

**WARID:** Peru (Sendero Luminoso) 1982-1999  
**STARDATE:** 22 August 1982  
**ENDDATE:** 31 December 1999  
Related cases: none  
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### **Conflict overview**

Peru's transition from military to civilian rule in 1980 was accompanied by guerrilla attacks that were launched by the Maoist insurgent organization PCP-SL, commonly known as 'Sendero Luminoso' or Shining Path. PCP-SL's ideology was mainly shaped by its leader, Abimael Guzmán, a philosophy professor from the remote Ayacucho region, who had founded PCP-SL in 1968.<sup>1</sup> Influenced by Marxist, Leninist and particularly Maoist thought, the movement's central aim was to facilitate a peasant-based revolution that would ultimately lead to Communism.<sup>2</sup> As Sendero Luminoso considered the Peruvian state *as such* as the main target of its revolutionary armed struggle, we will treat the political system – or, more precisely, the government of the Peruvian state – as the rebel's opposing conflict party, despite changes to the actual political parties that ruled the country over time.

On the eve of the first presidential elections that were allowed by the military dictatorship on 18 May 1980, PCP-SL burned ballot boxes in the town of Chuschi, Ayacucho region as its first act of armed struggle (McClintock 1984: 62). However, the early terrorist attacks did not exceed the threshold of at least 25 battle-related deaths per year until summer 1982, which is considered the formal beginning of civil war.

During the 208 months of fighting [**WARDUR=208**], terrorist attacks quickly escalated from symbolic acts, such as hanging dogs in public spaces, to full-scale armed attacks on military, police and civilians (Root 2012: 17). By late 1982, the government declared a state of emergency in the most affected provinces in the Ayacucho region and deployed its armed forces into those areas (Scott Palmer 1986: 139). This led to a significant increase in civilian and battle-related deaths, marking the formal onset of civil war in August 1982 (Scott Palmer 1986: 139).

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1 An excellent in-depth analysis of the causal factors and the historic context in which PCP-SL emerged is delivered by Degregori (1990, 2011).

2 Entrevista al presidente Gonzalo, El Diario, 24 July 1988, online edition, [http://www.solrojo.org/pcp\\_doc/pcp\\_0688.htm#OBJETIVOS](http://www.solrojo.org/pcp_doc/pcp_0688.htm#OBJETIVOS) (4 May 2014).

According to UCDP estimates, the hostilities caused 15.622 deaths through the end of 1999 [**FATALUC=16000**]. Other sources, such as the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), estimate that 69,280 people were killed or ‘disappeared’ between 1980 and 2000, with a confidence interval of 5% (TRC 2003: 53). These numbers are used in most of today’s literature (e.g. Freeman 2003: 151; Chernick 2007: 295). As the TRC does not differentiate the conflict dyads to which the estimated number of victims belong – other actors were likewise involved in the conflict, such as the paramilitary peasant self-defense forces ‘Rondas de Autodefensa’ and the second rebel group MRTA<sup>3</sup> –, we consider a reduction of 5% of the smallest estimates as an appropriate figure [**FATALOS=58000**].

According to the census held in 1981 (Yacher 1987: 68), the pre-war population was 17.8 million [**PREWARPO=17800000**]. As such, applying UCDP data to battle-related deaths in relation to the total pre-war population in Peru, the war intensity amounts to 0.09% [**INTENSUC=0.09**]. In contrast, if applying the TRC’s estimated total death toll, the war intensity amounts to 0.33% [**INTENSOS=0.33**].

Sendero Luminoso’s activities clearly declined after their leader Abimael Guzmán and other key members were captured in 1992 and Guzmán called for a negotiated peace in 1993. However, PCP-SL subsequently fractured into splinter groups; more radical parts of the organization continued armed combats under the new leadership of Oscar Ramírez (Ron 2001: 588). After Ramírez was captured in summer 1999, the dyad no longer reached the threshold of at least 25 battle-related deaths per calendar year.<sup>4</sup>

However, the insurgent organization could not be captured or eliminated completely and continued its operations within the Upper Huallaga Valley and the Valley of the Apurimac and Ene River (VRAE) area (Sanchez Nieto 2011: 521). While the UCDP Conflict Termination dataset attributes the end of war to a ceasefire agreement with conflict regulation [**WARENDUC=2**], we could not find any evidence of ceasefire negotiations in 1999. The only traceable call for peace took place in 1993, after the capture of Guzmán; but this was neither accepted by all parts of the insurgent organization (Sanchez Nieto 2011: 530) nor did the agreements lead to a decrease in battle-related deaths to under 25 per year. We therefore deviate from UCDP’s dataset and qualify the end of civil war as being due to low activity [**WARENDOS=5**].

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3 Abbreviation for ‘Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru’.

4 [http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdata/gpcountry.php?id=126&regionSelect=5-Southern\\_Americas#](http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdata/gpcountry.php?id=126&regionSelect=5-Southern_Americas#) (27 Mar 2014).

### **The military balance at the end of the war**

By the early 1990s, Sendero Luminoso was able to expand its area of activity at such a rapid pace that observers considered the possibility that the rebel side might emerge victorious from the conflict (Taylor 1998: 48). Starting from the Ayacucho region, the PCP-SL continuously expanded its guerrilla activities from 1983 to 1992: to Cusco and Puno in the south; to the Upper Huallaga Valley and other sections of the ‘Selva alta’; to Junín and surrounding departments in the Central Sierra; and to Cajabamba-Huamachuco and to Ancash in the northern highlands (Taylor 1998: 45). By 1988, Sendero Luminoso was even able to encircle the capital and built a guerrilla presence in the Chancay and Cañete valleys, located to the north and south of Lima. All in all, by 1991, the PCP-SL had expanded its activities to 21 out of Peru’s 24 departments and the number of provinces declared to be in a state of emergency had risen from six in 1981 to 56 by the end of 1989 (Taylor 1998: 45).

Considering Abimael Guzmán’s almost messiah-like status amongst his supporters along with his ability to create a strong ideological unity, his detention in 1992 represented a significant setback for the PCP-SL (Gorriti 1999). Most of the case-specific literature interprets the capture of Guzmán as the crucial turning point in the conflict, which initiated the organizational collapse and fragmentation of Sendero Luminoso. Although the government did not manage to defeat the insurgent group completely and civil war continued on a declining level until 1999, the Peruvian Government is widely regarded as the military victor of the conflict **[VICTORY= -1]**.<sup>5</sup>

According to Cunningham et al. (2009), the insurgent organization never controlled any territory during wartime. Case-specific literature, in contrast, cites strong evidence of territorial control. PCP-SL’s activities, as described above in their territorial dimension, were not just on a short-term military basis but, beyond that, also implicated the installation of ‘People’s Committees’ as new governing structures in most of these areas (Chernick 2007: 299). These new revolutionary authorities and organizational structures were meant to replace expelled and assassinated officials, traditional bosses and the police (Del Pino 1998: 162). In its areas of authority, the PCP-SL regulated social and market relations among townspeople, established schools for the training and recruitment of militants, and administered ‘popular justice’ (Chernick 2007: 302-306; Freeman 2003: 148).<sup>6</sup>

Case-specific literature likewise indicates that, by the mid-1980s, the PCP-SL began to collaborate with coca producers and traffickers in the Upper Huallaga Valley in north-central

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5 Taylor 1998; Sanchez Nieto 2011; Scott Palmer 2012: 135.

6 Chernick (2007: 303) describes that the PCP-SL prohibited religious and other traditional cultural practices and did also not allow farmer’s markets to take place.

Peru (Scott Palmer 2012: 138). By 1988-89, the rebels were estimated to have extracted at least 10 million USD a year in ‘taxes’ on clandestine airstrips in the valley (Scott Palmer 2012: 138). The PCP-SL also supported local coca growers in negotiations for better prices for their crops. In return, the rebels established a coca-fee of 5%, which, according to Scheina (2003: 368), produced a profit of up to 30 million USD a year.

However, it is said that by the time Sendero Luminoso entered Lima (in the mid-1980s), it had already lost most of the countryside with the exception of the coca-growing territories of the Upper Huallaga and the VRAE area (Chernick 2007: 298). Therefore, we have to conclude that the PCP-SL lost control of the larger part of the territories it previously controlled by the end of war in 1999 [**REBTERR= -1**]. In comparison to the state’s total territory, the PCP-SL’s operations and territorial control of the Upper Huallaga Valley and of the VRAE area at the end of war took place in a severely limited area [**MORETERR= -1**].

Looking at Sendero Luminoso’s relatively low fighting capacity at the end of war (Cunningham et al. 2009), we find a strong military advantage for the government [**REBFIGHT= -1**]. Although PCP-SL was not completely defeated in 1999 and a more radical faction continued its operations, the number of battle-related deaths along with the number of victims of one-sided violence had begun to decrease significantly from 1992 onwards.<sup>7</sup> Compared to Sendero Luminoso’s peak of activity during the 1980s and early 1990s, the reduction of capabilities and troops was obvious. The remaining 500 to 1,000 rebels (SIPRI Yearbook 2001: 6; IISS 2001: 242) were unable to continue guerrilla warfare in the same manner as in the previous years. Therefore, we assume that only the government side could have continued fighting in more than a few areas of the disputed territory at the end of war in 1999 [**CONFIGHT=-1**]. Even though Sendero Luminoso’s leader Abimael Guzmán was not killed but ‘merely’ captured by the government in 1992, his detention equally meant a significant weakening of the insurgent organization and is viewed as the critical turning point in the conflict (Scott Palmer 2012: 135). Finally, the capture of Oscar Ramírez later in 1999 can be regarded as the central factor for a decline in the intensity of fighting and the number of battle-related deaths to under the threshold of 25 per year [**LEADER= -1**].

In sum, there was a clear military imbalance to the benefit of the government at the end of war [**WARBAL= -1**].

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=126&regionSelect=5-Southern\\_Americas#](http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=126&regionSelect=5-Southern_Americas#) (4 May 2014).

### **The military balance in the post-war period**

Since there have never been any peace negotiations between the warring parties, only the side governing at the beginning of war continued to participate in the state's military forces [**STATEFOR 2000-2012= -1**]. Sendero Luminoso, though severely weakened, was reportedly able to maintain a limited number of its armed troops. IISS only provides troop-related data until 2011 (IISS 2000-2012). Other sources still assume that the PCP-SL had several hundred armed members in 2012 [**SEPFORCE 2000-2012=0**].<sup>8</sup> Although IISS does not provide data for the number of rebel forces in the years 2008, 2010 or 2012, we can certainly deduce from the other years that the troop ratio constantly declined to the benefit of the state's armed forces [**TROOPS 2000-2012= -1**].<sup>9</sup> The IISS does not provide any specific information concerning arms equipment of the PCP-SL's forces [**ARMS 2000-2012=n.d.**].<sup>10</sup>

As mentioned above, the insurgent organization managed to avoid capture and elimination by the military and continued its operations within the Upper Huallaga Valley and the VRAE area (Chernick 2007: 316; Sanchez Nieto 2011: 521). Within these territories, the remaining PCP-SL forces began to collaborate with drug groups and thereby found a way of financing their ongoing operations (Sanchez Nieto 2011: 522). Both the government and PCP-SL are therefore considered to have been in control of important territory since the end of war. When the fights intensified again in late 2006, the state's armed forces started to increasingly operate in the coca-growing areas (HIIK 2006-2012). Although information on this is not clear, we assume that the Upper Huallaga Valley faction of PCP-SL only began to suffer setbacks to such an extent that it finally lost control of these territories by late 2011. This is made evident by the faction's leader 'Artemio' publicly acknowledging defeat in December 2011.<sup>11</sup> The much larger and stronger faction operating in the Apurimac and Ene River Valley (VRAE), however, reportedly maintained its control in that area until the end of 2012 [**TERRCON 2000-2012=0**].<sup>12</sup>

Until 2011, the PCP-SL is assumed to have been in constant control of the mentioned territories of Upper Huallaga Valley and the VRAE area. In other words, between 2000 and 2011 neither side controlled more important territory than it had at the end of war or shortly thereafter [**TERRWIN 2000-2011=0**]. Finally, in 2012, the government side was able to regain control of important territories in the Upper Huallaga [**TERRWIN 2012= -1**]. As Sendero Luminoso's operations and territorial control are said to have taken place in a severely limited

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8 U.S. Department of State 2013.

9 Cf. Table 2, Annex.

10 IISS 2000-2013.

11 Gorriti, Gustavo/Mella, Romina: La última entrevista, IDL-Reporteros, 6 December 2011, online edition.

12 U.S. Department of State 2012.

area and to hardly have posed any threat to the central government outside the Valley of the Apurimac and Ene River (Sanchez Nieto 2011: 522), the Peruvian Government can be regarded as comparatively less vulnerable throughout the entire post-war period [**VULNERAB 2000-2012= -1**].

Throughout the post-war period, there were no peacekeeping missions deployed in Peru [**PEACEKEEP 2000-2012=n.r.**].<sup>13</sup> None of the permanent members of the UN Security Council stated any intent to intervene in the case of a new armed conflict [**P5ALLY 2000-2012=n.r.**].

All in all, since the conflict's termination in 1999, the military balance in the post-war period indicated a military advantage in favor of the Peruvian Government [**POSTBAL 2000-2011= -0.5, POSTBAL 2012= -0.67**]. As the combined value of **WARBAL** and **POSTBAL**, the total military balance in Peru amounted to [**BALANCE 2000-2011= -0.75, BALANCE 2012= -0.83**].

## Economy

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita and population estimates by the World Bank increased after the end of the war.<sup>14</sup>

Table 1: GDP per capita in post-war Peru in current USD

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population (total)</i>	<i>GDP per capita</i>
2000	26,000,080	2050
2001	26,372,358	2045
2002	26,729,909	2124
2003	27,073,334	2266
2004	27,403,845	2544
2005	27,723,281	2863
2006	28,030,688	3298
2007	28,328,410	3795
2008	28,625,628	4525
2009	28,934,303	4495
2010	29,262,830	5386
2011	29,614,887	6112
2012	29,987,800	6796

## The scale of compromise after the war

The PCP-SL never articulated the demand to enter the democratic institutional system of the Peruvian state. On the contrary, Sendero's fierce *anti*-electoral sentiment had clearly expressed itself since its first violent actions. According to Sendero's leader Abimael Guzmán,

<sup>13</sup> Fortna 2008.

<sup>14</sup> <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/tableview.aspx> (27 Mar 2014).

“elections have never given the working class or the people power” (Gorriti 1999: 58). It was not only Sendero Luminoso who rejected collaboration with the state, there was likewise no willingness on the governing side to include Sendero’s ideas or its activists into the political system (McClintock 1999: 223).

As both sides rejected any kind of peace negotiations, Senderistas did not enter the government nor did they obtain any veto rights [**GOVERN 2000-2012= -1; VETO 2000-2012= -1; VETOSAT 2000-2012= n.r.**]. In 2009, a more reformist faction of the original PCP-SL founded the political organization ‘Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights’ (MOVADef) in order to participate in the upcoming elections in 2014.<sup>15</sup> But when they attempted to register as a lawful political party in 2012, the National Jury of Elections of Peru (JNE) denied the request. The JNE justified the rejection primarily with its conclusion that MOVADef supported a principle that coincided with the ideology that had formerly guided the PCP-SL – namely, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, or Gonzalo Thought. It assumed that by doing so, the party would have inseparably been bound to violent acts opposing the constitution.<sup>16</sup> Since the JNE based its decision primarily on the Law on Political Parties (No. 28094),<sup>17</sup> which had already been established in 2003, and on the Political Constitution, which had come into effect in 1993,<sup>18</sup> we conclude that the state would have prohibited the PCP-SL from participating in the elections at any stage of the post-war period, even prior to MOVADef’s formal request in 2012 [**ELECT 2000-2012= -1**].

As Sendero Luminoso’s ideology was influenced by Marxist, Leninist and particularly Maoist thought, its central objective was a peasant-based revolution that would ultimately lead to Communism. Thus, questions of borders in and outside the country and the allocation of competences among the political levels were not a subject matter of the conflict nor of any compromises in the post-war era [**EXBORDER 2000-2012=n.r.; INBORDER 2000-2012=n.r.; COMPETEN 2000-2012=n.r.**]. Sendero was primarily revolting against the capitalist mode of production that structured Peruvian society. The economic order of the country,

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15 Although there has never been an explicit directive by the PCP-SL’s Central Committee to found this party, continuities and connections to Sendero Luminoso regarding its ideological and organizational basis can be traced. Especially, MOVADef’s central claim to free Abimael Guzmán (<http://www.movadef.net/peag/amnist%C3%ADa-general-n%C2%B0-1>) and its ideological affirmation of the ‘Pensamiento Gonzalo’ (<http://www.movadef.net>) are considered proof of this connection. Whether MOVADef is the direct continuation of Sendero Luminoso that temporarily adjusted its strategy to its recent situation or whether it is a new, ‘legal arm’ of the PCP-SL has been widely discussed (<http://lacolmena.pe/es-el-movadef-el-brazo-legal-de-sendero-luminoso/>, 25 May 2014).

16 Resolution (0224-2011-ROP/JNE),: <http://blog.pucp.edu.pe/media/4655/20120117-movadef1.pdf> (25 May 2014).

17 <http://portal.jne.gob.pe/informacionlegal/Leyes/Ley%20de%20Partidos%20Pol%C3%ADticos.pdf> (2 June 2014).

18 <http://www.tc.gob.pe/constitucion.pdf> (2 June 2014).

however, was never put into question by the parties governing [ECONOMY 2000-2012= -1]. Based on its Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology, the PCP-SL regarded its armed struggle as a class struggle of the Peruvian people and frequently demanded a “Government of the working class and of the peasants”.<sup>19</sup> Broadly speaking, we can consider this as a demand for the promotion of specific social groups, namely the working class and the peasantry. But as Sendero Luminoso assumed the realization of a communist revolution as the necessary precondition for the promotion of these groups, no compromise was implemented that would have fulfilled Sendero’s radical demands [SPECPRO 2000-2012= -1].<sup>20</sup>

The warring parties did not fight over any other central issues during civil war [ISSUE 2000-2012=n.r.; ISSUE2 2000-2012=n.r.]. There were also no new conflicts that emerged after civil war had ended [NEWCON 2000-2012=n.r.; NEWCON2 2000-2012=n.r.]. As there is no evidence of any implemented compromises, the question of whether compromises were more favorable for one of the formerly warring parties is not relevant [BENEFIT 2000-2012=n.r.; BENEFIT2 2000-2012=n.r.].

All in all, we can conclude that the post-war order in Peru was clearly and only shaped by the government’s interests [COMPROM 2000-2012= -1].

### **Stability of peace**

Although the PCP-SL was severely weakened at the end of war in 1999, it remained active but fractured into various wings; its estimated number of members also drastically decreased (Mache 2002: 112). Between 2007 and 2010, violence reportedly escalated again, but the total number of victims did not reach the threshold of 1,000 battle-related deaths.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, we cannot detect a relapse into civil war [SAMEWAR 2000-2012=0; DATESAME=n.r.; ANYWAR 2000-2012=0; DATEANY=n.r.]. The months of peace amount to 156 [PEACMON1=156; PEACMON2=156].

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19 “Desarrollemos la Guerra de Guerrillas”, Comité Central Partido Comunista del Perú, February 1982, [http://www.solrojo.org/pcp\\_doc/pcp\\_0282.htm](http://www.solrojo.org/pcp_doc/pcp_0282.htm) (13 Apr 2014).

20 According to some experts, the rural ‘campesino’ populations benefited from the government’s promotion of the mineral industry in the postwar period. However, since we are principally interested in the question of which conflict party could successfully push through its political demands, the neoliberal restructuring of the mineral industry clearly did not favor the demands of the Maoist organization. Hence, the government side prevailed on this issue.

21 [http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=126&regionSelect=5-Southern\\_Americas#](http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=126&regionSelect=5-Southern_Americas#) (27 Apr 2014).

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## Annex

Table 2: Troops in post-war Peru (IISS 1999-2013)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Government</i>	<i>SenderoLuminoso</i>	<i>Ratio</i>	
1999	115000	1750	65.71	1
2000	115000	1000	115	1
2001	100000	1000	100	1
2002	110000	600	183.33	1
2003	100000	600	166.67	1
2004	80000	600	133.33	1
2005	80000	600	133.33	1
2006	80000	500	160	1
2007	114000	500	160	1
2008	114000	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
2009	114000	500	228	1
2010	115000	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
2011	115000	500	228	1
2012	115000	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.