



Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/15749
6 May 1983
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

LETTER DATED 6 MAY 1983 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF COSTA RICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE
PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour, on instructions from my Government, to transmit to you herewith the text of the message sent on 4 May to His Excellency Ambassador Reginald Wood, Permanent Representative of the Bahamas to the Organization of American States and President of the Permanent Council of our regional organization.

I respectfully request you to have this note and the annexed message distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Fernando ZUMBADO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Text of the message sent by the Acting Minister for Foreign
Affairs of Costa Rica, Mr. Ekhart Peters, to His Excellency
Ambassador Reginald Wood, Permanent Representative of the
Bahamas to the Council of the Organization of American
States and President of the Permanent Council

I have the honour, through you, to inform the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States that the Government of Costa Rica considers it necessary to ask for the co-operation of the organization in order to guarantee its declared neutrality in relation to the internal conflict at present in progress in the Republic of Nicaragua. The reasons for our request are:

(a) The pacifist spirit of the people of Costa Rica induced it in 1949 to disarm unilaterally and caused its Government, in a declaration issued on 27 April 1983, to proclaim its neutrality in the international and internal armed conflicts of the countries in the area,

(b) The difficulty which the Government of Costa Rica is experiencing in carrying out these vigilance operations with its police forces, which do not have the equipment required for these operations,

(c) The length of our frontier with Nicaragua, 320 kilometres of extremely rugged terrain, no less than 60 per cent of which is covered by tropical forest,

(d) The cost of these operations and the possibility that they may have to continue for an extended period, given the characteristics of the struggle in question.

Should this request be approved by the Permanent Council of the organization, the Government of Costa Rica proposes that the force should be composed of troops from the countries of the Contadora group, whose altruistic and well-intentioned mediation in the problems of peace in Central America has been willingly accepted by all the countries in the area and whose foreign ministers have gained a deep understanding of its problems.

I attach the text of the declaration of the Cabinet of 27 April 1983, to which I have referred.

I take this opportunity to express to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ekhart Peters
Acting Minister for Foreign
Affairs and Worship

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Annexed document

The Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations conveys its compliments to the permanent and observer missions to the United Nations and has the honour to inform them that at a meeting held on 27 April 1983 the Government of Costa Rica issued the following communiqué:

COSTA RICA WILL ALWAYS BE A COUNTRY OF PEACE

DECLARATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC

The international policy of the Government is based on an immutable affirmation of the best traditions of the country, embodied in the following major principles:

- (a) Respect for the principle of self-determination of peoples,
- (b) Respect for the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States,
- (c) Affirmation of the principle of peaceful settlement of international disputes,
- (d) Application of the principle of ideological pluralism, which prevails in our internal order, to international relations in order to promote dialogue, détente and peace among nations, whatever the ideological orientation of their Governments,
- (e) Promotion of and striving for the enjoyment of human rights,
- (f) Irrevocable application of the right of asylum.

These major principles are our guide in the age-long and powerful pacifist policy of the Costa Rican people. As part of an edifying democratic and humanist process, our country disarmed unilaterally and abolished the army as a permanent institution under a mandate that has been included since 1949 in its political Constitution.

Consequently, Costa Rica - in the past, now and forever - has participated, is participating and will participate in all peaceful efforts to avoid any conflicts that may break out between sister nations or within those nations.

Moreover, the natural consequence of the same process is the policy of neutrality that we maintain with regard to other countries' international and internal armed conflicts.

Our Government considers that neutrality should not only be maintained zealously but should become a law of the highest legal and political rank, to serve as a constant guide for the foreign relations of our country. We

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declare that as long as confrontation remains within the sphere of ideological warfare, we are not neutral but active campaigners for the ideas of freedom, justice, solidarity and peace. When confrontation degenerates into armed violence, we are neutral.

The President of the Republic has long advocated this thesis in a number of international forums and is striving to secure for Costa Rica an active and perpetual neutrality protected by a statute recognized by the international community.

In pursuance of these principles of neutrality and peaceful settlement of international disputes, we have had talks with the Government of Nicaragua on solving existing bilateral problems and we are prepared to participate also in all multilateral forums that are working for peace and tranquillity in Central America. In this connection, we are glad to recognize and support the effort of the "contadora" group, composed of the Foreign Ministers of Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia and Panama. We are continuing to pursue this kind of action because we understand the concept of active neutrality to be not peaceful quiescence but continuous participation in every effort for peace. We deem ourselves to have sufficient moral authority to reiterate that Costa Rica will never be an aggressor and will accordingly not permit its territory to be used for planning and executing acts of war against other States. We likewise feel that we possess moral authority vigorously to reject the world-wide publicity campaign which has been launched against our country, for unworthy reasons, in an effort to represent it as engaged in aggression against the Republic of Nicaragua. Furthermore, we can accept international supervision or inspection, by OAS or friendly countries, of our frontier or of the observance of our commitment to neutrality. We are sure that the people of Costa Rica agrees with the general trend of the international policy that we are proposing because we are enemies of war, because we believe in peace with justice and because we are certain that with these weapons and the support of the rules of international law we shall be able to preserve our sovereignty, our territorial integrity and the dignity of our motherland and will never allow them to be diminished or injured.

The Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations takes this opportunity to renew to the permanent and observer missions to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.
