

CHAPTER 4

THE ARMED FORCES

Armed Forces Personnel



References:

Country	Total Armed Forces	Army	Navy	Air Force
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Note: Costa Rica, Panama and Cuba not included.

* Includes 180 ESMAD personnel.

Armed Forces Personnel

The Armed Forces in Latin America are permanent institutions, hierarchical and deployed throughout the territory. Some features help to make possible comparisons with other regions of the world:

They have long-standing, continuously updated organic laws and career data.

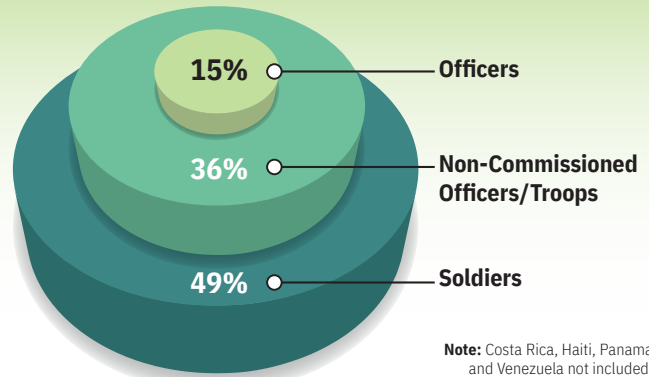
They are structured in distinct branches for the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

Their history dates back to the 19th century in most cases.

Their deployment covers the national territory, even in areas that other State institutions cannot access.

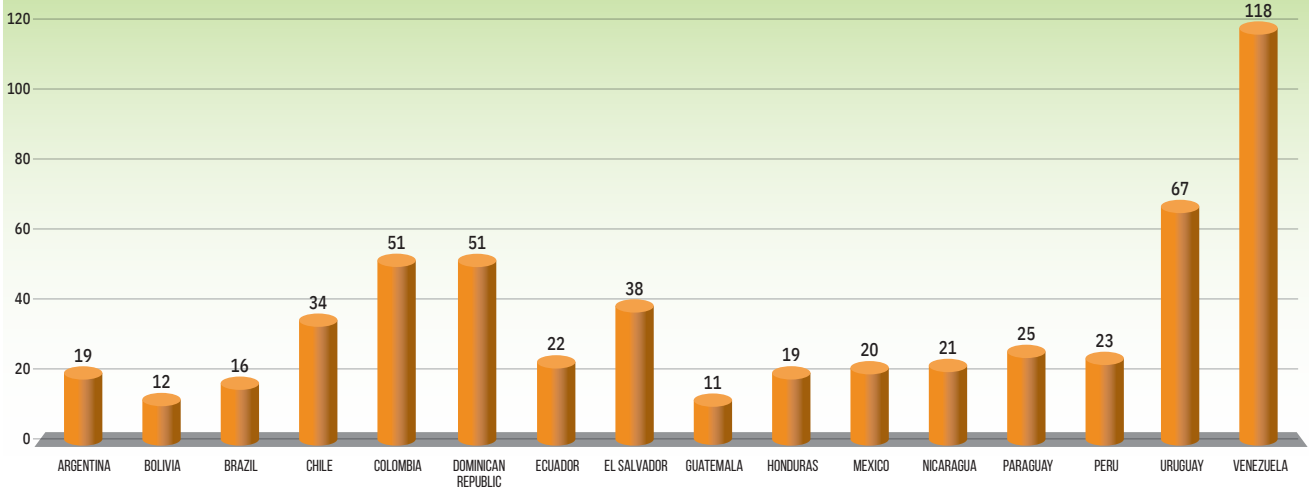
Even in cases where military service is compulsory, in practice most places are filled by people who register voluntarily. The operational nature of the forces is fuelled by a high proportion of career personnel.

Personnel Pyramid, Regional



Note: Costa Rica, Haiti, Panama and Venezuela not included.

Military Personnel per 10,000 Inhabitants



Military Personnel per 100 km²



Military Service

	Voluntary	Mandatory
Argentina	✓	
Bolivia		✓
Brazil		✓
Chile		✓
Colombia		✓
Cuba		✓
Dominican Rep.	✓	
Ecuador	✓	
El Salvador		✓
Guatemala		✓
Honduras	✓	
Mexico		✓
Nicaragua	✓	
Paraguay		✓
Peru	✓	
Uruguay	✓	
Venezuela	✓	

Source: Compilation based on the information detailed in the section 'The Countries' and legislation collected.

The Initial Military Training

In the Latin American region, the career personnel of the Armed Forces undergo a specific training period that usually takes years; the entire training process and subsequent training courses form highly professionalized forces.

The institutions have officers' academies and non-commissioned officers' academies. In some cases, there are even schools for troops.

Officers' Academies

Military academies for officers are institutions created to professionalize the officer corps, many of them close to two centuries of history. Its existence, variety of studies, and history illustrate the institutional basis of the Armed Forces in the region.

4 years

is the average time in the academy for officer training.

100%

of the military institutions in the region have an entry military academy for each armed force.

Most of the courses award, in addition to military studies, a Bachelor's degree.

Academies. Year of Creation.

100%

of the officer academies admit women.

33%

of them were created in the 19th century.

40%

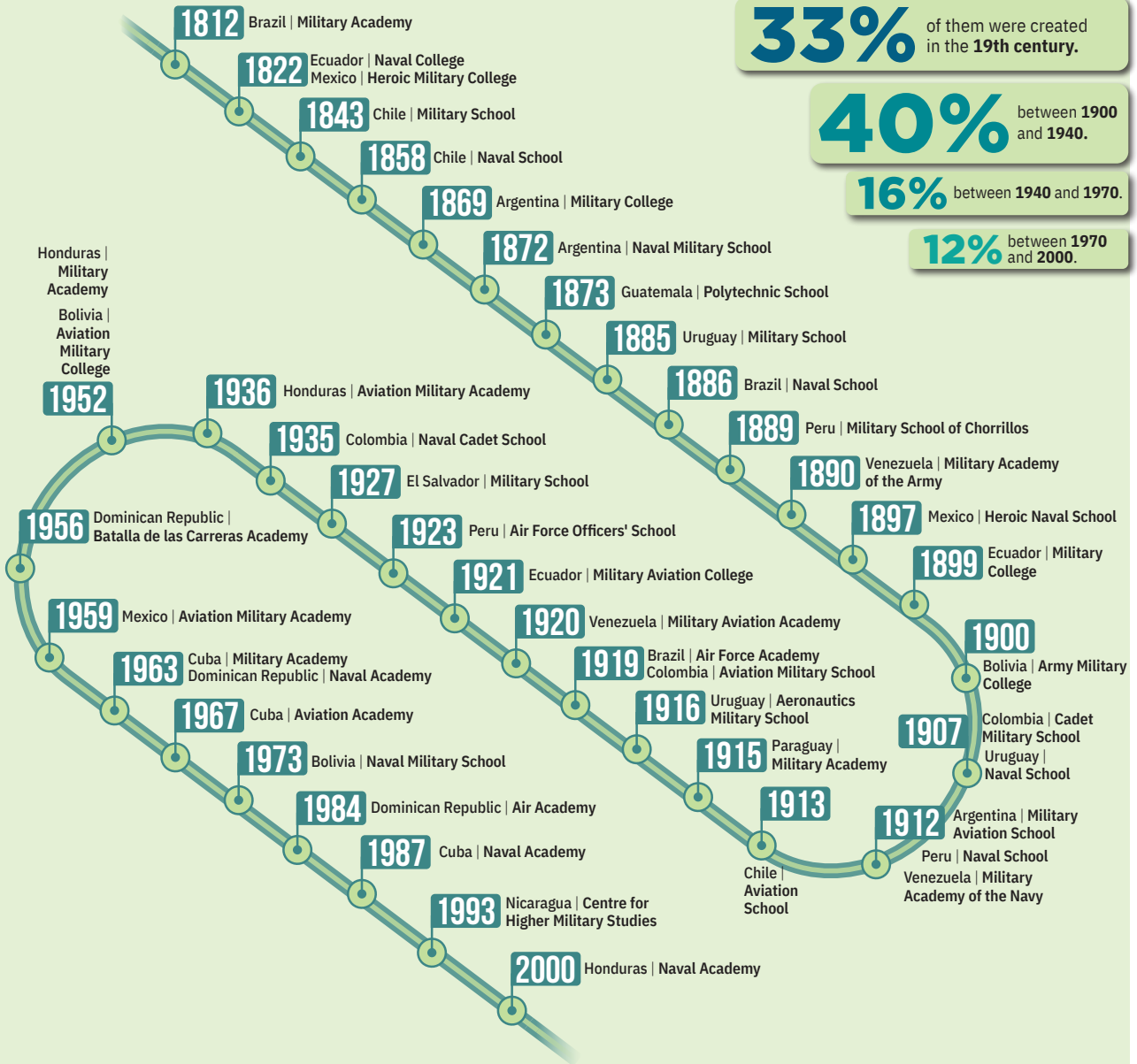
between 1900 and 1940.

16%

between 1940 and 1970.

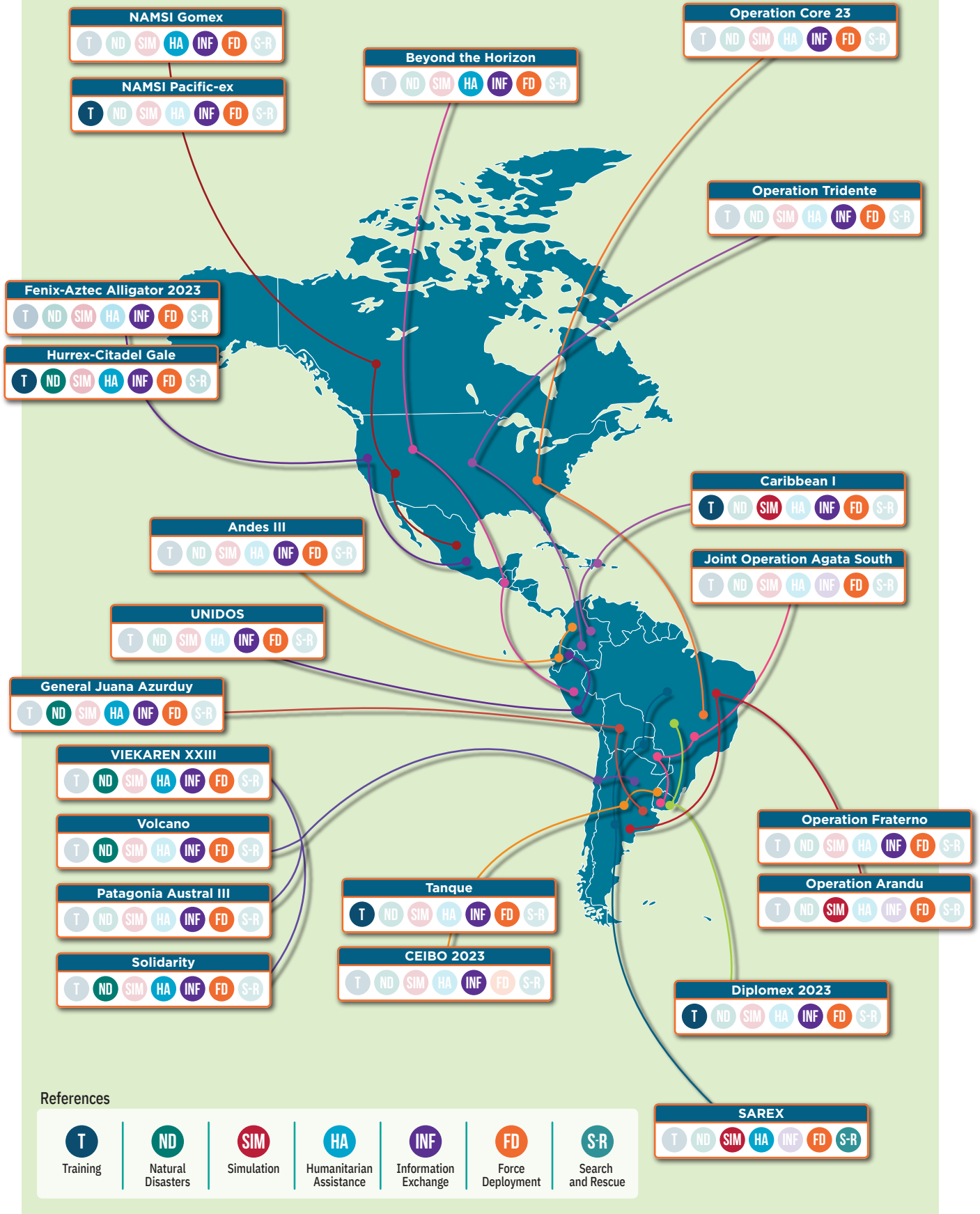
12%

between 1970 and 2000.



Source: Compilation based on the official websites of the official academies and information provided by the official institutions mentioned in the relevant country chapters.

Military Cooperation and Bilateral and Trilateral Exercises



Source: Compilation based on the official websites of the Ministries of Defence; reports and memories of labors; and information provided by the Ministries of Defence.

Military Criminal Justice Systems

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRIALS?

WHO IS TRIED?

MILITARY MODEL



Courts are composed of members of the Armed Forces only

MIXED MODEL



Civilians participate in this system through Supreme Courts as the last resort of appeal

CIVILIAN MODEL



The courts in charge of trying military crimes are composed of civilians only. The military justice system is within the civil criminal system



MILITARY



RETIRED MILITARY



CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OF THE ARMED FORCES



CIVILIANS NOT RELATED TO DEFENCE



POLICE AND/OR OTHER MEMBERS OF SECURITY FORCES

Argentina:			Military jurisdiction was revoked by Law N° 26394. Under this law, all offenses committed by military personnel are tried by the ordinary justice.				
Bolivia:	MM	M	RM	CAF	CV	PSF	
Brazil:	XM	M	RM	CAF	CV	PSF	
Chile:	XM	M	RM	CAF		PSF	
Colombia:	XM	M		CAF		PSF	
Cuba:	MM	M			CV	PSF	
Dominican Republic:	XM	M					
Ecuador:			Military jurisdiction was amended by the Political Constitution of Ecuador Republic, which establishes that all crimes committed by the military shall be tried by the ordinary justice.				
El Salvador:	XM	M					
Guatemala:	XM	M	RM	CAF		PSF	
Honduras:	XM	M					
Mexico:	XM	M					
Nicaragua:	XM	M					
Paraguay:	XM	M					
Peru:	XM	M				PSF	
Uruguay:	XM	M	RM				
Venezuela:	XM	M	RM				

Disciplinary Subsystem

Punishes acts defined as a breach or infringement of military discipline.

Infringement of Disciplinary Rules

Any willful or negligent act by military personnel affecting the disciplinary system.

Military Criminal Justice Subsystem

Penalizes acts classified as military crimes.

Military Crime

An illegal act affecting any legally or institutionally protected interest, specific for and related to the military.

Sources: Compilation based on *Ley que deroga el Código de Justicia Militar, aprueba modificaciones al Código Penal and Código Procesal Penal de la Nación, aprueba instrucciones para la población civil en tiempo de guerra y otros conflictos armados*, *Código de Disciplina de las Fuerzas Armadas y la organización del servicio de justicia conjunto de las Fuerzas Armadas* (N° 26394 – 2008/08/06) (Argentina). *Ley de organización judicial militar, Código penal militar, and Código de procedimiento penal militar* (Decree-Law N° 13321 – 1976/04/02) (Bolivia). *Código Penal Militar* (Decree-Law N° 1.001 – 1969/21/10) and *Código de proceso penal militar* (Decree-Law N° 1002 – 1969/10/21) (Brazil). *Código de Justicia Militar* (Decree-Law N° 2226 - 1944/12/19) and *Código Orgánico de Tribunales* (Ley N° 7421 – 1943/07/09) (Chile). *Ley por la cual se expide el Código penal militar* (Law N° 1407 – 2010/08/17) (Colombia). *Ley procesal penal militar* (N° 6 – 1977/08/08), *Ley de los delitos militares* (N° 22 – 1979/15/02), *Ley de los tribunales militares* (N° 97 – 2002/12/21) (Cuba). *Código de justicia de las Fuerzas Armadas* (Law N° 3483 – 1953/02/13) (Dominican Republic). *Ley reformatoria al Código Penal para la tipificación de los delitos cometidos en el servicio militar y policial* (RO N° 196 - 2010/05/19) (Ecuador). *Código de justicia militar* (DL N° 562 - 1964/05/29) and *Código Procesal Penal Militar* (Decree Legislativo N° 904 - 1996/12/04) (El Salvador). *Código Militar* (Decree N° 214 - 1878/9/15) (Guatemala). *Código penal militar* (Decree N° 76 - 1906/03/01) (Honduras). *Código de justicia militar* (DOF N° 1933/08/31) and *Código militar de procedimientos penales* (DOF 2016/06/15) (Mexico). *Ley orgánica de tribunales militares* (N° 523 – 2005/04/05) and *Código penal militar* (Ley N° 566 – 2006/01/05) (Nicaragua). *Código penal militar* (N° 843 - 1980/12/19) and *Ley orgánica de los Tribunales Militares* (N° 840 - 1980/12/19) (Paraguay). *Ley del régimen disciplinario de las Fuerzas Armadas*. (N° 29131- 2007/11/09), and *Código penal militar policial* (Decree-Law N° 1094 - 2010/09/01) (Peru). *Códigos militares: Código penal militar, Código de organización de los tribunales militares, Código de procedimiento penal militar* (Decree-Law N° 10326 - 1943/01/28) (Uruguay). *Código Orgánico de Justicia Militar* (GO N° 5263 - 1998/09/17) (Venezuela).

Military Justice. Legal Instruments

ARGENTINA	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Law repealing the Code of Military Justice, approving amendments to the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code of the Nation, adopting instructions for the civilian population in time of war and other armed conflicts, The Code of Discipline of the Armed Forces and the organization of the joint justice service of the Armed Forces (N° 26394 – 2008/08/06).	-----
BOLIVIA	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Disciplinary Offences and Penalties (Supreme Resolution N° 181303 – 1979/03/01).	Military Judicial Organization Act, Military Penal Code, and Military Criminal Procedure Code (Decree-Law N° 13321 – 1976/04/02).
BRAZIL	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Aeronautics Disciplinary Rules (Decree N° 76322 – 1975/09/22). Army Disciplinary Regulations and Other Measures (Decree N° 4346 – 2002/08/26). Navy Disciplinary Regulations and Other Measures (Decreto N° 88545 – 1983/07/26).	Military Penal Code Decree-Law N° 1001 – 1969/10/21. Last Amendment: N° 14688 – 2023/09/20). Military Criminal Procedure Code (Decree-Law N° 1002 – 1969/10/21. Last Amendment: N° 14752 – 2023/12/12). Military Judicial Organization Act (N° 8.457 – 1992/09/04. Last Amendment: N° 13774 – 2018/12/19).
CHILE	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Armed Forces Disciplinary Regulations (DS N° 1.445 – 1951/12/14. Last Amendment: Decree N° 129 - 2022/08/29). Navy Disciplinary Regulations. (DS N° 1232 – 1986/10/21, Last Amendment: Decree N° 130 - 2022/08/29).	Military Justice Code (Decree-Law N° 2226 -1944 /12 /19. Last Amendment: N° 21560 – 2023/4/10). Organic Code of Court Martials (N° 7421 – 1943/07/9. Last Amendment: N° 21577 – 2023/06/15).
COLOMBIA	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Law establishing the Rules of Conduct for the Colombian Military, Military Disciplinary Code (N° 1862 -2017/08/04).	Law issuing the Military Penal Code (N° 1407 – 2010/08/17).
CUBA	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Military Criminal Procedure Act (N° 6 - 1977/08/08).	Military Offences Act (N° 22 - 1979/02/15). Military Courts Act (N° 97 - 2002/12/21)
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Military Disciplinary Regulations of the Armed Forces (Decree N° 02-08).	Code of Justice of the Armed Forces (N° 3483 - 1953/02/13).
ECUADOR	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Organic Law on Personnel and Discipline of the Armed Forces (RO N° 236 - 2023/01/24).	Law amending the Criminal Code to criminalize offenses committed in military and police service (RO N° 196 - 2010/05/19).
EL SALVADOR	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Code of Military Justice (DL N° 562 - 1964/05/29. Last Amendment: DL N° 368 - 1992/11/27).	Criminal Procedure Code (Decree-Law N° 904 - 1996/12/04).
GUATEMALA	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Regulation of Disciplinary Sanctions (Governmental Agreement N° 24-2005 - 2005/01/24).	Military Code (Decree N° 214 - 1878/09/15 Last Amendment: Decree N° 41-96 - 1996/07/10).
HONDURAS	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Regulation for Members of the Armed Forces (SDN 02-01).	Military Penal Code (Decree N° 76 - 1906/03/01. Last Amendment: Decree N° 47 - 1937/01/22).
MEXICO	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Mexican Army and Air Force Discipline Act (DOF 1926/03/15. Last Amendment: DOF 2024/05/03). Law on Discipline for Personnel of the Mexican Navy (DOF 2002/12/13).	Military Justice Code (DOF 1933/08/31. Last Amendment: DOF 2023/09/05). Military Code of Criminal Procedure (DOF 15/06/2016. Last Amendment: DOF 2023/09/05).
NICARAGUA	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Military Disciplinary Regulations (Order N°17 - 2007/08/13).	Organic Law on Military Courts (N° 523 - 05/04/2005. Last Amendment: N° 567 -2005 /11/25). Military Penal Code (N° 566 - 2006/01/05). Code of Military Criminal Procedure (Act No 617 -2007/08/29).
PARAGUAY	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Military Penal Code (N° 843 - 1980/12/19).	Organic Law on Military Courts (N° 840 - 1980/12/19. Last Amendment: N° 6825 - 2021/10/13). Code of Military Criminal Procedure in Times of Peace and War (N° 844 - 1980/12/19).
PERU	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Law on the Disciplinary Regime of the Armed Forces (N° 29131- 2007/11/09. Last Amendment: DS N° 14 - 2009/05/23).	Military Police Penal Code (Decree-Law N° 1094 - 2010/09/01). Law on the Organization and Functions of the Police Military Court (N° 29182 - 2008/01/11. Last Amendment: N° 29955 -2012/12/06).
URUGUAY	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	General Discipline Regulations for Military Personnel of the Air Force (Decree 55/994 - 1994/02/08). National Navy Discipline Regulation (Decree 180/001 - 2001/05/17). General Service Regulation N° 21. National Army (Decree 305/003 - 2003/07/29).	Military Codes: Military Penal Code, Organizational Code of the Military Courts, Code of Military Criminal Procedure (Decree-Law N° 10326 - 1943/01/28. Last Amendment: N° 20075 - 2022/10/20).
VENEZUELA	Disciplinary Subsystem	Penal Subsystem
	Military Discipline Act (GO N° 40833 - 2016/01/21).	Organic Code of Military Justice (GO N° 5263 - 1998/09/17. Last Amendment: GO N° 6646 - 2021/09/17).

Source: Compilation based on the laws mentioned.

Military Cooperation and Multilateral Exercises

EXERCISE	TYPE OF EXERCISE	FORCES	PARTICIPANTS
COOPERATION EXERCISE IX (2023)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	AIR FORCE	Argentina, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, the Dominican Republic and the United States.
RESOLUTE SENTINEL (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	AIR FORCE	Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, France, Panama, Peru, United Kingdom, Uruguay and the United States.
PARANA III (2023)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	ARMY	Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Spain, United States, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.
GUARDIAN OF CENTRAL AMERICA (2023)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	ARMY, NAVY AND THE AIR FORCE	El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and the United States.
SOLIDAREX (2023)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY	Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Spain, United States, Italy, Mexico, Panama and Peru.
XIII ORION NAVAL CAMPAIGN (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY	Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Cayman Islands, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, the Netherlands, Panama, USA, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Dominican Republic, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Sweden, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, United Kingdom.
TRANSOCEANIC XXXII (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Colombia and the United States.
CADET CRUISER ARC GLORIA (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY	Italy, Portugal, Germany and Colombia.
TRADEWINDS (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY	Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Bermuda, Canada, Costa Rica, Colombia, Dominica, France, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos, Dominican Republic and United Kingdom.
EVENT HORIZON EXERCISE (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY AND THE AIR FORCE	Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Canada, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Dominican Republic, Spain, United Kingdom and United States.
RIMPAC (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY	Germany, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Korea, Denmark, Ecuador, United States, France, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Netherlands, Peru, UK, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Tonga.
UNITAS LXV (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY	Germany, Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Canada, South Korea, Colombia, Ecuador, Spain, United States, France, Guatemala, Honduras, Italia, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, UK, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.
PANAMAX (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	ARMY, NAVY	Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Dominican Republic.
ACRUX COMBINED (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	NAVY	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.
SAREX EXERCISE (2023)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	AIR FORCE	Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay.
ZEUS STRATEGY (2023)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	AIR FORCE	Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, Mexico and Colombia.
COMMAND FORCES (2024)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	ARMY	Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador, Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala, United States, Panama, Peru, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago, and Dominican Republic.
CROIX DU SUD (2018)	T ND SIM HA INF FD S-R CI IT	ARMY, NAVY AND THE AIR FORCE	Australia, Canada, Chile, United States, Fiji, France, Indonesia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, UK and Vanuatu.

T Training

ND Natural Disasters

SIM Simulation

HA Humanitarian Assistance

INF Information Exchange

FD Force Deployment

S-R Search and Rescue

CI Cooperation Improvement

IT Illicit Traffic

References

Source: Compilation based on the official websites of the Ministries of Defence, reports and memories of labours, and information provided by Ministries of Defence.