

heavier weapons. Most authorities believed that the objectives were achieved and the program was a success.<sup>49</sup>

El Salvador was considered to be one of the more successful micro-disarmament efforts conducted by the UN. In accordance with the peace accords more than 11,000 insurgents surrendered approximately 10,000 handguns, rifles and automatic small arms as well as 74 missiles and 9000 grenades. These weapons and a similar number from demobilized soldiers of the Salvadoran Army were destroyed. However, it soon became apparent that in spite of this success as many as 200,000 to 300,000 military style weapons remained in civilian hands.<sup>50</sup>

Nicaragua created a Special Disarmament Brigade to conduct buy-backs after demobilization. The first buy-backs began in January 1992. This was to get at caches that demobilized combatants had not previously handed over and were using to rearm. The gun buy-back program cost US \$6 million and during that time over 142,000 weapons and 250,000 pieces of ammunition and ordnance were either bought-back or seized. A combination of cash and food was used. It was a flexible programme catering to groups and individuals. Groups who handed over caches were collectively rewarded with food, construction material and cash. Much of the money for this enterprise came from foreign donations. The buy-back program did not distinguish between functioning and non-functioning weapons. All were destroyed by fire in open pits for cost-effectiveness and psychological reasons.<sup>51</sup>

## Summary of Findings

The analysis of several other UN operations that had a micro-disarmament component are encompassed in the comments and observations at Annex B. The cursory overviews contained in this section, in conjunction with the observations at Annex B, are sufficient to indicate some of the characteristics required, and some of the elements to avoid, for a successful micro-disarmament component to a UN peace operation.

A few general observations should be made as they are perhaps key to any UN peace operation that has or should have a micro-disarmament element. First and foremost, micro-disarmament starts with the negotiations among belligerents, and in this case if the negotiations are being brokered by a UN third party or facilitator it is through him or her

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<sup>49</sup>Edward Laurence *The New Field of Micro-Disarmament: Addressing the Proliferation and Buildup of Small Arms and Light Weapons*. Research Report Prepared for the Disarmament Section of the Foreign Ministry of the Federal Republic of Germany. California and Bonn: Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS) and the Bonn International Centre for Conversion, June 1996. Appendix VIII

<sup>50</sup>Edward Laurence, Appendix V

<sup>51</sup> Edward Laurence, Appendix VIII