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LETTER DATED 15 DECEMBER 1983 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF HONDURAS TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you the text of Note No. 603DA which the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Arnulfo Pineda López, addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua on 12 December 1983, in which he vigorously protested against another act of aggression and violation of our territory committed on 5 December 1983 by four Nicaraguan vessels sailing in the territorial waters of Honduras. The text of this Note, which has been brought to the attention of the members of the Organization of American States by the Mission of Honduras to that organization, reads as follows:

"Note No. 603DA. Tegucigalpa, D.C., 12 December 1983.

"Sir, I am writing to you with reference to your Note No. 243 of 5 December in which, on behalf of your Government, you protest against three air and sea incidents which took place on 4 and 5 December in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, allegedly in Nicaraguan territorial waters. In reality, the regrettable facts are as follows: On 5 December, at 7.50 a.m., at latitude 13°25'00"North and longitude 87°36'00"West, three high-speed launches of the Honduran naval forces which were engaged in routine patrol activities found themselves under heavy attack by four units of the Sandinist navy. A fight which lasted two and a half hours ensued, ending with the intervention of two aircraft of the Honduran air force that had been called in as reinforcements, which forced the foreign vessels to return to their own territory. With respect to the incident involving the armed vessels 'Copesnica No. 15 and No. 20', the truth of the matter is as follows: on Sunday, 4 December, at 2.05 p.m., the patrol vessels 'Honduras' and 'Hibueras', which were engaged in routine activities in the Banco del Cabo sector, were notified that two unidentified boats were penetrating into Honduran waters. The intruders were located at 15°03'00"N latitude and 83°08'00"W longitude. Once visual contact was established, it became clear that the boats were armed Nicaraguan fishing vessels. As a result of that unjustified attack, Ensign Juan Pablo Rodríguez, captain of the patrol boat 'Honduras', and seamen Luis Gabriel Torres Vindel and Jorge Alberto Ayala Pineda were wounded. One of the attacking vessels had apparently drifted off course, whereas the other had clearly entered Nicaraguan waters intentionally. As you will understand, the Honduran naval and air force units have in all cases acted in self-defence, in conformity with orders given after constant violations of national sovereignty by

Nicaraguan vessels and using the procedure which I had duly informed you would be followed. The Honduran Government has always been eager to assist in restoring peace to Central America and has conducted its foreign policy accordingly, on the basis of the concept of mutual respect. This fact is borne out by the excellent relations that Honduras maintains with other Central American countries, with which there have been no incidents like those which unfortunately mar its relations with Nicaragua, and those which the distinguished Government of that country seems disposed to provoke in places other than Honduras. Consequently, in addition to rejecting your note in its entirety, my Government protests vigorously against the above-mentioned incidents. Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Arnulfo Pineda LOPEZ
Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs"

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this foregoing note to be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Roberto HERRERA CACERES
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
