EL SALVADOR

Date of Elections: 28 March 1982

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in the national Constituent Assembly. It will be recalled that the Legislative Assembly elected in March 1978 was dissolved following the coup d'Etat of 15 October 1979.

Characteristics of Parliament

The national Constituent Assembly of El Salvador is composed of 60 members elected for the purpose of drafting a new Constitution and preparing for new presidential and parliamentary elections, the former due to take place in 1983.

Electoral System

All citizens aged 18 and over, except for members of the armed and security forces, were entitled to vote for members of the Constituent Assembly. Voting was compulsory.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The election date was announced on 11 November 1981 and the eight-week electoral campaign opened on 28 January 1982. A total of 331 candidates were in contention.

On polling day, the centrist Christian Democratic Party (PDC), led by President of the Republic Jose Napoleon Duarte, won the largest number of seats (24) but failed to secure an absolute Assembly majority with the result that the five right-wing parties, led by the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), contesting the election came together to form a coalition disposing of 36 seats. Leftist parties had boycotted the poll.

At its opening session on 26 April, the Assembly approved decrees granting itself, *inter alia,* legislative powers. On 29 April, a centrist candidate, Dr. Alvaro Magana, was elected as interim Head of State. On 4 May, a 14-member Government took office in which the right-wing parties held eight posts, the PDC three and independents three. The President of the Assembly is Major Roberto d'Aubuisson, leader of ARENA.

Statistics

1. *Distribution of Seats in the Constituent Assembly*

Pohtrcal Group	j	Number
Christian Democratic Party (PDC).		24
Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) . .		19
Nationalist Reconciliation Party (PCN)		14
Democratic Action (AD)		2
Salvadorean Popular Party (PPS) J.		1
		60