EFFECTIVENESS AND INTERNAL SECURITY.
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
OF EL SALVADOR AND NICARAGUA

Geoffrey ELLIS

Naval Officer, Naval Postgraduate School, USA

Nicaragua and El Salvador share many commonalities, including geographical vulnerabilities, widespread poverty, the experience of civil conflict in the 1980s, and a transition to democracy in the early 1990s. Nevertheless, each state has drastically divergent levels of violence, as measured particularly by homicide rates, with Nicaragua among the lowest in Latin America and El Salvador among the highest in the world. This paper assesses the historical and institutional variables that account for this divergence and evaluates each state's security structures using a civil-military relations analysis. In particular, the author uses Bruneau and Matei's criterion of effectiveness. The findings demonstrate that Nicaragua's security forces consolidated during the 1980s in a manner more capable of sustaining the democratic transition and confronting new security threats like gangs and organized crime.

Key words: *civil-military relations, Nicaragua, El Salvador, effectiveness, violence, Central America.*

1. INTRODUCTION

This year, El Salvador is projected to have the highest homicide rate in the world. At 92 per 100,000 inhabitants for 2015, its homicide rate has more than doubled since the breakdown of the gang truce in 2012 [1]. Nicaragua, by contrast, has experienced homicide rates steadily near or below 10 per 100,000 for over a decade, with 2014 one of the lowest yet at 8.7 per 100,000 inhabitants [2]. In this paper, I will examine this divergence in internal security outcomes through a civil-military relations analysis of the security forces of each state [3]. Contrasting El Salvador and Nicaragua offers useful insights due to the relevant similarities and differences. Both countries underwent a civil war in the 1980s. Both struggle with legacies of authoritarianism, and each is situated geographically within a major transshipment zone for narcotics from South America to the United States. The two states also differ in key ways, including varying degrees of foreign military assistance, different types of democratic transitions, and distinct methods of security sector formation during the civil war periods.

1.1 Objectives and Methodology

My aim is to explore the divergence in violence levels using a civil-military relations analysis of effectiveness of the security forces as my point of departure. Many Latin American civil-military relations specialists focus on democratic civilian control of the military–

a natural topic for a region that has, by and large, only democratized within the last several decades. Samuel Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* paved the way for this type of analysis, influencing leading civil-military relations scholars like Peter Feaver and John Allen Williams [4]. With respect to Latin America, academics have written about the influence of military prerogatives and reserve domains on democratic civilian control. Alfred Stepan pioneered this kind of analysis with his seminal analysis of military prerogatives in South America. In *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone*, Stepan outlined eleven indicators to assess the prerogatives of the military of Brazil, which other scholars have applied to various Latin American states [5].

Others, like Narcis Serra have written about civil-military relations in democratic transitions, drawing from his transformational tenure as Spain's first defense minister after Franco. Serra also stresses the centrality of democratic civilian control and subordination of the military. In his prologue to *Debating Civil-Military Relations in Latin America* (2014), Serra argues for the ongoing centrality of democratic civilian control due to *"the need to find policies that place them [the military] in a position subordinate to the new democratic authorities"* [6]. Serra alludes to the 2009 coup in Honduras as evidence for the continued centrality of democratic civilian control [7]. David R. Mares explores the various public opinion surveys conducted by Latinobarómetro and the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) to examine attitudes toward the military and democratic civilian governance [8]. He finds that most countries remain vulnerable to

coups due to *"distrust of government and a polarization of politics"* combined with a high regard for the military [9].

For my paper, I move beyond this focus on democratic civilian control to use an analytical framework that first arose through a debate between David Pion-Berlin and Thomas Bruneau in 2005-2006. Pion-Berlin contends that democratic civilian control in Latin America is better than most give credit, as he differentiates between the *"balance of competence"*, which *"tilts still heavily in favor of the military"*, and the *"balance of power"*, which he argues *"has moved in favor of civilians"* [10]. Thomas Bruneau responded to Pion-Berlin's analysis of Latin America by contending that civilians needed to develop sufficient knowledge about defense and security issues [11]. Bruneau proposed analyzing civil-military relations with a new analytical framework that moves beyond the traditional focus on democratic civilian control. Bruneau and his colleague Matei proposed a trinitarian analytical framework analyzing civil-military relations through democratic civilian control, effectiveness, and efficiency [12]. Of the three, I focus on the criterion of effectiveness and apply it to the security forces of Nicaragua and El Salvador, respectively.

Matei's articulation of the trinitarian framework contains several points relevant to my analysis. First, Matei argues that, faced with *"network-centricity and network-like traits of new security threats"*, security roles and missions have expanded beyond a traditional military focus to include police and intelligence agencies [13]. I use this perspective in analyzing the security sectors of the two states. Second, Matei argues that emphasis on control

is not enough; instead, scholars must assess *"the perspective of making effective security decisions and policies"* [14]. Effectiveness, in the case of El Salvador and Nicaragua, is the central focus of my analysis of security forces' approaches to violence. Finally, Matei proposes three indicators with which to evaluate effectiveness of a security force in fulfilling its assigned missions: plans, structures, and resources [15]. I will use these indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the internal security forces in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

I argue that Nicaragua's security forces had plans, structures, and resources better capable of adapting to the new threats posed by gang violence that arose during the early 1990s democratization period. These included community-based security organizations, a highly trained civilian police force, adequate funding, and sociologically sound rehabilitative plans to confront criminality and gangs. Conversely, El Salvador's security forces underwent a profound disruption and reorganization during the democratic transition that left it vulnerable and less capable of adapting to new security challenges. First, I will examine the historical factors that have influenced the effectiveness of the security forces. Then, using Matei's indicators of effectiveness, I evaluate and contrast Nicaragua and El Salvador's security forces.

2. HISTORICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING EFFECTIVENESS

2.1. El Salvador

Notwithstanding the emphasis on reforming the military and police, the legacy of the civil war period had implanted deep-rooted habits of impunity and military domination of internal security. As the Center for Strategic and International Studies' (CSIS) report on police reform in Latin America asserts, *"Fighting communism during the Cold War led to aiding Latin American defense establishments that controlled the police"* [16]. During the civil war, El Salvador's police functioned, as CSIS states, *"as a fourth branch of the military"* [17]. No Central American state received more U.S. foreign military assistance than El Salvador; between 1981 and 1992, the U.S. delivered a total of $273 million for the military and $860 million in general economic aid [18]. High military prerogatives in El Salvador were established during the 1980s war and have been slow to diminish. The United States unwittingly helped foment serious impunity problems in the security forces in El Salvador. As Jack Spence points out, *"They* [El Salvador's military] *knew the U.S. needed them"* and used this dependence to ensure their *"impunity from the law"* [19]. According to the Truth Commission, *"any organization in a position to promote opposing ideas that questioned official policy was automatically labeled as working for the guerillas"* [20].

El Salvador's security forces underwent a profound transition after the 1992 UN-sponsored Chapultepec Peace Accords. The accords were the result of two years of negotiations between the government and the FMLN insurgents [21]. Reforms were ambitious in scope with a number of specific goals, including reforming military doctrine, altering military education, purifying security forces of human rights abusers, reducing prerogatives, eliminating paramilitary actors (like the infamous death squads), and creating a civilian-led, professionalized national police [22]. The Chapultepec Peace Accords

called for the establishment of the Civilian National Police (PNC) with a central focus on protecting human rights—an effort to prevent the recurrence of the widespread torture and killings of state security forces and death squads during the civil war [23]. Like many militaries after civil wars, El Salvador's military reorganized after the peace accords to include equal representation of former guerilla insurgents.

The transition for the security sector has not yet resulted in an effective and capable security force. The legacy of state-directed violence and ongoing impunity has left a security sector with high prerogatives and weakened state institutions, as Barany details [24]. These high prerogatives manifested early on during the transition in the blanket impunity granted the military in 1993 after the United Nations-sponsored Truth Commission for El Salvador found over 85 percent of serious acts of violence committed by agents of the state [25]. Despite only being authorized for emergencies, El Salvador's military has continued to act as a primary agent in the struggle against the gang problem. The PNC suffers from endemic corruption, inefficiency, resource shortfalls, poor administration, and lack of uniformity in collection of evidence [26].

The negotiated settlement between the FMLN and the government resulted in a purified but severely weakened security sector. By agreement, the PNC was comprised of mostly civilians with no prior background in policing, with the exception of roughly 20 percent of the top positions allotted to both the security forces of the former regime and the FMLN [27]. Faced with the disruptions caused by such a massive institutional reorganization, El Salvador has continued to rely on its military to conduct security operations and augment police efforts to confront growing gang violence using Mano Dura strategies. As Barany observes, other than the military, *"the state simply has no one else to turn to"* [28]. In contrast, as I will show next, the Sandinistas had, in 1979, already replaced a repressive security state with a new structure of state security. The Nicaraguan security forces were more capable of enduring the transition to democracy, as their transition did not entail such a severe restructuring.

2.2. Nicaragua

After the 1979 Sandinista revolution, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) subordinated the military and police under its control: *"From 1979 until 1990, it was impossible to separate the state, the army, and the party"* [29]. As Margarita Villareal succinctly states, the security forces were *"part of the political and ideological apparatus that supported the revolution"* [30]. The Sandinistas consolidated control over of the new security sector, which consisted of the Sandinista Peoples Army (EPS), a newly created Civilian National Police (PNC), and Comités de la Defensa Sandinista (CDS). Although controlled by a one-party state during the 1980s, the security sector formed and retained its fundamental characteristics through the transition to democracy.

A declassified U.S. Army intelligence report from 1983 offers insights into how the Sandinistas established and shaped their newly formed armed forces and police. According to the report, the Sandinistas invited the Panamanian National Guard in to train the newly created national police force [31]. Several hundred Nicaraguan police officers also attended police academies in Panama during the years after the

revolution [32]. The Army intelligence report details how the Nicaraguans soon created a sophisticated police academy that *"includes an 8-month course emphasizing physical fitness, criminology, sociology, law, and political indoctrination"* with *"advanced training"* for *"specialized administrative positions such as prosecutors or police chiefs"* [33].

The report makes note, in particular, of a key element of Nicaragua's emerging security apparatus: Comités de la Defensa Sandinista (CDS), or Sandinista Defense Committees. The CDS formed an important and unique cornerstone of the state security apparatus. The effectiveness of the unit-level model for citizen security derived from the greater information-gathering capabilities inherent to the system. Membership in the CDS was diffuse and widespread. By 1986, membership in the CDS included 500,000 out of a total population of 3.5 million [34]. Modeled after the Cuban Defense Committees, the system of CDS combined citizen security with providing for social welfare, enabling political participation, and delivering public goods [35].

After the revolution of 1979, the Nicaraguans established a security structure that was capable of withstanding a democratic transition without requiring massive reform, as in the case of El Salvador. One major source of grievances leading to the Sandinista revolution had been the repressive character of the dictator Somoza's security apparatus, in particular the National Guard. As the current head of the PNC, Aminta Granera, a former nun and FSLN revolutionary, stated regarding the establishment of the national police in 1979, *"We didn't know how to be police. We only knew we didn't want*

to be like the Somozan Guard"* [36]. The Sandinistas consciously formed the internal security institutions to function in contrast with Somoza's repressive legacy.

3. EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS

In this section, I use Matei's indicators of plans, structures, and resources to assess the effectiveness of El Salvador and Nicaragua's respective security forces. Matei defines plans as any formulated policies directing the security forces to fulfill one of their assigned roles and missions, which for my paper center on internal security and strategies to counter rising levels of gang-related violence [37]. Structures, according to Matei, include the processes *"to both formulate the plans and implement them"*, usually in the form of effective state agencies that coordinate policies well throughout the government [38]. Finally, Matei defines resources as *"political capital, money, and personnel"* that allow forces to *"implement the assigned roles and missions"* [39].

3.1. El Salvador
3.1.1. Plans: LOW

The reactive nature of El Salvador's policies toward gang violence has demonstrated the lack of an enlightened and sophisticated internal security plan. McCulloch and Pickering aptly define crime prevention as *"non-punitive measures that reduce opportunities to commit crime or address the broader context in which people commit crime through a range of social and environmental strategies"* [40]. A U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report from 1992 pointed out how *"the government* [of El Salvador] *had not yet developed plans outlining the structure, operations, or resource*

needs of the police force" [41]. As a result, the Director-General of the police force was prohibited, per negotiation with the FMLN, from having any affiliation with the previous police forces [42]. The first director, a businessman, had no prior police experience *"to draw on as he prepares the plan"* [43]. Yet effective anti-gang policies often require sophisticated plans, as Preciado argues [44]. El Salvador has instead relied on Mano Dura strategies that incriminate and incarcerate gang members, using its military to make up for the deficiencies in the police.

3.1.2. Structures: LOW

Poor administration and lack of uniformity in collection of evidence reveal structural and institutional deficiencies in the national police [45]. El Salvador's Strategic Institutional Plan 2009-2014 indicates several weaknesses in the police force including *"lack of incentives"*, *"little development of police investigation and intelligence"*, *"lack of standardization in the databases"*, *"fragmented organization"*, and *"lack of training"* among other key deficiencies [46]. El Salvador's Mano Dura strategy has tried to fill the gap with the military. In 2015, the president ordered up to 7,000 of the military's total force of 25,000 to patrol the streets, and officers operate with wide latitude since the government proclaimed officers will not be charged for killings professed to be in self-defense [47].

3.1.3. Resources: LOW-MEDIUM

The national police in El Salvador suffer from chronic resource shortfalls [48]. The lack of resources allocated to the police is apparent by the fact that private security guards outnumber police 28,600 to 22,000 [49]. One newspaper correspondent in San Salvador describes the chaotic security situation as of August 2015:

"Schools are protected by barbed wire and often patrolled by soldiers; private security guards carrying shotguns man the entrance to major businesses and police, armed with rifles, conduct random checks on the highways....it is not uncommon to see soldiers in balaclavas riding on the back of flat-bed trucks mounted with heavy machine guns. Few people pay them a second glance."[50]

The PNC itself reports that its *"limited operational budget"* hinders effectiveness [51]. The government in 2005 reported 14,000 gang members incarcerated but only 45 rehabilitated through an "Open Hand" initiative, due in part to lack of funding and resources [52].

3.2. Nicaragua
3.2.1. Plans: HIGH

The chief of the National Police in 2014, Aminta Granera, attributed the anti-gang and anti-crime successes to a combination of measures that are *"preventivo, comunitario y proactivo"* (preventative, community-based, and proactive) [53]. The Nicaraguan police created the Office of Juvenile Issues as the central node for the development for its preventative model of gang violence prevention [54]. José Luis Rocha commends the *"exceptional character of the Nicaraguan police"*, especially their *"conciliatory discourse and propaganda"* and their attempt to *"overcome repressive penal models"*, instead treating gang members as objects of social rehabilitation [55]. Rocha contends that the National Police approached the issue of gang violence in a distinctively sophisticated and rehabilitative manner:

"The Sandinista elite's ability to use sociological terms and concepts

and their notoriously superior discursive capacity in relation to their Central American colleagues enabled the appearance of innovative proposals and an assessment of citizen security that deepened the analysis of youth gangs without criminalising their members." [56]

3.2.2. Structures: MEDIUM-HIGH

As The Economist dryly observed, *"Nicaragua's police force is in danger of giving socialism a good name"* [57]. As Rocha argues, the police since the democratic transition are comprised of two distinct factions that complement one another: the traditional elite and the FSLN [58]. Rocha contends that the FSLN faction has encouraged the rehabilitative policies toward gangs and resisted pressure from traditional elites who sought to implement policies similar to mano dura [59]. Nicaragua's police operate independently from the military, which conduct limited internal security missions. Instead, the military's role in internal security is limited to about 2,000 troops who provide security for Nicaragua's coffee production [60]. In contrast to El Salvador, Nicaragua has not used the military for anti-gang and anti-drug policy responses. Moreover, Nicaragua has created thousands of Comités de Prevención Social del Delito, or Committees for the Social Prevention of Crime, comprised of 20,000 volunteers [61]. As Cruz points out, the state excels at *"involving citizens in crime prevention committees—not in mere neighborhood watch groups—in the development of local safety strategies"* [62].

3.2.3. Resources: HIGH

Nicaragua's security budget has remained steady at an average of 1.2% of GDP between the years 2005 and 2013 [63]. The share of the budget allotted to the PNC has risen by 64% over the same eight years, a larger increase than any other security organization [64]. Nicaragua has also devoted resources to many programs to prevent gang violence, including sports tournaments, cooperation with social services volunteers, and scholarships for youth [65]. The national police have a rigorous education program mandating four-year degrees at the National Police Academy for aspiring commissioned officers [66]. The government funds training and education courses for ongoing instruction in the science of community policing [67].

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

El Salvador and Nicaragua have experienced dramatically different levels of citizen security in the years since democratization in the early 1990s. In this paper, I have examined this divergence using a civil-military relations framework to evaluate the security forces of each state. First, I outlined the historical factors that influenced and shaped each state's security sectors. I argued that the divergence in effectiveness arose from the different development paths taken during the 1980s civil war periods. Dominated by an authoritarian military using any means necessary to fight the FMLN insurgency, El Salvador's security forces underwent a profound period of reform and purification brought about by the 1992 Chapultepec Peace Accords. Nicaragua's security forces, on the other hand, formed effective institutions after the break with Somoza's dynasty that maintained their basic structures through the transition to democracy. I then

used the criterion of effectiveness developed by Bruneau and Matei, along with Matei's three indicators of effectiveness, to evaluate each state. **Table 1** outlines the results of my analysis.

Table 1. Assessment of Internal Security Forces in El Salvador and Nicaragua

	Plans	Structures	Resources
El Salvador	LOW	LOW	LOW-MEDIUM
Nicaragua	HIGH	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH

My analysis points to specific areas in which El Salvador's security forces must improve to achieve increased effectiveness. First, El Salvador's security forces should develop coherent anti-gang strategies that emphasize the role of rehabilitation and move away from Mano Dura strategies. Recent developments in El Salvador suggest government officials are beginning to understand this. On October 26, 2015, El Salvador's Security and Justice Minister formally presented Congress with a proposed law that would grant legal immunity to gang members who have not committed serious crimes, affording them the opportunity to enter into a government-sponsored rehabilitation program [68]. The proposed law, formally called the "*Gang Reinsertion Law*", faces challenges due to inadequate funding, a problem that Lohmuller argues caused the gang truce to fizzle in 2012 [69]. Nevertheless, the proposal marks a step in the right direction. Second, the use of the military in El Salvador should come as a last resort, since internal security against gangs requires more sophisticated policing and community-prevention strategies. The lasting solution is to fix the structure of internal security; specifically, the state must provide the police force with better quality

education, career incentives, better pay, and professional development. Finally, El Salvador needs to increase funding for the police. To this end, a recent sign of hope emerged when El Salvador's congress enacted a new tax on wealthy individuals and large companies to raise revenues for the PNC [70].

REFERENCES

[1] Jonathan Watts, "One Murder Every Hour: How El Salvador Became the Homicide Capital of the World", The Guardian, 22 August 2015, http://www.theguardian.com.world/2015/aug/22/el-salvador-worlds-most-homicidal-place.

[2] "PNUD destaca baja tasa de homicidios y de robos en Nicaragua", La Prensa, 27 May 2014, http://www.laprensa.hn/mundo.americalatina/713329-98/pnud-destaca-baja-tasa-de-homicidios-y-de-robos-en-nicaragua.

[3] In Latin America, homicide rates are the most reliable indicators of crime. As Mark Ungar notes, the existence of the cifra negra, or black figure, hinders accurate representation of most non-homicide crimes. Homicide rates are the most accurate due to the many international agencies, NGOs, and governments that track them. See Mark Ungar, Policing Democracy: Overcoming Obstacles to Citizen Security in Latin America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 48-50;

[4] Thomas Bruneau, "Impediments to the Accurate Conceptualization of Civil-Military Relations", in The Routledge Handbook of Civil Military Relations, ed. Thomas C. Bruneau and Florina Cristiana Matei (New York: Routledge, 2015), 15.

[5] Alfred C. Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 92-98.

[6] Narcis Serra, "Prologue", in Debating Civil Military Relations in Latin America, eds. David R. Mares and Rafael Martínez (Chicago: Sussex Academic Press, 2014), viii.

[7] Ibid.

[8] David R. Mares, "Citizen Security, Democracy and the Civil-Military Relationship", in Debating Civil Military Relations in Latin America, eds. David

R. Mares and Rafael Martínez (Chicago: Sussex Academic Press, 2014), 81-100.

[9] Ibid., 98.

[10] David Pion-Berlin, "Political Management of the Military in Latin America", Military Review 85, no. 1 (Jan/Feb 2005), 26.

[11] Thomas C. Bruneau, "Civil Military Relations in Latin America: The Hedgehog and the Fox Revisited", Revista Fuerzas Armadas y Sociedad 19, no. 1-2 (2005), 113.

[12] Ibid., 122.

[13] Florina Cristiana Matei, "A New Conceptualization of Civil-Military Relations", in The Routledge Handbook of Civil Military Relations, ed. Thomas C. Bruneau and Florina Cristiana Matei (New York: Routledge, 2015), 26.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 32.

[16] Stephen Johnson, Johanna Mendelson Forman, and Katherine Bliss, "Police Reform in Latin America: Implications for U.S. Policy", Center for Strategic and International Studies (February 2012), 16. http://csis.org/files/publication/120228_Johnson_PoliceReform_web.pdf.

[17] Ibid.

[18] John A. Booth, Christine J. Wade, and Thomas W. Walker, Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion, and Change (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2015), 347.

[19] Jack Spence, "War and Peace in Central America: Comparing Transitions Toward Democracy and Social Equity in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua", Hemisphere Initiatives (2004), http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/hemisphereinitiatives/warpeace.pdf, 47.

[20] Ibid., 9.

[21] United Nations, Chapultepec Peace Agreement, 30 January 1992, http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SV_920116_ChapultepecAgreement.pdf.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Zoltan Barany, "Building National Armies after Civil War: Lessons from Bosnia, El Salvador, and Lebanon", Political Science Quarterly 129, no. 2 (2014).

[25] Elisabeth Jean Wood, Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8.

[26] Orlando J. Perez, Civil Military Relations in Post-Conflict Societies: Transforming the Role of the Military in Central America (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2015), 63.

[27] Charles T. Call, "War Transitions and the New Civilian Security in Latin America", Comparative Politics 35, no. 1 (October 2002), 11.

[28] Barany, "Building National Armies after Civil War", 230.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Margarita Castillo Villarreal, "Nicaragua: Civilians and Military After the Sandinista Revolution", Military Review 85, no. 2 (2005), http://search.proquest.com/docview/225307641?accountid=12702, 6.

[31] United States Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Center, Army Intelligence Survey: Nicaragua, Vol. 3 (1984), http://search.proquest.com/docview/1679048599?accountid=12702, 1-24.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Kate Stout and Richard Dello Buono, "Nicaragua's Emerging Model of Popular Justice", Humanity and Society 10, no. 2 (May 1, 1986), http://search.proquest.com/docview/1309370859?accountid=12702, 210.

[35] Ibid.

[36] The Economist, "A Surprising Safe Haven", 28 January 2012, http://www.economist.com/node/21543492.

[37] Matei, "A New Conceptualization", 32.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Julie Ayling and Roderic Broadhurst, "The Suppression of Organized Crime: New Approaches and Problems", in Policing and Security in Practice: Challenges and Achievements, ed. Tim Prenzler (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 45.

[41] U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Aid to El Salvador: Slow Progress in Developing a National Civilian Police", September 1992, 4. http://archive.gao.gov/d35t11/147695.pdf.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Luis E. Preciado, "State Approaches Toward Reducing Youth Violence in Honduras and Nicaragua" (Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2015), 68.

[45] Perez, Civil Military Relations in Post-Conflict Societies, 63.

[46] RESDAL, Public Security Index: Central America, Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina (2013), last modified 17 October 2013, 55. http://www.resdal.org/libro-seg-2013/resdal-index-2013.pdf.

[47] Watts, "How El Salvador Became the Homicide Capital of the World".

[48] Ibid.

[49] Clare Ribando Seelke, "El Salvador: Background and U.S. Relations", Congressional Research Service, 19 May 2015, 9.

[50] Watts, "How El Salvador Became the Homicide Capital of the World."

[51] RESDAL, Public Security Index, 55.

[52] José Miguel Cruz, "Organized Civil Society and Gangs: Alternative Responses by Central American Organizations", in Street Gangs in Central America (San Salvador: UCA Publishers, 2007), 134.

[53] "PNUD destaca baja tasa", 27 May 2014.

[54] José Luis Rocha, "Street Gangs of Nicaragua", in Maras: Gang Violence and Security in Central America, eds. Thomas Bruneau, Lucía Dammert, and Elizabeth Skinner (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 116.

[55] Rocha, "Street Gangs of Nicaragua", 116.

[56] José Luis Rocha Gómez, "The Political Economy of Nicaragua's Institutional and Organisational Framework for Dealing with Youth Violence", Crisis States Programme, Working papers series 1, no. 65 (June 2005): 5.

[57] The Economist, "A Broken System: Citizens' security is the region's biggest problem. Time to improve criminal justice", 12 July 2014, http://www.economist.com/news/americas/21606864-citizens-security-regions-biggest-problem-time-improve-criminal-justice-broken.

[58] José Luis Rocha Gómez, "Mapping the Labyrinth from Within: The Political Economy of Nicaraguan Youth Policy Concerning Violence", Bulletin of Latin American Research 26, no.4 (2007): 543.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Peréz, Civil-Military Relations in Post-Conflict Societies, 75.

[61] Rocha, "Street Gangs of Nicaragua", 118.

[62] Cruz, "Organized Civil-Society and Gangs", 143-44.

[63] RESDAL, Public Security Index, 117.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Rocha, "Street Gangs of Nicaragua", 118.

[66] Preciado, "State Approaches", 57.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Michael Lohmuller, "El Salvador Proposes Gang Rehabilitation Law", InSight Crime, 29 October 2015, http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/el-salvador-proposes-gang-rehabilitation-law.

[69] Ibid.

[70] "El Salvador Congress approves tax package to fight violent crime", Stabroek News, 31 October 2015, http://www.stabroeknews.com/2015/news/regional/10/31/el-salvador-congress-approves-tax-package-to-fight-violent-crime/.