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GENERAL DEBATE

Note by the President of the General Assembly

1. The President of the General Assembly wishes to advise the members of the Assembly of an important communication which he has just received from the Presidents of Venezuela and Colombia dealing with the problem of human rights in Nicaragua.
2. Inasmuch as a number of statements during the course of our present general debate have referred to this subject, and in view of the tragic loss of human life in Nicaragua, the President wishes to bring this communication immediately to the attention of all the members of the General Assembly.

ANNEX

Letter dated 27 September 1978 from the Presidents of
Colombia and Venezuela addressed to the President of
the General Assembly

Unimpeachable international sources have described the extremely serious violations of human rights which have been occurring in the Republic of Nicaragua and which have caused profound concern to all democratic-minded people on the Continent. We, as spokesmen of nations whose Governments have signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, feel obliged to denounce to the United Nations, through you, the disregard shown by the authorities of Nicaragua for legal commitments entered into under the Charter of the United Nations and instruments elaborating on the Charter and signed by that country. In denouncing the tragic and dramatic situation of vast segments of the population of Nicaragua, whose essential rights are being violated, we respect the principle of non-intervention, which is by no means incompatible with the task of internationally safeguarding human rights which the United Nations is required to perform, as is the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, there being no objection to simultaneous action by these two bodies since the United Nations is not required to consider the political case submitted to the jurisdiction of the regional organization but to take action in defence of human rights which, as we understand it, is an inescapable obligation of the agencies responsible for ensuring full respect for those rights.

Any delay in the operation of international machinery in this field will cause irreparable harm to defenceless people, and in view of this consideration we request the immediate adoption of the necessary measures to prevent and halt the wave of genocide that is sweeping Nicaragua, whose helpless and innocent people demand universal solidarity. We are sure that you, Sir, will take appropriate action on this letter to ensure that, in the hour of need of this Central American country which is entitled to enjoy the benefits of peace, the United Nations is able, through the appropriate machinery, to prevent the occurrence of acts constituting a manifest violation of commitments entered into within the framework of the world Organization.

(Signed) Carlos Andrés PÉREZ
President of Venezuela

(Signed) Julio César TURBAY AYALA
President of Colombia
