
Introduction

In attempting to address the very complex subject of the verification of a peace accord with extensive arms control and other verifiable provisions, this paper begins with short introductions to the political, military and diplomatic contexts of the region, followed by an overview of the accords signed to date. Specifically, it focuses on the three major negotiations undertaken so far: Contadora, Esquipulas II, and the Nicaraguan national peace accord, the Sapoá agreements, of March 1988.

With the above as background, the paper then looks at the minimum content required for a peace accord of perhaps greater viability than Esquipulas II. Following this, it considers a maximum content agreement, both minimum and maximum taken in terms of what they would set out to achieve as accords. The "gradualist" school of thought on the subject is then briefly addressed.

With the current (minimalist) and potential (maximalist) contents assessed, a framework is provided for analysis of the verification of the agreements in question. Here again, the focus is on minimalist and maximalist accords. This section ends with a wider discussion of other potential confidence-building measures which might supplement an agreement.

The difficulties of implementation provide the subject of the next section. Such difficulties are addressed under the general headings of terrain and climate factors, political complexities, and technical difficulties.

The study ends with a "lessons learned" section and conclusion. It is hoped this approach will provide a study of value both to the specialist and to a wider audience concerned with the Central American peace process and the potential Canadian role therein.