

Raúl Benítez Manaut, *Strategies of Mexican Foreign Policy in El Salvador (1979-1992)*

This essay outlines the extent to which Mexican backing of the peace process in El Salvador constituted one of the most important moments in Mexican 20th Century foreign policy. The onset of crisis across countries of the Central American isthmus in the late seventies compelled Mexico to opt for an active diplomacy that refused to see the rise of guerrilla forces as a threat to continental security. Instead, Mexico deemed that the emergence of these movements was inevitable and it even drew comparisons with its own Mexican Revolution. In the case of El Salvador, 1981 saw the issuance of the “Franco-Mexican Declaration”, which brought forth a phase of strong diplomatic efforts in the country and recognized the coalition formed by the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front and the Democratic Revolutionary Front as a “representative political force”. Benítez Manaut analyzes the foundation of the Contadora Group (1983-1986), its crisis and increase in military activity and looks at how, from 1990 onwards, the stagnation of the situation on the ground led to the UN returning to the case of El Salvador, this time in the context of the fall of the Berlin Wall. By way of his analysis, the author concludes that the active role played by Mexico in this process was evidenced by the UN’s recognition of Mexico at the signing of the Peace Accords at Chapultepec Castle in January 1992.

Ana Covarrubias, *The Franco-Mexican Declaration on El Salvador*

In 1981, the governments of Mexico and France delivered the Franco-Mexican Declaration on El Salvador, in which they recognized insurgent groups, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front and the Democratic Revolutionary Front, as representative political forces. From this point forth, much discussion has taken place on the reason and the purpose behind this Declaration and, more importantly, on its interventionist nature, or otherwise, and what it meant in terms of Mexican foreign policy. Ana Covarrubias pinpoints arguments to explain the Declaration's formulation, including the reasons of one of its main proponents, Gustavo Iruegas, and its objectives. Furthermore, she proceeds to analyze its outcomes, as she draws a distinction between Mexican isolation in the region and the positive reaction of groups opposing the Salvadorian government. She argues how this was an interventionist declaration that responded to what was then identified as the Mexican interest, further maintaining that it did not achieve its purposes in terms of negotiations between the government and Salvadorian guerrilla groups and influencing a change in United States policy towards the conflict. Nevertheless, the author explains that the declaration clearly reflects how Mexican state officials understood the situation in Central America.

Rodrigo Páez Montalbán, *The Negotiation Process of the Contadora Group*

Throughout the nineteen eighties, Central America was the scene of multiple conflicts that triggered armed struggles

in various countries, the effects of which spilled over across the region. Rodrigo Páez Montalbán notes how the Contadora Group formed by Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—which took its name from the Panamanian island where the group was created—was set up as a diplomatic endeavor to contribute to the solution for peace being negotiated between all parties to the conflict. After ascertaining the complex political processes that existed in Central America, and concerned by foreign interference in these processes and the ruling out of the use of force in resolving the crisis, the Group undertook a monumental task of diplomatic containment that succeeded in getting the governments of Central American around the negotiating table. This complex process triggered the signing of the Accords for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace, with the initiative being left in the hands of these same Central American governments. Páez Montalbán describes the nature, circumstances, complexities and achievements of the Contadora Group within this complex negotiating environment and further highlights Mexico's strong voice in these endeavors.

David Escobar Galindo, *Mexican Contributions to the Salvadorian War's Political Solution*

One contribution of Mexican diplomacy in finding a solution to the war in El Salvador was the Franco-Mexican Declaration (1981) which acknowledged the representative nature of the alliance between the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front and the Democratic Revolutionary Front. David Escobar Galindo deems this international intervention to have been an incontrovertible historical milestone that reaffirmed the

national nature of the war; essentially a domestic conflict between traditional and revolutionary powers. Escobar Galindo further points out that when, in 1989, the international situation allowed both camps to sit down and build an understanding for a definitive solution, Mexico returned to the front line with a contribution that was not restricted to providing hospitality and logistical coordination, but also brought strong political and diplomatic support. Finally, the author reflects on what the war's political solution has meant for El Salvador, with a platform that has enabled a project to be developed for a peaceful and democratic society.

Ana Guadalupe Martínez, *Actions for the Integration of the Salvadorian Revolutionary Movement*

From the beginning of the Salvadorian conflict in the late nineteen seventies until the signing of the Peace Accords, Mexican foreign policy remained consistent and its actions were decisive for the popular revolutionary movement in Central America. In this essay, Ana Guadalupe Martínez discusses how Mexico was regarded as bringing up the political rear during this process, how it worked to build a shield against United States intervention (maintaining a stance that was independent of the pressures and interests of the USA), how it influenced the democratization of thought among the Salvadorian revolutionary leadership (turning the leaders of an orthodox guerrilla movement into leaders of an insurgent movement with a broad and extensive vision) and how it was instrumental in establishing areas for negotiations between the conflicting parties (for example, its commitment to implementing programs that enabled demobilized former insurgents to become reintegrated into economic life).

Sergio González Gálvez, *Mexican Diplomacy in the Chapultepec Accords Negotiation Process*

Mexico's strong tradition of prioritizing neighboring countries in its foreign relations, in particular its friends in Central America, with occasional involvement in pursuing peaceful solutions to domestic conflicts in order to avoid bloodshed and any international spillover of conflicts which could, due to their proximity, eventually lead to consequences in Mexico, always undertaken in careful consultation with national authorities, as has been the case in Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador, which it has combined with immediate support in reacting to natural disasters that have occurred in the region, constitute a significant feature of Mexican foreign policy, which has not only seen the prompt actions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also the constant support of other government agencies such as the Ministry of National Defense and the Navy, etc. This short article gives an account of Mexican participation in the conflict that affected the neighboring Republic of El Salvador in the midst of the Cold War and draws together information from various sources in an effort to explain to the reader not only the basis for Mexico's actions, which continue to influence us today, but also in this case the positive outcome obtained through the clear congruence of endeavors between the Contadora Group, in which Mexico participated from the outset, and the Secretaries-General of the UN and the OAS.

Carlos Castañeda Magaña, *Historical and Future Perspectives of the Peace Accords in El Salvador*

In this article, Carlos Castañeda Magaña outlines the scope of the Peace Accords signed on January 16, 1992, in

Chapultepec, Mexico, and its impact on El Salvador's future. Moreover, Castañeda Magaña discusses the contribution of the international community in achieving peace and establishing democracy. The author particularly highlights Mexico's role as one of the international actors that had a hand in the refounding of the Salvadorian nation through its recognition of the parties to the conflict and its influence in getting groups of nations to participate in the process for peace in the Central American region. The author explains how the Peace Accords cleared the way for the establishment of democratic institutions such as the National Civil Police Force and the Office of the Procurator for the Defense of Human Rights, in addition to constitutional reforms and reforms of the Salvadorian justice system. The agreement also saw the quashing of the repressive military bodies whose abuse was felt by the civil population. He further discusses the crowning moment in the history of the Central American country: the alternation of power, when the Salvadorian Left formed the government for the first time, bringing forward a national agenda for economic growth, social justice, equality and democracy.