

A stylized map of the Americas, showing North and South America in white against a dark blue background.

XXVII

Summit of the Americas
Virtual Summit

**OAS Special
Mission**

Committee Bulletin

Choetsow Tenzin, Chair
Juan C. Venancio, Director of English Committees



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Welcome to HACIA XXVII

Dear delegates of the XXVII Summit of HACIA Democracy,

It is my pleasure to be the first to welcome you to HACIA's virtual summit for the twenty-seventh meeting of HACIA Democracy. My name is Juan C. Venancio and as the Director of English Committees at HACIA XXVII, it is my job to ensure that all of you have a rewarding experience in committee while substantively debating a series of intriguing topics endemic to Latin-America.

My interest in HACIA and Latin America stems from my own Mexican and Honduran heritage. Born and raised in Houston, Texas, I grew up in a predominantly Latin-American ethnic enclave, and this upbringing has driven my personal interests in government, economics, and law. It was through these influences that I developed a natural passion for the region, having participated in organizations like Model United Nations, since my time in high school. As is the case for many, conferences like Model UN allowed me to explore several world issues, contemporary political struggles, and engage with potential solutions with other brilliant minds throughout the country. Now, as a junior at Harvard, I have continued to explore these interests through my previous participation in HACIA, Harvard's Institute of Politics, and the David Rockefeller Center for Latin-American Studies.

At last year's HACIA, I co-directed the 1948 Costa Crisis Cabinet and was amazed by the talent that HACIA attracts every year. This year, I have worked with our talented team of committee directors to select a thematically and temporally diverse set of committees, ranging from the internal displacement of citizens in El Salvador, to women's rights through the OAS, and even current public health issues across the Latin-American region.

HACIA is unique because the issues that we discuss are diverse, well-researched, and relevant. Not only that, but all of you, as delegates, derive from a diverse set of countries, schools, and backgrounds, which all serve to provide multiple perspectives on these hot topics. This highly social type of group learning is an invaluable skill to refine, especially in the context of increased socio-political, environmental, and public health dilemmas. As a result, I would like to encourage all of you to come to this year's conference with unique ideas, well-researched arguments, and out-of-the-box proposals throughout the course of the conference.

In conclusion, I can't wait for our conference to begin and to meet all of you in March! I'm also looking forward to the productive conversations that we will facilitate over the course of our conference.

Sincerely,

Juan C. Venancio, Director of English Committees english_committees@hacia-democracy.org

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From your Chair

Dear Delegates,

Hello! Welcome to HACIA! My name is Choetsow Tenzin, and I am so honored to be serving as your director for HACIA 2022. I am currently a Junior concentrating in Social Studies with a secondary in Education Studies and citation in Chinese.

I was born in New York City, but I have grown up in Charlottesville, Virginia for most of my life. I am a first-generation Tibetan American and am the first in my family to receive an undergraduate education. My background has taught me the importance of the opportunities around me and has cultivated a deep appreciation for my roots, which has further fueled my interest in international issues. I have found that my passion lies in understanding issues surrounding refugees, immigration, gender equality, prison reformation, and equal education.

On Harvard's campus, I am heavily involved in the International Relations Council and the Institute of Politics. Some of my experience directing conferences include directing the Legal Legal Committee at HMUN and HNMUN. I am a writer for our Harvard International Review. In the IOP, I formally co-chaired our Politics, Race, and Ethnicity group and commissions within our Policy Writing Program. Outside of school and clubs, I work at Harvard Admissions Office as a student coordinator, Loeb Music Library, and dance for Harvard's Asian American Dance Troupe. On the weekends' people can often find me at Bonchon or Kung Fu Tea spending way too much money on food. I am a huge foodie so feel free to ask for recommendations during your time here.

Since middle school, conferences like Model United Nations have played a huge role in my life. I am so grateful for the opportunity to spend a weekend getting to know you all and working with you to think of new ways for the Special Mission committee to serve the Latin American community. I hope that this committee will not only provide you an opportunity to improve your diplomacy, creativity, and passion for law, but also a feeling of belonging, excitement, and a deeper sense of appreciation for the work you do and friendships you make. I look forward to hearing your informative and enthusiastic debates. Most importantly, I hope to see each one of you embrace the diplomatic spirit of working collaboratively and respectfully with the commitment to make the world a better place. I know all of you are great leaders, but I hope you come to this conference with the wisdom of knowing when to take a step forward and when to take a step back.

I cannot wait to create a memorable weekend with you all as we tackle the issue of education! Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns before the conference. I wish to be someone who is supporting you before and during the conference. Looking forward to seeing you all soon!

Sincerely,

Choetsow Tenzin

Director, Special Mission Addressing Internal Displacement within El Salvador (MAIDEL)
HACIA

Topic:

**Mission Addressing Internal
Displacement within El
Salvador (MAIDEL)**

Introduction

In a country around the equivalent size of the state of New Jersey, El Salvador found its independence from Spain and the Central American Federation during the early 1800s. Following a 12-year bloody civil war, the country maintained a presidential republic system since 1992. Even though it is the smallest Central American country, it still has a large population of around 6.5 million people. However, it is reported that around 20 percent of the country's citizens live abroad. In a country with a long Mesoamerican history, beautiful natural landscapes, and rich religious culture, El Salvador is facing a growing issue of internal displacement.

The issue of internal displacement is defined as individuals who have not left the country but are on the run in their own home country. These individuals stay in their country and are still under the protection of their own government, even if the source of their displacement is their own government. Therefore, this group tends to be the most vulnerable population. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), there were around 45.7 million people internally displaced due to human rights violations, general violence, or armed conflict in 2019. More recently there has been a rise in internal displacement due to climate change. Internal displacement is a growing concern internally and externally for El Salvador. As more people move around within the country, they are leaving their jobs, homes, and sometimes families. The most vulnerable internally displaced individuals tend to be children who are often fleeing with family or distant relatives by their families to keep them safe.

In El Salvador, the political, social, and economic structures have been a driving force for internal displacement. The main danger with internal displacement is that it often results in emigration from the country. Many Central American countries have struggled with economic instability in the last decade. These struggles

can also be tied to the political shifts that many countries have gone through. In particular, El Salvador struggled throughout most of the 1900s and after the civil war in finding stability. The civil war also resulted in a mass exodus of El Salvadorians to neighboring countries like the United States (US). During this time, infamous gangs like Mara Salvatrucha, commonly known as MS-13, were formed in Los Angeles neighborhoods.

Following the end of the civil war and government-led mass gang crackdowns in the US-led to the deportation of members to El Salvador. These policies have led to the increase of gangs in Central American countries in number and power, destabilizing many social structures in communities. Furthermore, a more recent and increasingly common cause for displacement has been climate change. Over time there has been an increase in what nonprofit organizations call “climate refugees.” In the last couple of years, Central American countries such as El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, etc., have struggled with repetitive cyclones and other extreme weather conditions. An estimated 8 million people are struggling with food insecurity as a result of climate change in these areas. Therefore, it makes sense that families and individuals are looking for their escape elsewhere in their home countries or outside. However, these issues will continue to plague these countries unless proper policy and community action are taken to mitigate the roots of these issues. This committee will continue to explore and address the root causes of internal displacement and the negative after-effects.

History of the Committee

HACIA is based on recreating the structure and goals of the Organization of American States (OAS). The OAS is one of the oldest regional institutions with the first conference held in Washington DC in 1889. The official creation of the OAS was made in Bogota, Colombia in 1948. The Organization was created to promote peace, collaboration, and sovereignty amongst its 35 independent member states. The member states include Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, The Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The OAS charter contains organs that accomplish the organization's goals. The organs include the General Assembly; the Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs; the Councils; the Inter-American Juridical Committee; the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; the General Secretariat; the Specialized Conferences; and the Specialized Organizations. However, the OAS still has the authority to create other subsidiary organs and agencies as needed. This is where the Special Mission plays a role. The Special Mission first started under the Department of Sustainable Democracy and Special Missions. The Special Missions serve two purposes for OAS; the first is to provide any technical support to member states internally. This can come in different forms, some including personnel training for the staff of the OAS General Secretariat or implementing tools and organized procedures. The second important function of Special Missions is to aid member states in improving their institutional ability to prevent, manage, and resolve social-

political conflicts. This appears in several different ways. Most commonly Special Missions assist member states in creating national and local programs or initiatives to encourage collaboration and dialogue on the ground. These strategies are aimed at preventing and managing the longevity of these conflicts and creating timely responses.

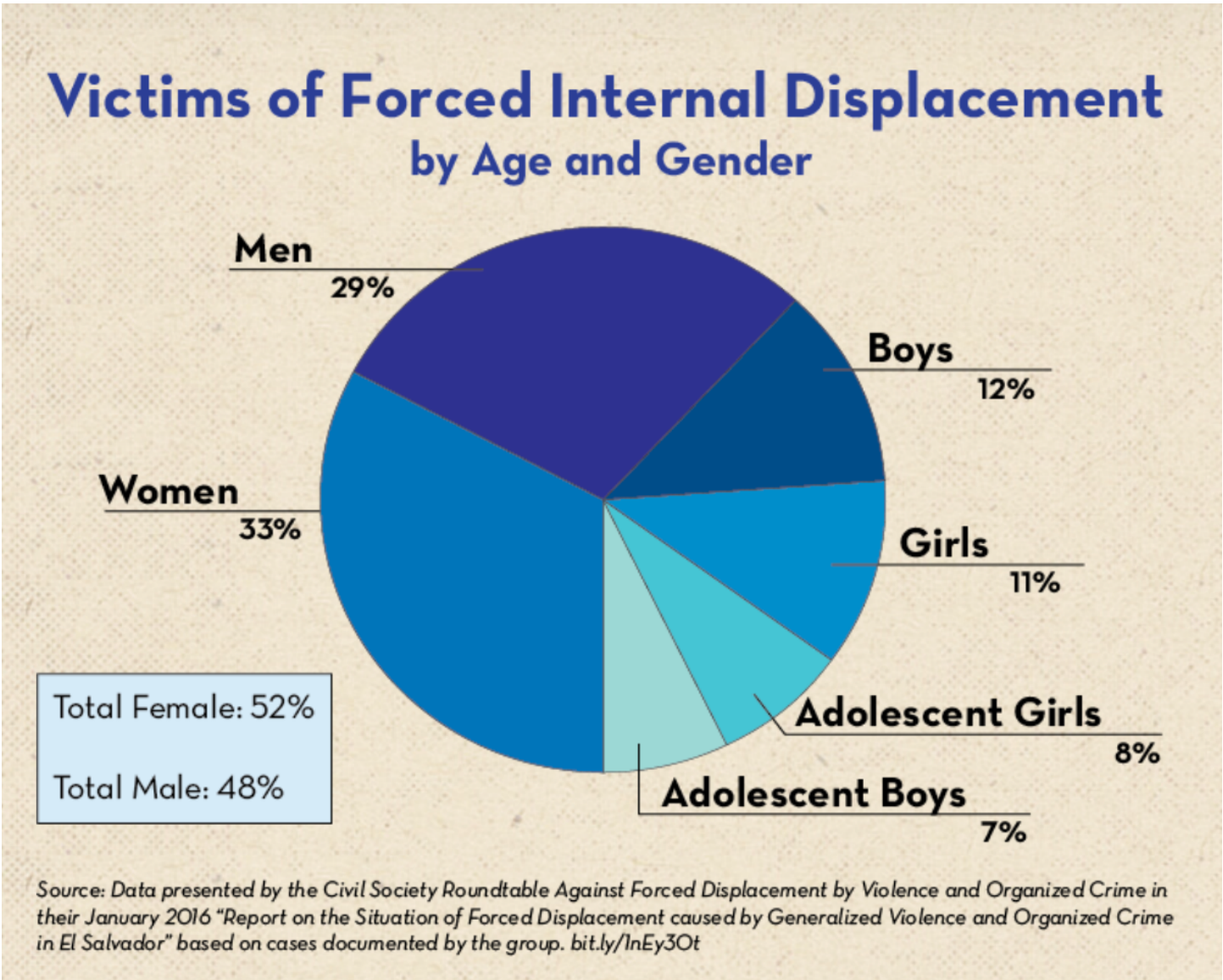
This HACIA conference's Mission Addressing Internal Displacement within El Salvador (MAIDEL) falls under the second functionality of Special Missions. One example of an active Special Missions is the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH). Following the corruption scandal in the Honduran Institute of Social Security (IHSS) and the protests that it triggered in March 2015, the government of Honduras invited the OAS to start a dialogue and create solutions to address the corruption within the country. As a result, a list of recommendations turned into a proposal that was signed into an agreement on January 19, 2016, between the OAS and the government of Honduras.

MACCIH was greeted with four goals: "Preventing and Combating Corruption," "Criminal Justice System Reform," "Political Electoral Reform," and "Public Security." To achieve these goals, the Mission created some actionable steps like creating a vetting system for Honduran prosecutors and judges to prevent corruption networks. Similarly, another strategy is engaging with the Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA) for recommendations on how to improve the quality and effectiveness of the Honduran criminal justice system. These actions are not only practical but also collaborative in improving Honduras's judicial system under the assigned Special Mission.



Aims of the Committee

This committee aims to address the growing internal displacement crisis within El Salvador. Internal displacement is a growing issue globally and particularly in the last five years in el Salvador. Several civil society organizations state the concern of disrupting social structures and negative long-term impact to youth in regard to education and community as a result of displacement. However, as stated earlier, the main concern with growing internal displacement is not only the destabilization it causes communities but also the increased likelihood of emigration from the country it results in. A common concern is the disproportionate impact displacement has on women and children as demonstrated below by the Civil Society Roundtable Against Forced Displacement by Violence and Organized Crime data chart on El Salvador in 2016.



C.1: Victims of Forced Internal Displacement by Age and Gender

According to a 2018 report by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, there is currently anecdotal evidence showing a correlation between displacement and low levels of socioeconomic development. Their reports emphasize the need for early government intervention and long lasting solutions to promote development that is sustainable and inclusive. Displacement affects the livelihoods, health, education, housing infrastructure, security, environment, and social and cultural life of the people and areas where it occurs. In terms of livelihood, the local labor markets of host areas with many internally displaced persons (IDPs) face

issues with unemployment, disrupted wages, and increased needs for social services. These social services include needs of housing, emergency healthcare, and even food for both potential short term and long term IDPs that increase overall costs for host communities. Furthermore, the readjustment or consistent move can have long lasting effects on a child's ability to access quality education, thus resulting in a negative impact on his or her future economic or social growth. It is especially important because IDPs are at a higher risk of violence during displacement or sometimes in their unfamiliar host environments. This type of economic fragility and social issue can harm not only the development of El Salvador but also its neighboring countries of Honduras and Guatemala.

Delegates in this committee should be prepared to think creatively and practically in addressing this issue. One issue with internal displacement is often the lack of government attention it is given. In committee, we will focus on understanding the issue and its causes to create well informed and qualitative policies. This can be in terms of addressing the economic and social root causes of displacement or providing better frameworks to support IDPs. The committee will recreate the El Salvadoran government choosing select departments along with some third-party members to address this issue. These department ministers will include representatives for:

- Department of Agriculture & Livestock
- Department of Economy
- Department of Environment & Natural Resources
- Department of Foreign Relations

- Department of Labor & Social Welfare
- Department of Public Security & Justice
- Department of Public Works
- Department of Tourism
- Attorney General
- Army of El Salvador
- Chamber of Deputies: San Salvador
- Chamber of Deputies: Usulután
- United Nations Worker: High Commissioner for Refugees
- Local Church Organization in San Salvador
- Representative from Honduras



Topic in Context

The causes for internal displacement can often be multifaceted ranging from economic shifts, social issues, and political turmoil. The following section will explore the history of El Salvador and potential causes that have exacerbated this issue.

Some research traces the origin of internal displacement as a growing issue post the cold war. Therefore, it is often viewed as a post-cold war phenomenon. Especially during the 1980s hundreds of thousands were displaced in Latin America due to the civil wars in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. El Salvador especially faced many issues regarding emigration and internal migration due to their civil war. It is estimated that at its height there were around one million individuals displaced. Furthermore, research also shows how those who are displaced are often most economically and socially vulnerable. Between those of European (Spanish) origin in power and those of indigenous background, those of lower socioeconomic status who were often indigenous were most impacted by internal displacement.

Leading to Migration

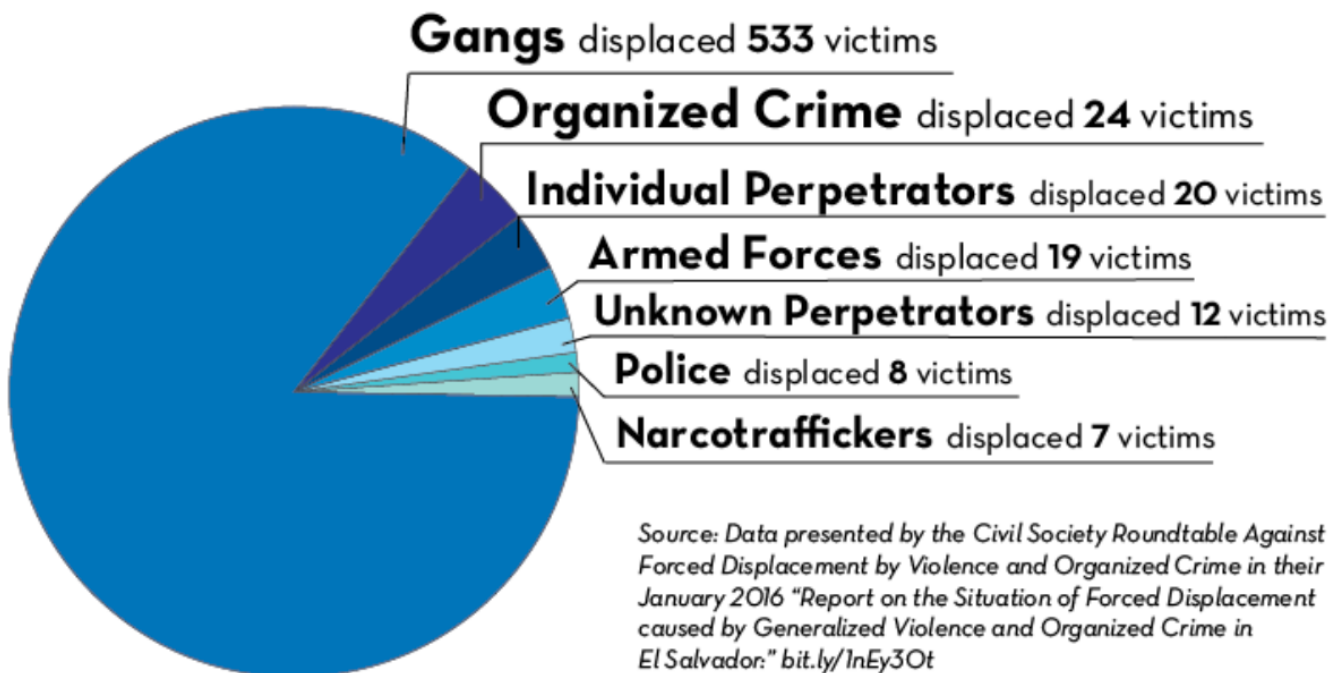
The IACHR report found that IDPs in El Salvador, along with other Northern Triangle countries of Nicaragua and Honduras, are typically exposed to violent environments and sometimes become victims of physical and sexual violence, trafficking in persons, or exploitation and hazardous travel. The IACHR report stated that most individuals and families flee due to pressure, threats, and abuse disproportionately directed at women and children. Children are often likely to be recruited independently or forcefully to participate in illicit activities. The IDMC report stated that more than 200,000 individuals are estimated to be displaced in 2016. Similarly, in 2016, the Civil Society Roundtable against Forced Displacement due to Violence and Organized

Crime reported many victims of forced displacement mainly due to threats, homicides, attempted homicide, and/or bodily harm.

Gang Violence

The most overwhelming causes of internal displacement tend to be social and related to certain actors enacting violence toward the general population. As the graph below illustrates, the agents that caused displacement between August 2014 - December 2015 and the estimated number of people directly impacted. Based on the information available by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) 2018 report the most common origin of displacement is the conflict caused by the violence of organizations such as gangs (commonly referred to as maras) and drug cartels; however, also surprisingly in some cases by the activities of state agents.

Violent Actors Causing Displacement in cases documented August 2014 to December 2015



C.2: Violent Actors Causing Displacement

Gangs in El Salvador first originated post the civil war in 1992. According to the country's defense ministry, there are an estimated 500,000 Salvadorans involved in gangs. This involvement includes around 8 percent of the population either from direct participation or through coercion and extortion by relatives. The two most prominent gangs in El Salvador are Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and Barrio 18 (La 18). Their affairs often include the distribution of drugs, prostitution, and extortion. Both gangs are mainly financed through daily extortion promises and operate in a decentralized manner. It is said that around 70 percent of all businesses in the country face extortion, resulting in an estimated revenue of about \$31.2 million US dollars for MS-13. In contrast, according to the Central Reserve Bank, the money lost because of violence spent on fulfilling extortion payments or private security is about 15 percent of the country's GDP, around 4 billion dollars per year.

Social Factors

However, it is important to understand the appeal of joining gangs and their multifaceted nature in El Salvador. It is said that the most common demographic for gang members are the youth. The average age for initiation amongst young people is between 12 and 16 years old. However, the youngest can even be 7 or 8 years old. Although gangs make large revenue, individually, it is predicted, there is not much personal economic gain. Instead, what is seen as the two main motivators for joining gang activity are family and identity. A majority of gang members come from lower socio-economic backgrounds with broken families. As kids they might have been raised by their grandparents or a single parent, maybe one parent is abroad working, etc. In a 2015 interview, Reverend Gerardo Mendez, who has been a priest in San Salvador working closely with at-risk youths living in areas firmly under a gang's grip, shared how teenagers can find family in gangs where they support and protect one another. Similarly, another motivator for teenagers is finding identity. Due to the environment that these teenagers grow up in they are often exposed to gang bangers and often see them as their only role models. In these communities, gang members have a certain level of power, security, and style that can make them

become idols for kids to follow. Often harshly and negatively portrayed for their crimes and the danger they cause, understanding this information makes it more challenging to address gang members who are often also victims of poor and violent conditions themselves.

Government Intervention

The environment of violence has almost become normalized in many poor communities, where public killings are common and make up nearly 40 percent of all murders. However, notably, almost all murders in El Salvador over the last twenty years can be somewhat traced back to the three-way gang war among members of the MS-13, La 18, and the government's security forces, mainly regarding territory. The El Salvadoran government has had a history of instability and lack of public trust. Following the end of the civil war, many Salvadorans abroad returned to their native country (voluntarily and forcibly by some countries). However, for many the home, they returned to was not the one they left or had even identified with, because many of the institutions were being restructured. In return, this created a power and support vacuum that many of the gangs took advantage of instead of the government.

However, during the late 90s and early 2000s the Salvadoran government, right-wing at this time supported by the US, took an iron fist approach in handling gang violence. This resulted in much police brutality against Salvadorans, especially youth in poorer communities, where many young men were profiled based on their appearance (specifically tattoos or “gang affiliated” attire) and often sent to prison. Civil war tactics and resources were redirected at gangs as a method of social cleansing with increasing overcrowded conditions in prisons, youth being negatively stigmatized, and even extrajudicial assassinations of youth suspected of involvement with gangs. In 2016, the National police chief Howard Cotto reported that government action had helped decline the homicide rate by 20.7 percent. According to the Reuters report calculations, El Salvador’s murder rate of above 100 for every 100,000 citizens in 2015 dropped to 81.7 per 100,000 in 2016. From a May 2021 research survey, El Salvador has an incredibly high incarceration rate of 562

prisoners per 100,000 citizens, closely following the United States which has the highest rate of incarceration in the world with 639 per 100,000. However, as government action intensifies and becomes increasingly hostile, so does gang activity in both membership and public violence. As a result, youth today in many marginalized and poor communities are often caught between victimization by police and armed forces and victimization by gangs.

Gang violence may be the main cause of displacement, but it is not the only one. The state itself is also not only responsible for neglecting the causes of displacement, but also even contributing to it. In a policy analysis research paper regarding gang violence and displacement, multiple cases were exemplifying the failure of Salvadoran state authorities to aid families or individuals in preventing displacement. This failure includes showing indifference to the challenges faced by victims and ignoring pleas by citizens. In 2013, only 35.4% of crime victims had reported to authorities according to a survey by the University of Central America's University Public Opinion Institute (IUDOP). Within this group, the survey further showed that around 72.1% stated that authorities "did nothing." Within the study, amongst the interviewed entrepreneurs, 31.1% are victims of extortion, and 68.1% reported that authorities haven't investigated the crime.

Similarly, the Salvadoran state has been unable to properly protect victims and witnesses of crime or people who participate in investigations or report a crime. It is often common to see gangs retaliate against those who work or contribute to the work against them. Many people fear gang retaliation when they speak with police or even when working for the force. This knowledge makes Freedom House's report even more alarming. According to the report by Freedom House, the judicial system in El Salvador is weak and plagued with corruption. A 2014 study by the IUDOP on Supreme Court case statistics (for common or ordinary adult criminal proceedings and procedures), in 2013 out of the 23,008 open cases 11,146 of them were closed "because the prosecutor did not present sufficient evidence to support the accusation in the time period granted by the court for this purpose." Likewise, from 2009 - 2013, it is estimated around 48% of cases were closed due

to failures in the investigative or prosecutorial process, and according to the IUDOP is an “indicator of lack of prosecutorial efficiency.”

Disappointingly, it is not only that the Salvadoran state authorities are unable to protect citizens from violence or persecution from organized criminal structures, but also that the state itself is responsible for violence against citizens. For those with close ties to the gangs, the increased crackdowns may reduce “gang violence” but it also takes away parents, extended family, and children away from many citizens. Similarly, through government officials or authorities, the state is also guilty of physical and sexual abuse against citizens or often those vulnerable to gangs. One specific case shared the story of a gay activist and a friend attacked and beat by Civilian National Police or commonly known as *Policía Nacional Civil* (PNC) officers attacked after leaving an LGBTQ pride parade. This was not the victim’s first time being harassed by the same police officers. The victim was later hospitalized with fractures on his skull, marks on his neck from strangulation, and bruises all over his body. Following the attack one of the police officers responsible for the attack threatened the victim and charged the victim for “injuring police officers.”

Regarding internal displacement, the government in the past has been often negligent or shown limited action. However, this is common for countries that face issues of internal displacement. It is often common to see more action from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the displaced themselves to promote solutions. However, more participation from international agencies could strengthen their hand and also provide additional encouragement for governments concerned to carry out promised programs.

Economics and the Job Market

Often the origin of political and social instability can be traced to the economy of a country. Although a country with rich culture and gentle people, the country has a history with an unfortunate amount of violence. Starting with La Matanza, the slaughter of around 10,000 to 40,000 indigenous people in 1932 due to the discovery of a planned uprising by leftist-communist organizers and indigenous communities. Indigenous

communities abandoned their traditions and ways of life in fear of retaliation, beginning cycles of forced displacement and appropriation of land for export crops, specifically indigo and coffee.

Furthermore, the post-civil war economy continued the implementation of neoliberal economic policies, privatization of state services and institutions, and trade liberalization to attract foreign investment and trade. It was increasingly hopeful with a period of economic growth and many social indicators improved including literacy, education, infant mortality, and poverty rate. However, by the mid-90s growth slowed and inequality rose. El Salvador is now in the top quintile of countries with the highest levels of income inequality.

In 2006, El Salvador signed to ratify the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR). There is debate on whether the CAFTA benefited El Salvador. Some state that the agreement helped increase employment and provide the poor with less expensive basic goods. However, others argue that CAFTA helped exacerbate economic instability with food insecurity, decrease in quality public services, labor rights, employment, negatively impact on the environment, and increase causes for migration.

Economic opportunity droughts lead to external migration. One specific example of a harmed industry is coffee. For example, during the 1980s around 50 percent of the nation's GDP stemmed from the coffee industry. However, over time the price of coffee dramatically decreased as corporations and foreign investors sought cheaper lesser quality coffee from producers in Southeast Asia and other Latin American countries like Honduras. A USAID report from 2002 stated that within 18 months the price of coffee had decreased by 75 percent. The coffee crisis can trace its origin to a combination of poor access to financing, labor migration, and fractured land ownership. El Salvador's coffee farmers were unable to escape the commodity trap financially harming many small businesses and landowners. An estimated 80,000 Salvadoran small coffee producers and coffee pickers have been forced into poverty as a result of the plummeting global coffee prices. Between 2013 and 2014, according to ABECAFE Union for Mills and Exporters, it took away 140,000 jobs from Salvadorans. As a result, many farmers end up with large debts and rely on the government to buy their

land and pay off any loans. Others often migrate to cities to search for work and take new jobs as factory workers in sweatshops or street vendors. The slow economic growth in El Salvador and lack of well-paying jobs is likely a contributing factor to growing unrest and migration.

International Politics

Those who don't decide to stay often emigrate legally or undocumented to other countries in search of jobs or safety. It is stated that nearly one-third of the global Salvadoran population lives in the US either documented or undocumented. The Salvadoran economy has become largely dependent on remittances, a sum of money being sent often as a sort of payment or gift, where it even accounted for over \$3.6 billion annually or 16.5% of El Salvador's GDP in 2012. Similarly, the policies of foreign countries often impact the internal affairs of El Salvador. Historically it is interesting to note that the most prominent Salvadoran gangs originated in the US. Particularly in Los Angeles, to protect themselves against other established gangs in the city and form some type of ethnic solidarity, many Salvadoran teenagers joined together to form these gangs. Following the end of the civil war in 1992, immigration policies in the United States became more restrictive. Many migrants who had been convicted of crimes were sent back to El Salvador, that was struggling to restabilize its foundation, and along with them brought gang culture and violence that is prominently seen today.



Topic for Discussion

Between the years 2006 and 2016, there have been 71,500 internally displaced people in El Salvador according to the United Nations Human Rights Committee factsheet. This is only an estimate because internal displacement is often a complex issue to address. Firstly, it is often politically and logistically difficult to keep count and provide humanitarian assistance to IDPs. Unlike other refugee populations, they most often do not live-in camps or shelters, but instead are spread throughout local communities. Furthermore, as mentioned above, they may even be reluctant to receive humanitarian aid from organizations in fear of being identified by the source of their movement or authorities. Therefore the following information is important to consider when thinking about how these changes will affect IDPs and the conditions they live in.

The most prominent issue that El Salvador currently faces, along with the rest of the international community, is the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the beginning of the pandemic, there have been about 90,129 infections and 2,804 deaths related to the coronavirus. Conditions show signs of improvement as El Salvador has already administered 5 million doses of the COVID vaccine according to the Reuters COVID-19 tracker. This means around 40.6 percent of the country's population is vaccinated if every person received two doses. El Salvador has administered at least 5,235,185 doses of COVID vaccines so far. Assuming every person needs 2 doses, that's enough to have vaccinated about 40.6% of the country's population.

However, COVID has left a nasty long-lasting impact on the country. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated that in 2020 the economies of Central America will have shrunk by 6 percent in 2020, due to the decline in tourism and a temporary halt on remittances last spring. Simply stated, any previous issues relating to the economy, democratic stability, violence, and corruption have all been magnified by the impact of the coronavirus.

Politically, in February the country elected a newer and younger president, Nayib Bukele, as a sign of change and hope. One of his pledges when campaigning was to eradicate gangs in the country within the next three to four years. There were signs of hope and improvement during his initial time in office. In Bukele's first 150 days in office, it was reported that the murder rate dropped drastically. Although there could be other factors such as the pandemic, from January to July of 2019 it was stated to be the least violent months in the last 15 years, excluding the gang truces in 2013 and 2012. Even more shockingly, there were no killings recorded on July 31, the only the eighth murder-free day in 19 years. However, these positives have taken a turn as Bukele now faces accusations of becoming more authoritarian and corroborating with gangs to enforce the COVID-19 curfew. Bukele's shift towards authoritarianism rings familiar warning bells for many as he continues to criticize journalists, human rights defenders, and other parties that question his commitment to democracy.

These changes come at a challenging time in the international community. Issues continue alongside the US-Mexico border regarding immigration. Similarly, there is a growing attitude in the international community towards preventing refugee flows and restricting refugee admission. Even though the international human rights law guarantees the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution in other countries, many large groups of individuals are meeting closed borders.

However, one positive is the growing focus on addressing the root causes for problems regarding migration. Earlier in 2021, the United States sent \$310 million in increased assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. This budget includes \$255 million in assistance to meet immediate humanitarian needs for refugees, other displaced people, and vulnerable migrants in the Northern Triangle. In April of 2021, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) created and implemented a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to respond to urgent humanitarian needs in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The DART's main focus is mitigating the impact of recurrent droughts, severe food insecurity, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, along with the communities still facing the aftermath of the hurricanes from November

2020. Specifically, more than \$16 million was directed towards addressing emergency food assistance and support to help people get back on their feet with resources for their community in El Salvador according to the USAID press release. This follows the growing environmental and climate concerns in the region. Many areas may experience less violence but are now increasingly devastated by droughts and in need of food security assistance as well as agricultural assistance to shift to viable crops. A growing number of IDPs are now victims of climate change. Unfortunately, this option is not as viable when the countries and cities these victims live in are among the most violent or often not big enough. Most importantly El Salvador needs to address its issue of displacement through internal reform. As Dr. Mauricio Gaborit, head of the psychology department at the University of Central America (UCA), stated “Displacement is a preamble for external migration because the country is so small.”

Bloc Positions

When addressing the issue of internal displacement, it is clear that this problem is multifaceted and complex. There are many actors involved in both exacerbating and mitigating the issue. Some key players that have been already seen are the El Salvadoran government, foreign governments, NGOs, faith-based organizations, community leaders, and other partners from civil society.

Looking at past actions, one prominent organization is the UNHCR. The UNHCR has worked closely with 45 communities prioritizing community-based interventions to alleviate risks towards the security of girls and boys, gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, youth, LGBTQ persons, and others affected by forced displacement. These programs led by the UNHCR, and partners focus on developing leadership, dialogue with national institutions, developing resilience, and awareness of rights. There is also financial support and initiatives to help small businesses and entrepreneurs to become self-sufficient and independent. These initiatives are so important because there is no single UN agency that is formally responsible for IDPs.



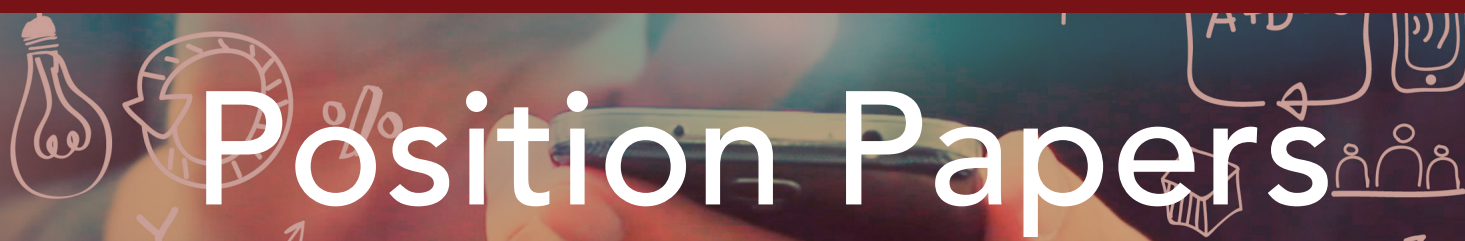
C.3: UNHCR Staff in El Salvador 2021

Questions A Resolution Paper Must Answer

As you begin your research and writing your position papers it is important to keep the following questions in mind:

- Who will this involve? Who is the most vulnerable in this situation?
- Is this an effect of the problem or the cause of it?
- What are the short-term effects of this? What are the long-term effects?
- Why is this the best policy or solution?
- Am I respecting the sovereignty or rights of this group?
- What can the committee do, within their mandate (e.g., recommendations, legislation, non-binding treaties, binding treaties, jointly agree to domestic legislation, etc.)?
- Is there any previous committee or OAS action, if any on this topic?

- What countries must cooperate for this action to be effective? E.g., must a specific country sign-off on resolutions affecting them specifically?
- What parties must reconcile their differences to address this issue effectively?
- Which parties will come into the debate effectively aligned?
- Are there any repercussions for any country taking a specific action (e.g. loss of U.S. aid money)?
- Are there any relevant but unrelated diplomatic issues that countries must weigh at the same time?



Position Papers

Writing a position paper may seem intimidating, but it can be the best opportunity to showcase your knowledge on the topic and creativity while solving the problem. Your position papers should be well informed and focus on finding practical solutions to the issue of internal displacement. Think about the role you are representing and their position in addressing the issue as well as what action would they be likely to take. Is the solution to address internal displacement through government intervention, policy solutions, community action, economic development, foreign aid, educational investment, or a little bit of all?

Some of the ongoing debate is focused on answering this question. For example, one alternative to addressing internal displacement is creating a regional non-governmental commission focused on the root issue, gang violence. This was first created in Honduras where the Honduras National Anti-Corruption Council works on investigating malfeasance in support of the region's attorneys general. Other ideas would be creating policy that focuses on short-term goals while working on advocating for broader reforms. For example, protecting children from the high-risk circumstances that displacement places them in. Protection of women and girls who are vulnerable to sexual violence, or investment in the education of internally displaced children who lose access to education or forced recruitment into armed groups. What is important to keep in mind is that the success of interventions for IDPs significantly depends on context-specific factors. This can include the willingness or ability of national and local institutions to receive aid for IDPs, the efficiency of legal and protection agencies, and the specific factors related to the internally displaced population. This can depend on the type of population and any pre-existing vulnerability or missing resources. Keeping these types of factors and solutions in mind can help you write a strong position paper.



Concluding Remarks

Dear Delegates,

Congratulations! You have now reached the end of this bulletin! I hope this introductory paper has not only been interesting and helpful but also thought provoking and informative. I personally was lucky enough to visit El Salvador in 2019 and fell in love with the country. I wanted to write on this topic after my experience meeting a UN worker focusing on this problem. Internal displacement is often an invisible issue, but its implications are significant and those affected by it are often silent victims.

As members of the HACIA community, we should constantly strive to learn from the world and each other. While reading facts and stories on paper is one thing, I want to remind you that this issue is very much real and experienced by those in communities we care about. I implore you to not only research this topic for this committee and this conference but also apply it to your communities at home. Let us appreciate the opportunity we have at this conference to explore this issue and discover ways to address it.

As always remember this conference is an international collaborative experience, even online, therefore come prepared to work well and wisely with one another. Collaboration and diplomacy are highly encouraged. The world, our home countries, and our individual lives are all going through a very transformative period. On one hand, there is a lot of disappointing news in the world right now, but at the same time, this is a great opportunity for change and progress. Let's keep a positive mindset going forward and bring our youthful, optimistic, and innovative energy to this conference as we discuss ways to make the world a better place.

Please reach out with any questions or concerns. I look forward to seeing you all in March. In the meantime, stay safe, stay healthy, and stay active.

Sincerely,

Choetsow Tenzin

Chair, Special Mission Addressing Internal Displacement within El Salvador (MAIDEL)

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