



Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Hearing

Witness Biographies

State of Exception in El Salvador

Panel I



Emily Mendrala currently serves as a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs covering Cuba and regional migration. Previously, Ms. Mendrala was the Executive Director of the Center for Democracy in the Americas, promoting U.S. policies of engagement toward the Americas, from 2017-2021. Her prior government service includes serving as a Director for Legislative Affairs in the National Security Council, working at the Department of State as a Special Advisor to the Coordinator for Cuban Affairs, and serving as an advisor on Central America regional affairs. Before joining the Department, she worked as a Professional Staff Member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Ms. Mendrala holds an M.A. in International Economics with a concentration in Latin American Studies from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a B.A. in Mathematics from the University of Virginia.



Scott Busby serves as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor at the U.S. Department of State where he oversees the Bureau's work on East Asia and the Pacific, the Western Hemisphere, business and human rights, and human rights-based sanctions. Previously, he served as Director for Human Rights on the National Security Council in the White House from 2009 to 2011 where he managed a wide range of human rights and refugee issues. From 2005 to 2009, he was Coordinator of the Intergovernmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees in Geneva, Switzerland. Prior positions include Director of the Office of Policy and Resource Planning at the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration in the Department of State (2000-2005), Director for Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs at the National Security Council (1997-2000), counsel at the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) (1995-1997) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (1992-1995). He got his start in federal service as an Asylum Officer at INS. Mr. Busby holds advanced degrees in sociology and law from the University of California at Berkeley and received his B.A. from Amherst College.

Panel II



Leonor Arteaga Rubio is a Salvadoran attorney. She heads the program on Impunity and Grave Human Rights Violations at the Due Process of Law Foundation (DPLF) in Washington, D.C., and is also a Commissioner for the National Commission for the Search of Disappeared Persons (CONABÚSQUEDA) in El Salvador, an ad-honorem position. At DPLF, Ms. Arteaga leads research, advocacy and monitoring initiatives on transitional justice issues and state violence in Latin America. She previously served as Deputy Ombudsman for Children and Youth at the Ombudsman's Office in El Salvador and worked with human rights organizations and victim's groups on litigation at the national and international level.



Noah Bullock has served as Executive Director of Cristosal, a human rights organization with a presence in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, since 2010. He came to El Salvador in 2005 as a Human Rights intern for Cristosal after graduating from the University of Montana with a bachelor degree in Liberal Arts: Emphasis in Peace and Conflict Studies. Mr. Bullock studied in 2001 at the International Institute for Conflict Research (INCORE), a joint project of the University of Ulster Northern Ireland and the United Nations University. He graduated cum laude with a postgraduate certificate in Local Development from the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas in 2009.



Héctor Silva Ávalos is a Salvadoran journalist. He studied journalism at the Universidad Centroamericana in San Salvador and at the University of Barcelona. He was an editor and senior researcher at the InSight Crime Foundation and a reporter and editor at *La Prensa Gráfica* in El Salvador for 15 years. He was a diplomat in Washington and a fellow at the Center for Latin American Studies at American University. In 2014 he wrote *Infiltrados: Crónica de la corrupción en la PNC de El Salvador* (1993-2013) and founded *Revista Factum*. He has collaborated with media including *El País* of Spain and *The New York Times* among others.



Tamara Taraciuk Broner joined Human Rights Watch as a fellow in 2005. She covered Mexico and Venezuela and has worked on several countries in the region as a senior researcher, as acting director, and currently as deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Americas Division. She previously was a junior scholar at the Latin American Program of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Ms. Taraciuk was born in Venezuela and grew up in Argentina, where she studied law at Torcuato Di Tella University. She has published articles in leading newspapers globally and holds a post-graduate diploma on human rights and transitional justice from the University of Chile, and a Master's degree in Law (LLM) from Columbia Law School.