



Directorate of
Intelligence

44
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Latin America Review [Redacted]

7 September 1993

Approved for Release

NOV 1993

El Salvador

Military Human Rights Office Flawed

The Salvadoran Armed Forces Human Rights Office, established earlier this year to respond to charges of military human rights violations, remains overworked and understaffed, and its investigations may be biased by internal military manipulation.

The office is the first organization within the military charged with overseeing the armed forces' conduct on human rights, but the failure of the High Command to allocate sufficient resources to the project raises doubts about the military's resolve to investigate itself. The office can adequately carry out its task of responding to inquiries from national and international organizations and embassies, but its investigative responsibility has fallen to junior officers who do not have the influence, experience, or resources to investigate violations thoroughly. Moreover, because the officers conducting the investigations usually hail from the same units as the alleged perpetrators, unbiased handling of their cases—and independence from unit commanders—cannot be guaranteed.