
Conclusions

This paper has identified and briefly assessed the likely verification requirements, in a general way, of a possible Central American peace accord, and elaborated somewhat upon potential implementation problems. In doing so, two types of agreement have been assessed — one with "minimalist" aims and one with "maximalist" aims.

A picture emerges in the first case of a requirement for a wide range of security-related verification provisions involving an array of mechanisms for monitoring compliance with an eventual accord. In this minimalist agreement, political elements, and their monitoring, would be perhaps somewhat less dramatic than those set out in Esquipulas II, for example. They would still exist, however, and would require some verification.

Much more dramatic, however, would be the security-related elements of such an agreement. These would be complex, wide-ranging and would require an extraordinarily elaborate verification regime, almost certainly established in connection with an international peacekeeping organization of a significant size. This peacekeeping organization would be of at least major observer mission size but would more than likely require a peacekeeping force to at least temporarily insert itself between hostile forces, and perhaps establish de-militarized zones and areas of collection for dissident armed groups.

An elaborate range of confidence-building measures can be envisaged in the context of this type of accord. Many of these, as seen above, would have a verification aspect, especially where sensitive areas are concerned. The size and terrain of areas likely to be considered sensitive make for a daunting verification task even without considering the tremendous political complexities that would affect the work of a monitoring body in the region.

In the case of a "maximalist" accord, some further security-related verification responsibilities would be envisaged to make the agreement tighter and more complete. The difficulties in achieving an accord which pushes forward the greatest distance possible the goals of the regional peace process mean that some of the political issues, such as democratization and the conditions of the regional super-power's acceptance of peace in the area, are here addressed and not in the "minimalist" accord. The bulk of the new responsibilities are for political verification, almost certainly by a smaller group of people than would be involved in the security provisions verification, and made up of more specialized civilian personnel. Their task would be a delicate one, involving a close knowledge of the political scene in the area. They would, as opposed to the CIVS experience, need time, staff, and a continuous and clear mandate for reporting on what they have discovered regarding the application of the accord's provisions.