Respondent entered the Salvadoran military at the age of 14. After completing his two years of compulsory service, he re-enlisted several times. When respondent left the military at the age of 23, he had obtained the rank of corporal and had technical skills with explosives and ammunition. Respondent had been trained as a sharpshooter and had acquired the expertise to train new soldiers. Respondent testified that prior to his return to civilian life in 1987 he had no reason to fear for his life.

Respondent testified that when he left the military, he returned to his mother's home where he worked seasonally in agriculture. Respondent also worked as an armed security officer in a textile factory. Respondent testified that as a civilian, he became a target for both military and guerilla attacks. Respondent explained that in an attempt to destabilize life in the towns, the guerillas would attack and burn factories. Respondent who was armed only with a gun, could not secure the safety of the textile factory and lived in fear for his life. Respondent also testified that persons he identified as Salvadoran government soldiers kidnapped him at gunpoint on at least three occasions. Respondent testified that he was tied, handcuffed, blindfolded, hung by his legs and tortured. Respondent testified that when his family sought help from civil rights groups and the Red Cross, the Salvadoran soldiers were pressured to release him. He was left beaten on the side of the road and told not to disclose who his kidnappers were.
Respondent testified that he lived in fear from both the Salvadoran military and the insurgent guerilla forces. He explained that he feared anti-government guerillas who wanted to kill him because he was a government soldier who fought against them in the war. He also feared that the military was interested in seeing him killed. Respondent said that the military was concerned that he could be exploited by opposition forces. As a civilian, he had become a liability to the military because of military expertise.

Respondent testified that he also feared for the safety of his family. He had many friends and neighbors, who disappeared and were eventually found dead. He explained that he left El Salvador to save his life.

Had the Salvadorian military been convinced that respondent was collaborating with the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front), it is unlikely that respondent would be alive today.