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LETTER DATED 13 MAY 1983 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PANAMA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the information bulletin issued at the conclusion of the meeting held on 11 and 12 May 1983 at Panama City by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela.

I request you, Sir, to have this communication circulated as a document of the Security Council, as well as of the General Assembly under the items entitled "Development and strengthening of good neighbourliness between States", "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" and "Peaceful settlement of disputes between States".

(Signed) Carlos OZORES TYPALDOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

INFORMATION BULLETIN

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group, at their meeting held at Panama City on 11 and 12 May 1983, considered the following subjects:

- (a) The request of the Government of Costa Rica for the establishment of an observer commission;
- (b) The course of the debate in the United Nations Security Council convened at the request of Nicaragua;
- (c) The programme of work of the next meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group with the five Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Central American countries, to be held at Panama beginning on 28 May 1983.

The Government of Costa Rica has made a request to the Organization of American States for the establishment of a "peace force, capable of effectively monitoring the area of Costa Rica bordering on Nicaragua". As grounds for its request, it pointed out that Costa Rica has no army and has difficulty in patrolling a long and irregular frontier. The authorities of Costa Rica advanced similar considerations to the Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela through special envoys, indicating their desire that an observer commission should be established for that purpose.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group, acting in accordance with the principles which guide their conduct, recalled that the original and essential purpose of the formation of the Group was to fulfil a diplomatic role designed to seek the settlement of conflicts through political means, relying on the co-operation of the parties involved.

From this perspective, the Contadora Group believes that its work should focus on the concentration of political efforts to promote dialogue, understanding and, in general, the development of political machinery which, with the co-operation of the States concerned, can ensure the full attainment of their objectives.

In the circumstances of the case, the proposal to set up an observer commission is closely related to the efforts to create conditions of peace in the region. The success of this proposal requires the co-operation of both countries.

In view of the foregoing, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group have decided to send an observer commission, consisting of two representatives from each of their countries, which will have the task of carrying out a study in situ in order to establish the facts, evaluate the circumstances and submit appropriate recommendations.

For the performance of these functions, the members of the commission may be accompanied by such advisers as, in the view of each country, are necessary, and they may, if they deem it appropriate, consult international experts.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela note with deep concern the development of the Central American conflict over the past few days and the repeated violation of essential principles of the international legal order.

These circumstances have given rise to various initiatives aimed at seeking the intervention of multilateral organizations. The initiatives include the recent requests made by Central American countries to the United Nations Security Council and the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States.

It would be highly desirable that in the deliberations taking place in the said forums, and especially those currently under way in the Security Council, there should be a strengthening of principles which should guide the activities of States in the international arena.

These principles include: self-determination and non-interference in the affairs of other States, respect for the territorial integrity of other States, the obligation not to allow the territory of a State to be used for committing acts of aggression against other States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the prohibition of the threat or use of force to resolve conflicts.

The countries of the Contadora Group once again call upon the Central American countries to help attain the goal of peace and, to that end, to apply their political will to the search for ways leading to dialogue and understanding to settle their current differences. This constructive and open attitude will largely determine the success of the peace initiatives.

With a view to achieving these objectives, a formal invitation has been sent to the five Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Central America to hold a working meeting at Panama on 28, 29 and 30 May 1983. The meeting will operate within the framework agreed upon during the most recent meeting held in April regarding the procedure for consultations and negotiations. A time-frame concerning the organization of items, their discussion in working groups and, lastly, their consideration in plenary meeting has been worked out.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela express appreciation for the hospitality and generous facilities provided for their work, which once again enabled them to fulfil the purpose for which the Contadora Group had been convened on this occasion.

Panama City, 12 May 1983.
