

citizens occurred mostly in the countryside with 95 percent of complaints involving rural incidences. (Torres-Rivas, 1994:24)

The report publicly named individuals linked to human rights abuse, and offered several recommendations involving administrative, legislative, and constitutional measures. The Truth Commission suggested the removal of the entire Supreme Court (Hampson, 1996:158), and several others indicated in the report within in public administration, judiciary, and military. It also recommended that those mentioned in the report and removed from the Supreme Court should be banned from public office for ten years. As a result, some military officers were removed from positions of authority, but in an extremely slow process due to many delays and apprehensiveness.

During the Truth Commission's research period of human rights violations, it encountered defiance not only from the military, but also from US government officials and intelligence agencies which refused to provide the necessary documentation, nor cooperate fully. This raised new questions about whether loyalty to Salvadoran military allies outweighed US commitments to the peace accords and the truth about past violations. (Constable, 1993:109)

Five days after the report's release, El Salvador's National Assembly, controlled by Cristiani's ARENA party, passed legislation entitled "General Amnesty Law for the Consolidation of Peace," which prevented the investigation and prosecution of all those responsible for human rights offences committed in context of the civil war (1980-1992); thus rejecting one of the principal recommendations of the report. (Amnesty International, 1996: 16)

Essentially, through the involvement of international agents, such as the UN Secretary General and ONUSAL, and the Truth Commission in the peace process, the accord and cease-fire were finally established. In addition, external pressures from neighbouring countries, including the 'four friends of the Secretary-General' (Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Venezuela), worked with both sides in support of the peace talks, and to prevent their breakdown. (Hampson, 1996: 136)

The incessant war finally ended after over a decade of violence and the death of thousands of innocent victims. UN involvement brought legitimacy and urgency to the peace process. While the accord itself was not perfect, it did put an end to the mass violence, and increased the possibility of a true transition to a 'legitimate democracy.'

Although the human rights violations still occur to a small degree, the fact that the FMLN became the second largest political force during the 'election of the century' in March 1995 demonstrates the progress that has occurred in El Salvador. (Spence, 1999: 1) Through the promotion and practice of 'democracy', former enemies may now debate and promote their interests within a political sphere, instead of relying upon terrorism and gunpowder to realize their aspirations.