

Following the May 1993 explosion of a clandestine arms cache in Nicaragua, it was revealed that the FMLN still held a substantial amount of armaments in depots in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. The FMLN cooperated fully with ONUSAL in the location and destruction of these armaments.

Apart from the successful demobilization of over eight thousand FMLN guerrillas and a fifty per cent reduction of armed forces personnel, the implementation of other provisions of the peace accords has proceeded slowly or is stalled. In his reports to the Security Council, the UN Secretary-General has noted an apparent lack of commitment on the part of the Government of El Salvador to fulfil many of its obligations under the peace accords.

In the last three months of 1993, El Salvador was again thrown into crisis by the murders of several officials of the FMLN, including one of its collective leaders, and of some members of the Republican Nationalist Alliance (ARENA). President Cristiani established an Inter-Institutional Commission to investigate these crimes, with the assistance of foreign police officials. At the behest of the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council, an independent joint commission to investigate the activities of illegal armed groups since January 1992, was constituted on December 8, 1993.

CANADIAN POSITION

The Canadian government is concerned about the resurgence of political violence in El Salvador which reflects the continuing problem of human rights violations in that country. This violence threatens to undermine the peace process and preparations for national elections in March 1994.

Officials of the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala, which is accredited to El Salvador, have in the past year made direct interventions to representatives of the Government of El Salvador on several human rights cases. Canada's Ambassador visited the country in November 1993 to assess the human rights situation. He met with the Ministers of Defence, the Interior, and Planning and Development to express the Canadian government's disquiet over recent acts of violence.

At the 48th session of the UN General Assembly, Canada co-sponsored a resolution on the human rights situation in El Salvador which reflected recent events. At the 49th session of the Commission for Human Rights (UNCHR), a consensus resolution was passed which stated that the human rights situation in El Salvador could, in future, be considered under Advisory Services (Item 21) if there were "substantial improvement." As there has not been a sustained improvement in respect for human rights in El Salvador, Canada will support its consideration under Item 12 at the 50th Session of the UNCHR.