FROM DARK PAST TO PROMISING FUTURE:
GUATEMALA'S NEW MILITARY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT
AFTER THE 1996 PEACE ACCORDS

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ABSTRACT

Civil-military relations theory stresses the importance of civilian control of the military and clearly defined roles for the military in democratic societies. There are two distinct perspectives regarding military roles. Traditionalist thinkers argue that the military should be restricted solely to its traditional role of national defense. On the other hand, some scholars propose additional, diverse, non-traditional roles for the military such as humanitarian assistance, law enforcement activities, peace-keeping operations, and disaster management, as “new military roles.” Guatemala serves as a case study where a military institution has received much criticism for past political involvement and lack of respect for civil authority. The 1996 Peace Accords stipulated a reduction and new mission for the Guatemalan military, which put new emphasis on disaster management, and serves as the research starting point. This study describes Guatemalan military involvement in disaster management during 1997-2002. In order to determine the nature of Guatemalan military involvement in disaster management, three indicators are examined: 1) organization, 2) training, and 3) participation in disaster response. Analysis of military compliance with Peace Accord directives, and the three indicators, is conducted to assess how well the Guatemalan military respected civil authority during the study period. This dissertation argues that the post-1996 Guatemalan military was involved in disaster management yet stayed within the bounds of civilian control of the military. The implications of these findings will add to the existing literature concerning civil-military relations, disaster management, and the controversial topic of non-traditional roles for the military.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter 1
Introduction

The role of the military in society is a controversial topic that is often debated. Civil-military relations scholars tend to hold one of two distinct perspectives regarding the role and purpose of the military in a democratic society. Traditionalist scholars believe that the military should be restricted to its traditional role of national defense, and not delegated with other responsibilities. These traditionalists argue that the military should not be granted too much power or authority, because in doing so, it is more likely that the military will overstep its bounds. On the other hand, many scholars support nontraditional “new roles” for the military such as disaster management, humanitarian assistance, border security, law enforcement activities, or peace-keeping operations, as some of several additional functions that the military can undertake and should perform in today’s ever-changing world. These non-traditionalists believe that the military is a diverse, powerful institution that can serve many functions and varied needs of the state. Furthermore, by having the military more involved in multiple facets of society, the military should consider itself to be more a part of society, and be less likely to overstep its designated limits. These non-traditionalists argue that military institutions can be granted more authority and responsibility and still operate within the democratic norms of society. This study discusses traditionalist views supporting the traditional role of the military, and their argument against expanding this role. A comparison is then made to the non-traditionalist perspective and further examined using Guatemala as a case study.
Civilian control of the military is probably the most important characteristic of sound civil-military relations within the framework of democracy theory. Scholars of civil-military relations tend to agree on several additional common conditions that need to exist to establish and maintain a harmonious relationship between the military and civil authorities. The discussion in support of new roles for the military also presents historical examples of military involvement in internal development in Latin America. History shows that these military roles are not really “new,” but what makes them different is the creation of official policy and doctrine specifically identifying these functions rather than the military defaulting to self-assigned or assumed functions.

The focus of this dissertation research centers on the somewhat controversial topic of the nontraditional military role of disaster management within the framework of a democratic society. In general, how humans can best prevent, mitigate, or respond to natural disasters in order to reduce human suffering and economic loss is a topic of continuing debate. Within this arena, there is a range of civil-military theory surrounding military disaster management functions and differing opinions as to what the extent of military involvement (if any) should be. On the one hand, traditionalists argue that the military should be solely dedicated to its historical role of national defense from foreign aggression, and that civilian leaders and civilian agencies are best suited for implementing preventive measures and disaster response. Among these traditionalists lies the opinion that in many past instances, militaries which have become too involved in non-military aspects of society have often emerged as political instruments that tend to usurp civilian authority and interrupt democratic processes; especially in lesser developed countries with weak democratic foundations.
On the other hand, many non-traditionalist scholars contend that the military, with its numerous personnel, training, and equipment, is best qualified for this endeavor. Disaster management is viewed by some as just one of several “new roles” for the military in today’s changing world. Some supporters of such roles for the military argue that, especially in lesser-developed countries prone to natural disasters, this is not only an important mission, but also an essential one. They believe that in a democracy, the military will maintain its position as subordinate to civilian authorities. Regardless of the differing theories, militaries throughout the world vary greatly concerning their involvement in disaster management. While some militaries do not place high importance on disaster management, and merely respond to emergencies in an ad-hoc manner, others have detailed emergency plans and undergo constant training for this contingency.

Most civil-military relations literature is based on the foundation that in democracies, the military is a state institution. State institutions should remain apolitical, and be subordinate to their civilian, democratically-elected leaders. It is common for governments to assign diverse tasks and responsibilities to the military, both traditional and nontraditional, because the military often has resources and the capability to complete such tasks (Cuny 1983).

Not all experts believe, however, that the military should be assigned any of the diverse non-traditional military tasks. Traditionalists argue in favor of limiting and restricting military missions in order to prevent military involvement in politics and governance. This kind of thinking originates from numerous cases where militaries have not been model state institutions, but rather have usurped civilian authority and become
political actors. The continuing argument surrounding nontraditional roles for the military is covered in detail in Chapter Two, "Civil-Military Relations: A Literature Review." In order to completely understand the two different opinions, and why traditionalist critics oppose nontraditional missions for the military, one must first examine traditional civil-military relationships between state and society.

Societies with structured state governments commonly establish a means for state protection and preservation. Military institutions have historically been created as the most practical mechanism for the physical protection of the state. The most traditional role of the military in a society is to provide for the security of its people and defend against external threats, which usually means protection from hostile states.

Civil-military relations experts agree that in democratic societies, the military institution is a state institution, which implies civilian control of the military. Civilian governments normally establish a broad national security strategy and supporting policies, and military leaders then set corresponding military strategies and doctrines. Another foundation of sound civil-military relations lies in civilian governments assigning clearly defined roles and tasks for the military. The military needs to be apolitical. It must not be involved in policy-making, but rather needs to be subservient and supportive of government policy decisions (Huntington 1957; Pion-Berlin 2001).

The military is often regarded with honor and high esteem, since it is tasked with protecting and defending the nation state, its constitution, government, its citizens and their way of life. Respect for the military and its personnel normally exists because the military provides a perceived necessary service - that of ensuring national security, and preserving freedom. Society accepts military service as a personal sacrifice, whereby
military personnel may be someday called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice, that of giving their life in the defense of their nation. The military is designed to be a noble profession, and military heroes are more common throughout history than military villains. Military heroes are recognized and respected for having led their countries during times of war and other crises. Occasionally, former and retired military leaders continue their service to the nation by becoming political leaders after giving up their military status; and in some cases have even advanced as far as the office of the President. Famous ex-military United States Presidents have included Washington, Grant, and Eisenhower, who were all retired general officers.

Civil-Military Relations in Latin America

Although there is a trend for societies to have high regard for their military institutions and military leaders, the problematic past of some military institutions in Latin America which became political, authoritarian, and abusive, resulted in these militaries being viewed less admirably than others. In extreme cases, Latin American “societies of fear” emerged, wherein, ironically, civilians became afraid of their own military which by design existed for their protection. When the military becomes involved in politics, or begins to assign or interpret its own functions, the state loses control and problems often arise. Some Latin American militaries have drawn criticism for not only failing to protect the people they were established to defend, but worse still, these militaries even persecuted and terrorized their own citizens. Most Latin American countries have a legacy of terror, violence, and fear associated with their militaries (Koonings and Kruijt 1999). For many people, the term “Latin American military” brings to mind images of military dictators, martial law, extrajudicial killings, among
other, less noble images. In many cases, the Latin American military not only failed to be apolitical and subservient to its democratically-elected civilian government, but worse still, the military took over and ran its government.

This may be one reason why Latin America has a certain historical reputation for being called the “land of the dictators.” Albeit stereotypical, there is much basis to this perspective. To argue the point, one only has to consider several Latin American military presidents, many of whom took power by means of a coup d’état, or manipulation of the political system or electoral process, remained in power for years or decades, and have been labeled military dictatorships or military regimes. This list of infamous past Latin American military leaders would include: Batista (Cuba), Castro (Cuba), Noriega (Panama), Pinochet (Chile), Rios Montt (Guatemala), Somoza (Nicaragua), Stroessner (Paraguay), Trujillo (Dominican Republic), and Vargas (Brazil). Some would also argue that Nicaragua’s President Ortega and Venezuela’s President Chavez should also be on this list, due to their dubious manipulation of their constitutions and electoral processes.

Military right wing death squads in Guatemala and El Salvador, Argentina’s “Dirty War”, disappearances, torture, and human rights violations of the late 20th Century further support the argument that some Latin American militaries might not be exemplary enough to be venerated, much less emulated. Studies of military institutions and military leaders in Latin America have historically presented the military with much criticism, controversy, and often notoriety. This is based on problems arising from an environment where the military held excess autonomy and power which may have facilitated extra-judicial and illegal military actions. Scholars continue to ask why some militaries overstep their boundaries by committing such acts as: disregard for democratic
and legal processes, disrespect for civilian control of the military, and ignorance of other limits, rules, regulations, etc., which are established for the military institution by society and government. Different opinions exist regarding how to prevent the emergence of "rogue militaries" and what civil-military relations conditions need to exist in order to maintain orderly, productive military institutions within the framework of democratic societies.

The Setting: Guatemala

The Guatemalan military is an example of a Latin American military which in the past was extremely political and problematic. In fact, "few Latin American political institutions have been more widely condemned than the Guatemalan armed forces" (Ruhl 2005, 55). On several occasions, involvement in coup d'états and human rights violations caused the military to be sanctioned by international organizations and to receive other legal actions and lawsuits.

The Guatemalan military dominated the political environment in Guatemala for most of the two centuries spanning the 1800s and 1900s. Among the prominent features of Guatemala's military domination of society is a dark history of military dictatorships, coup d'états, a general lack of respect for civil and judicial authority, and recurring human rights violations. The Guatemalan Army was responsible for over 75 percent of civilian non-combatant casualties during its 36-year counter-insurgency war. The war ended on December 29, 1996, when the Government of Guatemala and the guerrilla insurgency group, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (La Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca URNG), signed the 1996 Peace Accords.
Guatemala is also an example of a lesser-developed country that is prone to natural disasters. The most common natural disasters that frequently occur in Guatemala are: earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, hurricanes and flooding. Chapter Four, “The Guatemalan Military and Society,” provides a historical perspective on reoccurring natural disasters in Guatemala. In past emergencies, the Guatemalan military contributed greatly during disaster recovery efforts while local civilian organizations were either non-responsive or inefficient (FOF 1976).

During Guatemala’s 36-year civil war, which occurred from 1960 to 1996, the military was involved in non-traditional military roles such as civic action and other developmental projects throughout the country. In 1970, an Army-dominated National Emergency Committee was created with the purpose of overseeing disaster management with a military lead in the command and control of relief operations. During the same time period, however, the military was also accused of overstepping its bounds by acting with wanton disregard for human rights, civil liberties, and civilian control of the military. The Peace Accords of 1996 marked the end of the civil war and stipulated several military reforms, among them a reduction in military personnel and institutional reorganization. Militaries periodically revise their doctrine, missions, and organization in accordance with changing external factors in order to define their purpose and maintain their utility.

After signing the Peace Accords in 1996, the President of Guatemala and the Guatemalan Minister of Defense declared that Guatemala would create a new military, with a new peacetime mission and new roles, one of which would be an emphasis on disaster management. The “new” Guatemalan military serves as the departure point for
this study of military involvement in disaster management within the constraints of a
democratic society. Studying events in Guatemala during the six-year period after the
signing of the 1996 Peace Accords serves as a case study of a military institution with a
notorious past which assumed the non-traditional role of disaster management. The
question to be answered is whether or not the military institution was able to obey
civilian control, and operate within its legal boundaries, indicating the existence of sound
civil-military relations.

The Peace Accords represented significant changes to the status quo in political,
economical, and social sectors of Guatemala. The Accords established hundreds of new
commitments for state and society in Guatemala. This event marked the starting point of
a new direction for Guatemala, its military and the potential for new development and
progress during the 21st Century. One important commitment of the Peace Accords was
the requirement for the government to start a process of demilitarization and military
reforms. The main focus of demilitarization and military reforms was threefold:
downsizing and relocating military personnel, elimination of paramilitary groups, and
redefining the mission and roles of the armed forces.

With regard to the third category, the Guatemalan armed forces redefined its
mission to include the added role of emergency management, a term which is often used
interchangeably with disaster management.

The Study

Guatemala represents a unique case for examining civil-military relations under
conditions where a historically politically-involved Latin American military underwent
military reforms and was assigned the nontraditional responsibility of disaster
management. Such conditions elicit two important guiding research questions. First of all, was the Guatemalan military involved in disaster management, and if so, what was the nature of that involvement? Secondly, how did the Guatemalan military perform within the bounds of civil-military theory with regard to respect for civil authority during the time that it engaged in disaster management?

This dissertation answers these questions by examining quantitative phenomena during the six-year period immediately following the 1996 Peace Accords (1997-2002). The study collects and analyzes data for three criteria as indicators of military involvement in disaster management. This is followed by a review of civil-military relations in Guatemala during the same period. The conclusions of this review present the degree of military compliance (or non-compliance) to civilian government orders and directives. This study proposes the hypothesis that the Guatemalan military engaged in the non-traditional military activity of disaster management during the post-conflict period while complying with civilian authority and other lawful directives. Guatemala is a case from which we can learn and derive new theoretical models for civil-military relations in settings where the military is assigned such nontraditional tasks.

This study examines the six-year period immediately following the Peace Accords, 1997-2002, to determine what reforms were enacted, and the extent of military involvement in disaster management. It then analyzes civil-military relations regarding military reforms during the same time period, to determine how the military performed as an institution subordinate to the state in a democratic society. The post-Peace Accord civil-military relations of the Guatemalan military could serve as an indicator to predict
whether or not the military has broken from its dark past and might be on the road to a bright future.

With regard to the Guatemalan military's new mission in disaster management, the study is designed to show the nature and extent of disaster management involvement. It uses data pertaining to three key disaster management indicators as part of this analysis. By then subsequently examining this data and other reports regarding how the Guatemalan military operated within the norms of a democratic society during this time period, conclusions can be drawn about civil-military relations which will support one of the two views pertaining to the proponents of traditional versus non-traditional military roles. The chosen research methodology is that of an ethnographic case study approach. Guatemala is the case study site because it is a country which has had historical problems with its military, the military was reportedly assuming a larger role in disaster management after the 1996 Peace Accords, and I had previous experience living and working there. The content and evidence used in this dissertation is grounded in my 2002 field research study regarding disaster management functions and interactions between the Guatemalan Armed Forces and the Guatemalan civilian disaster management organization, *La Coordinadora Para la Reducción de Desastres* (the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction) (CONRED).

This study depicts the overall extent of involvement in disaster management by analyzing three variables as indicators: 1) disaster management training, 2) military organization, and 3) actual military response and participation in disaster management activities. The selected method used to interpret data for change over time for this study is trend analysis, or time series analysis. Using this method, change in involvement of a
function over time can be portrayed in either quantitative or qualitative terms. This study seeks to publish the historical facts, using empirical data, to demonstrate how the military was involved in disaster management, and describe the nature of that involvement.

The second component of the study examines how the military operated within the norms of sound civil-military relations during the study time period. After demonstrating the nature of military involvement in its new role of disaster management, the study turns to an evaluation of military compliance with the specific military reforms directed by the Peace Accords. First the data is grouped into the three indicator categories selected for the study period (1997 - 2002). Then the data is analyzed and quantified along a linear model, and this data will inform the descriptive analysis of the study. The analysis of the findings will determine what activities occurred in military disaster management training, organization, and response; the results of this research will also provide an increased understanding of military utility in disaster management.

Products of this dissertation will include:

- A brief background history of the military and society in Guatemala prior to 1997
- An overview of Guatemalan military disaster management education and training
- The location and distribution of military forces in Guatemala during the study period of 1997-2002
- The military response to natural disasters in Guatemala during this same period

This dissertation makes a significant contribution to the sparse existing literature pertaining to military disaster management operations. Whereas civil-military relations literature is growing, there is still much to be studied and learned in the area of non-traditional roles for the military and their impact on civil-military relations. The findings of this study will also add to the existing literature concerning civil-military relations,
political science, rule of law, development, and the often controversial topic of non-
traditional roles of the military.

Definitions of Key Terms

Throughout the dissertation, certain key concepts, terms, and phrases are
referenced in specific contextual ways. This section elaborates these key concepts, terms,
and ideas as they are intended to be understood in this study.

Civil-military Relations

Although there is no common, accepted definition, most scholarly sources explain
civil-military relations as the interactions and arrangements linking state, society, and the
military. The classic theoretical framework for studying civil-military relations is
presented in *The Soldier and the State*, by Samuel P. Huntington (1957). The focus of his
work centers on explaining the gap between the different attitudes and values held by
military personnel and civilians. He claims that differences in civilian and military
institutions, functions, and ideologies, have resulted in a separate military society within
the greater society as a whole. These fundamental differences present the challenge of
how to ensure government (civilian) control over the military institution.

Huntington’s main solution to this problem was “military professionalism.”
Through education and professionalization of the officer corps, Huntington reasoned that
the military would develop the discipline, structure, and values to remain apolitical and
supportive of civilian government. Huntington also proposed “objective civilian control”
for the civilian authority to maintain control of the military. This meant establishing and
clarifying missions, roles and doctrine for the military and then subsequently developing
and establishing specific tasks and functions in support of the broader missions
(Huntington 1957; Pion-Berlin 2001).

Democracy

Democracy is described and defined in many different ways. There is often
disagreement over the meaning of the term (Booth and Walker 1999a). Indeed, many
authors do not wish to restrict themselves to a single definition of democracy and limit
themselves to a reductionist framework (Walker and Armony 2000). Democracy theory
encompasses terms such as liberal democracy, representative democracy, and
constitutional democracy, among others. Democracy often refers to a society where all
citizens are allowed certain individual or collective rights, such as freedom of speech and
religion. This dissertation uses the term democracy, or democratic society, to mean a
form of government in which there is citizen involvement in rule through political
activities, manifested by unrestricted electoral participation in fair elections, democratic
institutions, and rule of law. In other words, the military (as a state institution) is
subordinate to popularly-elected civilian leaders. Furthermore, it is widely accepted
within the field of democratic transitions, that civilian control over the military is a
necessary condition for a democracy to exist (Jonas 2000, 106).

The Military / The Armed Forces

The term “military” is often used to mean of or relating to soldiers, arms, or war.
Furthermore, military can also mean of or relating to armed forces, especially ground
forces or sometimes ground and air forces as opposed to naval forces. The broader idea
of “armed forces” usually means: the combined military, naval, and air forces of a nation,
also called the armed services. In the United States, the armed forces are divided into
Military Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force (the Marine Corps is a part of the Department of the Navy).

In the Guatemalan military, the Navy and Air Force components are so small that the military and the Army are terms often referred to and used interchangeably in the press, discussions, and scholarly works and other literature. Additionally, Guatemala’s historical armed conflicts have been internal, making the Guatemalan Army primarily, if not wholly, responsible for its past military operations. Following the vernacular of the numerous sources cited, this study also presents the “military,” “the armed forces,” and the “army” as interchangeable terms to refer to both the entire Guatemalan military institution as well as the Guatemalan army ground forces.

Types of Army Forces

The United States Department of the Army manual *FM 4-0, Combat Service Support* (2003), divides military organizational specialties into three categories: combat units, combat support units, and combat service support units. **Combat units** are those military forces primarily trained and designed to fight a war, such as infantry, armor, artillery, and air defense artillery. **Combat support units** are units that provide fire support and operational assistance to combat elements. Combat support units provide specialized support functions to combat units in the areas of chemical warfare, combat engineering, intelligence, security, and communications. Within the U.S. Army, the combat support branches are the Chemical Corps, Corps of Engineers (i.e., Combat Engineering units), Military Intelligence Corps, Military Police Corps, Signal Corps, and Army Aviation.
Combat support should not be confused with combat service support units, which are units that primarily provide logistical support by providing supply, maintenance, transportation, health services, and other services required by the soldiers of combat units to continue their missions in combat. Expressed another way, Combat Support units are focused on providing operational support to combat units, while Combat Service Support units are focused on providing logistical support to combat units. Within the U.S. Army, the traditional combat service support branches are the following: Quartermaster Corps, Ordnance Corps, Transportation Corps, Adjutant General's Corps, Finance Corps, Chaplain's Corps, Judge Advocate General's Corps, and Medical Corps. Combat service support is a subset of military logistics (FM 4-0 2003).

**Natural Disasters**

Natural disasters are emergency conditions caused by acts of nature which require assistance above and beyond local community capacities. Included can be such naturally occurring phenomena as earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions and severe draught. Natural disasters may result in both human and economic losses. Their destruction and devastation can be minor if they occur in sparsely populated areas. On the other hand, when they occur in heavily populated areas, they can have horrific consequences. The most common natural disasters that occur in Guatemala are earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, hurricanes and flooding. A review of databases maintained by the U.S. Geological Survey, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration produced a sample of some of the worst earthquakes and hurricanes that occurred during the past 100+ years in the Western Hemisphere and is depicted in Table 1. When considering the severity of the
consequences of natural disasters, and the harm caused to both human life and property, disaster management becomes more concerning, more complex, and more imperative.

Table 1. Severe Hurricanes and Earthquakes in the Western Hemisphere

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural Disaster</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location/Country</th>
<th>Deaths/Damages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hurricane Isaac</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Galveston, Texas</td>
<td>6,000–8,000 dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurricane Mitch</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua</td>
<td>9,000 dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurricane Katrina</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Fla., Miss., and La.</td>
<td>1,800 dead $100 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>San Francisco, Ca.</td>
<td>3,000 dead 7.7–7.9 magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Chimbote, Peru</td>
<td>50,000 dead 7.9 magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Managua, Nicaragua</td>
<td>10,000-20,000 dead 5.6 magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Guatemala City</td>
<td>23,000 dead 7.5 magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>San Salvador, El Salvador</td>
<td>1,500-2,000 dead 7.5 magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>220,000 dead 7.0 magnitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Multiple Historical References

Disaster Management

Disaster management is a component of emergency management, which is the process of managing unforeseen critical or crises events. Within the scope of national emergencies, such calamities as civil unrest, famine, disease, among others, may arise. Disasters can be either a natural disaster which is caused by acts of nature, or man-made, such as an accidental oil spill. Disaster management encompasses a four-phase cyclical process that occurs before, during and after a disaster: 1) preparedness, 2) response, 3) recovery and 4) mitigation. Disaster management is a continuous cycle and is conducted at national, regional, and local levels. Integration of multiple institutions and organizations during each of the four phases is essential to a productive disaster management plan or system. Among the different actors normally involved in disaster
management are civilian leaders, government disaster management agencies, fire fighters, health or medical institutions, volunteer organizations, and the military.

Chapter Summaries

Following this introductory chapter, the remaining chapters of the dissertation are organized according to the following plan. Chapter Two delves more deeply into the theories and scholarship of civil-military relations and discusses the two theoretical civil-military relations perspectives applicable to traditional versus non-traditional roles of the military, with emphasis on the role of the military in disaster management. This chapter presents a discussion of the differing views of civil-military theory between those who support maintaining traditional roles for the military and those who regard new roles for the military as justified and support the use of the military in disaster management.

Chapter Three explains more fully the research design and methods used for this dissertation. It begins by outlining the qualitative and quantitative methods used, specifies the data to be analyzed, selection criteria, and the techniques used to obtain reliable data. This case-study approach includes multiple qualitative supporting research questions which centered on examining different sources of data such as archival resources, government and institutional documents and reports, and media reports. This research consolidates multi-source data as a means of triangulating in order to achieve a high level of data validity. This chapter also briefly explains how I was able to conduct field research and access source data directly from the military in Guatemala.

Chapter Four presents an overview of the country of Guatemala to explain the historical and developmental background focused on the sociological, economical and political setting which provides the framework of this study. This background serves to
set the historical context prior to the dissertation research study timeframe: 1997-2002.

Natural disasters of varying degrees have always occurred in Guatemala and with
different degrees of military involvement. An overview of Guatemala’s historical
institutional foundations, and sociological factors, such as poverty, illiteracy, and
indigenous population helps to explain why the country has been particularly prone to the
existence of a powerful military, and Guatemala’s vulnerability to a politicization of its
military. It offers an overview of the history of the military institution in Guatemala and
how it has interacted with society over time. This chapter provides the reader with a
snapshot of the Guatemalan military’s civil-military relations and past involvement in
politics. This chapter includes a brief summary of Guatemala’s 36-year civil war,
highlighting reasons why it started, military actions and operations during the war, human
rights issues, and how it ended.

Chapter Five discusses the 1996 Peace Accords and the political parameters that
were established for military reform. This chapter outlines pertinent excerpts from the
1996 Peace Accords that affect the military and call for the reduction of the military and
the establishment of a new military doctrine. The degree of compliance with the
directives of the Peace Accords will be used to help determine the nature of civil-military
relations and military attitude toward civil authorities during this timeframe. This
determination is made by analyzing how the military complied with, or failed to comply
with, military directives contained in the Peace Accords. Other secondary sources, such
as scholarly journals and newspapers are also used as part of the data confirmation
process.
Chapter Six explores the Guatemalan military involvement in disaster management during the post-war study period of 1997-2002. The findings which emerged from almost six months of field research depict the nature of military involvement in disaster management during this time. Specifically, the changes that occurred in military disaster management training, organization, and response are presented and discussed in detail. This chapter shows how the military assumed the new role of disaster management and took pro-active action toward professionalization, training, and coordinating in this area. Military response to natural disasters is documented in detail to show the extent of military assistance to civilian authorities and disaster responders.

Chapter Seven summarizes and discusses the findings and suggests recommendations for further study. By synthesizing and evaluating the descriptions and analysis presented in the preceding chapters, a final assessment is determined and offered to support the aforementioned research hypothesis. I also present several suggestions as to how this research may be expanded or used in other future studies.

This dissertation makes two claims. First, that during the six-year post-war period immediately following the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords, the Guatemalan military was assigned the role of disaster management, and that it was involved in the disaster management process. Specifically, it attempts to show how the Guatemalan military reorganized to be better designed to accomplish this mission; increased education and training to better prepare its personnel for this endeavor, and that it performed disaster response functions. Second, that the Guatemalan military demonstrated its subordination to civilian authority by complying with directives from civil authorities, at least so much
as can be measured by the Peace Accords and performance of disaster response functions. To this degree, this Guatemalan case study may serve as an example of how a military can reform and adopt non-traditional roles while still maintaining civilian control of the military.
Chapter 2
Civil-Military Relations and Disaster Management: A Literature Review

Political intervention by Latin American military institutions and military leaders has been the subject of controversy and discussion in numerous fields of study. For at least the past one hundred years, political armies have been operating in many Latin American countries (Koonings and Kruijt 2002). Scholars within the field of civil-military relations have debated the structures and methodologies that need to exist to ensure a balance between military professionalism and civilian dominance (Bruneau and Tollefson 2006). Civil-military relations theory stresses the importance of civilian control of the military and clearly defined roles for the military as one basic foundation of sound civil-military relations in democratic societies.

Traditional and Non-traditional Military Roles

Within civil-military relations theory, there are two distinct perspectives regarding the role of the military in society. Traditionalists argue that the military should be restricted solely to its primary role of national defense. This argument speculates that by limiting military roles, political intervention by the military is less likely because a limited military has less involvement and contact with society, less finances and resources, and in essence less power and capability to usurp civil authority. On the other hand, many scholars believe that the military should be assigned various nontraditional roles or multiple tasks, among them: disaster management, humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping operations, defense support to civil authorities, military support to civil
security and police forces, and others, often termed "new roles" for modern militaries in today's changing world. The nontraditionalist perspective argues that if the military is capable of performing these functions, it should, because it either fills a void or augments existing organizations' capacities. Furthermore, the nontraditionalists argue that a military that is multifunctional, and occupied with many tasks and activities, does not have time to question the status quo and become politically involved. Ironically, both sides of this debate defend their point of view by arguing that the military institution functions better in a democratic society when it is assigned either the traditional role or additional, nontraditional roles.

Through an analysis of relevant literature, this chapter attempts to summarize and clarify the two basic schools of thought on this topic. The arguments of several leading scholars who believe in exclusive traditional roles for the military are contrasted with those of supporters of non-traditional roles. Historical events serve to defend both sides of this argument. An overview of the history of military involvement in internal political affairs in Latin America presents cases where militaries involved in nontraditional roles have respected civilian control and other democratic norms, as well as cases where the military overstepped its bounds and became problematic. Since historical data exists to support both arguments, it is likely that defining roles for the military will continue to be an on-going topic of debate.

This chapter's discussion of new roles for the military focuses on the non-traditional role of using the military in disaster management. An explanation of the United States' policy regarding the use of the military in disaster management provides a sample framework for comparison of how one country implements this concept. Part of
this policy is the United States Military Doctrine of Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA), which is germane to this discussion of military involvement in disaster management and civil-military relations. Basic disaster management principles and theory describe how to best employ the military in disaster management. This literature review highlights existing literature and previous study which prompted this dissertation. Civil-military relations theory is used to examine the Guatemalan military’s involvement in disaster management and civil-military relations during the recent years after the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords.

**Democracy Theory**

The main concept of democratic theory used in this study assumes that the military in a liberal democracy supports democratic values and principles, and the military institution recognizes and accepts that it is subordinate to civilian leaders. For further reading pertaining to the historical and theoretical perspectives in democratic institutions, see Sanford Lakoff, *Democracy: History, Theory, and Practice* (1996). The theory, foundations, and institutions of democracy are described in Giovanni Sartori, *Democratic Theory* (1962); C.B. Macpherson, *Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval* (1973); Robert A. Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics* (1989), and *On Democracy* (2000).

Civilian control of the military is one of the fundamental concepts that defines how the military operates within a liberal democracy, and helps to sustain a democratic framework (Huntington 1957; Rial 1990a; Varas 1990). Moreover, especially in “new democracies,” or “emerging democracies,” democracy cannot be established “until the military becomes firmly subordinated to civilian control and committed to the democratic constitutional order” (Diamond 1999, 113). It is “widely accepted among students of
democratic transitions that civilian control over the military is a necessary condition for functional democracy” (Jonas 2000, 106).

A wealth of literature exists pertaining to the discussion and analysis of what a democracy is, and how to define democracy. Within this literature there is a large subset which examines developing democracies and emerging democracies. A sample of but a few of these scholarly works would include: Building Democracy in Latin America (Peeler 1998), Fault Lines of Democracy in Post-Transition Latin America (Aguero and Stark 1998), Democracy in developing countries: Latin America (Diamond, Hartlyn, Linz, and Lipset(1999), and Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation (Diamond 1999). These authors, among others, examine different criteria and indicators used to define democracy and determine whether or not a state of democracy exists. Among the criteria used to evaluate different degrees of democracy are factors such as rule of law, free and fair elections, political institutional foundations, and also behavior and mindset of citizens. Fundamental within the concept of democracy is the idea of good governance, where leadership and institutions do not abuse their power, and the three pillars of executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government are executed in the interest of the citizenry. Implicit within these fundamentals is the concept that the military is governed and managed by the elected authorities.

Civil-military Relations and Respect for Civil Authority

In Civil-military Relations and Democracy (Diamond and Plattner 1996), accepted requirements for the establishment of sound civil-military relations are discussed. For example, the military should have a clear purpose. It should be professionally trained, equipped and educated. Finally, the military should follow the
direction of its government leaders. The most important characteristic of democratic civil-military relations is the political subordination of the armed forces to elected civilian authorities (Ruhl 2005). One indicator of this political subordination is whether or not orders are obeyed. When the armed forces comply with all legal orders issued by the democratically chosen chief executive and refrains from attempts to interfere in civilian policymaking, it can be said that the institution is obedient and subordinate to civilian authorities. Nevertheless, some scholars of Latin American civil-military relations (Stepan 1988; Pion-Berlin 1997) make clear that more than this is required to achieve full democratic control. Samuel Fitch (1998, 2001) asserts that the military must also accept an organizational framework of civilian policy control over its internal activities via a civilian-led defense ministry and appropriate congressional committees. In addition, Fitch argues that military personnel must be held accountable to the rule of law in civilian courts. Although Fitch agrees that at times, the military, like other state institutions, may be granted a degree of (institutional) autonomy in the normal exercise of its professional functions, “the decision-making powers delegated to the military must be exercised within a democratically established legal framework and subject to oversight by the appropriate constitutional authorities” (Fitch 1998, 37-38).

The existing literature regarding the functions and roles of the armed forces in a democracy is predominantly concerned with democratic civilian control over them (Bruneau and Matei 2008). The superior civilian leadership must be capable of governing and directing the subordinate military. The civilian, democratically elected, government must be capable of conducting policy without interference from the military, especially when defining goals and the general organization of national defense,
formulating and conducting defense policy, and monitoring the implementation of military policy (Aguero 1995). This concept of civil-military relations is also often summarized and restated as the “subordination of the military to democratic authority” (Pion-Berlin 2001, 90). Most scholars agree that the best way to implement civilian control of the military is to establish military professionalism and clearly defined roles for the military. When defining military roles, however, different opinions exist as to what those roles should be.

Although there is no common, accepted definition for the term civil-military relations, most scholarly sources explain civil-military relations as the interactions and arrangements linking state, society, and the military. Samuel P. Huntington (1957), in The Soldier and the State, presents the classic theoretical framework for studying civil-military relations. According to Huntington, civil-military relations are loosely defined as those relations established between the military and the civilian environment that runs a nation. The focus of his work centers on explaining the gap between the different attitudes and values held by military personnel and civilians. He claims that basic fundamental differences in civilian and military institutions, functions, and ideologies, tend to cause a separate military society within the greater society as a whole. Given these fundamental differences, governments can be faced with the challenge of how to ensure (civilian) control over military institution. Huntington’s solution to this problem was “military professionalism.” Through education and professionalization of the officer corps, Huntington reasoned that the military would develop the discipline, structure, and values to remain apolitical and supportive of civilian government. Huntington also proposed “objective civilian control” for the civilian authority to maintain control of the
military. This meant establishing broad missions, roles and doctrine for the military to in
turn develop and establish specific tasks and functions in support of the broader missions.
For a detailed review of the “Huntingtonian Approach,” see Ernesto Lopez, “Latin
America: Objective and Subjective Control Revisited,” in Pion-Berlin’s Civil-Military
Relations in Latin America (2001).

Like Huntington, Varas (1990) stresses the importance of professionalization of
military forces as a means of achieving civilian control of the military. Varas argues that
professionalizing the military institution is a “fundamental requisite” for redefining the
role of the armed forces. Besides modernizing the armed forces’ organization and
equipment, this also includes revised military officer training and education. Since the
state is the functioning, directing element of society, responsible for resource allocation
and important values including military security, ongoing dialogue is essential to keep
this relationship amicable. If militaries are isolated, marginalized, or threatened from
their greater society, they can pose a threat to democracy (Marcella 1994a; Schulz 1998).
Hence engagement and interaction between civil society and the military is essential for
maintaining military subordination to and respect for civilian authorities. “Civilian
control of the military implies establishing links to communicate professional expertise
from one sector of society to the other” (Marcella 1994a, 212). Inherent with improving
these militaries is the objective of instilling in military leaders fundamental military
doctrines with specific attention toward linkages between politics and society. Solid
civil-military relations will only result after the members of the armed forces are
professionals who cannot, or choose not to, intervene in politics (Rial 1990a; Varas 1990;
Marcella 1994; Diamond 1999).
Thomas Young (2006) expands on Huntington's thesis to describe the underlying sources of tensions between civilians and the military in civil-military relations. He argues that, due to the fundamentally different cultural norms and conditions that occur between political leaders and military officers, a certain degree of tension will always exist between the two. Politicians thrive on ambiguity and uncertainty, whereas military officers, on the other hand, look for clarity of mission and certainty of conditions. Young believes that there will always be important differences between political and military cultures within a democracy. Military leaders must be apolitical, yet the military's dissatisfaction and mistrust of its civilian leaders can often lead to the decay of sound, harmonious civil-military relations. The military needs to recognize and accept that its specifically assigned roles and missions are designed to serve the wider policies of the state.

**Military Roles and Missions**

As Paul Shemella (2006) points out, the difference between the terms "roles" and "missions" is nebulous, at best. While the terms are almost universally applied within civil-military literature, there is no consensus on what they mean. Perhaps the most widespread meaning is that missions are tasks that indicate an action to be taken, usually by military commanders at the operational level, whereas roles are broad, enduring functions. Shemella cautions, however, that these terms can vary in meaning depending on what country is being addressed. These terms are often defined by constitutions and other legal documents. Regardless of how roles and missions are interpreted, their importance is that they clearly define military purpose, to answer the question as to what the armed forces are to be used for and under what conditions.
Shemella further explains that clearly defining both roles and missions is a precondition for genuine civil-military relations. Bruneau and Matei (2008) conducted a review of pertinent literature and programs implemented globally from The United States Center for Civil-Military Relations (CCMR). Their findings concluded that current major roles and missions of security forces can be narrowed down into six major categories: 1) fight, and be prepared to fight, external wars; 2) fight, and be prepared to fight, internal wars or insurgencies; 3) fight global terrorism; 4) fight crime; 5) provide support for humanitarian assistance; and, 6) prepare for and execute peace support operations. The first category of roles and missions, to fight external wars, is the traditional role of the military. The other five categories of roles and missions fall within the spectrum of nontraditional military roles.

Military personnel involved in nontraditional roles and missions require additional training and skills because they become much more involved with civilian populations. Table 2 summarizes the broad characteristics that differentiate between traditional and nontraditional roles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Mission Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
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<tr>
<td>External security functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethal force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-profile, large-unit operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonpermissive environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavily armed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little civil-military interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralized command and control</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warrior mentality</td>
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Source: Shemella 2006, 137
Woerner (1998) discusses differences in civilian community perceptions of the military in mature democracies versus emerging democracies. In mature democratic environments, civilians look for innovative ways to employ the military in peacetime that can solve socially relevant challenges. Often people see the military as not being gainfully employed if it is not fighting a war, and feel the need to give the military additional work in order to receive a return on their investment of funding a military. On the other hand, in emerging democracies, the civilian community often seeks to limit the military to “protecting national sovereignty, and in particular, national frontiers and borders” (Woerner 1998: 73). These civilians advocate restricting the armed forces to military bases, and in the most extreme cases, argue for the elimination of the military institution as being in the best interest of the nation (Woerner 1998).

**The Military and Development in Latin America**

Historically, the Latin American military has been very involved in politics. Brian Loveman’s works contain a very detailed account of the historical “political culture” of militarism in Latin America, most notably in: *The Politics of Antipolitics: the Military in Latin America* (Loveman and Davies 1989), and *For la Patria: Politics and the Armed Forces in Latin America* (1999). Juan Rial, in *The Armed Forces and the Question of Democracy in Latin America* (1990), summarizes the military histories of more than twenty Latin American countries and how the armed forces relate to the political system in each nation.

Military officials, especially in Latin America, have often seen themselves as leaders in the formation, protection, and development of their nations. The notion that the military is responsible for the development of the state is indeed a very controversial
one, given that some Latin American militaries have abused their authority by
overthrowing democratically-elected officials, as well as disregarding laws, civil liberties
and human rights. Nevertheless, these militaries have traditionally believed their roles to
be intimately linked to the development and progress of their societies (Gamba-

This viewpoint originates from historical origins whereby Latin American nations
were established in wars of independence. In many cases, the military institution was the
de facto governing body after independence. "The new republics had an army even when
they did not have a state. Those independence armies forged nations out of the ruins of
the colonial political institutions" (Rouquié 1987, 47).

The political power held by Latin American militaries in newly-formed countries
granted members of the military a certain degree of status and elitism compared to other
citizens. The concept of *fuero militar* as a characteristic of Latin American militaries is
explained in Millett (1986) and Rouquié (1987). The authors identify the military as an
elite organization, separate from the rest of society. This notion is critical for
understanding the cultural and historical factors that influence the Guatemalan situation.
The *fuero militar* military, as a special, privileged class, exempts the institution and its
members from the jurisdiction of the rest of society. *Fuero militar* provided special
rights to be enjoyed by officers and sergeants, giving the Latin American military an
enviable and prestigious social standing. Military personnel were not subject to the
regular courts but had their own judicial system, whether they were plaintiffs or
defendants, and this was true for life if they had served for a number of years. Because of
the *fuero militar*, the colonial army in Latin America became an independent organism
within the state that acted as a 'self-governing' institution that was answerable only to itself. This has caused some scholars to conclude that the arrogant and overbearing autonomy of modern armies in many Latin American countries is directly related to the privileged status of the military in the colonial period (Rouquié 1987, 45).

McAlister (1957) states that the military is a "class apart" and regards itself as such. The possession of special privileges enhances its sense of uniqueness and superiority, and at the same time renders it virtually immune from civil authority. Unfortunately, power and privilege are often not accompanied by a commensurate sense of responsibility. A large proportion of officers and men regard military service as an opportunity for advancement of personal interests rather than as a civil obligation. This characterization of Latin American armed forces makes the societal gap between civilian and soldier even wider.

Civil-military relations throughout Latin America have historically been strained at best. Many of these militaries have usurped civilian authority and become politically involved, usually supposedly acting in the interest of the state. Military Coups demonstrate the ultimate breakdown in military subordination to democratic authority and are an obvious symptom of failed civil-military relations. Patterns of military coups seem to occur when military officers believe a national crisis situation exists (Fitch 1986). For a very detailed discussion of examples of military coups in Latin America, see Loveman's For la Patria (1999). Too often, floundering, seemingly incompetent and indecisive presidents have been superseded by military officers with a "take charge" attitude who perceived that their state and society were being destroyed or threatened. In Latin America, armed forces have protected land-owning "oligarchies" against challenges
to their wealth and power, some military regimes have helped middle-class groups
(Vargas/Brazil, Perón/Argentina), including organized labor, to reduce the influence ofentrenched ruling classes. In some cases, armies have aided in extending rights to new
participants in politics, and have spurred redistributive economic and social reforms.
While in other cases, 1980's Argentina, Brazil, and especially Chile, the military has
restricted political participation, serving to demobilize and depoliticize, and even to
repress such activity (Lowenthal 1986). Such authoritarian military regimes helped to
create anti-military sentiment within the civil sector, and these feelings still linger in
many of Latin America’s present-day emerging democracies.

The role of the military in national development strategies is a topic of
contentious debate. Whether or not militaries should be involved with development tasks
is being questioned now more than ever, especially in countries where militaries are
reforming and restructuring in the post-Cold War era. Should the military’s
organizational, human, and technical resources be utilized in non-military areas, where
they can help promote development? Or, perhaps the military should be relegated solely
to tasks of a strictly military nature (Aguero 1994). Some scholars have argued that the
military in Latin America has had a negative impact on national development (Lieuwen
military institution in Latin America and presents statistical evidence to show that
militarization has had a negative impact in the region and has affected three key measures
of development: democracy, economic growth, and equity. Nevertheless, others admit
that in some cases, the military has contributed to (economic) growth and development
(Calvert and Calvert 1994).
Military-development relationships have existed in Latin America since the late nineteenth century. Based on European models, Latin American militaries assisted the process of state-building and expansion, and engaged in helping to populate remote areas and other civic activities (Nunn 1983). During the 1950s and 1960s, social science theories of modernization viewed Latin American militaries as ideal agents of transformation and progress (Johnson 1964). The military was viewed as the primary agent of modernity and instrumental for ensuring development and modernization. United States foreign policy even supported this ideology, witnessed most notably by military assistance support during the Alliance for Progress and other similar programs (Schoultz 1987; Yurrita 1990).

Past military regimes in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Panama promoted economic development as a means to improve national security. Despite huge variances in size, population, wealth, and development of their countries, military leaders throughout Latin America shared the belief that they were the best qualified to modernize their nations. Many of these military “reform” governments achieved success or limited success and contributed to economic growth; while others were complete failures (Calvert and Calvert 1994).

During Latin America’s counter-insurgency wars during the second half of the 20th Century, military civic action (involvement in community activities) increased as part of national security strategy. Guatemala’s 36-year civil war is a prime example where the army implemented civil-military initiatives. Its psychological warfare and civil affairs frijoles y fusiles (beans and rifles) program in the 1980’s attempted to win the support of rural communities by distributing free food for sustenance, and weapons for
self-defense against guerrillas. This campaign also forcibly relocated entire indigenous communities into model villages, "development poles", where they could be watched (and in theory protected) by the military. The Guatemalan army created more than two dozen "development poles," patterned after Viet Nam-style strategic hamlets (Manz 1988; Shea 2001).

Much literature discusses the phenomenon whereby peacetime militaries often assume non-traditional military roles, especially after the end of an armed conflict. One recent example is the case of the United States. Even before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, under Chairman Admiral W. Crowe, had begun considering alternative uses for the U.S. military. During the 1990s, the Army decided that in order to be able to compete successfully for resources in a post-Cold War environment, it needed to make itself domestically significant. Some proposed "new roles" for the army included: drug enforcement, immigration control, maintenance of public roads and structures, school infrastructure, and basic health care and immunization. Well prior to the September 11, 2001 bombings in New York City, the Department of Defense had begun military training programs for homeland defense. The army hoped that these programs would "enhance its peace-time value and expand its role as a versatile national resource" by performing non-combat missions domestically and abroad (Aguero 1994: 252). By supporting U.S. domestic and foreign policy, these missions help to promote American values, enhance the nation's domestic well-being and national security, and assist friendly nations (Aguero 1994).

Ironically, many of the new domestic military missions that have been considered or implemented look very similar to those advocated by past modernization theorists for
developing countries’ militaries. Some modernization scholars suggested roles in forest management and road-building for Latin American militaries, just as maintenance of urban infrastructure is a possible alternative role for the U.S. army. The United States has always offered domestic uses of the army following post-war demobilization, and these uses resemble the kind of narrow-version developmental tasks sometimes advocated for Latin American militaries. Nation assistance and nation building tasks, applied domestically in the United States and by the U.S. military abroad, bridge conceptions of domestic developmental use for militaries across the inter-American region (Aguero 1994).

Marcella (1994) considers military nation-building missions, especially where civilian agencies are either incapable or unwilling to operate, to be an “important function.” The Brazilian Army’s Amazon Military Command, for example, builds roads and airports, cooperates in economic development, builds schools, and provides education, health services, and transportation in remote areas. Such activities resemble those of the U.S. Army during its 19th Century conquest of the West. The U.S, Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) still has the mission of maintaining domestic waterways and wetlands. Even though the Corps is staffed and run almost entirely by civilians, it is still a Department of Defense organization with military hierarchy. As such, USACE could perhaps be seen as a model for Third World nation-building militaries. In many undeveloped countries, only the military, with its administrative and logistical support network, is capable of developing remote areas. Nevertheless, limits to nation-building activities should be designed so as to allow civilians to assume these development functions as soon as possible and without military competition (Marcella 1994).
Besides establishing clearly defined roles and missions, there are other ways of limiting military institutions. Young (2006) expands on Huntington’s argument in support of professionalization of the military by identifying seven traditional means of civilian control of the military. These controls are: 1) limits on the mission; 2) limits on the size; 3) limits on the budget; 4) constitutional and legal limitations; 5) culture of professionalism; 6) societal norms; and 7) a free press.

By limiting the mission, military roles are clearly defined so as to prevent it from engaging in activities that might bring it into conflict with civilian authorities. By controlling the size of the military, fewer armed soldiers would represent less internal danger to a society. Limiting the military budget allows for a closer civilian scrutiny of military expenses and activities, and can also serve as a means for rewarding or punishing behavior. Clearly defined constitutional and legal instruments help determine the bounds of jurisdiction for military activities. Military professionalization follows Huntington’s “objective control” theory of creating an organizational culture based on respect for civilian authority and law. The social and cultural constraints that a democratic society places on its military determine the degree to which its civilian leaders maintain control over it. Finally, freedom of the press allows for open, accurate reporting and transparency of military activities. Young (2006) argues that none of these seven “controls” is in itself sufficient, and that each one is a mutually supporting and contributing factor toward effective civilian oversight.

How to define military purpose in Latin America’s current emerging democracies is a topic of continuing discussion and debate. During a November, 1997 conference on *The role of the armed forces in the Americas: civil-military relations for the 21st century,*
attended by over 150 prominent civilian governmental and military leaders and noted scholars from throughout the Americas, a consensus on military functions was reached. Attendees concluded that the traditional mission of the armed forces – the defense of sovereignty and territorial integrity—is still the main military priority. A number of secondary missions were also identified, many of which fall within the nontraditional spectrum. Some of these “secondary missions” include: support for economic and social development, international peacekeeping, environmental protection, administration and preservation of national parks, and national and regional disaster relief (Schulz 1998).

When national interests are at stake, or especially national security interests are at risk, then critics seem to be more willing to readily accept secondary roles for the military. Some “ancillary functions” of the military are often seen as those missions (in addition to defending the country) that have national consequences, such as “assisting in times of national emergency or natural catastrophe” (Diamond 1999: 114). Despite mixed support of military involvement in development roles, most scholars agree that international peacekeeping is a legitimate military mission. Aguero (1994) argues that if development-related issues form part of a more encompassing concept of national security, then larger military roles in development will likely be tolerated.

A substantial number of scholarly works address the utility and purpose of militaries in disaster management. Most of this literature, however, focuses on international (external) humanitarian military assistance as opposed to national militaries’ management of internal disasters (Cuny 1983; Natsios 1995, 1997). The United States Department of Defense, however, does have extensive doctrine and regulations regarding (domestic) military support to civil authorities (MSCA). Recently, this doctrine has been
referred to as DSCA or Defense Support to Civil Authorities. The framework of U.S. military response to domestic disasters and emergencies lies almost entirely within the jurisdiction of the State’s National Guard elements, with only a minimal level of involvement by the active military and other non-national guard military reserve components.

In Latin America, most militaries consist only of active-duty, full-time components, and the U.S. concept of National Guard and Reserve “part-time militaries” is totally foreign. Scholarly research, explanation and information pertaining to disaster management theory in the developing world in general is lacking from the literature. Similarly, information specifically regarding disaster management framework and procedures in Guatemala is also absent. Although the Guatemalan military finalized a new doctrine in 1998, its standard operating procedures for disaster management have not been widely publicized or discussed.

**Disaster Management Theory**

Natural disasters are defined as emergency conditions caused by acts of nature which require assistance above and beyond local community capacities. Included can be such naturally occurring phenomena as earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions and severe draught. According to The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), emergency/disaster management encompasses a four phase cyclical process that occurs before, during and after a disaster: 1) preparedness, 2) response, 3) recovery and 4) mitigation. Disaster management is the mechanism by which society copes with disasters and emergency situations in order to ensure the well-being and progress of its citizens.
**Preparedness** is the attempt to limit the impact of a disaster by structuring the response efforts and by effecting a rapid and orderly response to the disaster. Preparedness often takes the form of disaster plans, population shelters or evacuation routes and procedures. Preparedness activities are conducted before an emergency occurs. **Response** consists of the actions taken to save lives and prevent further exacerbation of dire conditions. This phase puts the preparedness plans into action, for example seeking shelter from a tornado. The response phase takes place during an emergency. **Recovery** includes the actions which attempt to return to a normal or safer situation following an emergency. Recovery occurs after an emergency and concludes with the mitigation phase which begins the disaster management cycle all over again.

**Mitigation** is performing actions that strive to reduce the harmful effects of a disaster, or reduce the chance of an emergency happening, and as such limit both human and material loss. Some examples of mitigation would be to encourage agricultural techniques designed to thwart soil erosion and runoff, thus reducing the effects of floods and mudslides, or reinforcing existing bridges to better resist the impact of high water and debris during floods. New construction can take advantage of technological and engineering advances that have been made in modern construction materials and design to modify housing to resist high winds and earthquakes. **Prevention** is part of mitigation and consists of the activities that prevent the natural phenomenon from harming people or property. Some examples of prevention against the effects of flooding include: encouraging people not to live in potential flood zones, construction of dams or levies, or even redirecting rivers away from population centers. Mitigation and prevention activities are conducted before and after emergencies (Cuny 1983; FEMA 1994).
Military Functions in Disaster Management

Employing the military in a civil disaster can provide a number of advantages. The military can rapidly deploy to any part of an affected area for several months. Military forces often are requested to intervene to ensure security during relief efforts (Burkle 1995). Military units in general have an excellent, highly mobile communications system, are self-sufficient, and can usually operate for several days at a time. They have vehicles and heavy equipment useful in numerous disaster roles and can assist in the orderly distribution of supplies by relief workers. Military organizations can serve as an excellent enhancement to relief efforts, especially for health missions requiring elaborate logistics. Finally, military personnel are trained to act in an orderly and disciplined manner, which can have major psychological advantages in restoring order to an otherwise chaotic situation (Natsios 1997; Pirotte, Husson, and Grunewald 1999).

Military disaster response units are those military forces primarily trained and designed to support combat units during war, such as transportation, engineers, medical, and quartermaster (logistics). These units have assets and the capability to provide useful support before, during and after a disaster. With the exception of military engineers, military disaster response units originate from combat service support units.

Using military resources for domestic disaster response and foreign disaster assistance has raised questions about the appropriateness of this “new” role for the military. Kelly (1996) argues that using the military for foreign disaster assistance is inappropriate in most cases. The military’s concepts and methods of operation are contrary to the supportive and participative concepts of disaster assistance. Like Cuny
(1983, 1991), Kelly proposes that military culture, organizations, and mindset designed to destroy and defeat the enemy conflict with the ideology of humanitarian missions. Without a significant change in the way the military functions, their involvement in foreign disaster assistance is justified in only the rare catastrophic disaster or where truly unique capabilities are required.

Among the disadvantages of using military assets for disaster response is the reality that until recently, the military has not been trained to sustain long-term disaster relief efforts. Much of the basis for argument against using the military in disaster management functions is the lack of military training for this purpose. Authors such as Gordenker and Weiss (1991), Mackinlay (1991), and Cuny (1991) examine the dilemma of using the military to cope with disasters or provide humanitarian relief or assistance. These authors argue that, in most cases, the military is not trained or designed to provide disaster response, and as such should only be used as a stop-gap or ad hoc measure to assist civil authorities during crises of immense proportions. If the argument that militaries should not have a role in disaster management is based on their lack of training, then the question arises as to whether or not militaries could and should be trained in disaster management? Proponents of new military roles argue that this role is permissible for militaries that are trained in disaster management.

Military institutions can sometimes be domineering, and, if either left unchecked or operating under weak civilian leadership, they may have a tendency to take action on their own accord, which may or may not be beneficial to the goals of the operation. Except for the civil affairs and medical disciplines, no other unit/organ of the military is familiar with relief and development procedures deemed critical to a successful
humanitarian response. Military camps are often set up along military orderly traditions, and may overlook the needs of privacy, space, or cultural difference of the evacuees or homeless people. Finally, in some countries, the military uniform represents repressive, authoritarian stereotypes and bad feelings among the populace. All of these “disadvantages” can normally be overcome through coordination and effective control by the civilian leadership when military roles and functions are clearly defined (Cuny 1983; Natsios 1995, 1997).

The decision to deploy the U.S. military in such operations will only be done under the following conditions: 1) the mission must be definable and achievable, 2) it must represent a minimum safety risk for personnel, 3) if utilized, it will be done early, and for a short duration, 4) it should make a decisive, quantifiable difference, and 5) it must pose a clear advantage to any other means available (Natsios 1997; Clinton 1999).

Proper military forces provide advantages of public health services, security, transport, and infrastructure enhancement, all of which play a crucial role in assisting relief efforts. Military functions during relief and reconstruction should also be an occasion for rationalizing the role of the military. Even though the Nicaraguan and Honduran armed forces came under civilian authority for the first time in history during the 1990s, their equipment still consists of tanks and other needless weapons for a democratic society with no external threats. In this century of increased democratization, reduced military spending, and demilitarization, the missions of the world’s militaries should all be transitioning to internal security and humanitarian operations other than war. The image of soldiers as builders should be reinforced through reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. Outfitting and training armies to work in reconstruction and
protection of natural resources would help to consolidate one of the most sensitive aspects of the transition to democracy (Burkle 1995; Pirotte et al. 1999; IADB 1999).

Natural hazards may be unavoidable, but they need not always escalate into natural "disasters." To reduce vulnerability to future natural events, in particular for the most affected communities and regions, it is essential to consider the lessons learned from previous disasters. Countries recovering from a natural disaster must take advantage of this information in order to incorporate adequate preventive measures in the ongoing reconstruction process; and other nations can learn from them as well (IADB 1999).

The United States Military and Disaster Management

The United States can be briefly examined as one example where the military has been used for disaster management. The U.S. has disaster management plans and standard operating procedures which detail disaster management functions. Military responsibilities and functions during emergencies and disaster relief efforts are numerous and include coordination procedures between civilian organizations and the military. Among recent examples in the U.S. where military forces were deployed during domestic disaster response & recovery phases were Hurricane Hugo (1989) in South Carolina, Hurricane Andrew (1992) in Miami and Hurricane Katrina (2005) in Louisiana and Mississippi.

President Clinton's 1999 National Security Strategy (NSS) outlined the importance that the United States places on foreign engagement, and the promise of humanitarian and military aid to countries in need. The strategy also discusses demilitarization and new "operations other than war" for militaries world-wide. The NSS
also defined what the United States' “National Interests” are. The third category of “National Interests” is “humanitarian and other interests”, and applies to situations outside the U.S. requiring U.S. involvement “because our values demand it.” Examples include responding to natural and manmade disasters, promoting human rights, supporting democratization, adherence to the rule of law and civilian control of the military (Clinton 1999). It can be assumed that where democratic governments not involved in internal civil struggles require assistance, the U.S. will provide its military in full force to help as part of its aid package.

In addition to prevention, steps toward mitigation and preparation are critical. In the latter, preparation, a clearly defined role for the military should be established. Each country should have a national disaster preparedness plan (most do not), which includes details explaining military functions prior to, during, and after a disaster. The U.S. military is increasing training and preparedness for “operations other than war”, in anticipation of future requirements to assist disaster relief operations, both within the United States and abroad.

Cuny (1983) addresses disaster management as a continuous process, to be done before, during, and after disasters. Several works, most noteworthy those by Natsios (1995, 1997) and Pirotte et al. (1999), discuss U.S. and international assistance procedures and governmental and organizational responsibilities during crisis situations in other countries. Sufficient information exists to explain current U.S. civil-military disaster response policies and systems, to both foreign and domestic emergencies, as well as current administration/organization framework. In the United States, historical data and studies are available regarding lessons learned and general problems that have
occurred during civil-military disaster relief operations. In Latin America, however, scholarly studies and information concerning civil-military response and relief mechanisms is sparse and almost non-existent. U.S. civil-military doctrine and lessons learned literature could serve as a useful framework in designing a comparison study to examine military involvement in disaster management and what system is used and/or applicable in Guatemala.

The Guatemalan Military and Disaster Management Pre-1996

A review of relevant literature reveals a lack of scholarship which specifically addresses the topic of the Guatemalan Military’s involvement in disaster management. In searching related topics, the works by scholars addressed previously in this chapter have addressed civil-military relations, the role of the military in a democracy, Latin American democracies, traditional versus nontraditional military roles, and theories surrounding the general functions and utilization of the military in disaster management. A search of literature regarding the Guatemalan military reveals a plethora of works analyzing and critiquing the political reputation of the Guatemalan military, as well as its notorious past conduct of usurping civil authority and frequent commitment of human rights violations.

While some scholars argue that militaries can and should be assigned the role of disaster management, specific case studies and data in general regarding Latin American military actions and involvement in disaster management and response to disasters is significantly lacking from a survey of pertinent literature. This begs the question as to how Latin American militaries have been involved with disaster management. This study will help to fill this void by providing information about the nature of the Guatemalan military’s historical ad hoc involvement in disaster management, as well as what its
involvement was after 1996 when it formally identified disaster management as one of its peace time responsibilities.

On February 22, 2002, I consulted with Dr. Susanne Jonas of the University of California, Santa Cruz, faculty and also a member of The Institute for Global Communications (IGC), regarding this project. As an expert on the Guatemalan military, and author of several publications, Dr. Jonas agreed that Guatemalan military functions in general lack transparency, including its involvement in disaster management, and that the latter would be an interesting topic that also warrants further investigation. She stated that she was unaware of any existing literature that might answer this question, and that the most accurate information would probably be found in Guatemala, within the military itself, which would make it difficult to ascertain. Subsequently, I decided that in order to find the answers to these questions, it would be necessary to embark on a fact-finding field research mission to Guatemala, and look within the walls of the Guatemalan military garrisons and government archives to discover this information.
Chapter 3
Theoretical Framework

The Case Study

The chosen research methodology is that of a multi-method case study approach used to collect data for analysis that covers different characteristics of the Guatemalan military in order to arrive at conclusions regarding its role in disaster management in the context of the country’s civil-military relations. I selected Guatemala as the case study site for several reasons. First, Guatemala is a country which has historically had problems with its military operating within the bounds of normal civil-military relations and adhering to democratic and political processes. Second, the Guatemalan military has a history of disaster management practice and an even larger role in disaster management after the 1996 Peace Accords. And finally, my previous direct contact with the Guatemalan military afforded critical access to individuals and archival documents relevant to the study.

There are different concepts about what a case study is and how to define it. In reviewing the work of some of the prominent case study theorists (Merriam 1988; Stake 1995, 1998; Miles & Huberman 1994; Gillham 2001; Yin 2003), several observations about this methodology can be made. First, a case study should identify a “case” as the object of study. This “case” should be a complex phenomenon. It should also be investigated in its natural context without any artificial input. A case study should be examined using a multitude of methods or at least more than one method. Finally, the
case study should be contemporary, with objectives that are pertinent for both present and future use.

The case study approach is a useful research methodology when trying to determine “how” historical phenomena occurred. In particular, case studies are very applicable when the researcher is analyzing contemporary events or circumstances which cannot be manipulated (Yin 2003). Due to the range of evidence extracted from multiple data sources (such as archives, reports, news media, etc.), case study conclusions tend to have a high degree of reliability. The case study is an excellent method to explain and describe a topic for which information is lacking or not readily available. Since the case study approach allows for multiple units of analysis, it is particularly useful when describing broad institutional relationships and interactions. This study seeks to describe post-1996 actions by the Guatemalan military in the area of disaster management and also to examine the military’s compliance with Peace Accord and civil authorities’ directives. Hence the case study approach is very appropriate when examining civil-military relations between the military and government.

**Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis**

The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches is well established in case studies (Yin 2003). In basic terms, quantitative research reaches for as much empirical objectivity as possible whereas qualitative research accepts more subjective sources of information, but both methods are used to interpret data. Combining both quantitative and qualitative analysis is a useful method for obtaining a more complete understanding of social phenomena. Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods is a common technique to ensure that conclusions fairly portray reality (Bogue 1981).
Quantitative analysis identifies general patterns across many instances and serves to test theories (Ragin 1994). Quantitative analysis is number-driven and often used to interpret change over time after counting and measuring data variables. Quantitative measurements are often depicted as percentages compared with other variables and used in statistical analysis computations. Qualitative research collects, analyzes, and interprets data by observing what people and institutions do and say. This type of research results in descriptions of phenomena that are used to draw conclusions. Simple descriptive qualitative terms such as *more involved* or *less involved*, and more detailed qualitative terms such as *much more involved*, and *much less involved* can also be used to describe phenomena (Denzin 1978; Bogue 1981; Quarantelli 1994; Ragin 1994).

Measuring involvement in any given activity is often conducted by either quantitative or qualitative methods, or combinations thereof. Conclusions from quantitative factors can often be determined through statistical derivations from the data set without involving any human bias. In many cases, conclusions can also be drawn through simple observation of the data set without having to incorporate statistical analysis (Myers 2000).

**Analytic Framework**

The initial objective of this study is to determine to what degree the Guatemalan military might have been involved in disaster management during the early post-Peace Accord period of 1997-2002. In order to draw sound conclusions, the analysis of Guatemalan military activities in the area of disaster management must be multifaceted and utilize several indicators of involvement.
The scope of this study does not focus on analyzing the direction or amount of change (if any) in the extent of military involvement in disaster management, but instead focuses on confirming the fact that there was involvement. In other words, here we are not examining questions such as did the military become more involved or less involved in disaster management, rather we are focused on determining whether or not there was involvement. This study is designed to show the nature of the involvement, and argues that there is enough evidence to support the claim that the Guatemalan military was involved in disaster management during the sample time period. Analysis and conclusions produced by this study will show how much disaster involvement occurred in order to support confirmation of the hypothesis. Subsequent studies may attempt to examine the significance of any corresponding trends that show increased or decreased involvement.

**Research Design / Conceptual Model**

The research design utilizes field research, content analysis (document research) and triangulation techniques. Field techniques are well suited for acquiring current or recent information (Bogue 1981). Documents and archives serve to confirm or contradict information gathered through other means (Salkind 2003). The essence of case study methodology is triangulation, the combination of different levels of techniques, methods, strategies, or theories. Using a number of different methods and sources to obtain the same information (triangulation) will help to cross-check data and assist verification of information (Bogue 1981; Barrett and Cason 1997).

An institution or organization’s involvement in a task or activity can be observed and measured by examining a multitude of factors, among them: the amount of time or
number of courses allocated for training personnel to perform a task, the number or percentage of personnel or organizations assigned to accomplish a task, and the amount of time spent on the task. In rational terms, one can expect that as a task becomes more important, more emphasis is placed on it, often witnessed by an increase in resources or a large percentage of resources being dedicated to that purpose.

As Chapter 2 of this study has shown, that disaster management is not typically a routine mission assigned to the military. As such, despite occasionally being employed in disaster management and disaster relief, the norm is that most military units do not routinely receive disaster management training but are assigned this task in an ad hoc manner. Therefore, when military personnel and military units do receive this type of training and professional development, the type and amount of such training can serve as an indicator of military institutional involvement in disaster management.

Likewise, in traditional military organizations where the mission of the military is to provide for the defense against foreign aggression, military organization normally consists heavily of combat units. By examining the organizational structure and composition of any military institution, a determination can be made as to whether or not the military has a peacetime or wartime organization. A peacetime military structure is more adept at providing support to civil authorities in disaster relief. When military forces respond to a disaster or emergency is probably the most visible indicator of military involvement in disaster management. Grouping historical data pertaining to military disaster management training, organization, and response to disasters will serve to effectively measure and describe military involvement in disaster management.
The overall extent of Guatemalan military involvement in disaster management during the study time period is measured by analyzing these three variables as indicators: 1.) organization and structure, 2.) disaster management training, and 3.) military response and participation in disaster management situations. Examining organization and structure identifies whether the design and organization of the military is oriented toward traditional military (combat) functions or disaster management (non-combat) purposes. Disaster management training indicators consist of the number of courses of instruction, professional conferences, and simulation exercises, and the number of attendees or personnel trained. Measuring response and participation in disaster management involves gathering data surrounding natural disaster events to determine the military response and the number of military personnel involved. Each of these three indicators is independently and equally important, and when examined together they demonstrate the extent of military involvement and participation in disaster management.

The study measures disaster management using both qualitative and quantitative units of analysis. Qualitative measures of disaster management include defining natural disasters and classifying disasters into different categories such as fires, floods, landslides, etc. Qualitative analysis is also used to classify the Guatemalan military organization into disaster management and non-disaster management units. Quantitative measures of disaster management training will examine the number of military personnel trained in disaster management, to include schooling, conferences, and exercises. Quantitative measures of military organization compare numbers of military units with disaster management functions. Such measures also include the number of different missions, military personnel involved in disaster response, and civilians affected.
The study examines military disaster management variables of data over time as follows:

$$\text{DM: } X_1 + X_2 + X_3$$

Where: DM = disaster management

$X_1$ = military organization data

$X_2$ = disaster management training data

$X_3$ = disaster response data

Three variables ($X_N$) were chosen as key indicators of disaster management: 1) organization, 2) training, and 3) response. Presenting descriptive statistics of the data will serve to describe and define the different types of military organizations and units, disaster training, and responses to natural disasters; and grouping by year helps to also depict the chronology of events over time. For analytical purposes, the collected data is grouped for each of the variables for the years during the study period (1997-2002). This analytical framework allows us to answer the questions as to "how much" and "what type" of military involvement in disaster management occurred during the study time period.

The first component of this study seeks to address the broad guiding research question: What was the extent of the Guatemalan Armed Forces' involvement in disaster management functions during the post-Accord period? From the aforementioned key indicators of disaster management, three guiding research focus questions will help to establish the basis that the Guatemalan military was involved in disaster management. These research focus questions serve to guide and standardize data collection.
During the years 1997-2002:

1) Did the military reorganize toward a disaster management focus?

   Did military forces become more concentrated in combat support and service support units? (peacetime organization vs. wartime organization)

   Did the military create or designate disaster response units? (type of units & organization)

2) Did the military participate in disaster management education and training?

   What types of disaster management courses were taught?

   What disaster management exercises or simulations were conducted?

3) Did the military participate in disaster response activities?

   What was the frequency and type of natural disasters?

   What military units and how many military personnel responded to natural disasters both in Guatemala and internationally?

   The main component of the study examines how well the military operated within the norms of sound civil-military relations during the study period. After establishing to what degree the Guatemalan military was involved in its new role of disaster management, the study assesses how well the military complied with limitations set by the state. The basis of this assessment lies in the extent to which the Guatemalan military complied with orders and directives from its civilian government. Based on civil-military relations theory, this compliance is the crucial measurement criteria by which a determination can be made as to whether or not the military could be termed apolitical or not. The major factor for analysis which I chose to measure military subordination to the state examines compliance with the 1996 Peace Accords’ military reform directives. To
strengthen the validity of the analysis, the study examines criticism of the military by third parties during this timeframe. This second criteria looks at other government directives to the military during the study period, and assesses the degree of compliance by the military. Reports from watch groups such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and others, are studied to determine whether or not the military overstepped its bounds and authority. Other secondary sources such as scholarly journals and newspapers are also consulted as part of the analysis. The study tests the hypothesis by examining military compliance with civil authority directives as follows:

\[ H: X_1 + X_2 \]

Where: \( H \) = the research hypothesis

\( X_1 \) = compliance with Peace Accord military reforms

\( X_2 \) = compliance with civil authorities during disaster response

The main guiding research question for the study is: Did the Guatemalan Armed Forces maintain sound civil-military relations during the post-Accord period? Two guiding research focus questions will help to confirm the hypothesis that the Guatemalan military operated within the norms of sound civil-military relations:

1.) Did the military comply with the Peace Accord directives?

2.) Did military disaster responders operate subordinate to civilian authorities?

These yes/no questions are used to evaluate civil-military relations and describe how the Guatemalan military operated within the norms of civil-military relations during this time period. A descriptive analysis approach is used to analyze and summarize the data and draw conclusions about the nature of civil-military relations.
Study Objectives

This study will test the hypothesis that the Guatemalan military engaged in the non-traditional military activity of disaster management during the post-conflict period while complying with civilian authority and other lawful directives. The analysis of the findings will answer the focus questions by determining what phenomena occurred in military disaster management training, organization, and response. The findings will then show how the Guatemalan military responded to directives by civil authorities, and in particular: 1.) how well military reforms specified in the 1996 Peace Accords were complied with, and 2.) whether the military responded to disasters in a secondary, subordinate role to civilian authorities.

Products of this dissertation include:

- A brief history of the military and society in Guatemala prior to 1997
- An overview of Guatemalan military disaster management education and training
- The location and distribution of military forces in Guatemala (1997-2002)
- The military response to natural disasters in Guatemala (1997-2002)
- An assessment of compliance with Peace Accord directives for the military

Data Collection

This project uses a multi-method of data collection to gather information about the study. Field research, content analysis (document research) and triangulation methods are used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Mixed-method studies usually have a high degree of accuracy in depicting reality (Greene, Caracelli, and Graham 1989). The research involved traveling to Guatemala in 2003 to conduct five months of field research based out of Guatemala City. During this field research, I
collected field data pertaining to military disaster management operations during the sample timeframe, contained in official records (written source documents in Spanish) from both military and civilian agencies. The Guatemalan Ministry of Defense (MINDEF) granted me permission to conduct this study and facilitated data collection. I also obtained several research papers written by Guatemalan military officers. These research papers, which are archived at the Guatemalan Center for Military Studies (CEM), are not routinely disclosed to the general public. After photocopying these source documents in Guatemala, I travelled back to the United States where I read through them and extracted pertinent data for inclusion in this study.

Civilian agencies consulted included the Guatemalan Ministries of Agriculture, Health, and Infrastructure, as well as independent organizations, including the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (CONRED), the Red Cross, the Fire Prevention authority, and the National Police. Primary data documents included archives, written policies, calendars, directives, and inter-agency agreements. The United States Southern Command (U.S. Military Group, Guatemala) also served as a source of information to provide historical data pertaining to Guatemalan military disaster management training and seminars.

Documents containing data about military disaster management activities were then verified and confirmed through secondary sources such as newspapers, periodicals, and scholarly journals, as well as demographic reports and development indicators, among others.

The data collected pertaining to military education and training is grouped and categorized into sub-categories of classes/courses of instruction, professional conferences
and seminars, and training or simulation exercises. The examination of military organization involves first determining what changes occurred, and if they supported the disaster management mission. This analysis of military reorganization involves examining the restructuring by type of military units (combat versus disaster management-type units), along with any organizational changes in locations of units that could be employed in disaster management. Finally the last variable, military response to natural disasters, is studied to determine what type of natural disasters occurred, how many, and the number and type of military forces that responded.

Analysis of the collected data will be performed based on a descriptive model. After grouping the data, several tables are used to visually present important findings along with descriptive narration. Including quantifiable data will help to solidify the descriptive analysis of the study.

Summary analyses and interpretation is used to evaluate the findings to achieve accurate conclusions which confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis. Human subjects were not interviewed as part of this research project. Military and civilian personnel were only consulted with “as-needed” to clarify my understanding of source documentation.

Research Limitations

This study is bounded by several constraints. Since primary data was collected during field research in 2003, the study focuses on examining actions by the Guatemalan military only during the period 1997-2002. The research attempts to include as much training and education of military personnel that could be discovered. The investigation seeks to include training both within Guatemala as well as that which was conducted at locations outside of Guatemala. Likewise, the study seeks to include and record as much
data as possible regarding actual military response to disasters, and includes any international disaster response efforts in which the Guatemalan military may have participated. Although the research does consider training and education of military personnel at locations outside of Guatemala, and includes any international disaster response efforts in which the Guatemalan military may have participated, the study's primary focus is toward training and disaster response within the Guatemala.

Furthermore, due to limitations in historical records and availability of historical data, the study does not pretend to be all-inclusive and as such cannot capture in its entirety all training and disaster response incidents in which the Guatemalan military may have been involved.

This study will not seek to answer the question as to whether or not the military should be involved in disaster management, nor make judgment as to what degree this involvement (if any) should be. Likewise, it is not within the scope of this study to attempt to determine why any changes occurred. Rather, this study seeks to focus exclusively on describing the nature of Guatemalan military involvement in disaster management functions since the 1996 Peace Accords. The study then examines how the Guatemalan military institution functioned within the framework of sound civil-military relations, examining compliance with the Peace Accords and interactions with civilian directives during disaster response operations. The conclusions will help to determine to what extent the military respected the foundation of civilian control of the military, the guidelines contained within its established military doctrine, and other legal parameters.
Chapter 4
The Guatemalan Military and Society

Military presence in Guatemalan society started with the Conquest. From the beginning of Guatemala’s colonial history, the Guatemalan military has traditionally been a principal element of political power in Guatemala (Loveman and Davies 1997, 118). During the 19th and 20th Centuries, the presidency was led more often by authoritarian military leaders than democratic civilians, at least up until the 1990s. Some of Guatemala’s military leaders remained in power for decades. Military oppression and political dominance in Guatemalan society is a topic that has drawn much criticism.

Military involvement in Guatemala has included lawless actions such as overthrows and assassinations of elected leaders, fraudulent elections, extrajudicial executions and disappearances, and other human rights violations. Nevertheless, the Guatemalan military also provided humanitarian aid and relief after natural disasters. In contrast to the vast amount of criticism that the Guatemalan military has received for its political interventions, military involvement in disaster response has received little publicity. This chapter draws attention to the 1996 Peace Accords which ended Guatemala’s armed conflict of almost 40 years, and marked the start of a new, peacetime military. It also highlights military response to Guatemala’s most devastating natural disaster, the 1976 Earthquake.
Overview of Guatemala

Guatemala is a country that is prone to natural disasters. In the past, the Guatemalan military has been involved in disaster management, but not as an officially established military role. This overview of the Guatemalan military and society in this context lays the foundation for better understanding of the Guatemalan case study on which this study’s inquiry is based.

The territory of Guatemala covers an area of 108,890 sq. km. (42,042 sq. mi.), and is about the size of the state of Tennessee. It borders with Mexico to the north and west, Belize to the northeast, and Honduras and El Salvador to the southeast. Major cities include the capital of Guatemala City (metro area pop. 2.5 million), Quetzaltenango, and Escuintla. The terrain is mountainous, with fertile coastal plains. Variation in elevation causes the subtropical climate to range from temperate highlands to tropical coasts. Due to its spring-like climate, Guatemala is often referred to as “The land of eternal spring.” Guatemala has a population of 15 million people (2012), comprised of two main ethnic groups: Mestizo (mixed Spanish-Indian), known in Guatemala as ladinos, and indigenous (Mayan descent). Its major religions include: Roman Catholic, Protestant, and traditional Mayan. The official language is Spanish, and 24 indigenous languages (principally Kiche, Kaqchikel, Q'eqchi', and Mam) are spoken. Guatemala is divided into 22 departments (departamentos) and sub-divided into about 332 municipalities (municipios) (O’Kane 1999; BNG 2000).
Guatemala’s Indigenous People

Guatemala has the unique characteristic of being the most indigenous country in Central America, consisting of a variety of distinct Mayan peoples. Although the
indigenous peoples constitute about 60 per cent of Guatemala's total population, they are marginalized both economically and politically. The majority of Guatemala's indigenous population, 45-70% of the total population of almost 13 million, is made up of Maya-Quiché people. The indigenous population is concentrated in often remote, rural parts of Guatemala's central and western regions, where it constitutes over 90 percent of the population (BNG 2000; Shea 2001).

Indigenous people are marginalized not only geographically, but also both politically and economically. Their isolation from society and language barriers (many indigenous speak only their Maya language) are two important reasons why they have traditionally not been politically active, nor represented. Only 39 percent of the Maya are literate, compared to 61 percent of ladinos (Nyrop 1983, Trudeau 1993).

As a result of historical discrimination and isolation, indigenous people live under harsh conditions and experience sub-par living standards. Since 80 percent of all indigenous people live in rural areas and 68 percent work in agriculture, their physical access to public services and economic opportunities is very limited. Mayans live an average of sixteen years fewer than ladinos due to poor nutrition and lack of access to health services. During the 1980s, Mayans earned only half of the average national wage (O'Kane 1999, 44). In general, most Guatemalans are poor, and almost all Indians live in poverty (Nyrop 1983).

The existence of a ruling oligarchy and past political instability has created an environment where wealth is inequitably distributed. Despite having the region's highest GDP, Guatemala's wealth (capital and land) is very unevenly distributed. The poorest 10
percent of the population receive only 0.6 percent of the national income, while the richest 10 percent retain 46.6 percent (O’Kane 1999).

**Colonization and Integration**

The Spanish conquest of Guatemala started in 1524 with the military campaigns of Pedro de Alvarado. The Maya were organized in small independent kingdoms and fought from the jungles as guerrillas, operating frequently at night and engaging in ambushes and raids against the Spanish invaders. The Spaniards’ technical superiority, horses, armor, and firearms outranked the Maya. European epidemics introduced by the Spaniards such as chickenpox, measles, typhoid and other diseases helped to reduce the indigenous population of Central America from fourteen million to two million within only two generations after Alvarado’s arrival (Perera 1993; O’Kane 1999; Shea 2001).

After the Agua Volcano erupted in 1541, Guatemala’s first capital city was moved to what is now called Antigua, Guatemala, in the Panchoy Valley. The move inaugurated the Spaniards’ three-hundred-year colonial era. Antigua, Guatemala, suffered a series of earthquakes, culminating with a massive earthquake in 1773. After this devastating 1773 earthquake, Guatemala City was relocated to its current location in the Valley of the Hermit (Valle de la Ermita) (Perera 1993; Connely Benz 1996; BNG 2000).

Despite being vastly outnumbered by the Maya, the Spanish were able to impose control over the indigenous during the colonial period through different systems of repression. Colonial authorities created several institutions to extract labor from the indigenous population. The first was the tributo, a tax that all men between the ages of 18 through 50 had to pay twice a year. Payment usually took the form of goods such as
beans, maize, chickens, and other products. Another institution was the repartimiento, also known in other parts of Latin America as the encomienda, under which land was divided among the Spanish conquistadores and ruling class. Implicit within this system was the allocation of the indigenous people living on the land to the landowner, who was entrusted to care for them. Rather than care for their tenants however, landowners were abusive, and imposed slave-like conditions upon the Indians. These repressive measures resulted in an indigenous migration from settled areas into the highlands, or literally "heading for the hills" (Nyrop 1983; O'Kane 1999; Womack 1999; Lovell 2000; Shea 2001).

Not all Spaniards accepted the mistreatment of Indians. Colonial human rights activists demanded policy changes and a dignified treatment and recognition of the indigenous people as human beings with souls. Perhaps the most famous is the Dominican priest Bartolomé de las Casas, who later become known as the "Defender of the Indians." In his book La Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias (A Brief tale of the destruction of the Indians), he criticizes and details the atrocities committed against Indians in the name of the conquest (Nyrop 1983; Harvey 1998; Womack 1999; Shea 2001).

The Catholic Church was instrumental in educating and caring for Native Americans. It established schools to teach both Indian and Spanish children. The Church's main goal was to convert indigenous people to Catholicism. The Church was successful in converting the Indians partly because it allowed the assimilation of some Indian gods into the ranks of Christian saints. By identifying Indian gods with saints who
shared similar characteristics, they created a syncretic folk Catholicism (Nyrop 1983; Harvey 1998).

During the period 1811 to 1821, the Viceroyalty of New Spain, a colonial political territory ranging from present-day western United States southward to Panama, achieved independence from Spain. Independence only reaped benefits for the ruling class who no longer had to pay taxes to the crown. The indigenous population continued to suffer exploitation by the landowning class of Spanish origin, the criollos (creoles), and the ladinos. In 1823 the region further divided to form the Central American federation, which also soon dissolved and resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Guatemala.

**Military Dominance**

Throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries, the military maintained a habitual involvement in Guatemalan politics, either directly or indirectly. In fact, for any recent president of Guatemala, the greatest challenge is to convince the army that civil society is capable of functioning without the help of the military. June 30 is the national Guatemalan Army Day Holiday, and is significant because it is one of the eleven National Holidays in Guatemala (Lovell 2000). Some critics have called the military the “fourth branch of government” in Guatemala, and “easily the strongest” (Connely Benz 1996, 190). In 1990, many U.S. government officials believed that the army was Guatemala’s most important institution and the main conduit for development (Jonas 2000).

The military presence and significance in Guatemalan society is a hard feature to overlook. Throughout its history, the Guatemalan military has had close ties to the
oligarchy and has actively engaged in the political system, both openly and covertly. Since 1824 Guatemala has had fifty-six governments, 36 military, 4 juntas, and only 16 civilian, the last 7 having run consecutively since 1986. Up until recently, a tradition of coups, fraudulent elections and self-appointed rulers characterized Guatemala's political past. Patterns of non-democratic rulers, with wanton disregard for human rights and rule of law, have predominated. During most of the 20th Century, the Guatemalan military dominated the political system and through repressive means supported authoritarian rulers (Nyrop 1983; O'Kane 1999).

Numerous Guatemalan leaders have come to power through coups and counter-coups, and even one self-coup (auto-golpe) was attempted. As is the case with much of Latin America, Guatemala's administrations were characterized by an almost constant struggle between liberals and conservatives. Guatemala's presidents have ranged from adept to incompetent, serving short-lived spells to long-lasting dictatorships. The permanence of long enduring military regimes versus short civilian presidencies is seen by comparing some examples of the two extremes: civilian regimes of Alejandro Sinibaldi (2-6 Apr 1885) and Baudilio Palma (13-17 Dec 1930), versus military regimes of Rafael Carrera (1851-1865), Justo Rufino Barrios (1873-1882), and Jorge Ubico (1931-1944).

Since 1823 Guatemalan Presidents have ranged from short-term, temporary leaders, to long-lasting caudillo (political boss) dictators. In 1877, caudillo, President Justo Rufino Barrios (1873-1882), known as "the Reformer" for his economic development and infrastructure-building programs, expropriated communal lands. Barrios sought to take advantage of the late 1800s coffee boom by attracting foreign
investment to Guatemala. Coffee growers, many of them German or Swiss, soon began evicting the Indians. Coffee cultivation required higher altitudes, which made the mainly indigenous highlands lucrative for plantation expansion. These plantations also needed many more workers, creating a new workforce, that of the landless peasant. By the end of the 19th Century, coffee accounted for 80 percent of all Guatemalan exports. Coffee continues to be central to Guatemala's economy, and in 1997 it alone comprised 25 percent of export income (Perera 1993; Booth and Walker 1999; O'Kane 1999).

Ties between Guatemalan military leaders and the agricultural sector continued. Guatemala’s export fruit industry experienced tremendous growth at the turn of the 20th Century. By the 1930s, the United Fruit Company (UFCO) (la Fratera), a Boston-based banana company, was the largest employer, landowner, and exporter in Guatemala (Booth and Walker 1999; O'Kane 1999). In 1933, Sam Zemurray acquired the company and moved its headquarters to New Orleans, Louisiana. Guatemalan caudillo, Brigadier General Jorge Ubico Castañeda (1931-1944), was known for implementing development projects in the areas of road construction, public works, and public health. His motivation for these projects was largely to increase revenue from the agricultural sector. Ubico also replaced Indian slavery with vagrancy laws which still repressed the indigenous peasantry. Ironically, despite being responsible for these repressive laws, he was still popular among the Indigenous, who referred to him as “tata,” which means daddy in Maya. Ubico’s vagrancy law punished landless Maya if they did not work 150 days per year on plantations. In 1932, Ubico enacted Decree 1816, which exempted landowners from the consequences of any action taken to protect their goods or land. Decree 1816 in essence legalized the murder of rebellious landless peasants who resisted
forced labor. History books often refer to the Maya as a passive people who were easily conquered. Nevertheless, the history of Maya uprisings spans five centuries in the neighboring Mexican State of Chiapas, the most recent of which occurred January 1, 1994 (Womack 1999). Empirical evidence shows that since the conquest in 1524, Guatemalan indigenous rebellions have occurred on average every sixteen years (O'Kane 1999).

Repression under Ubico sparked numerous protests among worker and university student organizations. On July 4, 1944, pressure from massive strikes and demonstrations, together with opposition from young, reformist military leaders finally forced Ubico to relinquish the presidency to an eventual military junta. On October 20, 1944, Ubico’s replacement, General Juan Federico Ponce Vaides, was also forced out of office by a coup d'état led by Major Francisco Javier Arana and Captain Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán. About 100 people were killed in the coup. The country was then led by a military junta made up of Arana, Arbenz, and Jorge Toriello Garrido (Connely Benz 1996; Loveman and Davies 1997). This "Guatemalan Revolution of 1944" started a ten-year democratic interlude often referred to as "the ten years of spring" (O’Kane 1999; BNG 2000).

Also in 1944, the Junta called for Guatemala's first free presidential election, considered by historians to be the first transparent elections in Guatemala (Connely Benz 1996). Doctor Juan José Arévalo Bermejo emerged as the overwhelming winner by receiving more than 86% of casted votes, and assumed the Presidency on March 15, 1945. Arévalo was not a military officer, but rather a writer and teacher, who due to his open criticism of Ubico, had lived in exile in Argentina during the 14 years prior.
Arévalo marks a milestone for democracy in Guatemala in that he was the first
democratically elected president of Guatemala to fully complete the term for which he
was elected. During his term, many social reforms were enacted. Arévalo’s policies
were criticized by landowners and the upper class as being communist.

Among Arévalo’s social reforms was the Labor Code of May 1, 1947 which
 guaranteed the right to unionize, the right to strike, protection from unfair dismissal, a 48-
 hour work week, and the creation of a social security system. The Labor Code abolished
the forced-labor system, thus empowering the Maya to organize for decent wages without
fear of reprisals. Fierce opposition to these reforms arose from the oligarchy and the
UFCO. Despite some 30 plots to remove him, Arévalo managed to stay in power, largely
due to the strong support of the army, which was led by Colonel Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán
one of the officers who had helped in the rebellion against Ubico (Booth and Walker
1999; O'Kane 1999).

In addition to support from the army, several labor organizations and parties of
the left also supported Jacobo Arbenz as the next Guatemalan President to succeed
Arévalo. In March 1951, Árbenz assumed the presidency after winning Guatemala's
second-ever universal-suffrage election, marking the first peaceful transition of power in
Guatemala’s history. One of the country’s greatest ironies is that the Guatemalan army
produced the most progressive, honest and capable President in Guatemalan history to
date. Arbenz carried out the first true agrarian reform in Central America, expropriating
large, uncultivated tracts of land to include much of that owned by the UFCO. This
reform affected only about 1,700 people, but these powerful landowners owned over half
of the private land in Guatemala (O'Kane 1999).
Arbenz’s socialist reforms sparked anti-Communist sentiment and fears in both the United States and locally, finally causing him to lose what little support he still retained among the oligarchy. In 1954, an alliance of the most conservative sectors in Guatemala (the Catholic Church, landowners and much of the army) supported a plan, known as Operation Success, designed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to overthrow Arbenz. The successful 1954 Guatemalan coup d’état resulted in the overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz, who had been Arévalo’s freely-elected Guatemalan successor. The departure of Arbenz thus ended the brief “ten years of spring” period of democratic rule in Guatemala. This departure point was also the beginning of the Cold War between the U.S. and the USSR, which was to have a considerable influence on Guatemalan history. From the 1950s through the 1990s, the U.S. government directly supported Guatemala’s army with training, weapons, and money (Booth and Walker 1999; O’Kane 1999; BNG 2000).

Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas became the next president and initiated a repressive anti-Communist campaign. Thus began a four-decade long era of military-imposed terror referred to as "la situación" (the situation) (O’Kane 1999). This period is sometimes erroneously labeled as "la violencia" (the violence), which traditionally refers to a period of violence in Colombia during the 1950s.

During la situación, military and para-military organizations arrested and jailed tens of thousands of union organizers, political and indigenous activists, and other suspected left-wingers. Torture and murder were other means used to eliminate conspirators or members of the opposition. Castillo Armas persecuted grassroots organizations and dissolved political parties. He returned nearly all of the land given to
landless peasants during Arbenz’s agrarian reform to its original owners. Castillo Armas ruled until he was assassinated by a member of his personal guard in 1957 (Booth and Walker 1999).

Military rule once again became the norm in Guatemala, as did repression of the left. Guatemala became a model of U.S. Cold War foreign policy in the fight against Communism. With the exception of one civilian president in 1966, between 1954 and 1985 all heads of state were military, and the army dominated the political system (O’Kane 1999).

It should be noted that under some of these long-lasting regimes, despite their authoritarian nature, particularly Barrios ("the Reformer"), and Ubico, Guatemala experienced some progress in the areas of national infrastructure development, commerce and agricultural production. The overriding reputation of Guatemalan military rulers, however, is one of repressive, authoritarian men who cared little for social welfare or development. From 1954 until 1986, with one exception (Julio César Méndez Montenegro, 1966-70), all of the country's rulers were military men who defended the landowning oligarchy and the business class by repression and violence (Klaiber 1998; Schirmer 1998; Sieder 1998; Booth and Walker 1999; Shea 2001).

**Guatemala's 36-year Civil War**

Revolutionary movements throughout Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s were motivated by Fidel Castro's success in the 1959 Cuban Revolution, and Guatemala was no exception to this trend. In 1961, Guatemalan Army 2nd Lieutenant Luis Augusto Turcios Lima and Lieutenant Marco Antonio Yon Sosa, launched an insurgency campaign against the Guatemalan government. They formed a coalition of movements
(Movimiento Revolucionario 13 de noviembre (MR-13), Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (FAR), and Frente Revolucionario (FR-12)) which sought social change and equality. Never numbering more than five hundred, they engaged in skirmishes in the eastern departments of Izabal and Zacapa. There, they received much local support from banana workers and communist sympathizers. During the late 1960s, the military increased its counterinsurgency programs, led by Coronel Carlos Arana Osorio, aka "the butcher of Zacapa," so that between 1969 and 1970, the revolutionaries' focal points were eliminated and the first generation of guerillas disappeared (Perera 1993; Klaiber 1998; Schirmer 1998; BNG 2000; Jonas 2000; Jonas and Walker 2000; Shea 2001).

In the 1970s, a new generation of subversive communist groups emerged, this time in the western, indigenous-populated highlands. Four founding groups: the Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), the Guatemalan Labor Party (PGT), and the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), eventually coalesced in 1982 to form one single front: the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (La Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca URNG) (Klaiber 1998; Schirmer 1998; BNG 2000). Many Maya expressed their frustration with party politics and the lack of government support for rural needs by joining activist networks such as the Committee of Peasant Unity (CUC), which organized highly successful farm-worker strikes. From the guerrilla's point of view, the armed struggle challenged the legitimacy of the state and the exploitation of Guatemalan peasants by wealthy landowners and elites (Painter 1987; Klaiber 1998; Schirmer 1998). This was a war of liberation to resolve conflicting class interests in a country that, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit's Worldwide Quality-of-Life Index, usually rates as the second lowest physical
quality-of-life index in Central America and the third lowest in all Latin America, with only Haiti and Honduras having lower ratings.

During the 1970's and 1980s, the guerrilla groups sought support from peasant populations and recruited indigenous combatants from the countryside into their ranks, and engaged in terrorist-type activities such as bombings, kidnappings, ambushes and raids against commercial, industrial, military and government targets. Some indigenous groups fled to the jungle and formed small bands of what became known as the Communities of Population in Resistance (CPR) (Galiana 2000). Poorly trained and ill-equipped, these humble peasants who fought for the URNG and CPR habitually ended up being cannon-fodder to the highly skilled and heavily armed Guatemalan counter-insurgency forces (many of which were trained in the United States). During the 1980s, when the worst and most numerous human rights violations occurred, the United States was giving significant financial and military aid to the Guatemalan government - $50m at its peak in 1983 (Galiana 2000).

The Guatemalan Army retaliated against the subversive guerrilla groups with a unique "counter-terror" campaign which included selective "disappearances" of known or suspected rebels, and the emergence of death squads such as the Movimiento Anticomunista Nacional Organizado (National Organized Anti-Communist Movement) (MANO), (mano blanca, or "white hand"). It also expanded the size of its forces, mainly through forced recruitment of indigenous troops into military service. General Efraín Ríos Montt, whose presidency in the early 1980s was among the bloodiest and most repressive in Guatemala's history, engineered the formation of para-military groups, among them the Patrullas de Auto-defensa Civil (PAC) (Civil Defense Patrols). Through
a psychological warfare and civil affairs program of frijoles y fusiles (beans and rifles),
the government distributed food to rural communities in an attempt to win their support,
and gave them weapons for self-defense against the guerrillas. The Army itself engaged
in a "scorched earth" military campaign similar to the Vietnam-era tactics of "search and
destroy" missions. This campaign entailed relocating entire indigenous communities into
model villages, what the military called "development poles", where they could be
watched (and in theory protected) by the military. The military destroyed homes, crops,
livestock, and belongings left behind in order to prevent their possible use by guerrilla
forces. During these operations, the army was accused of having committed repeated
human rights atrocities, because the standing policy was to kill anyone who refused to
relocate (justified by the assumption that they were guerrillas or sympathizers). As a
result, entire villages of civilians, among them the elderly, women, and children were
annihilated (Perera 1993; Loveman and Davies 1997; Klaiber 1998; Schirmer 1998; Shea
2001).

By the early 1990s, although government attempts to wipe out the left-wing
guerilla URNG organization were unsuccessful, the URNG started to lose momentum
and appeal among its sympathizers. Fighting diminished, and the Army began to disband
the PACs. Nevertheless, atrocities continued, such as the massacre of Xamán, in 1995,
when an Army patrol attacked a community of refugees who were returning from
Mexico, killing 11 people, two of them children, and injuring another 30. Prior to this,
the Bush administration in the U.S. (1989-1992) had emphasized the curtailment of
human rights abuses and in 1990 had suspended U.S. military aid to Guatemala. Also in
1995, the international press began reporting about CIA involvement in the Guatemalan

During the course of the 36-year civil war, nearly half a million people, most of them Mayan, fled from their homes and communities. More than 150,000 took refuge in neighboring countries, primarily Mexico, and to a much lesser degree, the United States. Thousands of people migrated to Guatemala's cities, becoming members of poor urban fringe dweller neighborhoods where some formed organizations of rural transplanted communities. This contributed to the development of a political awareness and a political culture in which the indigenous population gradually began to play an enhanced role in formal national politics (Galiana 2000).

When the peace agreement was approved in 1996, more than 200,000 people (largely indigenous) had been killed, hundreds of communities eliminated, and more than one million people had been displaced from their homes and communities (BNG 2000; Galiana 2000; Shea 2001). The loss of life and devastation caused by the armed conflict, together with the legacy of fear stemming from the Guatemalan military's human rights abuses, left obstacles in the path toward future progress, social justice, and development in Guatemala. The 1996 Peace Accords stipulated an intricate Peace Agenda with multiple reforms designed to address the historical social issues that Guatemala has been
plagued with for centuries. The 1996 Peace Accords attempt to resolve these problems, in particular by addressing the role of the military in a democratic society.

**Natural Disasters**

Historically, societies worldwide have experienced varying types and degrees of natural disasters. In past times people often migrated away from hazard-prone areas to safer places less likely to suffer the negative consequences of these uncontrollable events. However, due to the world’s continued population growth, an increasing number of people live in areas prone to disasters. The combined factors of recent population growth, rapid urbanization and the socioeconomic structure in Central America have increased the vulnerability of these countries to natural hazards (IADB 1999).

**Table 3. Principal Earthquakes in Guatemala Since the 20th Century:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Location(s) and Magnitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 April 1902</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango y Sololá 7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 March 1913</td>
<td>Cuilapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 November 1917</td>
<td>Guatemala City, Villa Nueva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 August 1942</td>
<td>Departments of Guatemala, Sacapatéquez, Chimaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 February 1959</td>
<td>Ixeán, El Quiché</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 February 1976</td>
<td>Guatemala 7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 October 1985</td>
<td>Uspantán 5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 September 1991</td>
<td>San Miguel Pochuta, Chimaltenango 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 December 1995</td>
<td>Tucurú, Cobán, Alta Verapaz 5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 January 1998</td>
<td>Retalhuleu y Suchitepéquez 5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 July 1999</td>
<td>Izabal 6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 January &amp; 13 February 2001</td>
<td>El Salvador, 7.6 &amp; 6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CONRED 2013

Within Central America, Guatemala in particular has been especially prone to natural disasters, especially earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and hurricanes along with related landslides and flooding. Due to the characteristics of its geographical and
geological conditions, Guatemala is a country often beset by severe natural disasters which result in the loss of life and property.

The most common natural disasters in Guatemala are earthquakes, due to the tectonic plates and the large volcanic chain which runs through its territory. Three tectonic plates cross the country of Guatemala: the North American Plate, which extends from the Motagua River all the way to Alaska, the Caribbean Plate which runs from the Motagua to Panama, and the Cocos (Pacific) Plate which originates from the Pacific Ocean and fronts against the Caribbean Plate. Table 3 lists the significant principal earthquakes that have been recorded in Guatemala since the 20th Century (CONRED 2013).

As seen in Figure 2 and Table 4, Guatemala’s volcano chain of 29 volcanoes includes five active volcanoes: the Fuego, Pacaya, Santa Maria, Santiaguito, and Tacana, which are among the most prominent and problematic due to their constant eruptions. Table 5 lists the significant principal volcanic eruptions that have been recorded in Guatemala since the 20th Century (CONRED 2013).

**Figure 2. Map of Volcanoes in Guatemala**

[Image of a map showing the location of volcanoes in Guatemala]

Source: CONRED 2013
Table 4. Volcanoes in Guatemala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Elevation (m)</th>
<th>Location (department)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (active)</td>
<td>Tocaná</td>
<td>4,092</td>
<td>San Marcos, Guatemala/Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tajumulco</td>
<td>4,220</td>
<td>San Marcos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chicabal</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Siete Orejas</td>
<td>3,370</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (active)</td>
<td>Santa María</td>
<td>3,772</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (active)</td>
<td>Santiaguito</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cerro Quemado</td>
<td>3,197</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Zunil</td>
<td>3,542</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Santo Tomás</td>
<td>3,505</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>San Pedro</td>
<td>3,020</td>
<td>Sololá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Tolimán</td>
<td>3,150</td>
<td>Sololá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Atitlán</td>
<td>3,537</td>
<td>Sololá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Acatenango</td>
<td>3,976</td>
<td>Chimaltenango / Sacatepéquez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (active)</td>
<td>Fuego</td>
<td>3,763</td>
<td>Sacatepéquez / Escuintla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Agua</td>
<td>3,766</td>
<td>Sacatepéquez / Escuintla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (active)</td>
<td>Pacaya</td>
<td>2,552</td>
<td>Escuintla / Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>La Gubia</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Tecuamburro</td>
<td>1,840</td>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Jumaytepeque</td>
<td>1,815</td>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Moyuta</td>
<td>1,662</td>
<td>Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Amayo / Las Flores</td>
<td>1,544</td>
<td>Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Jumay</td>
<td>2,176</td>
<td>Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Tahual</td>
<td>1,716</td>
<td>Jalapa - Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Culma</td>
<td>1,027</td>
<td>Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Suchitán</td>
<td>2,042</td>
<td>Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Las Víboras</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Chingo</td>
<td>1,775</td>
<td>Jutiapa, Guate./El Salvador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Ixtepeque</td>
<td>1,292</td>
<td>Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Ipala</td>
<td>1,650</td>
<td>Chiquimula / Jutiapa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CONRED 2013

Hurricanes and tropical storms are also problematic recurring events in Guatemala. Excessive flooding is common in both the northern and southern coastal regions. In 1998, Hurricane Mitch killed 263 and affected over 105,000 Guatemalans. It caused millions of dollars worth of ecological destruction and property damage. Forest fires, both natural and human-originated, are also frequent occurrences, especially in the
northern Peten region. Destructive natural disasters in Guatemala are expected to continue in the future due to fixed geographic and environmental factors (Nyrop 1983; BNG 2000).

**Table 5. Principal Volcanic Eruptions in Guatemala Since the 20th Century**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volcano</th>
<th>Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acatenango</td>
<td>Eruptions from 1924 - 1927 and in 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuego</td>
<td>One of the most active Guatemalan volcanoes, more than 60 eruptions since 1524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The most violent occurred in 1932, 1971, 1974 and 21 May 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recent eruptions in January and April 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacaya</td>
<td>Frequent eruptions since 1565. Recent activity since 1961 after 76 years of inactivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa María</td>
<td>October 1902, 6,000 dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Categorized as one of the most violent 20th Century eruptions world-wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiaguito</td>
<td>Complex of four lava domes: Caliente, La Mitad, El Monje and El Brujo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formed in 1922 from the crater left by the 1902 eruption of the Santa María Volcano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eruption in 1929, 2,500 dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacaná</td>
<td>Eruptions in 1900-1903, 1949-1950 and May 1986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CONRED 2013

**The 1976 Guatemala City Earthquake**

"The morgue is full. Please don't bring any more bodies to the morgue."
Guatemalan radio broadcast (Steele 1976).

Among the worst natural disasters that occurred in Guatemala during the last half of the 20th Century was the 1976 Guatemala City Earthquake. On February 4, 1976, Guatemala City was devastated by an earthquake, the first tremor of which struck at 3:04 a.m., killing more than 22,000 persons and injuring about 74,000. The number of people left homeless was over 1 million - nearly one-sixth of Guatemala's population. The quake registered 7.5 on the Richter scale (the 1906 San Francisco earthquake was 8.2), and its epicenter was located 30 miles (48 kilometers) southwest of Guatemala City.
Shock waves were felt along a 2,000-mile strip of Central America and as far away as Mexico City, Mexico. The Richter scale registration was higher than the quake that destroyed much of Managua, Nicaragua, in December 1972 (Asturias and Trejo 1976; Steele 1976; Gawronski and Olson 2013).

Within minutes of the first tremor, thousands of people were buried under tons of debris, the densely populated slum sections of the capital were transformed into masses of rubble, and entire villages were destroyed. Guatemalan officials estimated that it totally destroyed 20 per cent of all the buildings in the capital of Guatemala City. Within the wide area affected in Guatemala (36,000 square miles of Guatemala’s 78,000), some of the worst destruction occurred in the upper central highlands and in many of the small villages tucked into the mountains surrounding the capital. The town of Joyabaj was wholly destroyed and 100 quake victims were hurriedly buried in a mass grave to guard against an outbreak of disease. In the small village of San Pedro Sacatepequez, villagers, including children, hurriedly dug graves or drug bodies to the cemetery where local police checked off names of the dead. Approximately 90% of structures were either destroyed or substantially damaged in these outlying areas, where the population is primarily Cakchiquel-speaking Indigenous peoples living in towns or rural villages (aldeas). The affected region has one of the highest population densities in all of Latin America (Asturias and Trejo 1976; Steele 1976; Gawronski and Olson 2013).

The U.S. government provided an immediate $3.6 million in emergency aid, and nearly $15 million more came from voluntary contributions from the United States within six days of the quake. In addition to the US, aid and relief assistance was immediately sent by the UN’s Disaster Relief Office, and the countries of Venezuela, Mexico and
Colombia. The Organization of American States (OAS) contributed $500,000, and several other Latin American countries sent food, clothing, medical supplies, doctors, and relief experts. Numerous countries and charitable groups organized and provided disaster relief. U.S. Army helicopters ferried supplies to isolated villages, and U.S. military personnel from the Panama Canal Zone helped Guatemalan soldiers keep order. Over 400 U.S. military assisted in-country relief efforts (FOF 1976).

After the major shock on February 4th, tremors continued for hours, more than 100 in Guatemala City. Two days later, just as relief and rescue operations were making progress, a second earthquake hit. This "collapse-type quake" (which does not run along fault lines) lasted only 25 seconds. It did not cause comparable damage or significantly increase the casualty toll, but it did spark a new wave of panic in the capital and toppled several already weakened buildings. The teeming slum districts in Guatemala City were already piles of debris. The middle and upper-middle class sections of the capital, however, were relatively undamaged (Steele 1976).

Within hours after the first shock, the Guatemalan government declared a state of "national catastrophe," mobilized the army and police, and began relief efforts under the National Emergency Committee headed by Defense Minister General Fernando Romeo Lucas. President Kjell Laugerud Garcia flew over devastated areas outside the capital, reporting that entire towns and villages had been completely destroyed. Fortunately, in anticipation of such a disaster, an army-dominated National Emergency Committee had been formed in 1970 which took charge of the entire relief operation. The efficiency of the Guatemalan military drew praise from observers who had witnessed the chaos and
official corruption that hampered the distribution of relief supplies in Managua, after its earthquake in 1972 (FOF 1976; Gawronski and Olson 2013).

The biggest problem in the recovery effort was the incredible number of cadavers that needed to be processed. Bodies lay amid the wreckage, wood needed to build coffins had run out, and long lines of injured people waited in front of hospitals. At the city's principal cemetery, families had to wait in line to bury dead relatives. The next dire issue was the scarcity of supplies, as shortages developed within the first few days. Water was meticulously rationed and food was scarce. Although a number of shops in Guatemala City opened the day after the quake, food prices skyrocketed; the cost of bread went from 6 cents a loaf to 25 cents, if it was available at all. Doctors feared an epidemic outbreak from the contamination of the city water supply or from the unburied corpses (or both). Additionally, the chaos in the capital, and landslides that blocked the roads leading to many of the hardest-hit mountain villages hampered relief efforts and prolonged Guatemala's suffering (Steele 1976).

The Guatemalan military has provided disaster response and humanitarian assistance to other emergencies, but much of this history has gone unreported and unrecorded. For example, on 18 September, 1991, the Guatemalan Civil Affairs Company from Military Zone 302, Chimaltenango, came to the aid of the inhabitants of San Miguel Pochuta after the area suffered an earthquake. The military provided first aid, rescue, medical evacuation, and transportation to shelters. The military also supported police in security and provided technical assistance to local authorities to assist in reestablishing basic services for the community.
Although not widely reported in the press, the Guatemalan Military was instrumental in assisting the international relief and recovery efforts during the aftermath of the 1976 earthquake. Nevertheless, the Guatemalan military involvement in international disaster response has received some recognition when assisting other countries in the region. After the 1972 earthquake in Managua, Nicaragua, the Guatemalan Air Force assisted in the airlift of homeless victims. It also set up control and distribution points and a reception area at the Las Mercedes Airport in Nicaragua. In response to Hurricane Fifi in 1974, the Guatemalan military also assisted with airlift operations to the Atlantic Coast of Honduras. The airlift also helped transport technical experts involved in the relief efforts. After El Salvador suffered its 1985 earthquake, the Guatemalan Air Force assisted the Government of El Salvador by conducting aerial reconnaissance missions, and also set up a command post and distribution center for relief supplies. The Guatemalan Air Force provided airlift of supplies to Mexico in 1985 during its earthquake relief operations. It also helped transport technical relief experts for the Mexican government. After Nicaragua was struck by a tidal wave and flooding in 1992, the Guatemalan Air Force provided support by transporting technicians and conducting airlift of relief supplies.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a description of Guatemala as a country that has been plagued by problems of natural disasters and military dominance. The 1996 Peace Accords established directives for a new, peacetime military. The next chapters examine Guatemalan military involvement in disaster management and changes to the Guatemalan military and civil-military relations after 1996.
Chapter 5
The 1996 Peace Accords and Military Reforms

This chapter examines military reforms directed by the 1996 Peace Accords, and the degree to which they were complied with and implemented (or not), and then suggests conclusions that can be drawn as to the nature of civil-military relations between the Guatemalan military and civil authorities during the study period.

On December 29, 1996, the Government of Guatemala signed the final “Firm and Lasting Peace” Agreement (*Acuerdo de Paz Firme y Duradera*) with the guerrilla insurgency group, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (*La Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatamalteca* URNG), ending almost four decades of internal civil war. The Peace Agreement consisted of several Peace Accords which together represented significant changes to the status quo in political, economical, and social sectors of Guatemala. The Peace Accords called for hundreds of new commitments to be established for Guatemalan state and society. The United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) summarized the Peace Accords into seven priority areas of action: human rights and national reconciliation; civilian-military relations and military reform; reform of the administration of justice system; indigenous peoples and intercultural relations; rural policy and development; social policies; and fiscal policy (Peace Accords 1996; MINUGUA 2002).

An analysis of the Peace Accords’ priority area of civil-military relations and military reform is fundamental to determining whether or not changes were made to the
Guatemalan military’s traditional political nature and tendency for involvement in
government affairs, as previously discussed. Commonly referred to as
the “civil-military accord”, the Agreement on The Strengthening of Civil Society and the
Role of the Military in a Democratic Society was signed in Mexico City on 19 September
1996. Many regarded this event as the effective end of the civil war in Guatemala

The main theme within the provisions of the civil-military accord was to redefine
the role of the military and modernize and strengthen Guatemala’s democratic
government. The role of the Guatemalan Army was to be reduced to the sole function of
external defense, and its doctrine, training, and tasks were to be modified accordingly.
The intent to limit the army to defending the country’s territorial integrity (guarding
against external threats) was designed to eliminate military involvement in Guatemala’s
internal security matters. The military was directed to reduce both its size (number of
personnel) and defense budget by one-third. Civil Defense Patrols were to be eliminated,
and the multiple national security force organizations were to be reorganized and unified
within one single National Civil Police force (Schirmer 1998: Salvesen 2002).

Although the armed conflict ended even before the final peace accords were
signed, these documents were welcomed by the indigenous community as a turning point
in Guatemala’s history, representing the possibility of its citizens being able to live in
peace for the first time in more than 500 years. Unfortunately, the transition from war to
peace was slow and difficult, given that it is not easy to change the military mindset to a
more civilian orientation and subsequent integration into society (Galiana 2000).
During a speech in 1996, Guatemala's newly-elected President Arzú, as part of his vision statement for the future, declared that the new role of the military would be one of serving society by modernizing for its defense and development. He stated that the Guatemalan Armed Forces will be the defenders of peace and will also contribute to the development of the country.

The most important change contained within the Peace Accords’ military reform package was the requirement for the government to start a process of demilitarization: the downsizing and relocation of troops, dismantling paramilitary groups, and redefining the role, mission, doctrine and education of the armed forces. Critics were quick to complain about the speed of progress and compliance, since by early 2001, nearly half of the Accords' 250 total measures were still unfulfilled (Schirmer 1998; Sieder 1998; Azpuru 1999; Molina 1999; MINUGUA 2002).

Both of Guatemala’s democratically-elected presidents Alvaro Arzú (1996-2000) and Alfonso Portillo (2000-2004), strongly supported implementation of the requirements contained in the civil-military accord. Using their presidential authority, they subordinated the army to the civilian Presidency and thereby gained an unprecedented opportunity to reduce the political role of the military and institutionalize democratic civil-military relations (Ruhl 2005).

One of President Arzú’s first decisions that affected the Guatemalan Army was to dismiss several military officers implicated in corruption and human rights abuses, but he then stalled on structural military reforms. Guatemala's subsequent President, Alfonso Portillo, who assumed office in early 2000, initially made some promising statements regarding military reforms and human rights, pledging to eliminate the infamous
presidential security guard (the *Estado Mayor Presidencial*) (EMP), and appointing outspoken human rights advocates to some government posts (MINUGUA 2002).

**Key Military Reforms**

A United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) was established in Guatemala to verify the peace accords during the early years after their signing. According to MINUGUA, central elements of the peace accords regarding the armed forces were not fully implemented (MINUGUA 2002). MINUGUA was deactivated at the end of 2004. Nevertheless, some of the elements of the civil-military accord had still not been completed or complied with at the time that this dissertation was being finalized (2013). Table 6, Key Civil-military Accord Reforms, lists nine main provisions of the civil-military accord that address the reorganization and modernization of the armed forces.

**Table 6. Key Civil-military Accord Reforms**

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Source: Peace Accords 1996

The directives within the civil-military accord were designed to demilitarize Guatemala and in essence transform the country from an authoritarian counterinsurgency state to a democratic state operating under the rule of law. Despite the acceptance of the
ideological commitment to enact a broad military transformation, the accord contained many ambiguities, loopholes and omissions that would impede implementation in several areas. In fact, all of the significant changes required constitutional and legislative reforms in Congress. These constitutional reforms would need to obtain a favorable vote of two-thirds congressional majority and a subsequent national referendum in order to be implemented (Jonas 2000).

1. Development and implementation of a new military doctrine

The Accords called for the formulation and adoption of a new military doctrine consistent with a democratic, peaceful society. This new doctrine would require the armed forces to abandon the national security doctrine under which they performed mainly counter-insurgency and public order functions. The army’s mission would be redefined, limited to defense of the country’s sovereignty, and the integrity of its territory. It was to have no other assigned functions, and its participation in other areas would be restricted to a role of participation and support to other government agencies. In order to implement these changes, the Guatemalan Constitution would also need to be changed, with constitutional reforms regarding (1) integration, organization, and functions of the army; (2) limiting the competency of military tribunals to violations of the military code (not common crimes); (3) primacy of the president as commander-in-chief of the army over the defense minister (notwithstanding the latter being civilian or military) (Jonas 2000).

Countries that transition from extended civil wars to peace often experience an increase in crime, criminal violence, and insecurity, and Guatemala was no exception. During 1996 and 1997, state-sponsored violence was replaced by an increase in
kidnappings, armed assaults and robberies, and other forms of criminal activity, both spontaneous and organized. The accords called for internal security functions, in other words law enforcement activities, to be carried out by the new civilian police (Policía Nacional Civil) (PNC). However, the 20,000 new police officers were not projected to be fully constituted until the end of 1999. As a result, the government allowed the army to continue to conduct internal security functions jointly with the PNC. During these early years neither the army nor the civilian government seemed concerned about defining a new military doctrine (Jonas 2000).

Finally, in December 1999, the Guatemalan army unilaterally published a new proposed doctrine to the Arzú administration (BBC World Service, 17 December, 1999), which outlined a new peacetime role for the military. BBC World Service reported that the new military doctrine emphasized “respect for human rights, the rule of law and subordination to the civilian authorities.” At that time, the head of the United Nations Mission in Guatemala, Jean Arnault, said the document was an important step towards military compliance with the peace accords. Later, however, the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala ascertained that this proposed "doctrinal manual of the Guatemalan armed forces" did not fulfill the requirement on the formulation of a new doctrine. The Portillo Government later assumed control of the document, and considered it to be only a working draft.

As Ruhl (2005) points out, the new doctrinal manual emphasized the armed forces’ constitutional subordination to democratically elected civilian authorities. The manual also clearly terminated the military’s support of the National Security Doctrine of the counterinsurgency era. Instead, it emphasized the army’s commitment to supporting
human rights and reconciliation. Admittedly, the short document was more of a skeletal outline than a fully elaborated military doctrine, and no civil society representatives or civilian politicians had been involved in its development. Nonetheless, the manual represented some institutional rethinking of basic military attitudes in Guatemala (Ruhl 2005).

On the one hand, authors such as Ruhl (2005) and Arévalo (2006) give the Guatemalan army credit for compliance with the requirement to implement a new military doctrine, albeit constrained by still-to-be-made changes to the constitution. On the other hand, some critics claim that the vagueness and ambiguities of the new doctrine prevent the definition of principles, concepts and basic guideline for the organization, training and use of the Guatemalan armed forces. This has caused difficulty for the military to clearly define its new role and to be employed in accordance with the country’s political and social reality as well as with the provisions of the Peace Agreements. MINUGUA, in 2002, went as far as to say that there hadn’t been any progress within the commitments to adopt a new defense policy and a military doctrine, which in turn prevented compliance with other commitments such as a redrafting of the Act Establishing the Army. These delays also held up the clear definition of the role of the Army in a democratic society, with the resulting continuation of inappropriate functions such as the activities of the civil affairs units and support for public security forces (MINUGUA 2002).

In short, the Guatemalan Army did publish a new doctrine, as required by this element of the civil-military accord. Critics can point to both strengths and weaknesses of the document. Nevertheless, until there is Guatemalan Constitutional reform, several
of the causes for criticism will remain unresolved. Further discussion needs to take place within Guatemalan civil society and its civilian authorities in order to clarify military strategy, and construct policy which will in turn clarify and improve the military doctrine.

2. Reduction in the armed forces presence to reflect a role limited to external defense

As Jonas (2000) and other civil-military traditionalist authors point out, much of the past criticism of the Guatemalan Army centers around the military domination of internal security measures which in turn promoted unorthodox tactical procedures and violations of basic freedoms and human rights. This measure of the civil-military accord would limit the role of the military to the traditionalist function of protecting Guatemala from foreign aggression. At the same time, internal security and police functions would be delegated to the new National Civil Police.

Implementation of this measure would require Constitutional changes which would have redefined the military's sphere of authority, removing it entirely from internal security functions, and restricting it to the task of defending national borders from outside invasion. This provision meant to reduce military presence in areas that had suffered greatly from Army-sponsored human rights violations during the war. However, during the early years after signing the Accords, while some redeployment and reduction of rural forces occurred, new units were also deployed throughout the country to perform operations beyond military functions, such as fighting crime. From 1996 to 1998, the number of military units actually increased in Guatemala's interior, particularly in Guatemala's Petén Department, signifying an increased Army involvement in public security and other clearly civilian spheres. Of particular concern was a continued
military presence in the Ixil triangle, an area of serious human rights violations during the civil war, where the armed forces maintained the same geographical deployment as during the conflict (Jonas 2000; MINUGUA 2002).

An additional constitutional reform would address exceptional security situations. When the ordinary means for maintaining public order have been exhausted, the president would be empowered, by exception, to call upon the army for temporary service, under civilian authority, without any limitation on citizens' constitutional rights—hence not involving the traditionally common “state of siege” (or “emergency”) in which such rights were suspended. The president would be accountable to Congress for all such exceptional situations, and Congress would be empowered to end them (Jonas 2000). These constitutional reforms were not implemented. Furthermore, a June 2000 decree formalized the military’s participation in internal security, contrary to the stipulations of the peace accords (Salvesen 2002).

3. The reduction of military troops by one-third by 1997 and military budgets by one-third by 1999

The civil-military accord directed a one-third reduction of the Guatemalan Army in two areas: personnel and budget. The accord required the Guatemalan military to reduce its personnel by one-third during 1997, and to cut its budget by one third as a percentage of GDP by 1999. Both of these measures were complied with, although not without receiving some criticism.

The Army complied with the accord-mandated one-third reduction in authorized strength and met the quantitative target by December 1997 (MINDEF 1999; Salvesen 2002). Although the army kept virtually all of its officers and specialists, it trimmed its
overall size by 33 percent, as agreed, and reduced its force structure by 15,477 positions from an official count of 46,900 troops in 1996 to 31,423 the following year (MINUGUA 2002). Some critics complained that although the army reduction by one-third was accomplished, since the reductions were made almost entirely among foot soldiers, the officer corps was left fairly intact. This resulted in a disproportionate number of officers on active duty and an imbalance in the hierarchical structure of the army (Arévalo 2006). Some units, such as the Presidential General Staff (Estado Mayor Presidencial) (EMP) and Military Intelligence that were due to be reorganized or deactivated, actually increased their power (Jonas 2000).

The Guatemalan minister of defense publication, Plan de Modernizacion 2005 (2005 Modernization Plan), explains that this force reduction was the result of unit deactivations and personnel discharges. The unit deactivations included four military zones, the Mobile Military Police, twenty-two infantry battalions, and one company of the National Palace Guard (MINDEF 2000). The United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Guatemala) (MINUGUA) verified the 33 percent force reduction and the unit deactivations on 23 September 1998 and found the Guatemalan military to be in compliance with the Peace Accords (MINDEF1999).

The Army reduction may appear to conflict with the previous section addressing increased post-war military presence conducting internal security missions; but this seeming conflict can be explained by the fact that the number of Army personnel was indeed quickly reduced, though the process of reducing the number of units was much slower. Force reduction figures show that prior to the peace accords there were 104
detachments and three years later there were still 95, albeit consisting of fewer personnel than before. The Army downsizing redesigned the operational structure of 19 military zones and three strategic brigades via the elimination of several military zones and the absorption of others' areas of operations. Three air bases and two navy port bases continued to operate as before (BNG 2000).

The second component of the civil-military accord's military reduction required the military to cut its budget by one third as a percentage of GDP by 1999. This was accomplished under President Arzú, where the military's budget shrank nearly on schedule, from 0.99 percent of GDP in 1995 to 0.68 percent of GDP in 1999 (MINUGUA 2002). The elected chief executive and Congress now controlled the overall level of defense spending and could balance the armed forces' needs against other national priorities. The effects of declining military financial resources could be seen in low army salaries and in decreased funding for training, maintenance, and new equipment (Ruhl 2005; Arévalo 2006).

The military experienced a gradual reduction in its budget under Arzú. Later, under President Portillo, the military budget increased to conflict levels. It was subsequently cut to half the Peace Accord target levels under the Berger Presidency (2004-2008) (Arévalo 2006).

During his candidacy, President Portillo had promised to increase the military's role in fighting crime and drug-trafficking. The Portillo administration regularly transferred funds from civilian agencies to enable the armed forces to perform their expanded missions. This augmentation to the military budget caused it to exceed the agreed upon 0.66 percent of GDP limit on defense spending in 2000 (0.83 percent), 2001
(0.96 percent), and thereafter (MINUGUA 2002). While the National Civilian Police (PNC) and government social agencies were starved for cash, combined military spending ballooned to over US$198 million by 2001, a level not seen since the war. The expansion of the military's budget and missions sparked increased external criticism from international human rights groups and MINUGUA (Ruhl 2005; Arévalo 2006). The military was often reluctant to disclose the exact amount of its funding, and the transparency of its declared budget was murky at best. The Guatemalan Congress and the president shared some authority to determine the size of the armed forces' budget, but Article 30 of the constitution allowed the military to keep the details of its finances secret as a matter of national security. The composition of the congressional Defense Commission changed every year, and few of its members were knowledgeable about defense issues. In 2001, Defense Commission chair Nineth Montenegro questioned military representatives closely about the defense expenditures, but she gained little new information. In a November 2002 appearance before Congress, for example, National Defense Minister General Macloni frequently cited Article 30 as grounds for his refusal to answer questions about the military budget, (Ruhl 2005; Arévalo 2006).

4. Disbanding the Presidential General Staff

The accord required the elimination of the Presidential General Staff (Estado Mayor Presidencial) (EMP). The purpose of this military organization was to serve as a presidential military guard with the mission of protecting the President. Critics considered compliance with this peace accord recommendation essential because of the EMP's direct involvement in past human rights violations and obstruction of justice. In addition to providing presidential security, the EMP had performed such functions as,
intelligence gathering, planning and carrying out selective assassinations, and other illicit operations. The EMP was to be replaced with a civilian-controlled unit that would provide security for the President and Vice President, and a transparent civilian law enforcement unit to track organized crime. These new entities were to have limited, clearly defined functions, and were to be subject to adequate oversight mechanisms to ensure that illicit activities not be allowed to occur (Schirmer 1998; MINUGUA 2002; Jonas 2000; Ruhl 2005).

Much to the disappointment of critics, President Arzú decided not to immediately disband the EMP. Arzú argued that the EMP was necessary due to the increased crime and violence during the post-war years. Rather than deactivating the EMP, Arzú increased its responsibilities by assigning it a new mission, that of combating kidnapping. This “anti-kidnapping command” was left to its own methods, without regard for violations of due process and other legal restrictions and without being subordinated to any civilian control. Also during Arzú’s presidency, the EMP was accused of being implicated in a high-profile political assassination and cover-up. It is important to note that it wasn’t the military, but rather President Arzú, who was responsible for not disbanding the EMP and complying with the accord (Jonas 2000; Ruhl 2005; Arévalo 2006).

Arzú’s successor, President Alfonso Portillo, despite campaign promises to disband it, relied heavily on the EMP. He did, however, initiate the partial dismantling of the EMP in 2000 and accomplished its final elimination on 31 October 2003 (Government Accord 711-2003, signed 12 November 2003). At the very end of his term, Portillo created the civilian presidential Secretariat of Administrative Affairs and Security
SAAS) to replace the EMP. Although the organization was new, however, many former EMP personnel were allowed to transfer into the SAAS, which drew much criticism from the press and other watchdog groups (Ruhl 2005; Arévalo 2006).

5. Provisions to dissolve the Roving Military Police

The Roving Military Police (also called The Mobile or Ambulatory Military Police) (*Policía Militar Ambulante*) (PMA) was a military police force created in 1965, during the early years of the civil war. It was established as part of the Guatemalan military’s counterinsurgency campaign, to keep order in poor communities and fight crime inside the military ranks. To ensure public security, the PMA took control of normal police functions and operated in both major cities and rural areas. It eventually came under the supervision of the D-2 Military Intelligence office, and was involved in military prisoner interrogation and accused of perpetrating disappearances, engaging in torture, and committing other forms of civil rights and human rights violations. The PMA also supported counterinsurgency plans by providing control and surveillance of the civilian population (Recovery of Historical Memory Project 1999). In 1982, the Guatemalan military took control of the National Police, the country’s civilian police organization, citing incompetence and corruption within the police ranks (Schirmer 1998).

The Accords directed that the demobilization of the PMA be completed one year after their signing. Despite the reputation of its dubious past, the disbanding of the PMA was consciously delayed by the Ministry of Defense and this delay was approved by the Guatemalan government. Keeping the PMA intact was justified by the military as being needed to help fight Guatemala’s post-war increase in domestic crime and violence (Jonas
2000). Critics were quick to complain that the military was stalling and not moving fast enough. Nevertheless, the military did at least begin plans for a phased elimination of the PMA in 1996. When contingents from the 2,420-strong force received notice of the deactivation in late January 1997, there was an uprising in protest, but the military high command ultimately enforced the dissolution. Jonas (2000) points this out as an indicator of military opposition to implementation of the reforms. Nevertheless, the army finally dissolved the PMA on 27 February 1998, making it one of the first army units to be disbanded under the accord.

6. Official deactivation and elimination of the Civil Defense Patrols (PACs)

This measure called for the elimination of the Civil Defense Patrols (*Patrullas de Auto-defensa Civil*) (PACs). Some Peace Accord literature also refers to the PACs as Civil Defense Voluntary Committees, or Voluntary Civil Defense Committees (CVDC) (*Comites Voluntarios de Defensa Civil*) (Arévalo 2006).

The language calling for abrogation of the decree creating the PACs stated that demobilization and disarmament of the PACs was to have been completed 30 days after the abrogation. Compliance was effective the same day that the Peace Agreement was signed, 29 December 1996, authorized by Guatemalan Government decree (Decreto) 143-96. The PACs, including previously demobilized members, ceased all relations with the Guatemalan Army and were prohibited from being reorganized to reestablish that relation (Jonas 2000).

Decree 143-96 ordered the military demobilization of the remaining 271,000 members of what once were more than 1 million-strong civil patrols, which had been implicated in countless human rights violations (MINUGUA 2002). Some of these
paramilitary units continued to exist under other names and maintained contacts with local army commanders; but the once-tight network of military domination over rural Guatemala was loosened considerably (MINUGUA 2002; Ruhl 2005).

By the early 1990s, the Guatemalan military had already begun disbanding the PACs, and military support for them was already on the decline before the signing of the final Peace Accord. The Guatemalan military actually reported that it had totally deactivated and disarmed all of the Civil Defense Patrols by 22 October 1997 (MINDEF 2000). Elimination of the Civil Defense Patrols was seen by many as a major event in the implementation of the Peace Accords, because it marked a huge step in the demilitarization of the Guatemalan countryside. As such, disbanding the Civil Defense Patrols marked a significant advance toward a future lasting peace in Guatemala. MINUGUA later verified and certified the Peace Accord-mandated deactivation of all Civil Defense Patrols (MINDEF 2000).

7. Establishment of a civilian minister of defense

The Peace Accord mandates the amendment of the Guatemalan Constitution Article 246, Duties and Powers of the President Over the Armed Forces, so as to allow the appointment of the Minister of Defense, whether he is a civilian or a member of the military. One major factor that has traditionally served to maintain military dominance within the Guatemalan government was the military status of the minister of defense. Guatemala’s 1985 Constitution states that the minister of defense must be an active member of the military with a rank of colonel or above. Therefore, the president, as commander-in-chief, was the only civilian with military responsibilities and authority. Except for the president, the entire Guatemalan military chain of command and
corresponding staffs have consisted of active duty military officers. Even the president’s personal staff, the EMP, was made up of active duty military officers. With only the president to deal with and the entire military structure at his disposal, the active duty officer who served as the minister of defense possessed a great deal of unchecked power. This lack of additional civilian control and oversight made it easy for the Guatemalan military to maintain its autonomy. Even under civilian rule, Guatemala had been less than democratic at times, since the military maintained control over many government functions and since some civilian administrations could not assert their democratic authority over the military (Schirmer 1998).

This Peace Accord directive removes the requirement for the minister of defense to be a military officer, opens the way for a civilian minister of defense staff, and increases civilian government oversight of the military. This constitutional amendment would strengthen civilian control of the military and emphasize the Guatemalan military’s subordination to a civilian democratic authority. In January 1999, the Guatemalan Congress under President Portillo submitted proposed reforms to military legislation to permit a civilian to be assimilated into the Army and then named minister of defense.

8. Creation of a new national intelligence agency

The accords called for the creation of two new civilian intelligence agencies. The first was to be the Department of Civilian Intelligence and Information Analysis (DICAI) in the Ministry of the Interior, to collect information relevant to internal security. The second agency was to be the Strategic Analysis Secretariat (SAE) to analyze intelligence received from both DICAI and the army intelligence organization (D-2) in order to
prepare recommendations for the president. In 2008, Decree 18-2008, the National Security System Law (el decreto 18-2008, *Ley del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad*) established the Strategic Analysis Secretariat (*Secretaría de Análisis Estratégico*) (SAE). Military intelligence was to concentrate on collecting information necessary to Guatemala’s external defense. In addition, a new congressional committee on intelligence was to monitor all three of these organizations. Although Arzú ultimately oversaw creation of the SAE, he weakened the impact of this reform by initially appointing mostly military personnel to its staff (Ruhl 2005).

The DICAÍ was never fully established under Arzú, leaving the army’s D-2 to continue gathering information on internal security matters. Military intelligence agents also, in some cases, still “carried out parallel investigations without having any authority to do so, diverting official police investigations and obstructing judicial work (MINUGUA 2002; Ruhl 2005).

President Portillo finally created the DICAÍ, a new national intelligence agency, under civilian control, responsible for information management for internal security purposes, and the D-2 was directed to only collect information and intelligence having direct military purposes. Furthermore, military intelligence was to be made available for dissemination to the new civilian intelligence agency.

9. **Restructuring and reorganizing the former national police institution**

The Peace Accords called for the establishment of a new National Civil Police force (*Policia Nacional Civil*) (PNC) of 20,000 persons by 1999. The PNC would have sole responsibility for internal security in Guatemala. The PNC was created in January 1997 and is overseen by the Minister of Government (some sources say under the
authority of the Interior Ministry). The PNC is currently deployed throughout all 22
departments in Guatemala, and covers 307 of its 311 municipalities. In 2000, the PNC
consisted of 16,205 members, of whom 6,273 (39%) were new recruits and 9,932 (61%)
came from the former security forces. Women (1,692) comprised ten percent of the
force. More than, 1,000 police officers were speakers of indigenous languages, yet they
were often assigned to locations not corresponding with their language skills. Although
police units had an increased presence, infrastructure and equipment remained
inadequate, and they were hampered by logistical shortfalls in the areas of fuel, spare
parts, and maintenance (BNG 2000; MINUGUA 2002).

Within the new PNC, police intelligence is carried out through the Criminal
Investigations Service (SIC), the Police Information System (SIP), and the Anti-Narcotics
Analysis and Information Service (SAIA). The SIC does investigative work for criminal
cases and must coordinate its work with the public prosecutors of the Attorney General’s
Office. The SIP is responsible for obtaining, producing, and analyzing data to identify
threats that might affect citizen security, while the SAIA specializes in investigating drug
trafficking activities.

Guatemala's 1999 Constitutional Referendum:

On May 16, 1999, in a national referendum, Guatemala's voters rejected the
package of constitutional reforms that was to cement key elements of the 1996 peace
accords and allow for their full implementation. Key measures included reforms
affecting military restructuring - notably limiting its role to external affairs, the rights of
the country's indigenous people- granting constitutional status to Mayan languages and
traditional forms of justice, and changes in the justice system. The result of the vote
marked a clear setback to the on-going peace process. A meager 18.5% of registered voters participated and voted "no" by a margin of 55% to 45%. The referendum was comprised of 50 proposed amendments to the constitution, approved by congress a year earlier (Jonas 2000).

Several factors help explain the victory for the "No" decision on the referendum. From an initial number of 13 amendments, the amount of proposed changes expanded to 51. This resulted in complexity and lack of understanding of the issues being voted on, particularly in rural areas where most Mayans reside. Guatemalan society continues to be plagued by strong conservatism and racism and even fear by some ladinos of an indigenous rebellion. Major political parties that supported the reforms, including the governing PAN Party (1999), failed to mobilize their base, while opponents excelled at turning out their supporters. The referendum result also reconfirms that powerful opponents to the peace process continue to operate within Guatemala, as demonstrated by the intimidation tactics used by right-wing groups opposed to the reforms, and distortion by opponents regarding the implications of the reforms. The vote demonstrates the weakness and limited national influence of those most supportive of the reforms, in particular, the political left, human rights groups, and Mayan activists (Jonas 2000).

Full implementation of the peace accords was hindered in two main ways by the rejection of the constitutional reforms. First, without reforms to the 1985 constitution, some of the changes proposed under the peace agreement will not take effect, while laws which have been passed could be challenged for unconstitutionality. Constitutional reforms are necessary in order for the peace accords to be fulfilled and legally binding. Second, the rejection may be portrayed as a symbolic vote of no confidence in the peace
process and may further delay the overall process of implementation. Currently, the entire peace process has stagnated and is in dire need of renewed momentum and revitalized political support if further democratization and reconciliation is to be realized (Jonas 2000).

Among the measures included in the defeated 1999 referendums was a constitutional amendment to permit the appointment of a civilian Minister of Defense. Despite several proposed solutions, to include appointing a presidential direct-commissioned civilian to hold the military rank required by the Minister of Defense position, none have been agreed or acted upon. Unfortunately, this and the other aforementioned military reforms will remain in limbo until Constitutional amendments are passed which will provide the legal foundation for their implementation.

Summary

Today, almost 20 years after the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords in Guatemala, the fact that some military reforms have not been fully complied with is disappointing. The defeat by Guatemalan voters of the 1999 referendums, which would have enacted constitutional amendments to provide the legal basis for peace accord compliance, represented a major setback to the reform process. If military reforms are to be completely implemented, the Guatemalan people and their civilian leadership (ie: the Guatemalan Congress) need to reinitiate efforts for constitutional and legislative change. Since the end of the war, Guatemala has been plagued by a high level of crime, much committed by organized gangs, several of which are believed to be composed of former guerrilla members. These gangs specialize in drug trafficking, kidnapping, extortion, bank robbery and car theft. Other criminal organizations are allegedly led by former
Guatemalan military officers. In 1996, Retired General Francisco Ortega Menaldo, Colonel Jacobo Esdras Salán Sánchez, and Major Napoleón Rojas, were all relieved of duty from the army by President Arzú because of their alleged involvement in criminal activities of the Moreno organized crime gang. In 2002, because of these former army officers’ suspected links to narcotics trafficking, their U.S. Visas were revoked (Ruhl 2005).

At the end of 1999, the Congress of the Republic adopted Decree No. 40-2000, the Support of the Civil Security Forces Act, as a response to increased criminal activity and violence throughout the country. The Act’s measures allow the military to continue to operate in support of the National Police (on a temporary basis) to promote internal security. The Act contradicts the Accords’ stipulation for the demilitarization of public security missions and the mandate that the armed forces’ mission focus exclusively on external threats. Of particular concern is that failure to provide military personnel with specialized training in public security tasks poses a potential risk to the full protection of human rights (BNG 2000; MINUGUA 2002).

National public security and safety must be established through government support to strengthen the capacity of the National Civil Police in all of its aspects and to establish quickly the comprehensive public security policy that does not require the support of the Army. The PNC must be provided with the resources needed to be effective in preserving public security. At the same time, it is essential to continue the professionalization and training of its personnel and to ensure their strict adherence to police practices that are consistent with respect for human rights.

Conclusion
The conclusion of this chapter coincides with that of Mark Ruhl (2005), and others, who argue that the Guatemalan army did become politically subordinate to civilian authority during the Peace Accord implementation years, although it did retain significant institutional autonomy and power. Furthermore, the principal cause of the failure to achieve a greater reduction in the armed forces’ role, or to complete the process of democratizing Guatemalan civil-military relations, was insufficient civilian commitment to reform, and not military opposition to change (Ruhl 2005).

During the early post-Peace Accord years, the Guatemalan Army did not openly oppose the directives which had ordered civil-military reforms. Military response was not one of full compliance, however. In most areas, the military remained neutral and willing to fulfill its responsibilities in a prompt manner (reducing its forces and budget by 33%, disbanding the PMA and the PACs). In some areas the military took more time to comply with requirements than that desired by critics. Only in a few areas could the argument be made that the military grudgingly complied or attempted to passively resist compliance.

Finally, despite several Guatemalan Presidents’ promising military reforms and military willingness to comply and cooperate, some important military reforms were not enacted or were only partially completed. As Ruhl (2005) and other authors point out, it would not be correct to blame the Guatemalan military for poor civil-military relations during the post-Peace Accord years. On the contrary, the Guatemalan Army conducted itself in a manner subordinate to, and respectful of, its democratically-elected leaders. As such, we can conclude that civil-military relations were good, and the non-compliance
and partial compliance with some of the reforms were due to a lack of will and support by the Guatemalan Presidents and the Guatemalan people.

Soon after the signing of the 1996 Accords, the United States lifted military sanctions and authorized Guatemalan military aid to attend expanded military courses, covering revised doctrinal subjects such as civil-military relations, military justice, defense resource management, and democracy. Since then, the Guatemalan Army has had a fairly continuous access to most military courses offered by the United States, but importantly, those courses specifically related to human rights, democracy and civil-military relations. Stipulations in the Peace Accords outline the integration of the military into national plans for security and development (Schirmer 1998; Sieder 1998; BNG 2000).

By 2001, the Guatemalan Office of the Minister of Defense listed among its institutional goals: 1.) the (continued) modernization of the Guatemalan Armed Forces, including its doctrine, as well as its academic and technical preparation; 2.) providing support to other governmental institutions, as directed by the President; and 3.) supporting special missions related to protecting the environment and rebuilding the country (MDNGT 2001). These goals are in line with the relatively recent trend of military institutions in Latin America to leave behind past political dominance and/or involvement, and instead to adopt functions directed by democratic governments and designed to assist in the development and formation of their states. The current trend toward reduced combat missions in Latin America signifies possible future roles for militaries in the region that encompass new professional missions and redefined civil-military relations (Rohter 1999).
Throughout the Peace Accord implementation period, the Guatemalan military actively sought a new purpose and mission for itself. As Jonas (2000) points out, at the same time that the Guatemalan government was trying to limit the military to the traditional role of national defense, the United States was actively encouraging the Guatemalan Army to increase involvement in counternarcotics and peace-keeping operations. Members of the Guatemalan Army officer corps continued to identify new "security threats" and seek out new missions. Tasks of guarding the border were stretched to require opening up a series of new military installations in border areas, supposedly charged with preventing drug trafficking across borders and piracy from archeological sites. In short, the military continued to assert its prerogative in carrying out tasks that were not within its competence as defined in the peace accords and occupying spaces that civil-military traditionalists would argue should have come under the mandate of civilian institutions. Lastly, yet another one of these new roles for the military is disaster management.

The following chapter addresses Guatemalan military involvement in disaster management during the post-war study period of 1997-2002. In this next chapter, data collected during field research in Guatemala in 2003 are presented, specifically, phenomena regarding military disaster management training, organization, and disaster response. These findings capture relevant historical events in Guatemala during the study period, and are analyzed to show the nature of civil-military relations during these years by examining how the military cooperated with other agencies it supported and how it complied (or failed to comply), with directives that were mandated by the Guatemalan government.
Chapter 6
Disaster Management and Civil-Military Relations in Post-Conflict Guatemala

This chapter depicts the nature of Guatemalan military involvement in the nontraditional military role of disaster management during the early post-war years (1997-2002) and simultaneously assesses the quality of civil-military relations. As previously mentioned, during the Peace Accords implementation years, the Guatemalan military began seeking out new roles and purpose for itself. Since after the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996, many sources reported that the Guatemalan Army had formally adopted the mission of disaster management as one of its “new peacetime roles,” the question then arises as to just how involved the military actually was in performing this task. In order to accurately assess and answer this broad research question, I selected three variables as indicators: 1) military organization and structure, 2) military disaster management training, and 3) military response to disasters. These indicators serve to explain and describe military involvement in disaster management, and suggest a new understanding of civil-military relations in Guatemala in the post-Peace Accords environment.

In the previous chapter, the Peace Accords’ political parameters regarding military reform were discussed. The discussion summarized nine pertinent excerpts from the Accords that affected the military institution and required the reduction of military personnel and units, along with the establishment of a new military peacetime doctrine.
The degree of compliance with the directives of the Peace Accords was used to determine the nature of civil-military relations and military subordination to civil authorities.

Here, I attempt to make a similar determination by analyzing how the military obeyed, or worked together with, civilian institutions and agencies that are directly responsible for disaster management. As such, the first two indicator variables, which look at military organization and education, focus on showing the degree that the military was involved in disaster management preparation. The third indicator variable, which examines how the military was involved in disaster response, will be used both to demonstrate military involvement in disaster management and to analyze the nature of civil military relations. If the Guatemalan military cooperated with and maintained its subordination to civilian leaders and agencies during disaster response missions while at the same time adhering to Guatemalan civil law and constitutional mandates, this would be an indicator of sound civil-military relations within a democratic framework. If in fact this occurred, it would signify a positive step forward for civil-military relations in Guatemala, and perhaps indicate a change from the notorious past reputation of a Guatemalan military that operated in disregard to civil authority.

**Post 1996 Military Reorganization and Restructuring of the Guatemalan Military**

As demonstrated previously, the military complied with the Peace Accord directive to reduce its personnel by 33 percent before the end of 1997. As part of this process, the Guatemalan Military underwent a restructuring and reorganization which involved the deactivation (elimination) of entire military units and the closing of several military bases. The unit deactivations included four military zones, the Mobile Military Police, twenty-two infantry battalions, and one company of the National Palace Guard.
(MINDEF 2000). The United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Guatemala (MINUGUA)) verified the unit deactivations on 23 September 1998 and found the Guatemalan military in compliance with the force reduction provisions of the Peace Accords (MINUGUA 2002). Part of the army downsizing included the reorganization of the operational structure of the 19 military zones throughout the country’s interior. Three strategic brigades were redistributed along with the elimination of several military zones and the absorption of their area of operations into other military zones. The air force continued to operate its three air bases; and the navy maintained its two port bases.

In order to better support its new peacetime role, the Guatemalan military then changed its military zone system into a system of military “regions” in order to redistribute the presence of military forces throughout Guatemala. The former military zone system had supported the counterinsurgency effort by ensuring a military presence throughout the country, especially in areas with large guerrilla concentrations. First, the Guatemalan military deactivated four military zones that had provided for a greater military presence in traditional insurgent stronghold areas (Military Zones 4, 8, 9, and 14). The following military zone deactivation (base closure) dates were provided to me directly from the Guatemalan Ministry of Defense: 30 April 1997 - Military Zone 4 in Salamá, Baja Verapaz; 30 September 1997 - Military Zone 8 in Chiquimula; and 30 November 1997 - Military Zone 9 in Jalapa and Military Zone 14 in Sololá. The elimination of all four of these military zones represented a significant reduction of infantry (combat) personnel from these rural areas of Guatemala.
Next, the Guatemalan military implemented a new regional system for its command structure. Established in the December 1999 version of the Guatemalan Army Doctrine (*Doctrina del Ejército de Guatemala*), regions replaced military zones as the major operational commands. The regions equate in military terms to theaters of operation, and are designed to support the external defense of Guatemala’s territorial integrity (MINDEF 1999). Legal authorization and approval for the new structure by civilian authorities was not finalized until November 20, 2001, with the signing of Government Accord (*Acuerdo Gubernativo*) No. 456-2001 Guatemalan National Defense Policy (*Formulación de la Política de Defensa Nacional de la República de Guatemala*).

The Guatemalan National Defense Policy (*Libro de la Defensa Nacional de la República de Guatemala*) was later finalized in 2003. Section 3.3 of this document addresses military force allocation (*El Dispositivo de las Fuerzas*). It states that the national territory will be divided into seven military regions, with the goal of maximizing efficient use of budgets and human resources. There will also be three air regions and two naval regions. The purpose of these regions is to establish a national defense in all directions, in depth, in order to achieve mutual support, security, maximization of supporting fires and unity of command (MINDEF 2003).

In essence, the land forces are divided into a total of eight regions when counting the seven military regions and the central (command) region. The seven regions are directionally named based on compass direction from the central (command) region (North, Central Northwest, Northwest, West, Southwest, Southeast, and East). Table 7 lists the land forces’ seven military regions along with their corresponding Guatemalan Department and, where applicable, vestigial units held over from the former wartime
army structure. Figure 3 shows a map of Guatemala with shaded areas representing
Guatemalan Ground Forces (Military Regions). The air forces are divided into three
regions (North, La Aurora (Central), and South), and the naval forces have one region for
each coast (Pacific and Atlantic) (MINDEF 2000, 2003). Unlike military zones where
some military commands were landlocked, all regional commands have responsibility for
some part of the country’s international border, major waterways, or airspace.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Zone</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Military Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 1</td>
<td>General Headquarters, Guatemala City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 10</td>
<td>Jutiapa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 11</td>
<td>Cuilapa, Santa Rosa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 12</td>
<td>Escuintla / Santa Lucia Cotzumalguapa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 13</td>
<td>Mazatenango, Suchitepéquez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 1316</td>
<td>Cuyotenango, Suchitepéquez (formerly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retalhuleu)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 14</td>
<td>Sololá</td>
<td>Deactivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 1715</td>
<td>Quetzaltenango / Totonicapán</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 18</td>
<td>San Marcos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 19</td>
<td>Huehuetenango</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 20</td>
<td>Santa Cruz del Quiché</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 21</td>
<td>Cobán, Alta Verapaz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 22</td>
<td>Playa Grande / Ixcán, El Quiché</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 23</td>
<td>Santa Elena Petén</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 302</td>
<td>Chimaltenango / Sacatepéquez</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 4</td>
<td>Salamá/ Baja Verapaz</td>
<td>Deactivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 6</td>
<td>Puerto Barrios</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 705</td>
<td>Zacapa / El Progreso</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 8</td>
<td>Chiquimula</td>
<td>Deactivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zona Militar 9</td>
<td>Jalapa</td>
<td>Deactivated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s 2003 Field Research
The new regional command system also allows the military to forward deploy forces throughout the country in order to readily support new peacetime functions, particularly humanitarian relief efforts after a natural disaster (MINDEF 1999, 2000). Such forward presence allowed the Guatemalan military to quickly provide critical humanitarian relief assistance to the public before, during, and immediately after Hurricane Mitch hit the country in late 1998. Most countries in Latin America use a similar zone or regional command structure to support counternarcotics, humanitarian assistance, environmental law enforcement, and border control efforts throughout the territory.

Under the new reorganization, some bases of the military zones that were not deactivated remained under the control of the military and continued to exist as subcommands under the new regional commands (MINDEF 2000, 2003). However, these military zones lost responsibility for territorial administration and were instead charged with responding to regional external defense and peacetime support requirements. Regional commands provide for the countrywide disposition of the military in support of its new peacetime roles. The new regional command structure of the Guatemalan military fulfills the reorganization directive of the Peace Accords to establish military doctrine with a focus on defense from external aggression.

Military support for the Civil Defense Patrols (*Patrullas de Auto-defensa Civil*) (PAC) was already on the decline before the signing of the final Peace Accord. As noted previously, the Guatemalan military totally deactivated and disarmed all of the PACs by 22 October 1997 (MINDEF 2000). The disbanding of the Civil Defense Patrols was a major milestone of the Peace Accords and of military reorganization, because it marked a
significant advance toward the demilitarization of Guatemala, in particular by reducing military presence in rural areas. It should be noted that the PACs were all armed combatants (riflemen) and their elimination removed thousands of foot soldiers from the Guatemalan Army’s military assets.

Figure 3. Guatemalan Ground Forces (Military Regions)

Source: Adapted from Libro de la Defensa Nacional de la República de Guatemala, 2003

The Guatemalan military no longer directs the National Police and its law enforcement activities. In accordance with the Peace Accords, the Guatemalan military
completed demobilization of the Mobile Military Police (*Policia Militar Ambulante*) (PMA) on 27 February 1998. MINUGUA later confirmed the PMA demobilization (MINDEF 2000; MINUGUA 2002). With the elimination of the PMA, the Guatemalan military relinquished its formal involvement in police activities.

As required by the Peace Accords, the Guatemalan government recreated its police force as the National Civil Police (*Policia Nacional Civil*) (PNC) under the minister of the interior. Active duty military officers no longer work jointly with the police and the minister of defense has no direct influence over the new PNC. In agreement with the Peace Accords, the Guatemalan military’s Doctrine (*Doctrina del Ejército de Guatemala*) addresses police functions only as a support function in extreme circumstances, under control of a civilian authority, at the direction of the president, and with the consent of the congress (MINDEF 1999).

Both Presidents Arzú and Portillo decided to retain the Presidential General Staff (EMP) as the security service for the president. Consequently, they delayed the deactivation and elimination of the EMP. Portillo did, however, initiate the partial dismantling of the EMP in 2000 and accomplished its final elimination on 31 October 2003 (Government Accord 711-2003, signed 12 November 2003). Even though the elimination of the EMP occurred after the selected timeframe of this study (1997-2002), it warrants mention because the delay in compliance was not due to military resistance or non-cooperation, but rather due to the reluctance of the two civilian commanders-in-chief, Presidents Arzú and Portillo, to implement this policy.

Much of the Guatemalan military wartime organizational structure was specific to counterinsurgency operations and only applicable during the internal conflict. Therefore,
with the end of the civil war, the Guatemalan military began to change its organizational
structure in order to support its new external defense and peacetime functions. Also, the
Peace Accords mandated many of these organizational changes in order to remove those
aspects of the military organization meant to control the civilian population.

Since 1996, the Guatemalan military reduced its force structure by 33 percent,
reorganized into a regional command structure to better support peacetime roles,
disbanded the Civil Defense Patrols, demobilized the Mobile Military Police, and
relinquished control over national police forces. Entire Infantry (combat) Battalions were
eliminated (not relocated) from the following Military Zones: 302-Chimaltenango, 705-
Zacapa, 1316-Suchitepéquez, 1715-Quetzaltenango, 18-San Marcos, 19-Huehuetenango,
20-Quiché, 21-Cobán, Alta Verapaz, and 22-Playa Grande.

Although delayed, the Guatemalan military also abolished its Presidential General
Staff (EMP). The new defensive posture of the Guatemalan Military represents a reactive
structure that is prepared for the external defense of the country while at the same time
ready to support other government agencies as contingencies arise. In summary, during
the early years after the finalization of the 1996 Peace Accords, the Guatemalan military
reorganized and restructured itself to eliminate its wartime posture and replace it with a
new structure designed to better support its new peacetime role and missions, with
disaster management being one of those new roles.

On November 12, 1997, the Presidents of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and
Nicaragua, acting in their capacity as Commanders-in-Chief of their respective Central
American Armed Forces, created the Conference of Armed Forces for Central America
(Conferencia de Fuerzas Armadas Centroamericanas) (CFAC). CFAC was formed to
contribute to security, development, and military integration of the region; to stimulate a
permanent and systematic effort for cooperation, coordination, and mutual support among
the national armed forces; to perform academic studies of common interest; and to
provide an optimal defense against threats to democracy, peace, and freedom. It operates
under the Central American Integration System (SICA), which is a regional unification
organization designed to improve and strengthen communication and coordination among
Central American countries (CFAC 2013).

Within its mission statement and objectives, CFAC stresses the importance of
regional safety and stability. CFAC exists to promote the coordination of regional
military activities with leaders from civil society, because the Central American Armed
forces exist as an integral part of society to promote peace, democracy and sustainable
development in Central America (CFAC 2013).

During the years that followed, as the Central American armies reorganized and
published new peacetime doctrines, military leaders realized the need to task organize
and develop military structures that were designed for rapid response and humanitarian
assistance capabilities during disaster events. From this need emerged the creation of a
new military organization called the Humanitarian Rescue Unit (Unidad Humanitaria y
de Rescate) (UHR or UHR-CFAC). On 24 May 1999, CFAC issued Act No. 005/99
which officially authorized the creation of the UHR-CFAC. This specifies that the
mission of the UHR is to carry out humanitarian rescue / relief operations in any Central
American country affected by a natural or man-made disaster, with the purpose of saving
and protecting human life and to mitigate the effects of disasters (CFAC 2013).
The CFAC-UHR information pamphlet produced by the Guatemalan Army's Civil Affairs Directorate explains the purpose, capabilities, procedures, and organization of the UHR. The fundamental purpose of the UHR is to be able to satisfy the support requirements of another Central American country which needs external assistance due to a natural or man-made disaster. The UHR is designed to be able to respond to disasters ranging from geological events, extreme weather phenomena, forest fires, volcanic eruptions, hazardous material spills, man-made incidents, and epidemics. The capabilities of the UHR include the ability to deploy by land, sea, or air; be self-sustainable and functional for at least five days; and be able to operate in all types of terrain and weather conditions. The model for the UHR organization consists of: 1) a unit commander, 2) teams of engineers and medical personnel, 3) technical personnel trained in search and rescue, and 3) support units: logistics, military police, communications, etc. The design of the UHR is flexible and can be tailored in accordance with the needs and characteristics of the supported disaster (CFAC 2013).

The UHR-CFAC serves the important function of providing neighboring Central American Countries the means of providing immediate and adequate assistance during emergencies. The integration of the Central American Armed Forces within National Emergency Systems significantly improves the response of the countries in a national or regional emergency because UHR-CFAC has permanent human and material resources, as well as a mechanism to react immediately to emergencies. The creation of UHR-CFAC to support communities within the Central American region when affected by a disaster demonstrates international cooperation and mutual trust that allows stability and
promotes the integration process of Central American countries. On 24 May, 2000, the Guatemalan UHR was formally activated with 146 assigned personnel (CFAC 2013).

On 1 July 2004, the Guatemalan UHR was reorganized as part of a subsequent restructuring and downsizing of the Guatemalan Army. It was assigned to the Guatemalan Military Brigade, General "Justo Rufino Barrios" located in San Juan Sacatepéquez, vicinity of Guatemala City. This designation established billets for eighty-one (81) personnel and complied with legal documents signed in 1999.

**Post 1996 Military Disaster Management Education and Training**

In Guatemala, the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (*la Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducccion de Disastres*) (CONRED) is the Guatemalan civilian government agency that has primary responsibility for coordinating the immediate assistance activities designed to help the civilian population following a disaster. Since 1969, when it was formed under the early abbreviation CONE, CONRED has been responsible for disaster prevention, disaster response, and historical recording of disasters.

The agency has similar functions to those of the United States’ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). CONRED is integrated by representatives from the Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Firefighters, and the National government. CONRED employs a diverse staff of administrators, engineers, technicians, and other specialists within the field of disaster management. It has its own organic equipment, transportation, and disaster relief supplies, although compared to the military, its budget and resources are somewhat limited. The Ministry of Defense has a military liaison officer (LNO) embedded at CONRED. The military LNO is a
contributing participant of CONRED’s Emergency Operations Centers (Centros de Operaciones de Emergencia) (COE), during declared emergencies.

As previously indicated, CONRED was established in 1996 in its current organizational structure under civilian leadership. The Guatemalan Congress approved Law 109-96 (Decreto Ley 109-96), which created the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (CONRED) and which transformed the former military-dominated disaster management agency (CONE) to a civilian-led government executive branch. The new directive placed an emphasis on the prevention of disasters, while continuing its responsibility of disaster response, which had been on-going since the first disaster management agency was established in 1969.

Chapter II of Guatemalan Law 109-96 (CONRED) specifies the organization of CONRED. Article 6 establishes what organizations are integrated into the National Organization for disaster reduction: The National Council (consejo nacional), is made up of a board of directors (junta directiva), and an executive secretary (secretaria ejecutiva), who oversee coordinators at the regional, department, municipal, and local levels. Article Seven identifies the National Council as the lead organism of CONRED, which will be composed of a primary and alternate representative from the following institutions:

- Minister of National Defense
- Minister of Public Health and Social Security
- Minister of Education
- Minister of Public Finance
- Minister of Communication, Transportation and Public Works
- Minister of the Interior
- Coordinator of the National Council and Executive Secretary (director)
- National Firefighters
- Assembly of Presidents of Professional Schools
- Coordinating Committee of Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial, and Financial Associations
Soon after the signing of the Peace Accords, the Guatemalan Military began incorporating disaster management training and professional development into its military training program. Several unpublished Army officer’s studies on file at the Guatemalan Center for Military Studies conclude that up until 1998, most military personnel had little or no training in humanitarian assistance disaster relief operations, and as such, disaster response was conducted in an ad hoc manner. It was noted that military civil affairs units were lacking in essential skills needed to provide adequate support to humanitarian assistance operations. These sources suggested that training of military officers in disaster management would improve communication and response between military and civilian organizations. They recommended increasing the knowledge and skills of military officers by providing courses in disaster management, allowing officers to attend conferences and seminars, as well as participation in disaster simulations.

The Guatemalan military leadership must have been thinking along similar lines as these authors, because formal military disaster management training began around the same time that these studies were completed. Probably realizing that its past involvement in disaster management was one of an ad hoc or spontaneous nature, the Guatemalan military decided to incorporate new related training and curriculum into its professional development programs. New curriculum in disaster management was added to existing military courses. Additionally, coordination was made to allow military personnel to attend disaster management courses conducted by CONRED.

disaster management with CONRED, governors, mayors, and other local leaders. On 29 July 1997, the Guatemalan Ministry of Defense Chief of Staff published Directive DAC “O” 004-97 which established the implementation of disaster management courses, coordinated with and taught by CONRED, for Guatemalan officers and soldiers, with particular emphasis on training those personnel assigned to civil affairs companies. From 24-29 August 1997, Guatemalan military personnel participated in a Central American Armed Forces Humanitarian Operations exercise in Honduras, which focused on disaster assistance during floods (Barrera 1999).

From 5-16 January 1998, CONRED began training Guatemalan Army officers in disaster management and started including “civil protection” courses as part of the curriculum in the Army Civil Affairs Course. In May and June of 1998, the Guatemalan Army Civil Affairs Directorate hosted forest fire prevention seminars with members of CONRED’s Emergency Operations Center (COE) from the Petén Department, with participants from the United States, Guatemalan Firefighters, and the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture. During the Month of June 1998, the Guatemalan Army Civil Affairs Directorate drafted emergency response plans designed to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the effects of disasters caused by flooding, fires, earthquakes, rain and volcanic ash. On 30 June 1998, a multinational forest fire response simulation exercise was held at Campo Marte, Guatemala City, during which military aircraft participated from Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala (Barrera 1999).

The Guatemalan Army Civil Affairs Directorate published Directive DAC “O” 095-98 on 3 July 1998, which required the military commands to provide feedback or status reports regarding the measures they had taken to coordinate with CONRED
representatives in their jurisdictions. On 6 August 1998 The Civil Affairs Directorate held a meeting with civil affairs officers from all of the military commands to familiarize them with the new disaster management courses being taught to military personnel by CONRED. During October 1998, each military command and directorate was sent a copy of Law 109-96, which specifies military cooperation with CONRED for both disaster preparation and disaster response. On 26 October, the Guatemalan Ministry of Defense published Memorandum No. DAC “O” 006-98, which ordered the military commands to conduct disaster preparedness exercises in coordination with CONRED for the purpose of testing civil-military disaster response plans. Conclusions from the lessons learned and after-action reports attribute the success of the Guatemalan Army’s response to Hurricane Mitch (addressed later in this chapter) as directly related to the intensification in prior training and emphasis that the Guatemalan Army placed on disaster management (Barrera 1999).

The Guatemalan Army Officer Advance Course (Curso Avanzado) added 8 hours in civil defense instruction which included topics on 1) inter-institutional cooperation, 2) legal aspects of civil-military cooperation, 3) states of emergency and public law, 4) participation of the armed forces during declared states of emergency, and 5) participation in civil defense. The new instruction was received by 40-60 Guatemalan Army officer students, was conducted 2 times per year, and also incorporated 2-4 hours of disaster administration and damage evaluation and assessment (Evaluación de Daños y Análisis de Necesidades) (EDAN) familiarization. The Guatemalan Army Officer Basic Course (Curso Básico) added 4 hours of civil defense, 1-2 hours taught by CONRED, 30 Guatemalan Army officer students per class, which was also taught on average 2 times
each year. An uncertain number of military personnel were also trained by the
Guatemalan National Forest Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Bosques*) (INAB) to learn
firefighting techniques and procedures to respond to forest fires and assist in their control.
(http://www.inab.gob.gt/)

At least 363 Guatemalan military personnel completed the Civil Defense (*Defensa Civil*)
Course from 1998-2002. Taught by CONRED, the course consists of 50 hours of
instruction. This CONRED course produced certification and students received a
diploma/accreditation. This course explains the potential natural disaster threats that
affect Guatemala, and covers the disaster management cycle of responding to disasters
before, during and after their occurrence (mitigation, preparation, response, and
recovery). It also teaches how to produce a disaster management contingency plan, as
well as basic signaling and communication during evacuation operations. The course is
three days in length. The number of Guatemalan military personnel trained each year is
as follows: 1998: 49, 1999: 150, and 2002: 164. It is unknown why no personnel were
reported trained during the years 2000 and 2001.

A total of 148 Guatemalan military personnel completed CONRED’s disaster
administration and damage evaluation and assessment (*Evaluación de Daños y Análisis
de Necesidades*) (EDAN) course between 2000-2002. This course teaches students how
to evaluate and assess damages and effects of disasters that have affected normal terrain,
structures, lines of communication and transportation, and public health. Students also
learn how to prioritize needs and to take appropriate corrective action. The course is
three days in length. The number of Guatemalan military personnel trained each year is
During the study period from 1997-2002, members of the Guatemalan military participated in annual disaster management training exercises funded by the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM, or SOUTHCOM). Both Guatemalan military and civilian personnel participated in these multinational training exercises. SOUTHCOM also funded several disaster management conferences and professional development activities for Guatemalan civilian and military participants, both in Guatemala and the United States.

SOUTHCOM’s website reports that it routinely sponsors disaster preparedness exercises, seminars and conferences for the purpose of improving the collective ability of the U.S. and its partner nations to respond effectively and rapidly to disasters. The Humanitarian Allied Forces (Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarias) (FA-HUM) exercise provides the opportunity for the U.S. and its partner nation security forces to train together to prepare for natural disasters. The exercise improves regional information-sharing and capability to provide humanitarian relief during disasters. FA-HUM is an international disaster relief field training and command post exercise aimed at evaluating and improving local, regional and international response and relief efforts. Table 8 lists the countries where FA-HUM occurred each year during the study period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location/Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Miami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Honduras</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s 2003 Fieldwork
These exercises often included more than 500 civilian and military participants from 23 different Western Hemisphere countries. On average, about ten Guatemalan Army and ten CONRED personnel attended each FA-HUM exercise. Each year the exercise had a different theme, or area of focus. For example, in El Salvador, the theme was “Regional Cooperation during Natural Disasters in Neighboring Countries.” In Guatemala, FA-HUM focused on the theme of international cooperation during earthquakes and flooding. FA-HUM 2000, in the Dominican Republic, had the objective of training on the effective functioning of a joint emergency operations center during a multinational disaster relief effort. The 2001 exercise in San Jose, Costa Rica, took the form of a subject matter expert (SME) discussion group. The training exercise format resumed the following year in Honduras.

Guatemalan military personnel also attended SOUTHCOM-funded disaster management professional development activities: conferences, orientation visits, and subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs) during 1997-2002. These professional development events covered such diverse topics as search and rescue operations, firefighting, military support to civil authorities, and general disaster management topics, among others. Table 9 lists known SOUTHCOM-funded disaster management professional development events, dates, and locations.

The training events with the largest number of participants took place in Guatemala at the CONRED facilities in Guatemala City, with an average of 30 civilian and military attendees. Five events which ranged from one to four Guatemalan participants took place in the United States. From 23-30 October 1998, approximately 40 Guatemalan officers attended a seminar on “Developing Plans for Civil-military Support
to Disasters,” which was managed by facilitators from the United States Army Reserve 350th Civil Affairs Command based out of Pensacola NAS, Florida (Barrera 1999). The event with the most participants was the 2001 Regional Disaster Preparedness Conference, where 100 Guatemalans from numerous civilian and military organizations attended.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning for Civil-military Support to Disasters</td>
<td>23-30 Oct 98</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search and Rescue Orientation Visit</td>
<td>29 Nov - 4 Dec 99</td>
<td>Miami, Fl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Prevention Seminar</td>
<td>23-25 Jan 01</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Interagency Fire Center Visit</td>
<td>5-9 Feb 01</td>
<td>Boise, ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Preparation and Response Workshop</td>
<td>28 Apr - 4 May 01</td>
<td>Orlando, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Disaster Preparedness Conference</td>
<td>13-16 Nov 01</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctrine Development SMEE</td>
<td>3-7 Dec 01</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Preparation Visit to FEMA</td>
<td>6-10 May 02</td>
<td>Dallas, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence Support to Disaster Relief Seminar</td>
<td>8-12 Jul 02</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Management and Recovery Seminar</td>
<td>17-23 Nov 02</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Doctrine Development SMEE</td>
<td>18-22 Nov 02</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s 2003 Fieldwork

This historical data shows that since 1997 the Guatemalan Military began incorporating disaster management training and professional development into its training program and operational procedures. After publishing directives for subordinate military commands to coordinate and interact with CONRED, the Ministry of Defense added new disaster management courses and curriculum to its training program. This training was conducted by CONRED subject matter experts. This data demonstrates the Guatemalan military’s involvement in disaster management education and training for its
personnel, which indicates a high degree of importance on the nontraditional role of
disaster management.

Legal Authority for Guatemalan Military Participation in Disaster Management

Traditionalist thinkers who opposed military involvement in any role other than
providing for the national defense might question the legality of the Guatemalan
military’s part in disaster management. They could question the legitimacy of
Guatemalan military participation in disaster management, along with providing support
to civil authorities during emergencies.

Several areas of Guatemalan law not only allow for military participation in
disaster management, but specifically require it. In most cases, the Guatemalan military
is directed to provide support and cooperation to the lead agency and other supporting
agencies, in the control and prevention of forest fires, disaster management, and other
emergency situations. As long as the military operates within this established legal
framework, and remains supportive of, or subordinate to, the lead agency, traditionalist
civil-military theorists do not have any basis to criticize Guatemalan military
involvement in the nontraditional role of disaster management. Therefore, prior to
examining military disaster response from 1997 to 2002, a review of some of the more
pertinent applicable Guatemalan laws is prudent.

Several Guatemalan laws address fire prevention and firefighting operations.
Article 36 of Guatemalan forest fire reporting law 101-96 (Ley Forestal Decreto Numero
101-96, ARTICULO 36, Aviso de incendios) requires military authorities to notify civil
authorities about any fires within the national territory that they are aware of. This law
specifies that all transportation services are required to immediately report any forest fire
that is detected. Air transportation services will inform air traffic controllers, who will immediately inform INAB. Civilian and military authorities are required to provide any necessary help, such as their institutional resources, to prevent and control forest fires. Anyone who becomes aware of a forest fire is required to inform the closest local authority, who will in turn relay the information to INAB.

Signed by the Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, and Defense, the Convention for Institutional Cooperation (Convenio Marco de Cooperacion Interinstitucional / Interministerial) (Acuerdo Gubernativo 547-99), section D, Monitor and Control of Forest Fires (Monitoreo y Control de Incendios Forestales), third clause, directs commitment and cooperation from each ministry in fighting forest fires. Interagency cooperation in fighting forest fires is also directed in Law 150-2000 (Acuerdo Gubernativo 150-2000), signed 13 April 2000. Article 2 of this law states that in order to attend to and respond to declared disasters, all civilian and military authorities are required to support The National Forest Institute (Instituto Nacional de Bosques) (INAB), the National Council of Protected Areas (Consejo Nacional de Area Protegidas) (CONAP), and the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (la Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducccion de Disastres) (CONRED), in their efforts to prevent and combat forest fires, to include mitigation of secondary natural disasters caused by Guatemalan forest fires.

Finally, Government Directive 63-2001 (Acuerdo Gubernativo 63-2001) establishes the administrative organization of the Guatemalan National Forest Fire Prevention and Control System (Sistema de Prevencion y Control de Incendios Forestales) (SIPECIF), and specifies that the Ministry of Defense will support SIPECIF
when required (www.sipecif.gob.gt). All of these laws dictate that the military will be involved in fire prevention and control, and that the military cooperate and support the other agencies involved in these efforts.

Likewise, several Guatemalan laws direct that the Guatemalan military be prepared to assist other institutions in disaster management and other emergencies. The Guatemalan National Defense Policy (Libro de la Defensa Nacional de Guatemala) (2003) outlines the organization of Guatemalan Military institutions and functions in Part Four, Defense Resources, of Chapter VIII, The Guatemalan Army (Cuarta Parte: Medios para la Defensa, Capítulo VIII: Ejército de Guatemala). In this document, the Army is charged with national security and defense, to include the cooperation with other institutions in case of natural disasters or other national emergencies. Among the Army Functions, the policy reiterates that Article 244 of the Guatemalan Constitution establishes the Guatemalan Army, as the institution responsible for maintaining the territorial integrity of the country, its peace, and internal and external security. Additionally, the Defense Policy refers to Article 249 of the Guatemalan Constitution, which specifies that the Army will support and cooperate during emergency situations or time of public calamity (en situaciones de emergencia o calamidad pública).

Article 249 of the Guatemalan Constitution requires the Guatemalan Army to collaborate and cooperate with civil authorities in disaster management, specifically “in case of disasters” (en caso de desastres). Guatemalan Army Law 72-90 (Ley constitutiva del Ejercito Decreto Numero72-90), Article 4, specifies that the army will provide this cooperation (in emergency situations) in conformity with the Law of Public Order, (de conformidad con la Ley de Orden Público) when necessary. To further clarify how these
laws apply to disaster management, military order, Guatemalan Minister of Defense Directive No. 001-MDN-99, requires that the Guatemalan Army provide humanitarian assistance during natural or man-made disasters.

**Post 1996 Guatemalan Military Response to Disasters**

Whereas 1997 was a fairly benign year for natural disasters in Guatemala, 1998 made up for a period of relative calm by being one of the worst years of natural disasters in recorded history. Unfortunately, 1998 was a catastrophic year that brought tragedy to Guatemala in the form of drought, fires, hurricanes, floods, and landslides. This section examines military response to severe natural disasters and explains the nature of that involvement.

In 1998, devastation by forest fires in Guatemala came not only in terms of acreage of crops and forest lost, but also in terms of loss of human life and human suffering due to loss of (farming) livelihood and property. Most of the causal factors for the fires were attributed to an extremely dry year due to the El Niño phenomena, combined with the agricultural practice of swidden agriculture (*la roza*). This consists of a "slash and burn" agricultural method where cover plants are burned as a means of cultivation and clearing, and then the residue is incorporated into the soil as fertilizer. During the months of February, March, and April, 1998 (traditionally the driest months of the year), a large portion of Guatemala’s territory, spanning from the Sierra de las Minas in Zacapa towards the Verapaces, el Quiché, Huehuetenango, and Petén Departments were affected by wildfires. According to local press sources, Guatemala lost 165,000 hectares, 100 species of animals were affected, and the smoke from the fires was so intense that it drifted as far northward as the State of Texas. Local authorities and
first responders were incapable of detaining the wildfires, and it wasn't until April 1998 that the Guatemalan Government declared a state of emergency in the Petén and activated the National Environmental Commission (Comision Nacional De Medio Ambiente) (CONAMA).

Upon the government declaration of a state of emergency, Guatemalan military units from Military Zone 23 were called upon for assistance. Military personnel, working together with civilian firefighters, and supported by helicopters from the United States, deployed to the affected areas where they worked for 45 days to extinguish and contain the majority of the fires. It should be noted that in Guatemala, firefighters are all volunteer units and are normally first responders not only to fires, but also to medical emergencies. Guatemalan firefighters are used to working with police when responding to acts of violence or accidents, as well as working with the military during response to natural disasters. Most military responders were ordinary soldiers armed instead with backpack fire extinguishers, machetes, chainsaws and shovels. Many of the military responders suffered from smoke inhalation, respiratory problems, and heat exhaustion. Some were hospitalized and at least one Guatemalan soldier lost his life during the containment operation. The operation was directed under the supervision and direction of the CONRED Emergency Operations Center (Centro de Operaciones) (COE) in the Petén, which was augmented by Guatemalan Army Civil Affairs personnel.

Forest fires not only ravaged Petén, but also San Marcos, Quetzaltenango, Totonicapán, Quiché, Sololá, Huehuetenango, Chimaltenango, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Santa Rosa, and Alta Verapaz departments. These departments received military support from Military Zone 23, Santa Elena, Petén, Mariscal Zavala Military Brigade, Military
Zone No. 6, Izabal, Military Zone No. 705, Zacapa, Military Zone 11, Cuitlapa, and La Aurora Air Base. The Paratrooper Base, Puerto San Jose, was on alert as a ready reserve. Military forces were used to control and extinguish forest fires, and also to protect loss of life and property. In the case of the Petén, the military was also tasked with the mission of preserving the Mayan Biosphere and protecting it against illegal hunters and poachers of tropical wood. Throughout Guatemala, during 1998, a total of 3,331 military personnel supported civil authorities in extinguishing 74 recognized (declared) wildfires and assisted civil authorities in forest protection.

**Hurricane Mitch**

Category 5 Hurricane Mitch struck Central America from October 29 to November 3, 1998. It was the fourth-strongest hurricane ever recorded in the Atlantic and the worst natural disaster to strike the region in the 20th Century. The extent of the devastation was something previously unfathomable. Over 10,000 people were killed; 13,000 were reported missing; and 60 percent of the infrastructure in Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala were destroyed with more than 300 bridges and hundreds of miles of roads washed away. About two million people were left homeless, either displaced or their homes destroyed. In Guatemala, Hurricane Mitch was the worst natural disaster to strike since the 1976 Earthquake. Whereas the 1976 Earthquake was more severe in terms of loss of human life, Mitch was more devastating regarding the extent of the damage in terms of total area and people affected. In Guatemala, Hurricane Mitch resulted in 263 people killed, over 105,000 affected, and millions of dollars worth of ecological destruction and property damage (IADB 1999; BNG 2000).
Even before Tropical Storm Mitch was upgraded to Hurricane status, Guatemala had experienced heavy rainfall which caused flooding and landslides. On 25 August 1998, the Guatemalan Army and its Civil Affairs units from military Zone 20, el Quiché, supported civil authorities during rescue operations responding to victims of landslides and mudslides in Santa Rosa Chubuyub, in the municipality of San Pedro Jocopilas and in the villages of La Montana and Tierra Colorada in the municipality of Sacapulas el Quiché. Infantry units from the Army Central Region responded to assist in clearing debris from landslides (lahars) from the Santiaguito Volcano, in Viejo Palmar, Quetzaltenango, and also assisted in search and rescue, establishing shelters, and distribution of food and supplies. Military response teams worked together with civil authorities in evacuating and establishing shelter for victims of flooding by the Coyolale River.

Approximately 48 hours prior to Hurricane Mitch making landfall on Guatemala’s Atlantic coast, the National Coordinator for Reduction of Disasters (CONRED) announced a state of emergency. CONREDs regional office in the Guatemalan Department of Izabal then coordinated with military leaders from the Atlantic Navy Base, Military Zone 6, and the Guatemalan Air Force to evacuate 3,460 people who were living in high risk riverine areas of Amatique Bay and the Motagua River. During the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch, the Guatemalan Military completed a total of 2,411 evacuation operations using all of its service components as follows: Army: 1,228, Navy: 855, and Air Force: 328. These missions resulted in an estimated 127,215 people being evacuated, and prevented an unknown amount of lives from being lost (Barrera 1999).
The Guatemalan Army worked with CONRED by providing vehicular and aircraft support to transport people and relief supplies. Additionally, almost 17,000 military personnel worked in planning, coordinating and distributing operations. The Guatemalan Military conducted 1,681 food supply operations as follows: trucking for CONRED: 113, Army: 1,147, Navy: 359, and Air Force: 62. These food supply operations distributed more than 4 million pounds of food items to the hurricane victims. Additionally, in coordination with the Ministries of Health and Agriculture, the Guatemalan Army conducted 170 medical relief missions and provided vaccination of people and animals, water purification operations, and sanitation. The Guatemalan Army Corps of Engineers conducted numerous road clearing operations, and constructed one Bailey bridge. The Military was crucial in providing support to civil authorities and provided 305 public security and safety missions: Army 198, Navy 67, and Air Force 40. Every day during the entire month of November, the military provided CONRED 356 people and 10 vehicles. The military supported CONRED in assorted tasks, to include: coordination, transportation, loading and unloading of vehicles, and management of food, clothing, medicine, and other logistical operations such as inventory and distribution (Barrera 1999).

Post Hurricane Mitch Natural Disasters in Guatemala

In 1999, minor eruptions from the Pacaya Volcano sent volcanic ash into the atmosphere, and affected residents of Guatemala City and its surrounding areas. In May, Guatemalan Army Civil Affairs and soldiers from the Military Honor Guard Brigade evacuated 95 families from the towns of San Francisco de Sales, el Patrocinio, San Jose Calderas, and el Cedro, to the Municipality of San Vicente Pacaya. In September 1999,
the Military Honor Guard Brigade supported CONRED in distributing blankets, lumber, and zinc roofing material to the inhabitants of Asentamiento la Arenera in zone 13 and Villa Lobos III in Guatemala City.

On 11 July 1999 an earthquake measuring 6.1 Richter struck the area of Izabal and Puerto Barrios. The earthquake killed at least one person and injured 27. Power lines were knocked down and houses and roads were damaged. Members of the Guatemalan military worked together with CONRED damage and assessment teams to provide initial situation reports. Further military assistance was not requested. During 1999, the Guatemalan military was also called on to assist local authorities during minor relief efforts after flooding occurred in the Achiguate, Maria Linda, Polochic, and Motagua Rivers.

On 21 December 1999, a Cubana DC-10 Cuban airplane skidded off the runway at Guatemala City's La Aurora airport and slammed into houses. At least 26 people were killed. Components from the nearby Guatemalan Army Corps of Engineers and other military units in Guatemala City supported CONRED and other first responders in assisting victims of the crash, and clearing debris.

Forest fires in 2000 once again affected Guatemala. Military assets were called on to assist civil authorities, but specific data pertaining to these events could not be obtained. The Guatemalan Ministry of Defense Civil Affairs Directorate provided the data about significant disasters involving the largest military response listed in Table 10. It shows the type of disaster, dates and areas that were affected, resulting damage, and the size of the military response. The monetary losses are listed in Guatemalan Quetzales (Q), approximately 8 Quetzales being equal to $1 U.S. Dollar.
On 1 March, 2000, the Pacaya Volcano, about 25 miles (40 km) to the south of Guatemala City, erupted, causing officials to take emergency measures in the capital. The volcano spewed ash over nearby villages to such an extent that CONRED declared a red alert. CONRED requested Guatemalan Army Soldiers to be sent to the site to help evacuate local villages after the eruption began. The military assisted in the evacuation of 50 residents of Patrocinio and others from San Vicente Pacaya, both nearby villages. On different occasions during 2000, small teams of Guatemalan soldiers provided help to relief workers during minor recovery missions after flooding occurred in the Achiguaté, Acome, Pantaleon, El Naranjo, and Coyolate Rivers.

| Table 10. Natural Disasters and Guatemalan Military Response, 1997-2002 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Disaster | Dates | Location | Damages/Losses | Military Response |
| Dengue Outbreak | Oct 6 – 20 2000 | El Salvador | Human losses | 23 Officers, specialists and troops |
| Earthquake | Jan 13 – Feb 13 2001 | El Salvador | Q358,625.85 | 47 Officers, specialists and troops |
| Starvation | Sep 2-17 2001 | Camotán, Jocotán, Chiquimula | Chronic Malnutrition, Q96,748.00 | 103 Officers, specialists and troops |
| Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DHF) | Jul 7-23 2002 | Honduras | Q91,181.12 | 32 Officers, specialists and troops, 2 reporters |
| Landslides | Sep 13-17 2002 | San Lucas Toliman, Solola | Material damages and human losses | 143 Officers, specialists and troops |

Source: Author’s 2003 Fieldwork

After a period of heavy rains, on 12 Sep 2002, a mudslide (Lahar) struck the small community of el Porvenir, San Lucas, Tolimán, Solalá, killing 35 people and destroying
40 homes. About 250 people were left homeless. In addition to the mud, the town,
located on the side of the dormant Tolimán volcano, suffered an onslaught of rocks,
boulders, and trees. Observers reported boulders as large as 15 feet across. Soldiers from
nearby Guatemalan military units provided disaster response along with government
officials, emergency disaster teams, and firefighters.

**Post 1996 Guatemalan Military UHR Response to Disasters**

Since the activation of its UHR, Guatemala has responded to both international
and national emergencies. During the “hemorrhagic dengue epidemic” humanitarian
assistance operation that occurred in Apopa, El Salvador, from 29 September to 13
October 2000, the UHR-CFAC units from Guatemala and Nicaragua were activated and
worked jointly with their Salvadorian counterparts to eradicate the transmission of
dengue and mitigate the effects of the epidemic. Approximately 23 Guatemalan
members of the UHR deployed and provided support. The eradication campaign treated
3,000 Salvadoran families.

In the aftermath of the earthquakes that occurred in El Salvador during January,
2001, approximately 60 members of the UHR-CFAC unit of Guatemala, together with
Nicaraguan forces, collaborated with the El Salvador relief unit to mitigate the effects of
these earthquakes. This relief mission operated from 19 January to 1 February 2001, and
attended to the needs of 3,759 Salvadorans.

From 2-17 December 2001, members of the UHR deployed within the national
territory to Camotán and Jocotán, Chiquimula, Guatemala, to assist in famine relief to
victims who were starving and dying from malnutrition which had resulted from crop
loss. The UHR assisted other relief agencies by distributing food and water, and providing first aid and primary triage to victims.

Guatemala deployed about 40 military members of its UHR-CFAC to Honduras from 7-23 July 2002 in order to assist the Honduran Ministry of Health’s campaign to eradicate the hemorrhagic dengue epidemic there. The UHR assisted in mosquito control efforts by conducting debris and trash removal, fumigation, and application of insecticide and repellent. In all, the UHR attended to 2,000 Honduran families.

It is important to note that in all of these situations where the military responded to disasters, the military did so only after other agencies such as CONRED and the National Forest Institute requested military help. Additionally, military forces functioned in a supporting and cooperative manner. This was true even during UHR deployments to El Salvador and Honduras, where the Guatemalan military served under the supervision of the relief effort leaders.

**Conclusion**

The historical empirical data shows that since 1996, the Guatemalan military underwent a major reorganization and restructuring of its forces. It reduced its force structure by 33 percent, eliminated the Civil Defense Patrols (PAC), Mobile Military Police (PMA), Presidential General Staff (EMP), and removed itself from control of and involvement in national police activities. As part of the downsizing and restructuring, entire Infantry (combat) Battalions were eliminated. Furthermore, the Guatemalan military reorganized into a regional command structure to better support peacetime roles. This new organization of the Guatemalan Military represents a reactive structure that is prepared for the external defense while at the same time ready to support other
government agencies as contingencies arise. This new Guatemalan military abandoned its wartime organizational structure, replacing it with a new structure designed for the peacetime role of external defense and support to civil authorities, with disaster management being one of those supporting roles.

The establishment of the Conference of Armed Forces for Central America (CFAC) in 1997, and Guatemala’s joining as a member, shows not only the Guatemalan military’s interest in regional harmony, but also an institutional outward thinking toward external defense. Similarly, the creation of the Humanitarian Rescue Unit (UHR), whose primary mission is to assist neighboring countries during disaster relief operations, also shows a military vision focused on external vs. internal phenomena.

In 1997 the Guatemalan Military began incorporating disaster management training and professional development into its training program and operational procedures. After publishing directives for military commands to coordinate and interact with CONRED, the Ministry of Defense added new disaster management courses and curriculum to its training program. This training was conducted by CONRED subject matter experts. SOUTHCOM also facilitated new disaster management training for the Guatemalan military. During the period from 1997-2002, the SOUTHCOM FA-HUM disaster management training exercise provided the opportunity for the Guatemalan military to train together with U.S. and security forces from regional nations to prepare for natural disasters. SOUTHCOM also arranged disaster management conferences, orientation visits, and subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs), for the professional development of Guatemalan military personnel. In summary, the Guatemalan military’s
involvement in disaster management education and training for its personnel indicates a high degree of importance on its nontraditional role of disaster management.

This chapter showed the level of Guatemalan military involvement in the nontraditional military role of disaster management during the early post-war years (1997-2002). It presented facts pertaining to the post-Peace Accord military reorganization, disaster management training, and disaster response. The legal authorization for the Guatemalan military to participate in disaster management comes from several official documents, including the Guatemalan Constitution. Whether providing support in controlling forest fires, disaster relief operations, or emergencies, the military always acted in a supporting, cooperative role. From 1997-2002 the Guatemalan military responded to disasters on many occasions. The most active year was 1998, which was affected by extreme drought and forest fires, followed by Hurricane Mitch. The newly created UHR also responded to disasters for both international and domestic response missions.
Chapter 7
Conclusion: Dark Past, Promising Future?

An amazing event occurred in Guatemala almost ten years after I finished my field research collecting data there. On 14 January 2012, retired army general Otto Pérez Molina became Guatemala’s eighth civilian democratically-elected president since the 1980’s. The significance of almost three consecutive decades of civilian Guatemalan presidents is phenomenal, given the country’s history of military dominance as chief executive and head of state. Although most past Guatemalan presidents have been military officers, for the first time ever, a former army general was elected president through the democratic process. This alone should serve as a visible indicator of changing civil-military relations in Guatemala. Nevertheless, it would be prudent to examine other features of civil-military relations and related events that have occurred in Guatemala since this study was conducted.

This final chapter begins by returning to the original research questions, to summarize and discuss the corresponding findings and conclusions based on the research. It first briefly revisits the historical background of the military and society in Guatemala that set the conditions for an ideal case study scenario to examine the theory surrounding nontraditional roles for the military in democratic societies. It then presents implications of the findings that could affect the future of civil-military relations in Guatemala. This study illustrates how militaries can reform and redesign based upon the needs of the state in order to serve the greater needs of society. Finally, based on the significance of this
study, I suggest recommendations for further reading and future investigation in the field of civil-military relations.

This study examined civil-military relations in Guatemala during the early post-war period (1997-2002). The research hypothesis suggested that the Guatemalan military engaged in the non-traditional military activity of disaster management during the post-conflict period while complying with civilian authority and other lawful directives. The first chapter of this dissertation introduced the controversial topic of nontraditional roles for the military within the field of civil-military relations. While some scholars believe that militaries should be multi-tasked and have many nontraditional responsibilities, others feel that the only assigned military function should be the traditional role of national defense. Regardless of differing opinions, however, there is one commonality between the two schools of thought, which is the belief that in democratic societies, the military must be subordinate to civilian leaders. Therefore, if militaries are assigned nontraditional roles, then they should always be in a supporting or cooperating capacity, and never the lead agency.

To recapture the framework of this research, I selected Guatemala as a case study representing an example of a country that historically did not have good civil-military relations, and also was prone to natural disasters. Chapter Four, “The Guatemalan Military and Society,” presented a historical overview of Guatemala focused on the sociological, economical and political setting which provided the civil-military relations framework for this study. Guatemala is a country that has been plagued with the two problems of recurring natural disasters and a domineering, political military which has seldom respected the tenets of good civil-military relations. Guatemala’s 36-year civil
war ended with the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords, an event which marks the selected starting point for the dissertation research study timeframe: 1997-2002.

The initial guiding research question sought to explain the extent of the Guatemalan Army’s involvement in disaster management functions during the post-Accord period. In order to answer this question, supporting study questions sought to first examine the reorganization of the military, disaster management training and education, and disaster management response activities. After confirming that the military was involved in disaster management, then the main question to answer was whether the Army maintained sound civil-military relations during the same time period. This occurred by first studying the degree of military compliance with civil-military directives contained in the Peace Accords, and then looking at military response to natural disasters and the corresponding subordination to civil authorities.

Chapter Five discussed the 1996 Peace Accords and the political parameters that were established for military reform. This chapter listed nine pertinent directives from the 1996 Peace Accords that affect the military, and called for the reduction of military forces, and the establishment of a new military doctrine. The degree of compliance with the directives of the Peace Accords was used to show the nature of civil-military relations between the military and civil authorities during this timeframe. This determination was made by analyzing how well the military complied with, or failed to comply with, military directives contained in the Peace Accords.

Of the nine important Peace Accord civil-military relations directives examined, eight were complied with, while only one was not completed and has yet to be fulfilled. The Guatemalan military complied with the following eight directives: 1) development
and implementation of a new military doctrine; 2) a reduction in the armed forces
presence to reflect a role limited to external defense; 3) the reduction of military troops
by one-third by 1997 and military budgets by one-third by 1999; 4) disbanding the
Presidential General Staff (EMP); 5) provisions to dissolve the Roving Military Police
(PMA); 6) official deactivation and elimination of the Civil Defense Patrols (PACs); 7)
creation of a new national intelligence agency; and 8) restructuring and reorganization of
the former national police institution. Of the eight completed requirements, only the third
one, the disbanding of the Presidential General Staff (EMP) was not fully completed
during the 1997–2002 study period. However, during these years, measures were taken to
reduce and begin the final elimination of the EMP, which eventually did take place in
2003. Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter Five, the reason for this delay was not due
to military resistance, rather, the delay was caused by Presidents Arzú and Portillo, both
of whom desired to maintain the EMP’s existence during their presidencies. The one
civil-military measure that was not completed during the study period, and also has yet to
be completed, is the establishment of a civilian minister of defense. This is not easy to
fulfill, because in order for a civilian to be appointed as minister of defense, the
Guatemalan Constitution needs to first be amended. The one attempt to approve a
referendum for constitutional reform was defeated in 1999 by the Guatemalan voters. It
is unknown if and when the Guatemalan Congress will revisit this topic.

Chapter Six, “Disaster Management in Post-Conflict Guatemala,” attempted to
make a similar determination regarding the nature of civil-military relations by analyzing
how the Guatemalan military obeyed, or worked together with, civilian institutions and
agencies that were directly responsible for disaster management during the post-war
study period of 1997-2002. As such, the first two guiding research questions examined military organization and education, with the objective of showing the degree that the military was involved in disaster management preparation. The third guiding research question, that examined how the military was involved in disaster response, was used to analyze the nature of civil military relations.

From the empirical data collected, this study concludes that the military assumed the new role of disaster management and took pro-active action toward organizational restructuring, professionalization, training, and providing disaster response in support of civil authorities. Between the years 1997-2002, the Guatemalan Military implemented organizational changes that included closing military bases, reducing the number of its combat forces, and redesigning its military doctrine to one focused toward the traditional role of external defense.

At the same time, the military expanded its emphasis on military functions in disaster management. This was seen by the increase in disaster management education and training for military personnel. The Guatemalan military joined the international coalition of the Conference of Armed Forces for Central America (Conferencia de Fuerzas Armadas Centroamericanas) (CFAC), and created the Humanitarian Rescue Unit (Unidad Humanitaria y de Rescate) (UHR) disaster response unit to be able to better support international disaster response efforts. The UHR responded to emergencies in the neighboring countries of Honduras and El Salvador, as well as within Guatemala.

The Guatemalan military responded to natural disasters both domestically and internationally during the study period. Military assistance was provided to civilian authorities and disaster responders in response to hurricanes, forest fires, landslides,
floods, volcanic eruptions, health epidemics, among other emergencies. This military assistance occurred while always cooperating with, and in subordination to, civilian leaders and agencies. The Guatemalan Army’s actions while adhering to Guatemalan civil law and constitutional mandates during these disaster response missions demonstrate sound civil-military relations within a democratic framework. This signifies a positive step forward for civil-military relations in Guatemala, and at the same time indicates a change from the notorious past reputation of a Guatemalan military that operated without regard to civil authority. The Guatemalan military underwent progressive change, established new roles, and followed the guidelines of the Peace Accords except for the one directive which was restricted by constitutional constraints.

This dissertation reveals two major findings. First, that during the six-year post-war period immediately following the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords, the Guatemalan military assumed the role of disaster management, and that it was involved in the disaster management process. Specifically, the Guatemalan military reorganized to be better designed to accomplish the disaster management mission; it increased education and training to better prepare its personnel for this endeavor, and it actively performed disaster response functions. Second, and most important, the Guatemalan military demonstrated its subordination to civilian authority by complying with directives from civil authorities, as measured by compliance with the mandates of the Peace Accords and by working in a supporting and cooperating capacity to civilian agencies charged with disaster response. To this degree, this Guatemalan case study serves as an example of how a military can reform and adopt non-traditional roles while still maintaining civilian control of the military.
This research provides an innovative assessment of military disaster management functions in a post-conflict, developing country. This study expands existing knowledge in the area of nontraditional military roles by examining a disaster management resource often only used as a last resort: the military. These conclusions show that since 1996, the Guatemalan military increased emphasis concerning its role in disaster management, and was able to operate within the norms of sound civil-military relations within democratic practice. These findings may serve to guide civil-military relations in other countries and can also be used to educate international relations professionals and decision makers toward a better understanding of military utility in disaster management. This Guatemalan case study may serve as a model from which other countries that are transitioning from war to peace could follow when considering new roles for the military. Future studies may seek to determine how this Guatemalan case study compares with countries like Mexico and Chile that also use their military for disaster management.

There is still much to be studied and learned in the area of non-traditional roles for the military and their impact on civil-military relations. This dissertation makes a significant contribution to the sparse existing literature pertaining to military disaster management operations by examining the successful civil-military relations in Guatemala after its military placed new importance on disaster management. The findings of this study will add to the existing literature concerning civil-military relations, political science, rule of law, defense studies, war and conflict studies, international security and development, environmental and disaster management studies, and the somewhat controversial topic of non-traditional roles of the military.
The findings of this completed investigation demonstrate that Guatemala has the potential to put behind its legacy of a society hampered by the *fuero militar* phenomenon, where the Army is an elite class unto itself and also a major powerful political player. Further study is necessary to examine civil-military relations in Guatemala since 2003, to examine whether the Guatemalan Army will continue to accept and comply with being subordinate to civilian authority. If the Guatemalan military continues to stay on its current trajectory of adherence to sound civil-military relations, and maintains its subordinate position to civil authorities, it will leave behind its dark past and embark on a journey toward a very bright and promising future.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


BIOGRAPHY

Troy Foote was born and raised in New York City. He first became interested in Latin America while attending Stuyvesant High School. After graduating from the United States Military Academy at West Point, he served for more than ten years as an active Army officer and held assignments in Panama and Guatemala. He completed his M.A. in Latin American Studies, with a concentration in Tropical Agriculture, at the University of Florida. After leaving active duty in 1996 he served in the Army Reserve as a civil affairs and foreign area officer, and completed 28 total years of military service at the rank of lieutenant colonel. His professional interests include: Central America, civil-military relations, international development, disaster management, and environmental issues.