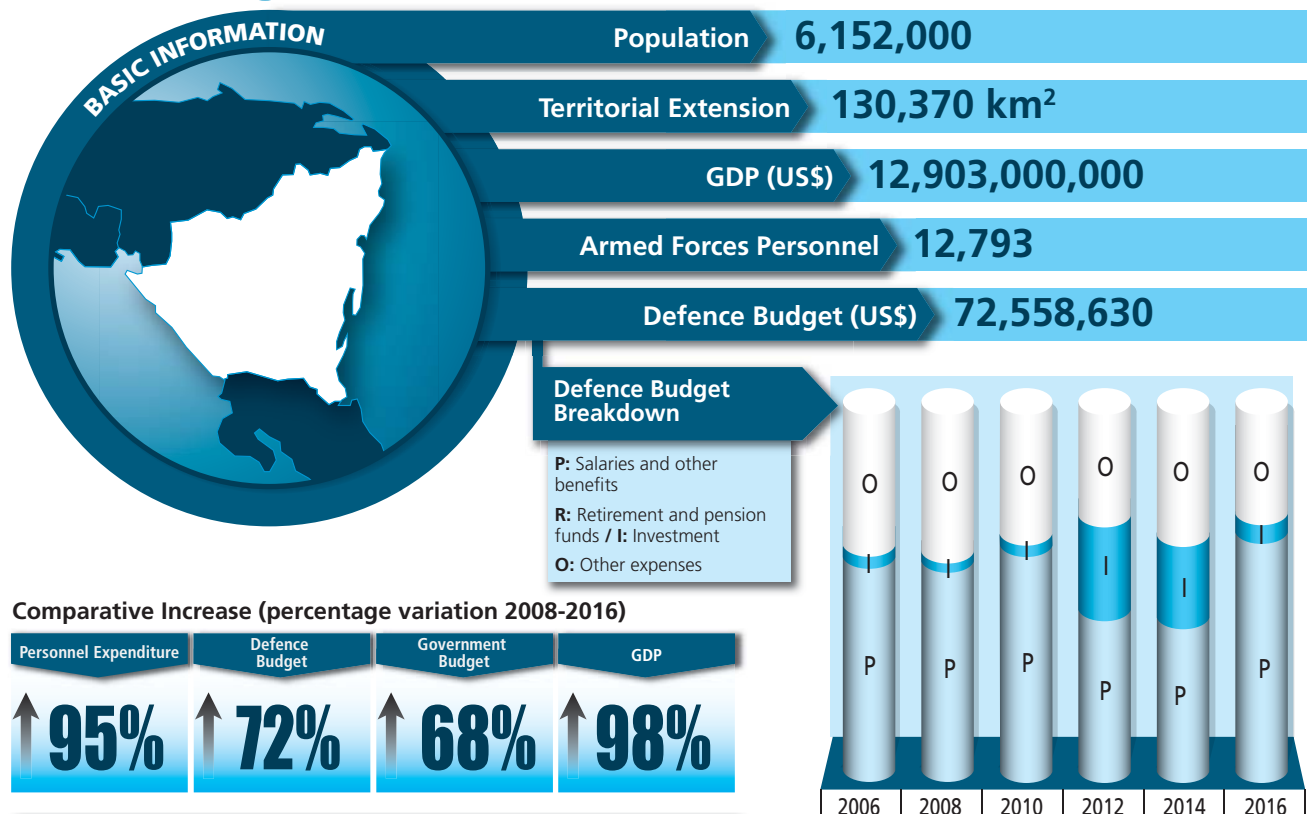


# Nicaragua



The Ministry of Defence was created in 1979 and its incumbent Minister is Dr. Martha Elena Ruiz Sevilla.

## The Legal Framework

### National Legislation

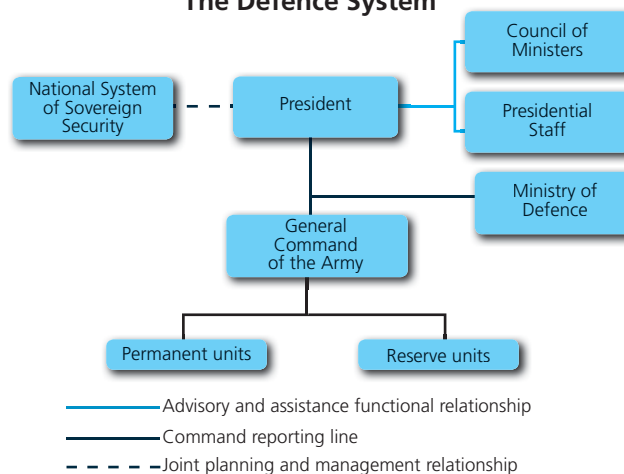
#### Systems and concepts

- Act on the Organization, Competence and Procedures of the Executive Power (N° 290 - 1998/06/03. Last amendment: Act N° 929 - 2016/05/25).
- Law establishing the national system for disaster prevention, mitigation and response (N° 337 - 2000/04/07. Last amendment: Law N° 863 - 2014/05/19).
- National Defence Act (N° 748 - 2010/12/22).
- Law on the legal framework on borders (N° 749 - 2010/12/22).
- Law of sovereign security of the Republic of Nicaragua (N° 919 - 2015/12/18).

#### Military Organization

- Code of Organization, Jurisdiction and Military Social Benefits (Act N° 181 - 1994/08/23. Last amendment: Act N° 855 - 2014/02/11).
- Organic Act of Military Tribunals (N° 523 - 2005/04/05. Last amendment: Act N° 567 - 2005/11/25).
- Military Penal Code (Act N° 566 - 2006/01/05).
- Code of Military Penal Procedures (Act N° 617 - 2007/08/29).

## The Defence System



National Defence is conducted through the higher military and political bodies. The President is the Supreme Chief of the Army of Nicaragua. The Council of Ministers is the main advisory body on defence and security matters. The Presidential Cabinet is a consultative body for national defence matters available to the President of the Republic. The Ministry of Defence is the consultative body in matters relating to the creation and implementation of national defence plans and policies, and manages the elaboration of defence policies throughout the national territory on behalf of the President. The High Command structure is under the leadership of the General Command of the Army and is made up of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, the Chief-of-Staff and the Inspector General. The Commander-in-Chief is the senior military advisor to the President with regard to his/her role as Supreme Chief of the Army of Nicaragua, including the elaboration of national security and defence plans and policies as well as coordinating their implementation. The Assembly exercises the powers granted to it by the Constitution and continuously monitors defence-related matters through the Committee of Peace, Defence, Interior and Human Rights.

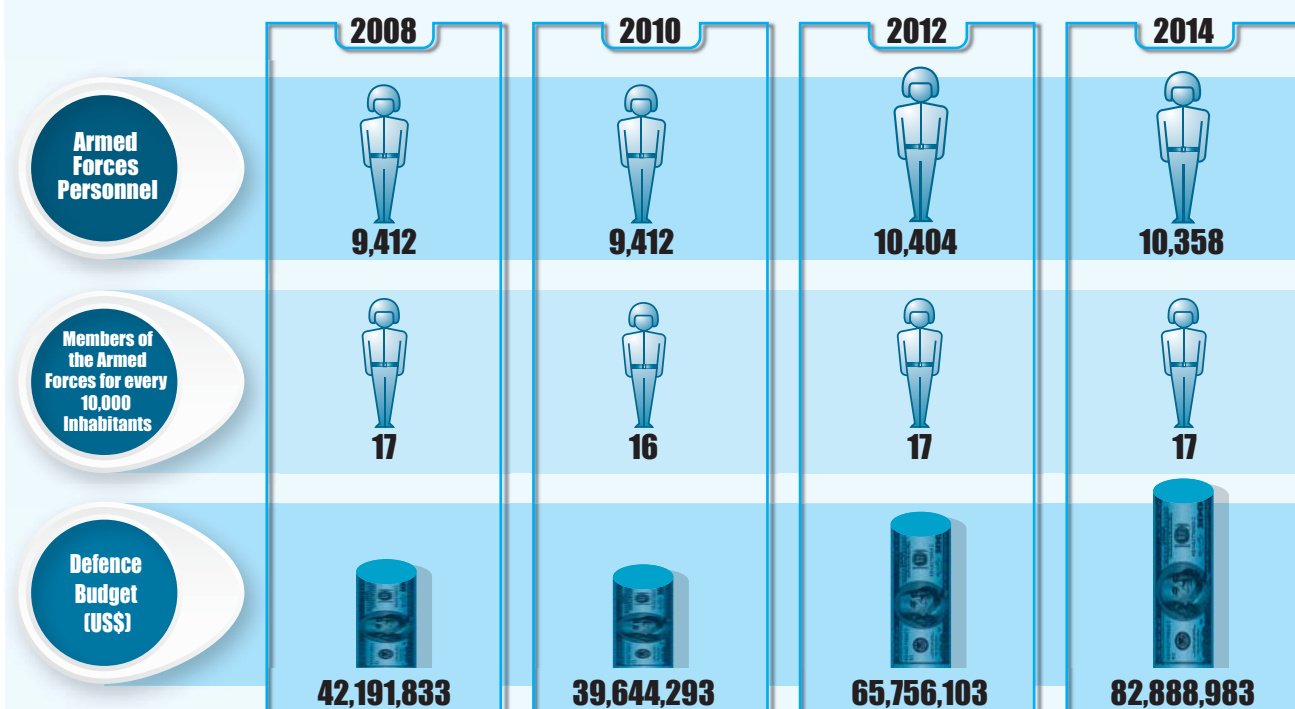
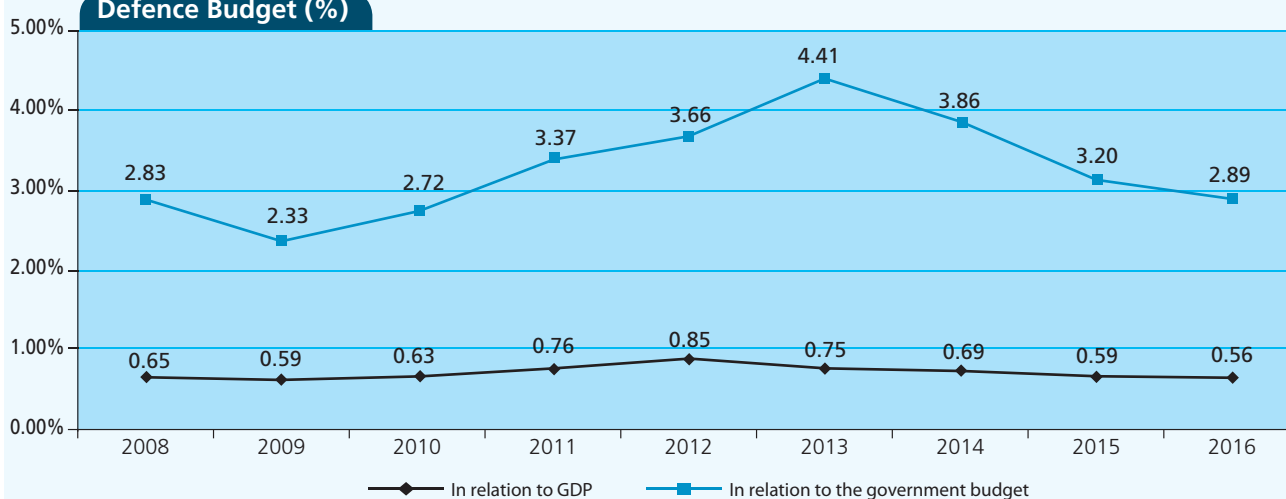
**Source:** Compilation based on *Ley de organización, competencia y procedimientos del Poder Ejecutivo* (N° 290 - 1998/06/03. Last amendment: N° 929 - 2016/05/25), *Ley de la Defensa Nacional* (N° 748 - 2010/12/22) and *Ley de seguridad soberana de la República de Nicaragua* (N° 919 - 2015/12/18).

**Source:** *Anuario Estadístico de América Latina y el Caribe*, 2015, CEPAL (territory and population: projection 2016), IMF, World Economic Outlook Database, (GDP: projection 2016), and *Ley anual de presupuesto general de la República* 2016 (personnel).

## Budget

Year	Defence Budget (US\$)	Government Budget (US\$)	GDP (US\$)
2008	42,191,833	1,492,080,617	6,523,000,000
2009	37,293,776	1,598,952,131	6,298,000,000
2010	39,644,293	1,455,689,864	6,246,000,000
2011	53,774,224	1,596,112,400	7,078,000,000
2012	65,756,103	1,794,342,438	7,695,000,000
2013	85,080,114	1,931,049,585	11,272,000,000
2014	82,888,983	2,148,730,368	11,946,000,000
2015	71,613,275	2,238,993,587	12,222,000,000
2016	72,558,630	2,513,867,020	12,903,000,000

## Defence Budget (%)



**Source:** Compilation based on the Ley anual de presupuesto general de la República from 2006 to 2016. The Government Budget is considered as that passed by Congress in the aforementioned law. Investment is considered as that presented in "Capital Expenditure/Assets".  
 GDP: Projection of the World Economic Outlook Database, IMF, for each year considered. This source has been taken for comparative purposes. Each country prepares the budget based on its own GDP estimation. The value of the dollar considered corresponds to the exchange rate determined by the World Economic Outlook Database, IMF, for each year under consideration.

## The Armed Forces

### General Mission

The Army of Nicaragua is the armed institution responsible for defending the country's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Only in exceptional cases, when stability of the Republic is threatened by severe internal disorders, calamity or natural disasters, shall the President, acting within a session of the Council of Ministers, be entitled to order the intervention of the Army of Nicaragua in support of the National Police. (Constitution, Sec. 92)

Its mission is to prepare, organize and lead the armed defence of the homeland, and to defend the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of the Nation. Its missions, composition and structure are defined according to the scenarios, threats and risks identified by the Nicaraguan State, which will provide the necessary public means and resources to provide the Army of Nicaragua with the ability required to comply with its missions and tasks in times of peace, with the purpose of preventing and deterring any type of international armed conflict.

The Army of Nicaragua shall plan, organize, prepare, manage and execute the national armed defence of the homeland and defend the territorial integrity, the independence and sovereignty of the nation. In turn, it shall intervene -in exceptional cases- to support the National Police, under the order of the President of the Republic within the Council of Ministers, where the stability of the Republic is threatened by large internal disorders, calamities or natural disasters and assist in the execution of work that contribute with the country's development.

It shall co-assist in case of extreme need, in maintaining peace and order in the nation, as well as in the fight against drug trafficking, arms trafficking and human trafficking and transnational organized crime. It shall contribute to strengthening the risk management policy, based on preventing, mitigating and managing natural disasters, safeguarding the life and property of the population. It shall participate in international peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance missions, in accordance to the UN Charter, approved by Resolution No. 84 of Nicaragua's Congress, international treaties or agreements signed and ratified by the State of Nicaragua based on regulations and principles of International Law.

(Ley de la defensa nacional, N° 748, Sec. 16 and 17).

### Specific Missions

#### Army

The Land Force is the Army's main instrument to perform missions in defence of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, acting in coordination with the Air Force, the Navy and common bodies.

#### Navy

The Navy carries out missions to support the Army, and independent missions directed by the High Command of the Army. Ground force units that carry out security and safeguarding missions of units and facilities form part of the Navy

#### Air Force

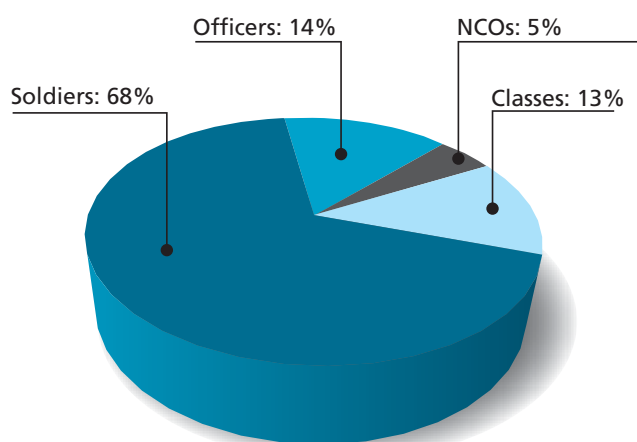
The Air Force carries out missions to support the Army and Navy as well as independent missions directed by the High Command of the Army. The land force units, which carry out missions of air, defence, security and maintenance of the units and facilities form part of the Air Force.

### Armed Forces Personnel:

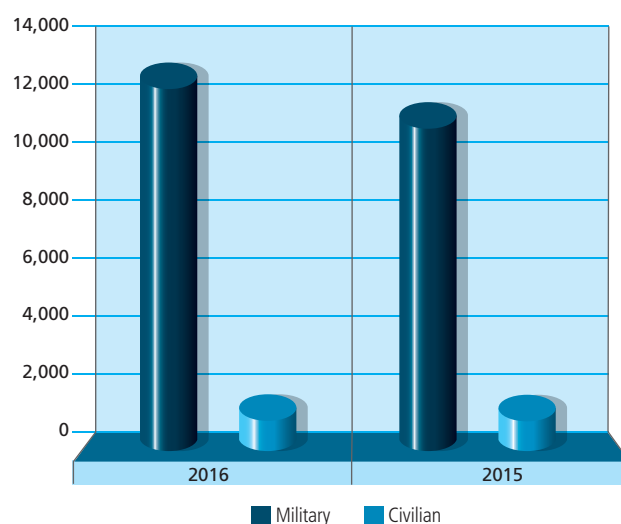
Officers:	1,802
NCOs:	587
Classes:	1,665
Soldiers:	8,739

**Total Armed Forces Personnel: 12,793**

### Armed Forces Personnel



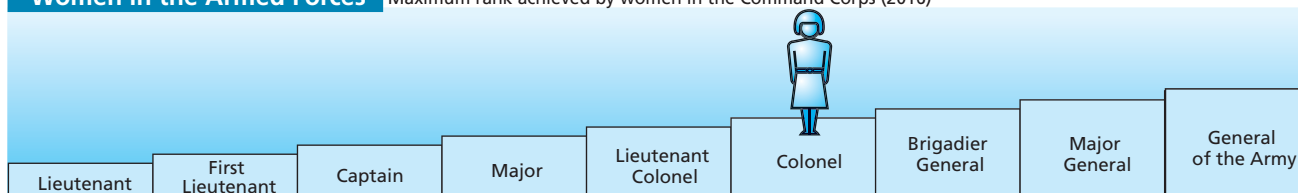
### Defence sector personnel



**Source:** Ley de la defensa nacional (N° 748 – 2010/12/22) and Código de organización, jurisdicción y previsión social militar (N° 181 - 1994/08/23. Last amendment: Act N° 855 - 2014/02/11) (missions) and Ley anual de presupuesto general de la República 2015 and 2016 (personnel).

### Women in the Armed Forces

Maximum rank achieved by women in the Command Corps (2016)



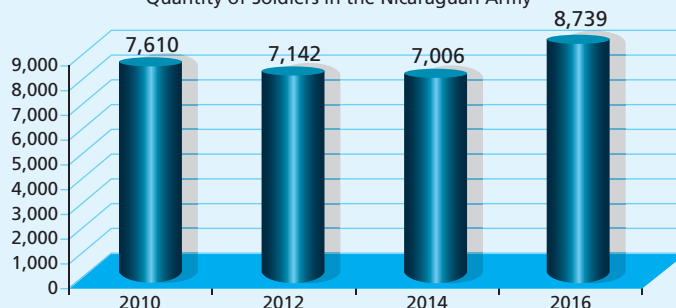
**Note:** These ranks correspond to the Army as an example. The highest rank achieved since the creation of the National Army as the only armed force of the Republic, in 1979, is considered. The command corps includes officers who have been educated at military academies from the beginning of their careers, different to those who develop a career in the civilian sphere and are then incorporated to the military.

### Military Service

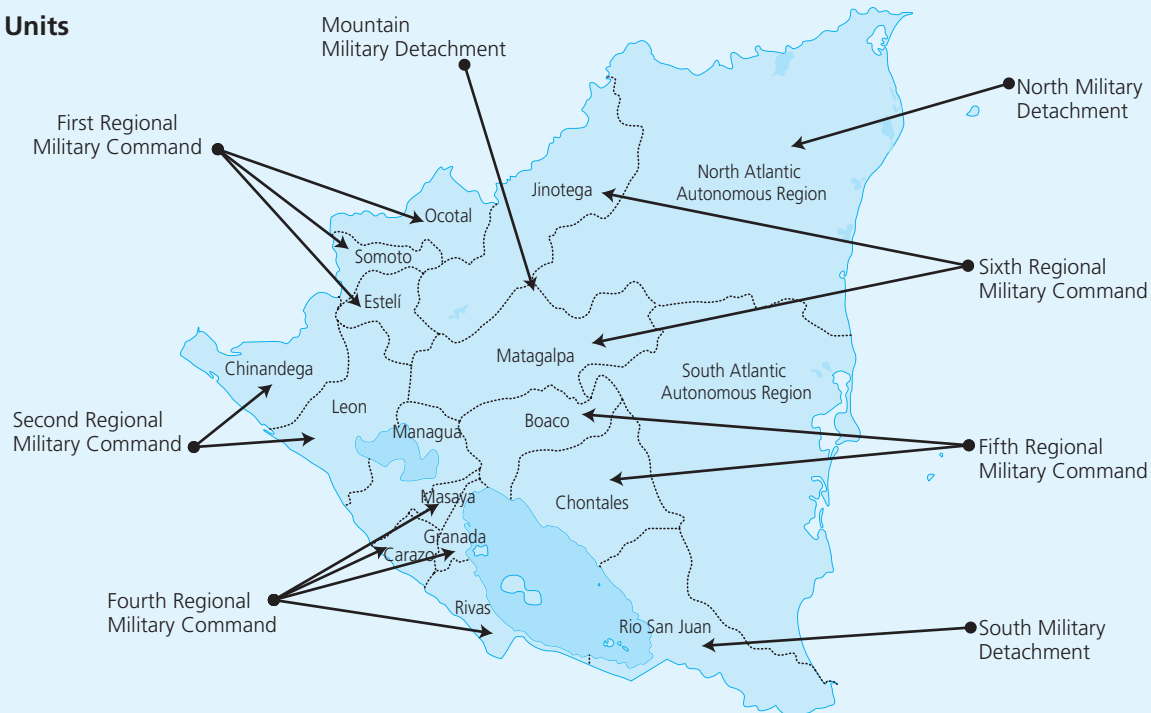
Men and women are equally allowed to enter the military service, which has a one-year duration and the possibility of further extension. The Political Constitution forbids any type of compulsory recruitment and thus military service is optional.

Since 1998, the new soldiers of the Nicaraguan Army have received a 3-month training course at the National School of Basic Infantry Training "Soldado Ramón Montoya" (ENABI). Graduates from this School become temporary military members and can be hired for a 3 to 5-year period, after which they can continue with their active service for 5 additional years or access military courses that allow them to become career military personnel.

Quantity of Soldiers in the Nicaraguan Army



### Army Units



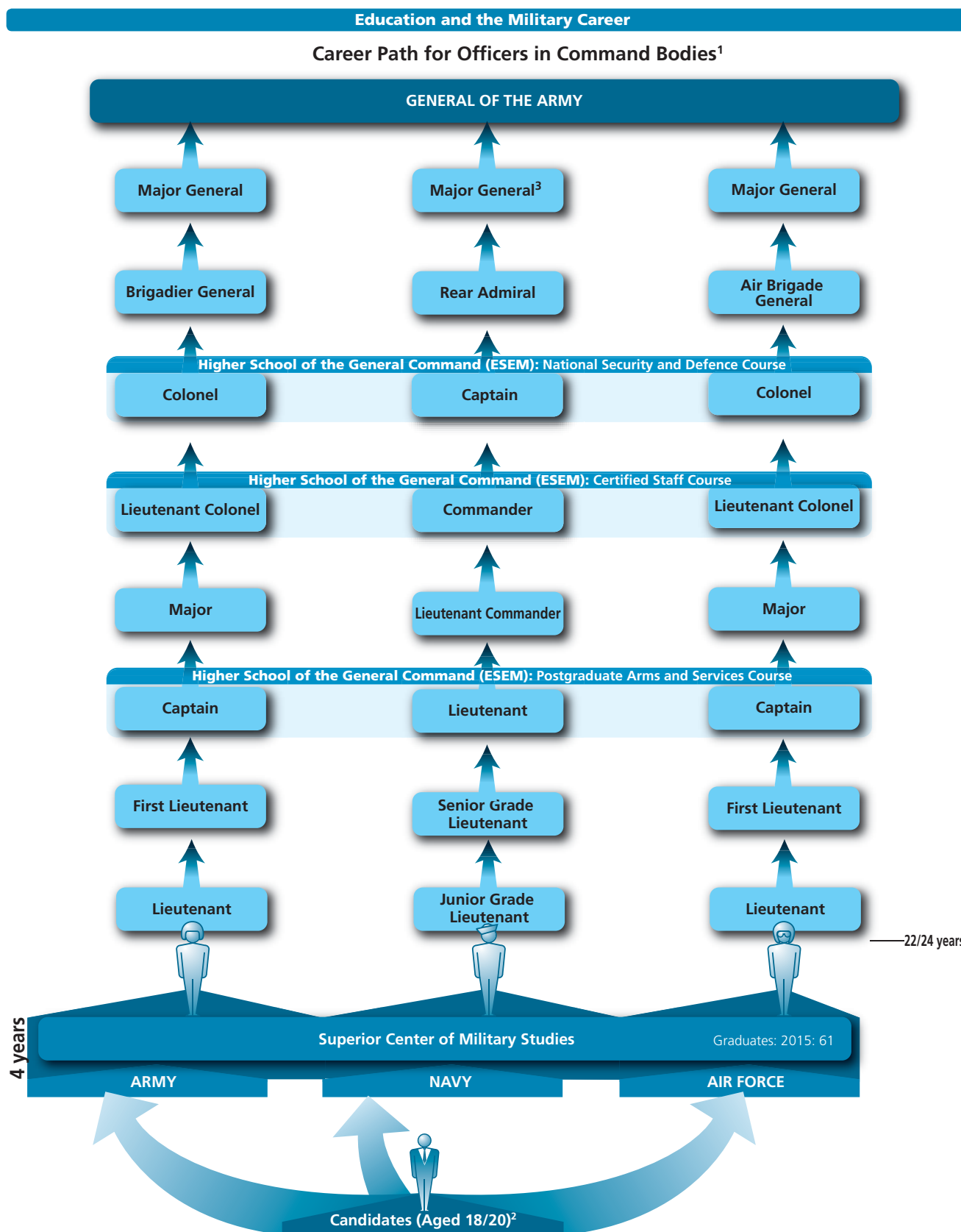
### Border Protection

It falls under the so-called "Containment wall" strategy. It includes smuggling and illegal immigration detection.

In the last few years, cooperation with Honduras has intensified, also within the framework of the CFAC. Combined operations between these countries, called "Morazan-Sandinista", have the operational aim of combating drug-trafficking (including crop growing, transfer and sale of marihuana), illegal arms trafficking and livestock smuggling in border areas.

The Nicaraguan Army serves as the Executive Secretary of the National Sovereign Security System. The Defense Information Directorate is the entity in charge of performing such role.

**Source:** Ley anual de presupuesto general de la República 2016, Ley de seguridad soberana de la república de Nicaragua (Nº 919 – 2015/12/18), Memoria Anual 2015 del Ejército de Nicaragua, Libro de la Defensa Nacional de Nicaragua ) and the website of the Nicaraguan Army.



<sup>1</sup> Command corps includes officers who have been educated at military academies from the beginning of their professional careers. The graph makes a theoretical reconstruction of officer' promotion through the completion of mandatory courses. Further requirements for promotion have not been considered.

<sup>2</sup> Ages 18-20 years have been considered for comparative purposes. The minimum age for promotion shall depend on the age of graduation from the military institution.

<sup>3</sup> Senior Officers of the Naval Force who hold a position in the General Command of the Nicaraguan Army shall receive the rank corresponding to the military hierarchy of the Army..

**Source:** Compilation based on the *Libro de la Defensa Nacional de Nicaragua*, 2005, and the website of the aforementioned institutions and the Nicaraguan Army.



## Defence and National and International Community

## Activities in which the defence is related to:

The Environment and Natural Resources

Health

National Police

Immigration and Foreign

Persons

Education

Supreme Electoral Council

Transport and infrastructure

## The Nicaraguan Army carries out a variety of plans linked to community support:

## 2015 Operational Plans

A few results:

- 487 criminals arrested.
- 15,488 undocumented individuals stopped.
- 201 drug traffickers arrested (nationals and foreigners).
- 142 firearms restricted.
- 262 firearms of civilian use.
- 4,457 ammunitions.
- 2,958 Kg cocaine seized.
- 714 Kg marihuana seized.

Through the Navy, Air Force, and the Airport Security and Protection Detachment (DEPSA), the Army cooperated in maintaining security at 5 ports.

Fight against drug trafficking and organized crime

Airport and port security

## Protection and Security of the Coffee Harvest:

Protection and security for coffee harvest: In the 2015 production cycle, they secured the collection of 2,130,222 quintals (100 lbs equivalent) of coffee, totaling around US\$290,000,000. Protection and security was provided to the transfer of money for the sale of coffee, remunerations of coffee growing workers, benefits and storage centers.

Defence of objectives that, due to their political, economic and social importance, are considered to be strategic for security, stability and national development.

- 101 strategic objectives have been identified: energy, telecommunications, road infrastructure, ports, airports, large development projects, water supply stations, among others.

Protection of strategic objectives

Rural security

Aims to neutralize the criminal activity of groups, permit the free and safe circulation of citizens and of transport, facilitate commercial agricultural, livestock and coffee-production activities.

## Disaster Support

## Earthquake Contingency Plan

Seismic hazards in Nicaragua are common. The high seismic zone corresponds to the strip that runs parallel to the coast of the Pacific Ocean, where they occur at depths greater than 40 km, in the friction zone between the Cocos and Caribbean lithospheric plates.

The Earthquake Plan has a fundamental strategic objective of establishing guidelines and courses of action to be implemented from the moment of impact, clarification of the situation by relevant authorities, the disposition of forces and means by state institutions, municipal governments, relief agencies and local volunteers for the management and development of humanitarian assistance operations to assist the affected population in an effective and timely manner, facilitating the following actions:

Search, locate and rescue.  
First aid medical assistance.  
Firefighting.  
Evacuation and protection of evacuees.

## Plan for the prevention and control of forest fires

Oriented towards the prevention and control of forest fires and the need for correct operation planning that involves the variety of authorities from central government to community leaders in the municipalities located in the departments of Esteli, Madriz, Nueva Segovia, Chinandega, León, Masaya, Granada, Carazo, Rivas and RAAN.

For the implementation of this plan, coordination is established between troops of the Nicaraguan Army, the National Police, the Fire Department, Fire Brigades and the structures of the Committees for Prevention, Mitigation, and Response to Disasters, and departmental, municipal and local authorities.

## Plan for tsunamis on the pacific coastal zone

The Plan is implemented by the General Command of Civil Defence in close coordination with the Executive Secretariat of SINAPRED, and with the participation of structures that form part of the Commission of Special Operations: Air Force, Navy, and Regional Military Commands 2 and 4, contingents of troops from the Military Unit of the Capital, and of the Humanitarian and Rescue Unit (UHR) of the Nicaraguan Army. They would act on the basis of the plan for the deployment of forces, equipment and vehicles in response to natural or man-made disasters.

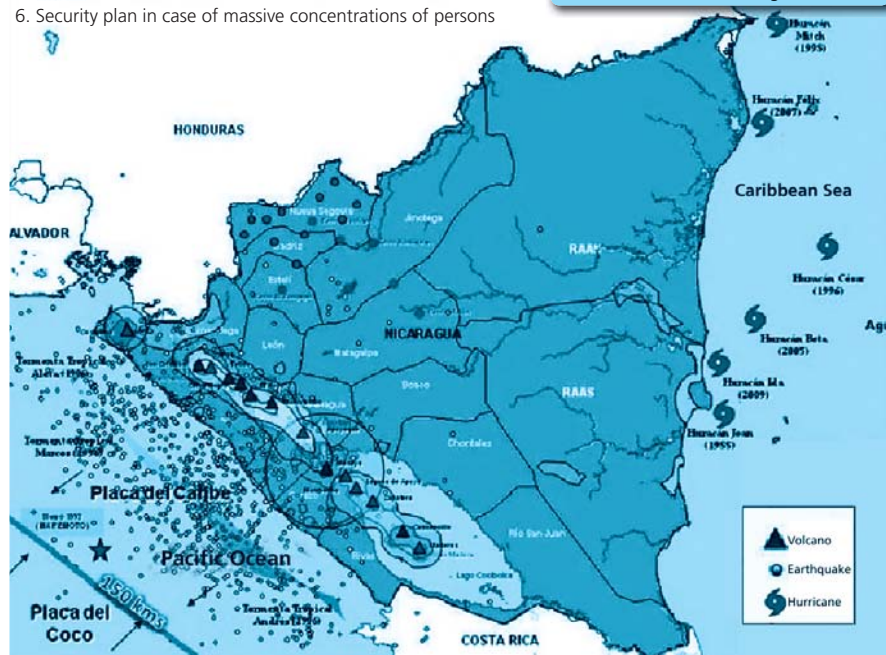
## Security plan in case of massive concentrations of persons

Its main objective is to articulate courses of action and operational measures to implement together with the members of the Committee for Special Operations to ensure the evacuation, rescue and provision of first aid assistance to participants in different activities involving the mass concentration of persons, in case of sudden large-scale events that may cause damages to the concentrated population.

The **Army's General Command of Civil Defence** has 6 contingency plans for providing humanitarian assistance to civilian populations affected by natural or man-made disasters.

1. Earthquake Plan - Pacific Region
2. Winter Plan (heavy rains and hurricanes)
3. Volcanic Eruption Plan
4. Plan for the prevention and control of forest fires
5. Plan for tsunamis on the coastal zone of the greater pacific region
6. Security plan in case of massive concentrations of persons

These plans are implemented in coordination with the different structures of the National System for the Prevention, Mitigation and Response to Disasters (SINAPRED) and local volunteers organized in committees and brigades.



## Winter Plan

The causes of these weather-related events, such as heavy rainfall, are associated with the flooding of rivers, creeks, streams, increases in the level of lakes and landslides lead to heavy damages to persons and property, transport and production infrastructure, and the environment.

The plan's main objective is to articulate courses of action to be developed in order to provide the forces, vehicles and equipment and State institutions in humanitarian assistance to the civilian population.

## Volcanic Eruption Plan

The frequency of volcanic eruptions is also variable, from those that are almost constantly erupting (Masaya), to those that are active only every 100 or even 1,000 years (Apoyeque). In 2005, the Volcano Concepción was active, generating eruptions and the expulsion of ash that reached the municipalities of Rivas, San Jorge, Buenos Aires, Potosí and Belén; without causing any material damage or loss of life. The basis of the plan is the analysis of risks and threats, including the implementation of a variety of operational actions and measures that seek to guarantee a rapid, efficient and opportune reaction in support of the civilian population. Thanks to the support of donor organizations, Nicaragua has access to various Early Warning Systems.

## Humanitarian and Rescue Unit (UHR) "Commander William Joaquín Ramírez Solórzano"

Launched in September 2010, it has 300 permanent members of the Army of Nicaragua, trained to support the population in response to natural or man-made disasters.

The Training Center for Peacekeeping Operations -CAOMPAZ- was created in December 2007 to train personnel according to UN standards.

Source: *Memoria del Ejército de Nicaragua (2015)* and the website of the Nicaraguan Army.