

*Recommendation #58*

**It is recommended that for security forces' human rights capacity building, that HROs focus on changing attitudes and instituting human rights protection mechanisms, as opposed to general professional development.**

For example, ONUSAL was involved in the supervision of the creation of the new National Civilian Police Force (PNC). The goal of creating a police force with a radically different philosophy and membership, as well as cutting police links to the armed forces, went far beyond the traditional scope of UN institution building. ONUSAL was part of PNC training and standards setting, and one significant success was the creation of National Civilian Police Guide to Norms and Procedures. This guide served as the basis for a number of police courses at all levels of the PNC. This in-depth involvement in police reform and capacity building has been partly replicated in Haiti<sup>201</sup> under MICIVIH and UNMIH.

ONUSAL's human rights division was also involved in the reform of the El Salvadorean military, including the preparation of and distribution of 20,000 copies of a book entitled *Military Doctrine and Army/Society Relations*. More problematic was the outcome of the Ad-Hoc Commission agreed to under the Accords, where three independent Salvadoreans carried out a 3 month investigation and came up with confidential list of 103 officers to be removed or transferred. The military's response to this was slow but relatively complete, and the impact on the military has been undeniable. While full blown public inquiries and courts martial would have achieved greater justice, given the situation "the Ad Hoc Commission represented a creative answer to the need for a cleansing of the military...that the Commission's members did such a thorough job demonstrates that review commissions per se can be effective instruments for change where judicial power is weak or corrupt."<sup>202</sup>

There is of course the danger that the precedence of such 'soft' options become automatic, losing sight of the inhumanity of gross human rights violations. The point of departure for reconstruction must remain an attempt to achieve full justice, even if the UN and societies must often have recourse to trade offs and compromises.

The experience of MICIVIH in Haiti highlighted another issue, the need for reforms of related security and judicial mechanisms and institutions to proceed roughly in step. The Haitian police were seen as a key target for reform and a large amount of UN and donor resources were put into police restructuring and training. The result has been for the police to move far ahead of the broader judicial system, eg. prosecutors, judges, justice ministry. The danger is that police will quickly lose confidence in the capacity of the rest of the system to effectively prosecute those they think are guilty. The police could very easily 'forget' much of their training and

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<sup>201</sup> In Haiti, the US Justice Department's ICITAP program has taken the lead role in police recruitment and training, and MICIVIH with its far fewer resources has been limited to sporadic training sessions at the academy.

<sup>202</sup> p.33, *Human Rights and UN Field Operations*, Human Rights Watch, op cit.