groups of political opposition with those that had accepted the amnesty. The creation of a National Reconciliation Commission that would verify all aspects of the reconciliation process, and would also monitor the fulfilment of the agreements related to the amnesty, the cease-fire, the democratization process, and the upcoming elections. Finally, the agreements called for the cessation of aid to irregular forces.

**d. The meeting of San Salvador (4-5 October 1987).**

The peace talks between the government and the FMLN-FDR resumed in the headquarters of the Catholic Church. In this meeting, both parties agreed to create two commissions to seek and prepare accords related to a cease-fire process and other aspects of Esquipulas II. There were no concrete agreements between both parties at this point and another meeting was schedule to continue the discussions.

**e. The meeting of Caracas (21-23 October 1987)**

in this meeting, the government and the FMLN-FDR did not come to an agreement. By October 21, delays existed when both commissions discussed the norms by which to carry out the cease of fire. As a result, a new meeting was schedule to be held in Mexico on 22th. The FMLN though, ceased the peace talks due to the assassination of the non-governmental Commission of human rights representative. The government delineated a policy of nonviolence, pardon and forgiveness. The rebels were urge to accept the arrangements and the spirit of Esquipulas II, a cease-fire and amnesty, to disarm and to incorporate in the political democratic process. On the other hand,

the FMLN-FDR demanded a government reorganization that incorporated all social sectors that favored a political solution. This newly organized government would promote the conditions for free elections.

In Esquipulas II, the Central American presidents established a period of 90 days for the agreements to emerge. The purpose of this measure was to search for El Salvador's reconciliation, but concrete results were not obtained. However, despite the limited improvements of the peace talks, the government promoted an amnesty and a unilateral cease-fire that went into effect on 5 November 1987. The FMLN also declared a unilateral cease-fire.

In 1988, the FMLN-FDR introduced a new proposal called Diplomatic Offensive (*Ofensiva Diplomática*). This proposal sought to increase international support in favor of the FMLN, and to prevent ARENA's victory in the presidential elections of 1989. By the beginning of 1989, the FMLN, had redefined its military strategy and the possibilities of a new military offensive were evident.

On January 1989, the FMLN, before the presidential elections of March, presented a proposal aimed at converging the elections into a contribution to the peace process. They asked to postpone the elections to September 15, 1989, and demanded the following: an end to the repression by the armed force; the keeping of the armed force in their headquarters; the integration of the Democratic Convergence( a leftist Party, an FMLN supporter) to the Central Electoral Council; and the promulgation of a new electoral code. They also demanded the right of voting to those Salvadorans living outside the country. If these demands were answered, the FMLN promised to respect the activities of the political parties, to declare a two-day truce before and after elections, and to accept the electoral result of September elections.

In this framework, the government accepted the FMLN-FDR demands except for the postponement of the elections. This answer motivated the FMLN to stop and boycott the presidential elections. This action did not succeed, though, due to the response of the vast majority of the population who went to the polls. This popular response motivated the FMLN to promote and end to the armed conflict through a political settlement, and to retreat from its military commitment. In March 1989, President Duarte passed the government to the newly elected President Alfredo Cristiani.

## **2. President Cristiani's Negotiation process (1989-1992)**

### **a. The meeting of Mexico ( September 1989) <sup>3</sup>**

At this meeting, the FMLN-FDR, through Commander Joaquín Villalobos, announced its proposal called Proposal to achieve Democratization (*Propuesta para encontrar la Democratización*). It also called for the cessation of hostilities and the lasting peace in El Salvador. This proposal had three important components: an observance of a cease-fire starting on 15 September 1989; an initial phase for the incorporation of the FMLN: a definitive end of the armed conflict; and total integration of the FMLN to the political life starting 31 January 1990.

The government proposed to create a negotiating commission with a permanent character whose purpose was to develop activities related to the peace process. At the end of this meeting, both delegations signed an agreement called Accords of Mexico (*Los Acuerdos de Mexico*). In this agreement both parties were committed to carry out permanent peace talks with maximum seriousness, reciprocal guarantees, and an efficient framework to achieve a conflict resolution.

### **b. The Meeting of San José (16-17 October 1989)**

Prior to this meeting, military actions on both sides increased throughout the country. The FMLN disregarded the agreement to cease sabotage activities, and increased its military campaign.

Since the meeting in Mexico, the debate was full of tension, political violence, and urban terrorism. Acts of sabotage increased in the capital and the FMLN developed against what they called the repressive actions of the ARENA government and the Armed Force.

In San José, the FMLN arrived with the same negotiation agenda as proposed in Mexico along with two additional points: (1) The measures for the auto-purge and the professional education of the armed force; and (2) Judicial system reforms. The proposal of the government mentioned a cease-fire and the end of sabotage actions. But these topics did not prosper due to the irrational procedures presented by both parts to end the armed conflict. After this meeting, violence increased dramatically. Meetings scheduled for 20 and 21 of November 1989 in Caracas were not held because the FMLN launched an insurgent offensive. The FMLN declared publicly that this offensive developed because the negotiation process was full of disputes.

**c. The FMLN offensive (11 November 1989)**

This offensive was named "*Fuera los Facistas, Febe Elizabeth Vive*" (Expel the fascist, Febe Elizabeth lives). This offensive had four objectives. First, it aimed to stop the socioeconomic programs developed by President Cristiani. Second, it tried to reinforce the FMLN, and finally, it attempted to create dissatisfaction against the government.<sup>4</sup>

The armed forces responded quickly to this armed insurrection and managed to control the situation. The FMLN failed to reach their objective for two primary reasons. First, they never had to support the population. Second, the combatant units of the FMLN were not prepared to fight in the streets of San Salvador. The Salvadoran people clearly announced to the FMLN that they were tired of the war. Civil society demanded that the FMLN incorporate itself into the political process of the country, and to resolve the armed conflict over the negotiating table. This popular reaction obligated the FMLN to resume the peace talks with the government.<sup>5</sup>

**d. Debate Efforts after the Offensive**

It was fair to think that the effects of this offensive would create a hostile climate among the negotiating parties. However, President Cristiani proposed to begin the peace talks in December of 1989 under one condition—that the FMLN stop all terrorist actions against the civilian population. In Costa Rica, the presidents of Central America expressed their total support for the government of EL SALVADOR and condemned the FMLN for their offensive. Within a setting of international negotiation proposals, both delegations requested the participation of the United Nations in the peace talks. With the participation of the United Nations, the peace talks developed in a different framework. This new dialogue framework evolved from the impact that the offensive had on all Salvadorans, the acceptance of the peace talks by the U.S. Government, the mediation of the Secretary-General of the U.N. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the flexible proposals of the FMLN, and the pressure from national and international organizations.

After 10 years of civil war, the FMLN sensed that a negotiated solution was the only viable way to end the armed conflict. Thus, the FMLN called for the establishment of a social, political, and economic regime that would assure the fulfillment of the will of the Salvadoran people. The objective of this regime was to maintain and to reproduce a democratic system with the consensus of the Salvadoran people. With this framework, the government and the FMLN resumed the peace talks.

**e. Meeting of Geneva 04 April 1990)<sup>6</sup>**

In this meeting, the Salvadoran government and the FMLN establishment an agreement. The purposes of this agreement was to end the armed conflict by a political route in a short period, to

encourage the democratization of the country, to guarantee the respect for human rights, and to reunify the Salvadoran society.

The initial goal was to achieve political agreements that would cease the armed confrontation and all activities that jeopardized the rights of the population. These agreements were to be verified by the United Nations and approved by the security Council. The medium-term goal was to establish the guarantees and necessary conditions for the incorporation of the FMLN combatants to the civil, institutional, and political life of the country. The methodology was that the government and the FMLN would develop a dialogue between both parties with the mediation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations or his representative, and that the Secretary-general would assure that the peace talks were contributing to the success of the negotiation process. The government and the FMLN would assure that their representative had the authority to discuss and formulate agreements.

The conditions of this agreement were that the government and the FMLN agreed on a private peace process. The Secretary-General or his representative was the only private peace process. The Secretary-General or his representative was the only authorized person to provide public information. The Secretary-General, in discreet form, would maintain confidential communication with the U.S. Government, with members of the United Nations, or with other organizations that could contribute to the success of the peace talks. The government and the FMLN agreed that the national political parties and social organization had an important role in the consolidation of the peace. Both parties identified the need to establish and maintain consultation mechanisms with such organizations.

**f. The Meeting of Caracas (16-20 May 1990)**

For this meeting, the agendas of the government and the FMLN continued to be the same. However, they outlined a new perspective : the total search for a negotiated solution. Both parties continued to promote their efforts to promote their efforts to achieve of the armed conflict through negotiations.

**g. The meeting of Oaxtepec, Mexico ( 19 June 1990)**

This meeting centered on the purge of the armed forces that later became a strategy of the FMLN to promote a stalemate in the negotiation process. The government accepted this proposal contingent upon the demobilization of the FMLN units. The fundamental issue of this meeting was not to reduce but to purge the armed forces. The FMLN viewed this condition to be necessary for the democratization of the country<sup>7</sup>.

The purge of the armed forces became a preoccupation for some national and international political sectors, especially the U.S. congress. This topic was the most controversial of the agenda, and was the reason that greater advances in the negotiations failed to take place.

**h. The negotiation proposals in San Jose I, II and III( July-September 1990)<sup>8</sup>.**

In San José I ( Costa Rica), the government proposed a transformation of the Armed force's doctrine and their new role in the democratic system. The government also accepted and supported the judicial process surrounding the investigation of several assassinations that occurred in previous years.

The FMLN continued to emphasize the topic related to the purging of the armed forces. Its intention was to stop the corruption of military officers and the taking of command posts by officer's *tandas* (graduating class). The government provide assurance that the purging og the armed forces would take place aster the FMLN had been disarmed and demobilized. The meeting ended with a signed agreement establishing the mechanism to monitor human rights under the United Nations through an organization later known as ONUSAL.

In San José II and III, the FMLN again stressed the disappearance of the armed forces. Concrete agreements were not obtained and this failure caused the debate to lose credibility. This also contributed to the continuation of the armed confrontation. Despite the frustration of these meeting, both commissions considered that the negotiation process should continue.

**i. The offensive of November 1990.**

Despite president's Cristiani's speech to the United Nations (October 1990) to continue with the peace talks, the FMLN launched a new military offensive in November. This had a lower level of intensity and duration than the one in 1989. The FMLN argued that this offensive had the purpose of re-energizing the negotiation process. Again, the FMLN's military offensive did not achieve its objectives for lack of support from the population due to this armed insurrection, the negotiations stopped and the peace process was put in danger. However, the secretary general of the United Nations brought both parties to the negotiations table. Between December of 1990 and January of 1991, he held private meetings, the Secretary General announced that the peace talks would resume immediately.<sup>9</sup>

**j. The meeting of Managua (March 1991).**

By the early 1991, the FMLN understood that its Marxist-Leninist goals could not be reached by means of force. Moreover, the FMLN presented in Managua, before the Commission of the European Economic community and the foreign relation Ministers of Central America, an initiative to accelerate the peace talks. This proposals discussed the armed forces, constitutional reforms, and a cease-fire. This peace initiative was accepted by the government, and the process continued without major problems.

**k. The meeting of Mexico (April 1991)**

In this meeting, both sides agreed reforms to the Constitution that related to the armed forces, the judicial system, human rights, and the electoral process. These reforms were presented to the Legislative Assembly after the agreement was reached in Mexico. An execution calender or time line was also created to ratify these reforms. Several items related to the armed force were left pending due to the refusal of the FMLN to go on with this its disarmament and demobilization.

In this meeting, the truth Commission was created whose responsibility was to investigate the most prominent acts of violence since 1980. The Commission was to be formed with three civilians appointed by the Secretary General of the U.N. and accepted by both negotiating parties.

There were four major agreements at this meeting. The first agreement concerned the subordination of the Armed Forces to Civilian power; the creation of a State Intelligence organization; the restructuring of the military justice regulation; and the proposing of laws that relate to paramilitary groups, recruitment and public security forces.

Second, the judicial system must be organized along with the laws related to the form of choosing the Supreme Court Judges. The election of these judges would be approved by two thirds of the Legislative Assembly. Third, human rights laws would be based on the agreements signed in San José I. A National attorney for the defense of the human rights would be appointed and would be elected by two-thirds of the Legislative Assembly. Forth, the electoral system would be restructured. The Inter-party Dialogue Commission would be created to address these reforms, and it would serve as an important base for debate and cooperation across the political spectrum <sup>10</sup>.

**l. The meeting of Caraballeda, Venezuela (May 1991)**

This meeting was continuation of the previous one. However, it tried to give more emphasis to those pending topics related to the armed forces and to the cessation of the armed conflict. The meeting concluded with a few advances; but, it showed the will of both parties to arrive at a solution.

**m. The meeting of Queretaro, Mexico ( June 1991).**

Once again the topics were discussed were related to the armed forces and the cease-fire. In relation to the Armed forces, the government said that they would be reorganized to fit in the new Salvadoran democratic system. The government again recognized that the armed forces would be subordinated to civilian authorities, and that the agreements related to this topic were necessary for the pacification of the country. Based on this, the FMLN took an apparently flexible attitude, agreeing to discuss those topics already mentioned. However, they only discussed those aspects dealing with public security forces, and the cease-fire. Other pending topics were a source for later discussion.

**n. The meeting of Mexico(July 1991).**

The FMLN again continued to extend the course of the negotiation by evading the final agreements on topics related to the armed forces and the and ceased-fire. The FMLN argued that there were specific points in the topics of the armed forces and the cease-fire that had not been resolved. At the end, the FMLN brought a new topic for discussion that broke the agenda presented in Caracas. In sum, this meeting was unsuccessful.

**o. The meeting of New York ( 21 September 1991)**

After a stagnation of the peace talks created by unrealistic demands of the FMLN in Mexico, the negotiation process resumed through the exigency of the United Nations. However this time it included the participant of the Secretary-General of the U.N. and President Cristiani.

Cristiani was present solely to have an interview with the Secretary-General, given that his governmental commission would meet with the commission of the FMLN. The agreements of New York changed the plan settled on in Caracas and were based on the negotiation process, the cease-fire, and the disarmament and demobilization of the FMLN. Both parties only discussed those topics related to the negotiation of political agreements, the cease-fire , and the terms of the negotiation process. At the end, both commission decided that a date for the cease-fire must be predetermined in a short period.

In sum, it was agreed to create the National Commission for a Peace Consolidation (Comisión Nacional para la consolidación de la Paz, COPAZ), to purge the armed forces, to reduce the armed forces, and to create a Civilian National police force (Policía Nacional Civil, PNC)<sup>11</sup>

A new document, known as *Acuerdos de Nueva York* (Agreements of New York), was also signed. The issues addressed in this proposal were the armed forces, the judicial system, the electoral system, and the ratification of constitutional reforms. These agreements also called for the conditions of a cease-fire, the political participation of the FMLN, the implementation of the peace agreements, and the participation of FMLN's ex-combatants in the CNP. The FMLN agreed to drop its commitment to end the armed conflict by the force.

**p. The meetings of Mexico (November 1991)**

The negotiations began with the discussion of the public security doctrine and structure of the CNP. In these meetings, there were agreements of previous topics presented in other meetings. During these meetings, the FMLN announced to the government commission that its armed units

would not surrender their weapons to any one. Such an attitude obviously denied the will of the FMLN to end of the armed conflict.

The agreements of Geneva clearly established that the purpose of the peace talks was to end the conflict by means of a political debate; something that could not be achieved while the FMLN maintained its military structure. The FMLN, throughout the peace talks, used its military apparatus every time its general interests were threatened, to promote its position on certain issues.

**q. The meetings of New York (16 December 1991)**

The goal of this meeting was to reach a final agreement to end the armed conflict. With the presence of the Secretary General, the meeting was a success. His presence gave dynamism to the negotiation process. Obviously, the Secretary General of the UN wanted to finish the peace talks before his term was over (31 December 1991).

In this meeting, President Cristiani came to join the peace effort. His participation also accelerated the peace talks so that an agreement could be reached before the last day of 1991.

**r. The meetings of New York (31 December 1991).**

Here, the end of the armed conflict came with the signing of the document known as *Acuerdos de Nueva York (Agreements of New York)*. In the agreements, the government and the FMLN conflict. The agreements also reflected the commitment of both parties to sign the Cessation of the Armed Confrontation of El Salvador (*Cese del Enfrentamiento Armado de El Salvador CEA*). The agreements also called for an end of the FMLN's military apparatus, the incorporation of its combats to the socio-political system, and reduction of the armed forces.

Some commitments before the signing of the CEA were established. The government and the FMLN would meet again from the 5th to the 10th of January 1992 to negotiate the execution calendar of agreements. If agreements did not exist by January 10, the U.N. would formulate a strategy to settle unresolved matters before the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. Finally, the formal signing of the CEA would be held on January 16 and it would be carried out from 1 February 1992 until 31 October 1992<sup>12</sup>.

Despite the peace Accords of New York, FMLN's middle level commanders announced that they would not surrender their weapons to an international organization under the condition that they obtain power within the structure of the government. This event did not take place and the negotiation process continued as schedule.

**s. The meetings of New York (06-10 January 1992)**

In this meeting, a document was signed known as New York II. It included the details of the agreement signed on 31 December 1991 that would allow the final signing on 16 January 1992. The FMLN behaves negatively and accused the government of using the armed force to intimidate its combatants scattered around the country. This attitude delayed the negotiation process until 12 January.

**t. The final meeting of Mexico (16 January 1992)**

In Chapultepec, Mexico, the government of El Salvador and the FMLN signed the final document known as *Los Acuerdos de Paz (The Peace Accords)*. These accords outlined the peace talks, the process of the FMLN's demobilization, the reincorporation of the FMLN, the constitutional reforms, the demobilization of the armed forces, and the economic and political opening of the country under the supervision of ONUSAL.

## NOTES

1. Based on the the research made by Lt. Francisco Blandón, El Salvador Air force, in his thesis *El Salvador: An Example of Conflict Resolution*. NPS, June 1995.
2. All the presidents from Central America got together in a town called Esquipulas, in Guatemala and formulated these accords to promote democratic systems in the region through economic, social, cultural, and political treaties.
3. *El Diario de Hoy*, San Salvador, 01 October 1989, p.2.
4. Rubén Zamora, *For El Salvador: Democracy before Peace*, New York Times, 24 January 1990, A15.
5. *La Prensa Gráfica*, 10 November 1989, p. 1.
6. Transcript of documents, Geneva, 04 April 1990.
7. *La Prensa Gráfica*, interview with Joaquín Villalobos, member of the FMLN's negotiation commission, 23 June 1990, p.1.
8. Transcripts of Documents, San José: Costa Rica, 26 July 1990.
9. *El Diario de Hoy*, 04 December 1990, p.1.
10. Transcripts of documents, Mexico City: Mexico, 27 April 1991.
11. Transcript of document, New York: United Nations, 25 September 1991.
12. Transcript of Document, New York: United Nations, 31 December 1991.

8. 10. 1941. 10. 10. 1941. 10. 10. 1941.

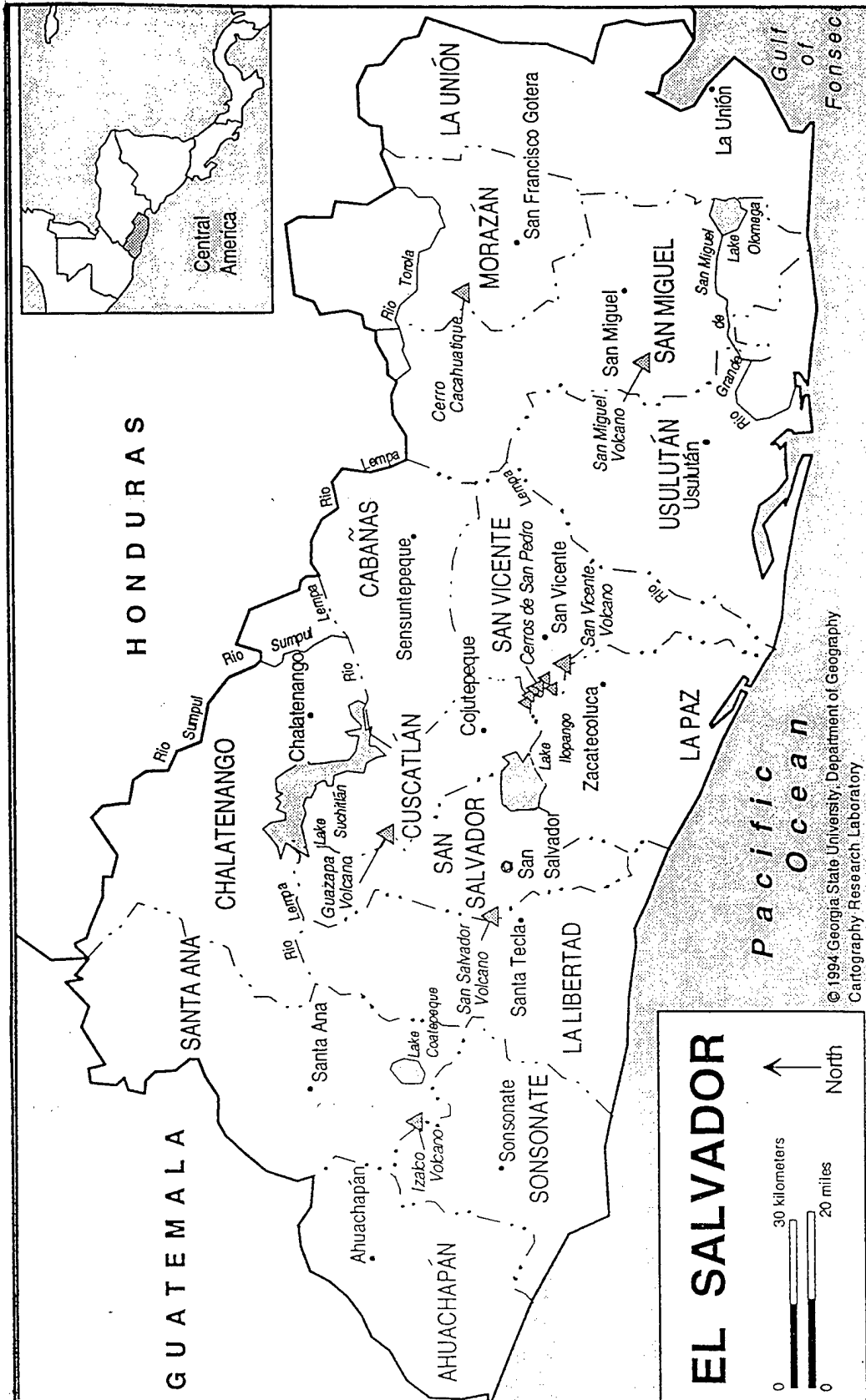
## APPENDIX L. MAPS



Map 1. Colombia and El Salvador in the Continent



Map. 2 Colombia's Political Division



Map. 3 El Salvador's Political Division



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