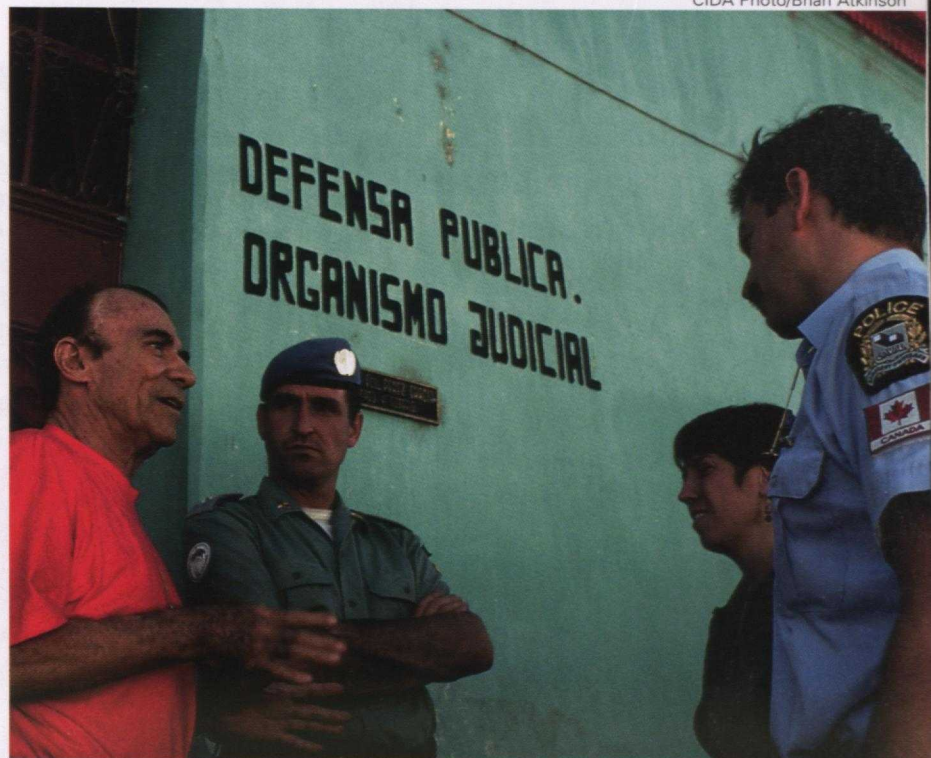# Security sector reform

■ In many countries, security institutions intended to serve and protect the public actually pose a major threat to human security. Authoritarian or undisciplined military and police forces can be major violators of the human rights of women, men, girls and boys. Corrupt or incompetent security institutions either fail to protect the public effectively against violence, or worse, collaborate with criminals.

■ For Canada, security sector reform refers to helping improve the effectiveness, affordability and accountability of security institutions abroad, especially in countries emerging from conflict. It involves increasing the ability of those institutions to protect the safety of individuals and carry out their legitimate duties humanely in accordance with the norms of a free and democratic society. Effective and accountable military and police forces play an important role in protecting civilian populations in zones of conflict. In this context, Canada has placed particular emphasis on developing practical strategies to enhance safety and security in refugee camps. Establishing effective and accountable security institutions is also an essential component of a broader exit strategy for peace support operations. In Kosovo, East Timor and Afghanistan, Canadians have played an important role in multi-disciplinary teams helping to bridge between immediate post-crisis peace support and longer term peacebuilding and development.

CIDA Photo/Brian Atkinson

A Canadian police officer working with a local police detachment as part of the United Nations mission, Guatemala. (1997)

■ Canada will continue to help develop this relatively new field at both policy and operational levels. Our commitment includes a $15-million contribution to a Canada-Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) partnership to promote community-based security in the ECOWAS region through capacity building and security sector reform.

Corrections guidelines for UN peace support operations

Canada's Human Security Program supported the development of guidelines for the establishment and operation of humane and effective correctional services during UN peace support operations. Developed by the International Corrections and Prisons Association, the guidelines provide a practical base for establishing UN standard operating procedures in the administration of justice and are aimed at helping to ensure that respect for basic human rights and humanitarian norms are built into any correctional system the UN is called upon to set up or reform within the context of a peace support operation. Presented by Canadian officials to the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations in August 2002, the guidelines are available on-line at: www.icpa.ca.