

EMPLOYMENT OF THE EL SALVADOR ARMED FORCES FOR INTERNAL SECURITY

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**EMPLOYMENT OF THE EL SALVADOR ARMED FORCES FOR INTERNAL
SECURITY**

by

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ABSTRACT

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The authorities of El Salvador are facing multiple threats to the governability and stability of the country; including International Drug Cartels, Gangs (Maras), Weapons Dealers, and common violence that create instability and insecure. The Government is concerned about the current situation and is making different efforts to impede and reduce the criminal organizations activities. One of the efforts is the use of the armed forces to combat the criminal organizations. Actually, the military forces are supporting the local police in regular activities in rural areas and places where violence has a large presence, providing support to the penitentiary system for external security and main entries of the prisons, keeping permanent presence in the dark spots along the national boundary to stop and reduce the gambling activities and working in joint operations with the entities in charge of the control of the illegal drug movements in the region. The military forces, in order to be effective, have to modify the organizations, training, and procedures used in this kind of environment. Also, the forces have to acquire the proper equipment and means required to be more effective against the illicit organizations that use multiple ways to conduct the prohibited actions.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE EL SALVADOR ARMED FORCES FOR INTERNAL SECURITY

... this it is not a Salvadoran exclusive phenomenon, you know it well. It is a world-wide, but certainly aggravated drama in our region. In the last decade the organized crime and the drug trafficking, as well as the action of the violent and criminal youthful gangs, has been developed and today they constitute the worse threat to the stability of our republics...

—*President Mauricio Funes Cartagena*
Speech UN, September 2009

The El Salvador Armed Forces call “Legion of Liberty” has been accomplishing its mission according with the National Constitution since its creation in 1823. Its role has been multi-faceted including intrastate and internal war, supporting the peace process in El Salvador, and providing support and security to citizens during natural disasters. In the international environment the Armed forces is one of the main tools used by the government to interact in the international environment, for example participation in UN peace keeping operations and international coalitions.

The criminal actors that threaten the security and stability in El Salvador are numerous; there are criminal organizations such as the gangs, Drug Cartels and weapons smugglers that not only affect the stability and security condition of the country but also the region and countries in the northern and southern parts of the continent. The criminal actors have changed and adapted to the new environment such as the combination of international Drug Cartels with the local Gangs to transport the drugs by land throughout the countries in response to the effort made by countries to stop the movement by air and sea.

The Government has assigned a new task to the armed forces, which supports the National Civil Police in the effort to maintain internal security in the country. This is a

critical task for military forces due to the nature of the threats they face, purposes and the ways they operate. To accomplish the mission, the leaders at the political level have to provide the resources needed by the forces, and created the conditions at the government level to accept and support the efforts made by military forces in order to be effective against criminal actors that endanger not only the peace in the country but also in the region.

Background

The first document that base the legal basis is the Constitution of the Republic, the following articles defined the Armed Forces role:

Art. 1. - El Salvador recognizes the human being like the origin and the aim of the activity of the State that is organized for the attainment of justice, the legal security and the communal property. Also it recognizes all human beings from the moment of the conception. Consequently, it is the obligation of the State to assure the inhabitants of the Republic have the enjoyment of the freedom, the health, the culture, the economic well-being, and social justice.

Art. 168, Numeral 12º - To have the Armed Forces in to the defense of the sovereignty of the state and the integrity of its territory. If the average maintenance of internal peace, the tranquility, and the public security have been exhausted, the President of the Republic will be able to use the Armed Forces to that aim. The performance of the Armed Forces will be limited in time and custom-made for the strictly necessary reestablishment of the order and will stop as soon as it has completed that assignment.

Art. 212. - The Armed Forces has a function in the defense of the sovereignty of the State and the integrity of the territory. The President of the Republic will be able to

arrange the Armed Forces for the maintenance of internal peace, in agreement with the suppose of this Constitution.

The Law of the National Defense defined in the Art. 5. - The Executive Branch has the responsibility to lead and to administer the National Defense, in narrow coordination with the Organs Legislative and Judicial. Its planning is an activity within the scope of politics.

Statutory law of the Armed Forces of El Salvador in the Art. 3. In time of peace the Armed Forces will help the development and the promotion of the policies and objectives of the national defense, and especially the maintenance of internal peace. To organize, to equip and to instruct units in active situation and reserve, will enable them accomplish to military a mission.

Decree No 60, Executive Branch of the Republic of El Salvador defined in the Art. 1. - To have the Armed Forces until by the term of a counted year from the use of this Decree, in order to support the Civil National Police in operations of maintenance of internal peace, by means of the planning and execution of preventive operations against delinquent by means of joint patrolling of prevention, dissuasion and apprehension of delinquents in all the national territory; for such effect, the human and material resources of the Armed Forces will be used to help to reach a greater tranquility and public security.

The Decree No 70, of the Executive branch extend the faculties contained in the Executive Decree No 60 related in the second considering, as far as the number of personnel and resources of which it will be with had the Armed Forces in cooperation,

and support of the activities of the Civil National Police in the matter of public security and, therefore, the attainment of internal peace.

Legislative Branch of the Republic of El Salvador issued the Decree No 317, The Decree authorizes the Armed Forces to control the entrance and to register individuals and guards of the penitentiary enclosures, as well as to occupy sentinel gate of monitoring and to offer security in the periphery of such, next will be the ability to offer internal and external security, without having direct bonding with the internal ones.

The President's Security Policy, about the security in the country is "general mission of the policy is to permanently turn to El Salvador into a country, in which the constitutional state of right is respected and in which the familiar life develops undressed of the fear; a country where a climate exists that favors the investment and the opportunities of individual and collective improvement".¹

Threats to Internal Security

Gangs, after the peace agreement signed on 16 January 1992 between the El Salvadorian Government and the "Farabundo Marti for National Liberation Front," they agreed to demobilize the security corps that were in charge of internal security and protecting the international boundaries. The NCP² was then created, equipped, and trained in a very short time with a lot of limitation in order to face the security corps demobilization's program. Also the economy was in critical condition, as were social and health care conditions. The national education system was degrading, so day to day life in the country for the persons with fewer resources at this time was difficult.

The El Salvadorian Governmental authorities identified that the main source of violence in the country was coming from illegal groups called "Maras" (gangs). Those groups originated in Los Angeles, California, during the early 1990s³, and were formed

by young immigrants whose parents moved to the United States in order to escape the war in El Salvador and look for a better destiny. Many of these young members enrolled in neighborhood groups; those groups mature into members and areas of influence. The Maras began to act against the law; they were involved in robberies, homicides, murders, traffic and possession of weapons, and other criminal activities. Some members of the Maras were deported to their home countries due to the illegal activities. Once back in the country, the members of the Maras organized illegal groups and started to commit illegal actions in El Salvador.

Today, the two main groups involved in illicit activities are the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and the 18th Street gang (M-18). Those groups are mainly composed of children, adolescents and adults, from both genders, from different levels of society. They are involved in criminal activities like armed assaults, aggravated robberies, homicides, murders, extortion, traffic and possession of weapons, consumption, and traffic and possession of drugs. According to the government, October of this year closed with 11 murders per day⁴; this amount is less than past months but is still significant.

The Maras are well organized and spread out in the country with a lot of influence in the main cities where the local population is influenced by their permanent presence, control, and influence. They use terror to control the population and obtain economic resources through a tax imposed for them called “renta”, Everyone who has a business small or big has to pay. If the owner refuses to pay, they act against the person or resources used to achieve the economic activities. The government spent \$ 171.00 million dollars in health care to local people affected by the violence.⁵

The Maras control most of the illegal activities in the country; they have even been linked with the drug cartels in the regions. This situation increases the level of violence and illegal activities due to how the drug dealers are fighting for control of the areas of influence and control of the drug trades.⁶ The migration back and forth of the members of the Maras to countries in the northern of hemisphere and to drug dealers in the region of Central America, Mexico, and the United States makes the problems more complex.

Drug trafficking, the efforts made by the governments of countries in North America to reduce drug traffic from South America to the United States' market has caused the drug dealers to change the way they carry the merchandise to the final destination. In the past, the drug dealers received the drug directly from South America. Now they have been pushed to use the Central America region, especially ground transportation or a mixture with the air or maritime ways to transport the drug throughout the region to avoid the authority's effort to control the illegal movement.

This activity happened during the internal war in the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, but at this time the government and authorities in charge were focused to resolving the instability condition. After the peace agreement, the government started to put attention to the illegal activity. The challenge was huge and complex due to the experience acquired by the drug dealers in ways to move the drugs across the region, and the corruption of some members of the authorities in charge, created the perfect environment for those businesses.⁷

In El Salvador, there is a large presence of international criminal organizations such as Colombian drug dealers, the "Zetas" and "Sinaloa" cartels from Mexico trying to

get control of the drug traffic in El Salvador. Those groups use Gangs MS 13 and 18th Street gangs to obtain superiority to secure the drug traffic in the country and the internal market.⁸

The violence caused by the control of drug movement has caused criminal activities like murders, intimidation attempts, and kidnapping. Most of those activities are against other drug dealers and authorities in charge of combating this traffic. Another problem faced by the government is corruption in some organisms of the government. Those conditions make the country unsecure and create a condition of instability in the region.

In El Salvador the consumption of cocaine, marihuana, crack and heroin⁹ is increasing among the local population¹⁰ due to the accessibility of the drugs in the local market. Most of these drugs come from the international drug dealers paid by the gangs and criminal organizations. The two main gangs in El Salvador control most of the local drug market and use the money for their illegal action.

Smuggled, the unprotected international boundaries among the countries in the Central America region make a perfect paradise for the smuggler that uses the country like a path to the final destination or to introduce goods to be used in the local market. The illegal traders not only affect the economy of the country due to less monetary resources received by the government due to the unpaid taxes, but they affect national security due to the trafficking of illegal weapons,¹¹ illegal drugs moving across the country, human trafficking, and others. This condition adds one more problem to the instability of the region and the country specifically.

Studies indicate that Central America is becoming more popular for illegal weapons trafficking due to the lack of resources assigned to control the international boundaries, internal problems that keep the authorities working in the most critical action of internal violence, and the corruption in some members of the authorities in charge of combating this illegal activity.¹² Parts of the weapons that enter to the country have a different destination than the local area. Those weapons are part of the business of the international weapons dealers, and in most of the cases, their destination is South America and/or drug dealers in Mexico. The rest of the weapons are used by common criminals and gangs to carry out illegal activities inside the country.

Part of the weapons trafficking comes from the remnants of weapons used by the guerrillas during the 1980s and 1990s in the region during the disarming, demobilization, and reintegration of the illegal armed groups in countries like Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador, that didn't turn in all the weapons at that time.¹³ The remote areas in Honduras were used to store weapons by different groups in the regions.

The weapons dealers used different procedures and techniques to carry the weapons through the country. For example, they made special compartments in vehicles, ships, and airplanes to hide the weapons and ammunitions, using the public road network, ports, and airfields. Other procedures were used to pay to the local gangs and criminals to move the weapons in remotes areas using beasts of burden to carry the load, normally the routes used were unprotected by the authorities or with less control. In most of the cases, those movements have been made with the support of the

corruption of some members of the local authorities. Many times payment is made with drugs or weapons that later are traded in the local market.

The common violence, some specialists indicate that the root of the common violence comes from poverty and the lack of opportunities to obtain an honest job, but other approaches are that the persons get accustomed to making less effort to obtain what they desire. El Salvador has both conditions. Besides the common violence present in the country like in most of the countries around the world, the post war condition adds more elements. After the war finished, the lack of labor conditions and other disadvantages related with the postwar in the country were presented. Some of the members from both sides did not have many opportunities to start a new life due to lack of knowledge or skill. Others decided to use the military skill obtained throughout the war to obtain the resources to live. These situations add more complexity to the common violence.

The common violence performed by the criminals are murders, kidnappings, armed assaults, robberies, extortions, and others that are less serious. The environment of criminality and violence generated by the illegal actors have a big impact in the regular government activities such as loss of external investment, human cost, eroding the economical and social condition and especially the health care system.¹⁴

The violence is present in most of the departments of the country, but the high criminality is around the main cities like San Salvador, the capital of the country, Santa Ana, San Miguel, and Sonsonate. According to the police, the rate of violent activities is slightly decreasing in relation to last year. During the present year, the violence is

changing from geography regions, due to the efforts made for the authorities in order to reduce it.¹⁵ And the criminals are moving to areas where there used to be less violence.

Reason to employ the Armed Forces

Security is a government's concern; the high level of violence and the perception of insecurity affect most of the daily routine of the local population, generate adverse effects of the quality of life, public health, development of human being, education, and governability. Violence also affects the society structure, reducing the cooperation among the citizens and groups. The impact of the insecurity and violence reduce the development of the human being.

Uncertain conditions reduce the government's opportunities to collect economic income from the industry and local traders due to lack of investment. Further, the reduced economic activities affect the capacity of the government to cover and provide job opportunities to the population. The same happens in the international environment. The credibility of the government's capacity to deal with the internal problem generates an unsecure environment to invest in the country.

The government invests resources from the general budget to reduce and mitigate the effects generated by the violence activities. This condition reduces the capacity of the government to invest and create the conditions required to increase the economical income in the local populations and develop the industry and economic activities required to develop the country.

The governments spend resources on the National Civil Police to improve the quality and capacity of the institution, but the NCP has been unable to control the violence in the country. This situation forced the government to take action and use the

armed forces as the last resource to control the violent conditions generated by the criminal organizations.

Since the peace agreement was signed, the armed forces have been working and cooperating in the different government social and economic projects that help the people who need it most. The armed forces helped the population affected by natural disasters that occurred during the last decade. Those activities have been performed using all the human and material resources available.

In 1993 the armed forces began to support the police in internal security tasks. The original plan was called “Strong Hand.” This plan addressed that military personnel provide security and logistic support to the police in actions against the criminal activities in the rural areas of the country. Since the beginning of the plan, the armed forces have been supporting the police in the internal security. The executive branch modifies some procedures; it provides more freedom of action and human and material resources to the armed forces to increase the capability and effectiveness. The plan produced some positive results but was not enough to deter the criminal actors.

The National Civil Police have since been created and are making efforts to generate and obtain the capacity and effectiveness required. However the short period of time since it was created and the instability condition in the country cause slow development of the police and generate the perception that they are inefficient to perform their task. Another problem to identify is the corruption of some members of the institution. There are different conditions that generate this problem such as economical profit, criminal pressure on the family and members of the institution, and other unknowns. Some members in different levels of the structure have been criticized for

following political posture, being related to criminal organizations, or being incapable of conducting their jobs.

Since the beginning of the NCP, it has been criticized. It was created and organized with different cultural and social perspectives, for instance, the regulation indicated that they have to work eight hours a day, but the criminals work 24 hours a day. The decision process is lineal, which means the police have the option to act according to their perceptions, other situation criticize that the police were created by former members of demobilized guerrillas, security corps released from military service, and the local population. These conditions create internal problems and difficulties to obtain unity of effort.

The support provided by the armed forces to the police in internal security task has been positive since the beginning. The different plans implemented by the government to assist the internal security such as combat criminal activities, provide security during the harvest collection, counter drug activities, provide security during holydays, protect the international boundaries, provide security in the penitentiaries, and provide to the armed forces the experience and familiarize them with the roots of the problems, causes, and conditions that generate the violence in the country. This condition provides a better understanding of the problems and better criteria to approach and combat the criminal activities.

Current Situation of the Armed Forces in Support of Internal Security

The El Salvador Armed Forces is supporting to reduce the criminality in different areas of the internal security in the country since 1993. In 2003 the government started to increase the participation of the military forces to stop the violence.¹⁶ At the beginning the task was to support the police in rural areas, but later the government assigned

more tasks such as support to antinarcotics activities, provide security in penitentiaries, and protect international boundaries in the areas without protection. Actually, there are more than eight thousand military members performing internal security tasks combine with the police and some case alone¹⁷.

The support provided by the armed forces to combat the violence is performed in two different ways. One is through the “Prevention and Support to the Community Plans” executed in October of 2009. The plan organizes the small unit in “Joint Group in Support to the Community” (JGSC), Those groups are composed of police and military personnel, and the main tasks are to conduct Joint Operations in order to prevent delinquent activities, conduct prevention patrols, dissuasion of common violence and organized crime, and provide security to farming production.

The command of the JGSC is performed in a combined way. The senior police members in the group normally receive the tasks planned to conduct the Joint Command of Public Security (JCPS), and the senior military members provide the procedures to secure the activity. The Police members are in charge to execute the capture or search procedures and the military forces provide security to the activity. Normally the JGSC has an area of responsibility to perform the activities but can be collected with other groups to execute a specific activity for a period of time. There are more than 300 JGSCs working across the country in the areas that have higher levels of crime. ¹⁸The JGSC are more prevention units due to the daily routine procedures addressed by the police.

The other way to combat the violence is through the “Zeus Command.” This command is composed of eight military task forces, and spread out in seven

departments with the highest level of criminality. The main tasks are to conduct actions against the criminal activities by itself or in conjunction with the JGSCs and police forces; perform search operations and support territorial control; support the local population in case of natural disaster; and capture violators and turn them in to the police for legal procedures. The military forces are under control of their own leadership. The Zeus Command's Staff plans and orders the security tasks. Police members cooperate with the military units to perform the captures and to conduct the administrative documentation in place and after the personnel captured are turned in to a police delegation in the area to conduct the legal procedure. The tasks forces perform main joint operation with the police and General Fiscally of the Republic to capture violator with legal charges. At the end of October of 2010, 139 main joint operations had been performed, having as a result the capture of 3,000 criminal elements.¹⁹

Control of drug movement the armed forces are part of the "Task Force Cuscatlán," a unit in charge of controlling and reducing the drug traffic in the tridimensional space of El Salvador. The air forces provide control of the airspace and provide combat service support to the ground units. The naval forces provide control of the territorial sea, and support the antinarcotics police units when requested. The ground forces integrate the joint operation by request from the police authorities; normally the support provided by the military forces is to secure the areas where the antinarcotics units work. The military forces along the international border have the task to confiscate the drugs coming from the countries beside El Salvador.

Control of the national borders, on June 24, 2010, the armed forces started to execute the control of the illegal path along the international boundary to combat and reduce

smuggling activities, drug traffic, illegal weapons movement, and control of human trafficking. The military forces established 23 mobile positions along the border to control illegal activity coming from outside or going inside the country. Those units are under control of “Sumpul Command,” that is in charge of planning and tasking the units. During the first four months of the operation the military forces had confiscated 2,373 weapons from different calibers.²⁰ The regular procedure used by the units is to keep the freedom of movement along the border, avoiding the routine to smugglers.

Security role in the National Penitentiary System, on May 2010, the legislative branch created decree number 371 that tasked the military forces to provide security in some penitentiaries of the country. The “San Carlos Command” is in charge of the entire operation, initially covering seven penitentiaries and lately added one more. The task is to perform security operations in coordination with the police in the penitentiaries designated to neutralize the incoming and outgoing the illegal issues, and to reduce the criminal activities performed by the prisoners. The military units provide external security and have control of movement from outside and inside. The penitentiary security is in charge of the prisoners inside the jail. According to the General of Division, David Munguia Payes Minister of National Defense, the extortion made by the prisoners from inside the penitentiaries had decreased between 35 and 40% since the military forces started to secure the jails.²¹

Common Problems

The common situation that reduces the effectiveness of the decree is lack of knowledge, training, equipment, and in some cases differences between the actors involved and ineffective coordination. The following conditions are the most common problems faced by the military forces during the execution of the multiple tasks

assigned; some of these actions are performed with joint forces from different institutions and others just with military forces.

Organization, the military forces are organized primarily to perform multiple military tasks, but the roles of the military forces in internal issues require a particular organization. Actually, the military units employed in internal issues adapted the combat organization to perform security tasks, for some tasks such as providing security to police during the capture procedures or performing patrols in areas where criminal activities are at high levels. The traditional military organization meets the required activities, but other activities like to secure, search, registers a personal or house, provide security and control of the access and exits of the penitentiaries the military organization have to be modified to cover the multiple tasks performed. The organization adopted by the military units produces positive results but have to be improved in order to make the actions more effective.

Training, the training received by the military forces in the public security environment is basic. There are areas to conduct effective registering of persons, automobiles and houses; procedures to follow in case of violator capture, how to neutralize a violator without the use of weapons; how to identify illegal substances, and others, are areas that have to be trained in more detail in order to be more effective. The rules of engagement help to reduce casualties but have to be improved prior to use. For example, the military member has to be trained to identify and react when a situation endangers his life and the rest of the team.

Equipment, this area is one of the most critical for the military units. The lack of communication reduces the effectiveness of the command and control, prior

coordination, during and after the actions, and the interchange of information at the right time and place between military units and other institution involved in the actions, the incompatible of equipment and frequencies made more difficult the coordination.

Another area that is affected is mobility; the lack of transportation means reduction in the capacity of the military units to react and pursue the violator when they use vehicles and other kinds of transportation like motorcycles, bicycles, or horses in rural areas and also reduces the capacity to react in case of an emergency situation, the air support can play a key role to react in areas of difficult access or the air surveillance to track the pursuit of criminal groups. The lack of special equipment reduces the capacity of the military forces to increase effective actions against crime.

Intelligence resources, the lack of effective intelligence agents reduces the capacity to be more effective against criminal actors. The military forces have reduced capacity to collect information from criminal activities. Most of the information used by the military forces comes from the members on the ground and the local population. The lack of effective intelligence interchange among the police, General Fiscally of the Republic, penitentiaries security personnel, private security and others makes it more difficult to obtain updated and effective information. The reduced capacity to acquire information from technical resources like phone call intervention, cell phone blocking, aerial surveillance, web communication, and others reduce the effectiveness of the effort.

Combat Service Support, the lack of an effective supply and maintenance systems affects the capacity of the military forces to keep the freedom of action on the ground due to the daily procedures used by units to resupply food, water, and basics to

the units. The same happens to the maintenance procedures provided to the material and equipment used by the forces. In most cases, the maintenance services have to be requested in advance due to the limited capacity of the units to provide the maintenance. This situation gets worse when the request is in emergency cases.

Legal procedures

The lack of knowledge of laws related to internal security tasks performed by the military forces such as legal procedures during capture of material or illegal substances, procedures to follow during personal detention on handling of the proof needed by the justice's members or coordination that has to be performed by the military forces with others institution affect the result of captures and detection. Another problem that the forces face during the execution of the tasks is the few advocates and expert personnel in legal procedures available to advise the military personnel during the procedures. Those conditions affect the final result of the activities because in some cases the violators are released due to improper procedures or lack of proof that incriminate the violator in the criminal activity.

Unity of effort, there is proof of the effectiveness when the military units execute the activities without the support from other institutions. Due to the time reaction and procedures followed by the personnel from other institutions, this reduces the possibility of the opportune time against the violator. The availability of personnel from other institutions is critical in emergency cases when is required to act in combined way, due to the crime being committed 24 hours a day. There are also some cases of information being leaked or denied from members of the police to protect the criminal organizations.

Regional environment, there are criminal organizations that are related with other violators outside the boundaries, and there are tight relations among the criminal organizations like gangs, drug dealers, and weapons traffickers in the region. The violator uses the adjacent territories to protect themselves from the national authorities, execute extortion by phone, and coordinate illegal activities, like the relevant case of the Salvadorian Deputies murders in Guatemala in February of 2007.²³ The Police of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua are aware of the crime's relation and make efforts to reduce the problem but it looks like every nation has a different tempo to combat the violence.

Issues to Improve

Laws, to combat the criminal organization likes gangs or drug dealers, the country needs a strong institution like the Supreme Court of Justice to support the multiple pressures that those organizations can press to the their members. The pressure can be used to release criminal members, change the judiciary personnel's mind about a specific topic, or to request a favor. The institutions need to prepare and protect their own personnel from the threats in order to avoid extortion, intimidation, coercion, and other procedures used by criminal organizations.

The recent issue of the new law against the Maras (Ley Antipandillas) approved by the National Assembly on September 2010, promises to cover all the inefficiencies of previous laws. The new laws promise to cover the real situation existing in the country. Now the actors involved in the use of the new rules have to complete their activities according to the legal procedures and be strict in the application of the commitment. The Supreme Court has to keep monitoring and evaluate the right application of the law and take action if required or change if need for improvement. The judges' corps has to

evaluate the cases in an objective way, avoiding the release of a violator based on technical mistakes performed during the capture. The police, military and fiscal members, and members of other institutions involved in the combating of crime have to be familiar with the legal procedures and act according to the rules dictated.

Government, the government has to provide the human and material resources needed by the military forces in order to increase the effective actions against the criminal. The resources can be supplied in scale by priorities to the security task units and the kind of violence they fight. The way to acquire the resources can be through the regular budget, international loans, or by donation from other countries. Once the armed forces' mission finishes, the equipment can be transferred to the police in order to increase their capabilities.

The government level is required to combat the corruption cases, creating effective procedures to identify and control the proliferation of the illegal activities among the government personnel, making a clear vision that the person who breaks the law has to be removed from the institutions and face justice. The Code of Conduct generated by the government has to be executed firmly by all personnel and punish those who break it.

The government has to create the unity of effort in all the institutions involved in the problems, putting pressure on the leaders of the institutions that are not collaborating in the activities against the violence. The institutions that are involved in security tasks have to provide all the human resources and the equipment available to be used against the criminal activities.

The government has to seek alliances with nations that face the same problems in the region and establish common goals and procedures to be more effective against the international criminal organizations. The interchange of information is a vital activity among the police, fiscally and for the armed forces in the region. The violence is a common problem in the region with similar actors and similar beginning and has to be fought like a single enemy, and not in a single state activity.

The National Security Council has to play an effective role in creating the conditions to allow the units on the ground to perform their jobs in the best way. The council has to resolve the multiple problems faced by the unit on the ground, improving procedures, coordination, interchange information and other required at the strategic level. It must look in different possibilities to obtain the resources needed by forces, Interchanging the knowledge, experience and information available with the rest of the countries in the region to increase the pressure and reduce the spaces of common violence. Through the NSC the institutions involved in the problems have to reactivate and invigorate the organization created to combat the violence, like Joint Command Regional Public Security (JCRPS), Join Command Departmental Public security (JC DP), and Join Command Public Security (JCPS) offices created to support the joint work between the police and armed forces.

The government has to provide the economical resources and conditions to make the living conditions of the human resources more conformable to avoid disappointment among the personnel, and reduce the chance to criminal organizations to seduce by illegally means the elements involved in the crime's combat.

Armed Forces, the organization of the units involved in combating crime has to be revised and adapted to the current situation, using the experience and knowledge obtained previously. The units have to be trained in the organization, giving attention to develop the primary skills needed for every member in the organization. The organization has to provide the mobility needed in some cases to pursue the criminal, but also has to provide sufficient power to face criminal groups well equipped with experience in the uses of multiple weapons. This organization has to be evaluated and adjusted when needed for the commanders of the units. One aspect to keep in mind is defined clearly by the chain of command in the case of the JGSC.

The training for personnel employed in the internal security has to be increased in order to develop the basic skills in this kind of environment. The basic training taught to the new personnel has to increase in time and has to cover procedures like rules of engagement, personal defense, how to perform search procedures, physical searches, role of every member in the team, and other requirements. Military personnel already in the forces have to receive training at least periodical to cover the most common lack of knowledge and skills. Other actions that can increase the skill of the military members is to provide documents like capture procedures booklet, basic data about smuggling activities, procedures to identify and classify the most common drugs in the area, and other useful information needed by the forces.

The equipment required by the forces has to be prioritized according with the urgency, identifying the requirements. The protection equipment for personnel like helmets, shields, guns, ammo, tear gas, and personal defense stick has to be obtained early in order to reduce the exposure of the personnel. The mobility deficiency can be

reduced using the local market to acquire personnel transport vehicles, motorcycles, and using the transportation means available in government organizations. The use of cell phones in the different units can increase the ability to communicate and coordinate action among the personnel involved. The use of codes, security procedures, different frequencies, and other measures can reduce the vulnerability of the means of communications.

To reduce the deficiency of the legal procedures in the military personnel, the procedures must be clarified. It is also necessary to provide personnel with legal knowledge to assist the military personnel in the more complex cases. All the personnel involved in security tasks have to know the rights that the legal status provides to them, and the restrictions imposed by law. The institution has to open an office in charge of collecting the denouncement against the military personnel to reduce the illegal activities performed by the forces and to show the public opinion that the institution is working within the legal frame.

The institutions involved in the activity have to share and provide all the pertinent information available to the units on the ground. The JCPSs have to collect the information available of the geographical area, analyze it and produce information useful to the units, including the daily plan activities have to be based on the information available. The police, armed forces, and penitentiaries security have to increase the quantity and quality of the personnel involved in intelligence processes. The personnel have to be trained and prepared in specific areas of the criminal organization. The leaders at every level have to conduct periodic evaluation of the personnel to identify possible gaps and links in the organization. The capacity of the military units and

institution support to obtain and deny information to the criminal organizations can be increased by the use of technical intelligent equipment like interception of the cell and regular phone call, and use of the cell phone GPS location available in some cell phones to locate criminal activities, and cell phone blocks in the penitentiaries.

The coordination among the organizations involved in the activities is critical; the unity of effort has to prevail over sector or personal interest. The leaders of every institution have to create a feeling of responsibility about the problems in the subordinated personnel and make clear statements that this is a general joint effort led by the government with the main objective to reduce the criminal activities to the level that the institutions that police and penitentiaries can handle themselves. The institution has to reinforce the offices in charge of the joint works, supply the human and material equipment needed, and evaluate their performance continuously. The institution leaders have to indicate the high level of decision progress, the positive and negative situations generated by the employment of the joint forces, difficulties that are out of their hands, and problems faced by the units. This situation can produce a moral pressure in the institution leaders and generate the compromises needed.

Institution support, the police leaders at every level have to increase the level of participation in the activities with human resources, equipment and information available, looking to neutralize the sectors or individual interests that influence in a negative way the effort made by the rest of the organization. The police have to change some procedures like the quantity of personnel available to work with the military forces, generate a mobile concept during the regular patrol and search operations, and provide more freedom of movement during the performed daily tasks. The differences in the

work schedules between the police and military forces affect the tempo and speed of the actions. Both institutions have to work in the same period of time with the same personnel to provide the continue process required in these kind of activities.

The authorities of the penitentiaries have to provide all the pertinent information available to the military personnel, the coordination has to be continuous between the principal of penitentiaries, police chief and military forces commander, to exchange information, current or incoming activities in the jail, procedures followed by the security personnel, and other relevant issues. The change of the security dispositive, procedures, personnel and/or equipment has to be observed in advance to take the pertinent actions by the rest of the forces involved in the security.

The police and the penitentiary authorities have to create procedures to prosecute and punish the illegal activities among the personnel. The unity of effort has to be the same for everyone involved in the activity. The leaders and human resources have to follow a common interest defined by the constitution and law issues. Those organizations have to keep in mind that the armed forces is providing support to them and will end when the criminal actions get to the level that can be handle by themselves.

Conclusions

To be effective against criminal organizations, the national institution involved has to act according with the legal procedures and look for solutions instead of problems. The efforts in different areas are huge at the government level but are essential to reduce the level of criminality in the country. One of the key aspects to perform is to reduce corruption found in every level of the organization. If this illegal

activity is reduced, the capacity of criminal organizations to obtain favors and support from government personnel would reduce considerably.

This is a common effort and has to work globally for the institutions involved in the problems; the government has to create a unity of effort in order to be effective against the criminal organization reducing the space and chance of the illegal organization to interfere in the actions. The sector and individual interests are dangerous to the effort and institutions involved; the government has to neutralize these activities and apply the Conduct Code created for this purpose.

The use of the armed forces in internal security issues is restricted to certain periods of time. This means that the effort made has to be supported from the rest of institutions in order to obtain the desired goal. The uses of the military forces in this activity are the last resources from the government. If the effort made is not enough to reduce the criminal activities, the government has to seek for help outside the country, a situation that is not appropriate for a self governing country.

Endnotes

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