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PREFACE

The Military Intelligence Summary (MIS), published in eight volumes, is a synopsis of military intelligence worldwide. Intended to serve as a ready reference, the MIS presents a compilation of intelligence on those forces that contribute to the military security of each country, and on the political and economic factors affecting the country's military capability. Published annually, the MIS serves to update information in other DIA publications.

Information summarized in the MIS is available in detail in numerous DIA publications. A list of related publications, both completed and scheduled, is published in the Register of Intelligence Publications (DRS-2600-37A-85) and the Defense Intelligence Production Schedule (DVP-2600-35-85 (Vol I) and DVP-2600-36-83 (Vol II)). The Intelligence Users Guide (DDP-2600-397-83) explains how to obtain finished intelligence products and services from DIA.

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GUATEMALA

1. (U) Political-Military Situation: Officially, Guatemala is a republic with a popularly elected President and legislature, but since March 1982 its constitution has been in abeyance. Since August 1983 the de facto Government of Guatemala (GOG) has been headed by Chief of State Major General (MG) Oscar Humberto Mejia Victores who simultaneously is Minister of Defense. The GOG is in the process of returning to a democratic civilian government.

(NFR) National elections are scheduled whereby a civilian government is to be inaugurated in January 1986. The leading presidential candidates (arranged alphabetically by party) are Vinicio Cerezo of the center-left Christian Democratic Party (DCG), Mario Sandoval Alarcon of the rightist National Liberation Movement (MLN), Jorge Serrano of the National Party of Democratic Cooperation (PDCN), and Jorge Carpio Nicolle of the centrist Union of National Center (UCN). Elections are scheduled for October 27 and in the likely event of a run-off, it will be held in late November. The Mejia government appears committed to holding elections. There are no indications that it is supporting any political group or party.

(NFR) MG Mejia did not want to be Chief of State but relented under pressure from military commanders when the Army high command deposed Brigadier General Rios Montt in August 1984. Mejia's position is as a transitional leader. He has stated he will remain as Chief of Government until an elected civilian government is installed, or until he is asked to step down by the powerful Council of Military Commanders which is the source of his support. The Council consists of 20 military zone (MZ) commanders, commanders of the key military units in Guatemala City, members of the Defense Staff, and other senior commanders. Apart from discarding many of Rios' reformist projects, the Mejia regime has taken no major initiatives or decisions, apparently leaving the job of tackling fundamental economic and social problems to its intended civilian successor. MG Mejia has made major trips to Latin American democracies in an effort to enhance the GOG's image as a democracy in the international arena.

(NFR) Guatemala's retransitioning from nearly 30 years of military power to democratic government is fragile. The economy more than any other factor will continue to be a critical consideration. In April 1985, broad dissatisfaction centering around private sector discontent over Guatemala's continuing currency deterioration, national-level economic mismanagement, and Mejia's announcement of a tax reform package created such a crisis to GOG stability that Mejia was forced to rescind the tax package, and fire the Ministers of Economy and Finance. At this writing, the final chapter on this crisis has yet to be written. If the private sector maintains its confrontational stand because of even worsening economic conditions, or is able to convince key military leaders of its position, it would constitute a serious threat to Mejia's stability and jeopardize the scheduled elections. Whatever political party may be victorious during upcoming elections, its legacy will be an extremely poor economy.

(NFR) The GOG views the support Nicaragua and Cuba have given Guatemalan and other Central American countries insurgents as its major external threat. During the 1960s, Cuban-armed and trained insurgents began to instigate attacks against the GOG. Between 1979 and 1982, insurgency in Guatemala took on new

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proportions as the Cuban and Sandinista governments increased logistic and training support to insurgent groups. Because the GOG believes that Guatemala is targeted to fall to Communist-sponsored guerrilla movements after the overthrow of El Salvador, it can be expected to draw closer to El Salvador and Honduras as a means of countering the perceived Nicaraguan-Cuban threat.

Another external threat is the longstanding territorial dispute with Belize. Following the failure of the tentative UK-Guatemalan "Heads of Agreement" understandings, and Belize's subsequent independence on 21 September 1981, Guatemala must now bring itself to deal directly with Belize and arrive at a face-saving solution. In February 1985, Guatemala-Belize nonministerial-level talks, characterized by the GOG as exploratory and informal in nature, were held. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that formal discussion or definitive agreement will be reached before the inauguration of a civilian GOG administration. In the absence of a territorial settlement, Guatemala could be expected to assert its territorial claim should it become convinced that Belize is supporting Guatemalan insurgents.

The most significant internal threat to GOG stability is the insurgency that has plagued Guatemala since the 1960s. From 1978 to 1981, the level of insurgency increased dramatically as stepped-up logistics and training support from Cuba created a viable threat to the Guatemalan Government. Guerrillas virtually destroyed Guatemala's important tourist industry and inflicted heavy damage on cotton and sugar-processing plants. The guerrillas' objective is to topple the government by gaining popular support, discrediting the Armed Forces, crippling the economy, and isolating the GOG from international support.

The four main guerrilla groups—the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres—EGP); the Revolutionary Organization of the Peoples in Arms (Organizacion Revolucionario del Pueblo en Armas—ORPA); the Rebel Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes—FAR); and the Guatemalan Labor (Communist) Party-Dissident Faction (Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo—PGT/D)—in 1982 agreed to cooperate and coordinate their activities through an umbrella entity called the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca—URNG).

Total guerrilla strength is estimated to be 1,200-1,500 combatants. For the most part, the individual guerrilla groups have preferred to maintain their leadership and authority autonomy, hence the URNG has had only limited success in coordinating guerrilla combat efforts. Guerrilla actions include hit and run attacks against military and other government units, national and provincial leaders, and government and private economic infrastructure-related resources. In February 1985, the verbal URNG issued a communiqué announcing its decision to intensify the armed struggle against the military. The Army expects an increase in violent guerrilla actions—especially attacks against politicians—as the October elections draw closer. If the GOG is able to continue its successful counterinsurgency measures (addressed below) the guerrilla threat will continue to be reduced from its critical 1980-81 level when it was a threat to GOG viability.
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(S/NF) The Guatemalan Labor Party-Orthodox Faction (Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo—PGT/0), is a nonviolent dissident group, the URNG. The PGT/0 announced in 1981 that it would join the insurgent struggle, and in 1983 took credit for some guerrilla operations. However, internal divisions and the government's capture of several PGT/0 leaders have severely limited this group's capabilities.

(S/NF) The FAR, a force of about 400 to 600 combatants, is the oldest and best established group. It is most active in Guatemala's geographically isolated Peten Dept, which borders on Mexico. The FAR has the best radio communications systems of all the guerrilla groups, and is noted for its highly trained, well-organized cadre.

(S/NF) Although the EGP has suffered severe setbacks as a result of counterinsurgent operations begun in 1982, it is still the largest guerrilla organization, with an estimated 500 to 800 combatants. It is concentrated in the Highlands (most heavily near the Mexican border) in the departments of El Quiche, San Marcos, Huehuetenango, Alta, and Baja Verapaz, and possibly still in Chimaltenango. Some EGP retreat movement into the departments of Zacapa and Izabal occurred during late 1982 and early 1983 but with limited success.

(S/NF) ORPA suffered reverses during 1983-84; nevertheless, it still poses a substantial threat. It consists of a force of an estimated 300 to 350 well-trained guerrillas, and operates mainly in the Departments of Quezaltenango, San Marcos, Retalhuleu, and Suchitepequez.

(S/NF) The PGT/D incurred severe losses in 1982, and probably now has far fewer than the original estimate of 200 guerrillas. These losses have caused it to explore the possibility of reunification with the PGT/0. Such a move would strengthen both factions but there is no indication this has occurred.

(S/NF) The GOG's efforts to counter its widespread insurgency are based on the realization that the socioeconomic injustices that have polarized Guatemala must be addressed before the government can realistically expect to eradicate insurgency. Aggressive patrolling and small unit tactics characterize the military's combat strategy. In March 1983, the military initiated a broad reorganization that was intended to place the entire country under firm military control, and simultaneously win the popular support of the traditionally politically isolated Indian population. The former military regions were disestablished and replaced by 23 MZs. The reorganization gives the Army a countrywide presence instead of the isolated force concentrations characteristic of the former structure. Also, it helps alleviate the Army's severe mobility problem by facilitating floating of battalions between neighboring MZs. The reorganization has enabled the Army to execute its combined combat and psychological operations in the large and often remote highland regions.

(S) The key to GOG antiguerrilla strategy is the formation of civil defense forces (CDFs), a militia-type organization under the control and direction of the military. The CDFs receive some military training and equipment. The CDFs now number some 900,000, and possess a weapons inventory that varies from machetes and clubs to a limited number of rifles. An estimated 2 percent are armed at any
one time. To date, their combat record has been impressive, but their primary role is as a psychological weapon against the guerrillas. The CDFs are another vehicle for turning the allegiance of the Indian from the guerrillas to the GOG.

(3/4F) The GOG is waging an aggressive tri-Service combat campaign in its remote, northern Peten region—the traditional stronghold of the FAR. The military's strategy has been to attempt to contain the guerrillas, and to complement combat action with increased, combined psychological-civic action programs. In an effort to erode the insurgents' regional influences, the Army has established civic action companies, subordinate to the respective MZ commander, whose individual platoons are responsible for the administering of hygiene/health, education, and civic awareness programs, while a fourth platoon works with the local citizenry in developing an intelligence net for the Army.

(3/4F) The Armed Forces Communications Service is collocated with the joint security operations center in Guatemala City. The principal communication network is a single sideband AM HF net with links to about 50 fixed stations. The military emphasizes communications security, but overall field operations are severely handicapped by the lack of a sufficient number of operable equipment, and enough well-trained signal service personnel.

(3/4F) In addition to the Army's communications weakness, the Armed Forces are faced with other serious deficiencies in meeting the insurgent threat. It is hampered by a top-heavy senior officer corp, the lack of a professional NCO cadre, poor mobility and communications, an overly centralized command and control system, and a shortage of modern equipment and weapons. The Army has no real special forces-type units, and depends on its two airborne battalions as the closest equivalent. The government's civic action programs are constrained by Guatemala's sluggish economy.

(3/4F/NN/NG) Since 1977 the major suppliers of military materiel to Guatemala have been Belgium, Israel, and the United States. In 1982, Belgium provided 10 used US M-41 tanks and 500 MAG machineguns. Other significant Free World suppliers include Switzerland, Italy, Japan, Spain, Portugal, and Argentina. Taiwan has supplied agricultural aid and psychological operations training.

(3/4F) Since 1983 Guatemala has produced small arms ammunition (5.56-mm and perhaps 7.62-mm). Production for 1984 is estimated at 5 million rounds, but with little modification the factory could probably double this quantity. Guatemala assembles a three-wheeled armored personnel carrier, which closely resembles a combination of the US V-100/150 Cadillac Gage APC.

2. (U) Key Officials:
Head of State: Maj Gen Oscar Humberto Mejia Victores
Minister of National Defense: Maj Gen Oscar Humberto Mejia Victores
Chief of the Ministry of Defense Staff (Formerly designated Chief of the Army General Staff): Brig Gen Rodolfo Lobos Zamora
Chief, Directorate of Intelligence, Ministry of Defense Staff (Formerly G-2, Army General Staff): Col Carlos Dorantes Marroquin
Acting Navy Commander: Capt Carlos Lazo Azurdia
Air Force Commander: Col Guillermo Rolando Ponciano Y Ponciano
3. **Military Economics:**

(U) **Military Budget:** $198.4 Million for fiscal year ending 31 December 1985; 15.5 percent of the central government budget and 2 percent of estimated GDP. No service allocation is available. Dollar value converted from quetzales at the official exchange rate of 1 quetzal equals $1.00.

(U) Guatemala's agricultural sector generates one-quarter of the GDP; one-quarter is derived from exports; and the service sector produces the remaining half. The estimated 1984 GDP is $8.7 billion, or $1,100 per capita. Guatemala's leading exports are coffee, sugar, bananas, and meat. Major imports are manufactured goods such as machinery, transport equipment, chemicals, and fuels. The principal trading partners are the United States, El Salvador, Mexico, West Germany, Japan, and Costa Rica.

(U) Guatemala can be viewed as a "dual" economy: it has a modern sector and a traditional sector. Three-fifths of its economically active population are concentrated in the rural sector, the other two-fifths in the urban sector. The annual rate of population growth is slightly above 3 percent. The economy can not generate enough jobs to accommodate this increase and therefore there is a high rate of unemployment and underemployment—approaching 40 percent in 1984.

(U) Guatemala is in the midst of a prolonged period of economic stagnation and recession, that will extending at least into the nearterm. The effects of the recession and a continuing scarcity of foreign exchange has led to a period of real decline in the economy. Real per capita GDP has been falling since 1980. While the Guatemalan economy leveled off somewhat in 1984, the structural problems remain: depressed world prices for traditional agricultural exports; loss of regional markets for manufactured exports; large fiscal deficits; the guerrilla insurgency; and difficulty in borrowing private capital. These economic factors, especially the latent threat posed by the insurgency, have destroyed Guatemala's once thriving tourist industry, and have reduced the rate of foreign private investment to a quarter of what it was.

(U) Inadequate foreign exchange earnings and continuing high levels of imports has led the government to impose controls on imports and capital movements. While these measures resulted in deep import cutbacks, they also created scarcities in raw materials and produced goods and, thereby, impeded economic growth. Guatemala took an important step toward dealing with the problem by reaching agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on an economic stabilization program in August 1983. Under this program, Guatemala agreed to constrain the level of the public sector's fiscal deficit, reduce arrearages, limit new commercial borrowing, and impose no new or stricter controls on trade or capital transfers. Guatemala, however, was found in non-compliance last year, because of the governments failure to adhere to the adjustment program goals. The government continues their own austerity program but it has not proved to be effective. With an eye to upcoming elections of a civilian government, Mejia has ruled out a devaluation of the quetzal, a key action to attaining balance of international payments, because of its inflationary and political impact. Net reserves, therefore, continue to dwindle because of the over-valued currency. The parallel foreign exchange market was
LEGALIZED in November 1984, but some aspects were even more controlled than the controlled market that preceded it. Increasing public broad based attacks on the administration's austerity program by professionals, trade organizations, and private individuals could lead to government inaction that could accelerate the decline of the economy and significantly worsen the problems faced by the future civil government.

(U) Guatemala's success in implementing a workable austerity program, obtaining sizable international financial support, and containing the insurgency are all key determinants of how soon the country will emerge from the current recession and again attain economic growth. However, even when all of these prerequisites are met, Guatemala would experience only a slow rate of growth as it restructures its economy over the near term, by following a prescribed path of economic restraint. Given its high rate of population growth, even modest rates of economic growth would lead to a declining standard of living for the population.

4. (U) Population: 7.8 million as of January 1984
   Males (ages 15-49): 1,700,000; physically fit, 1,250,000; 85,000 reach military age (18) annually
   Ethnic Divisions: 44 percent Indian, 56 percent Ladino*
   Literacy: About 45 percent

5. (U) Army:
   Personnel Strength: 30,000 (1,700 officers, 28,300 NCOs, enlisted, civilian specialists and cadets)
   Reserve: 37,000 (Approximately 11,000 could be immediately mobilized; others are standby reservists.)
   Major Units: 23 MZs (3 have not been activated due to shortage of personnel and equipment; each contains at least 1 deployed infantry battalion, 6 contain 2 infantry battalions, and 1 contains 5 battalions); 12 special purpose battalions (1 Chief of State Guard, 1 military police, 1 mobile military police, 1 engineer construction, 1 cadet, 7 strategic reaction-type: 4 infantry battalions--2 at Mariscal Zavala Brigade** and 2 at Honor Guard Brigade--2 airborne infantry, and 1 Air Force tactical security group.
   Major Equipment: 46 105-mm howitzers (32 Yugoslav, 14 US); 12 106.7-mm (4.2-in) mortars; 20 APCs (5 M113, 5 M113A1, 7 Cadillac gage V-100, 3 Guatemalan assembled); 15 armored vehicles (10 RBY Mk1, 5 M-8); 10 tanks (M-41 medium tanks with 76-mm guns); 12 ADA (20-mm Oerlikon). In addition, there are items in the inventory that are of questionable combat effectiveness because of obsolescence and/or nonexistence of spare parts and ammunition, such as 75-mm pack howitzers, M3A1 armored cars of World War II vintage, and M3 light tanks.

*(U) Westernized Indian, Mestizo, and Whites.

**(S/N) The battalion is the Army's largest combat unit. A brigade's organic staff augmentation and equipment allows for its assumption of command and control of additional units.
6. **Navy:**

Personnel Strength: 950 (40 general service officers, 20 Marine officers, 240 general service enlisted, and 650 enlisted Marines).

Reserve: A limited reserve system was put into operation in February 1982.

Major Units: The small patrol force type Navy is divided into two forces: Naval Force Atlantic headquartered at Santo Tomas de Castillo Naval Base, and Naval Forces Pacific headquartered at Port Quetzal (until recently known as Port San Jose). A third naval base is located at Sipacate. There is one Marine Battalion four 165-man companies.) Two of the companies are assigned to Santo Tomas, one to Port Quetzal, and one to Sipacate.

Ships: 14 total. 11 coastal patrol-river/roadstead craft: 1 fast patrol craft (PCF); 8 patrol boat (pb); 2 river/roadstead patrol boat (PBR); 1 amphibious warfare craft; 2 auxiliaries—hydrographic survey ships (AGS). One of the two hydrographic research ships, Gukumatz, is currently subordinate to the civilian San Jose Port Authority. Upon completion of its survey work, the vessel will reportedly revert to Navy control. The Marine Corp has 12 small boats similar to the Israeli Zodiac Command boats. Armament consists of 20-mm guns, 12.7-mm machineguns, and 76-mm recoiless rifles.

7. **Air Force (GAF):**

Personnel Strength: 650 (160 officers, 490 enlisted), including 140 pilots (rated and student)

Reserve: Since June 1982, 200 Guatemalan males have been commissioned Guatemalan Air Force Reserve second lieutenants. The great majority of these own their aircraft. Their mission is to support the active GAF when called upon.

Units: Two airbases: GAF headquarters Base at La Aurora International Airport, Guatemala City (seven squadrons: one fighter, one helicopter, one C-47 transport, one Arava transport, one reconnaissance, one PC-7 Pilatus training, one maintenance); an air force police command (formerly known as the Tactical Security Group), a battalion-size unit, on loan from Army is assigned to Air Force headquarters for security. GAF Sanchez Santa Elena Base (two squadrons: one security, one flight) one base services company, one army rifle company assigned to the base for perimeter security.

Aircraft: 100 total: 13 jet (10 A-37B Dragonfly, 3 T-33 Lockheed); 25 turboprop (1 Super Kingair 2000, 5 Fokker F-27 Friendship, 7 IAI-201 Arava, 3 Turbo Stationair 6, 9 Pilatus PC-7*); 30 prop (1 Douglas DC-6B, 8 C-47A Skytrain, 12 T-41 Mescalero, 3 Cessna 180, 4 Cessna 206, 1 Cessna 310, 1 Cessna 337); 32 turbine helicopters (7 UH-1H Iroquois, 1 Bell 212, 5 Bell 412, 3 SA 315B Lama, 2 Alouette III, 8 Bell 206B Jetranger, 5 Bell 206L-1 Longranger II, 1 Hughes Model 500 D)

8. **Paramilitary:**

None. Public security forces consist of the National Police and Treasury Police. Both are subordinate to the Minister of Government and Interior.

Personnel Strength: National Police – 9,500; Treasury Police – 2,100

**(C) All 11 Pilatus PC-7 aircraft are configured for ordnance delivery (4 7.62-mm machineguns, 2 2.75-Inch rocket pods (5 rockets each), and 250-lb bombs).**
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9. (U) Key US Officials (all in Guatemala City except as indicated):
   Chief of Mission: Ambassador Alberto M. Piedra
   Director, AID Mission: Charles E. Costello
   Defense Attaché and Army Attaché: COL George A. Hooker, USA
   Assistant Army Attaché: MAJ Roy P. St. Clair, USA
   Naval Attaché: CAPT William Cavanaugh, USMC
   Air Attaché (Tegucigalpa): COL Glenn W. Young, USAF
   Military Group Commander and Chief Army Section: COL David R. McLaughlin, USA
   Chief, Air Force Section: COL Philip K. Waldron, USAF
   Joint Logistics Officer: LTC Gerardo Acosta, USAF

10. (CF) Foreign Military Presence: Israeli and Swiss technical representatives visit Guatemala on a regularly scheduled basis to provide advisory and technical assistance for the operation and maintenance of the Israeli Arava and Swiss Pilatus PC-7 aircraft. A few Salvadoran officers and NCOs attend Guatemalan Army schools. An estimated 15 to 20 Taiwanese military and civilian technicians have aided in helicopter repair as well as civic action operations.