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 THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA:  
THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE  
AND SECURITY AND PEACE  
INITIATIVES

Letter dated 20 May 1986 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the  
Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed  
to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the "Official proposal of the Government of Nicaragua for a prompt finalization of the process of negotiating and signing the Contadora Act", dated 15 May 1986, which was submitted to the member countries of the Contadora Group (see annex).

This proposal has been submitted as a contribution to the negotiations on security matters still pending in the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, with a view to facilitating the speedy and successful culmination of the peace process in the area and in the spirit of flexibility and support for the efforts of the Contadora Group which has characterized the policy of my Government.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex distributed as an official document of the General Assembly at its fortieth session, under item 21, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Julio ICAZA GALLARD  
Ambassador  
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

ANNEX

Official proposal of the Government of Nicaragua for a prompt  
finalization of the process of negotiating and signing the  
Contadora Act, dated 15 May 1986

1. On 11 November 1985, in the face of the brutal escalation of the war of aggression waged by the United States against Nicaragua and the delivery to mercenary forces of land-to-air missiles, the Government of Nicaragua took the decision to suspend the negotiations on security matters pending, so that the Contadora Group and the Support Group could devote their energies to solving the specific problems and conflicts which were exacerbating the situation in the region, with particular reference to the escalation of the policy of war pursued by the United States against Nicaragua.
2. On 12 January 1986, the Contadora Group and the Support Group adopted the Declaration of Caraballeda, by which, through the call for simultaneous action, they recognized the need to create a climate conducive to progress in the negotiations; in other words, it is acknowledged that, so long as aggression against Nicaragua continues, the conditions for signing any agreement on security matters do not exist.
3. During the meeting of the 13 Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Panama from 5 to 7 April 1986, Nicaragua defended the Latin Americanist position upheld in Caraballeda, Guatemala and Punta del Este.
4. On 7 April 1986, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries of the Contadora Group and the Support Group invited the five Central American Governments immediately to resume negotiations on the outstanding aspects of the Contadora Act, and further invited them "to a meeting in Panama City on 6 June 1986, for the purpose of declaring the negotiation of the text of the Contadora Act officially concluded and proceeding to its formal adoption".
5. On 11 April 1986, Presidents Julio María Sanguinetti and Alan García Pérez, of Uruguay and Peru respectively, invited the parties concerned to conclude the negotiation of the text of the Contadora Act and to proceed to its "formal adoption", explaining that "the signing and entry into force of that instrument would be subject, free from any pressure, to the existence of conditions ensuring that the security of each and every country in the area was not threatened".
6. Along the same lines, on 12 April 1986, as a new manifestation of the political will to achieve a successful culmination of the Contadora negotiating process, Nicaragua accepted the resumption of negotiations and agreed that, once agreement on the outstanding aspects of the Act had been achieved and once United States aggression against Nicaragua had totally ceased, it would be ready to sign the regional agreement.
7. Nicaragua wishes to participate in this new round of negotiations in order to conclude the outstanding aspects of the Act in the same constructive spirit as has always characterized its participation in the Contadora process; consequently, taking into account the obvious interest of the Contadora Group in the signing of an agreement as soon as possible, Nicaragua, as a gesture of the utmost flexibility and with a view to the prompt signing of the regional Act, makes the following proposal on manoeuvres and armaments. /...

APPENDIX

Commitments with regard to security matters\*

In conformity with their obligations under international law and in accordance with the objective of laying the foundations for effective and lasting peace, the Parties assume commitments with regard to security matters relating to the prohibition of international military manoeuvres; the cessation of the arms build-up; the dismantling of foreign military bases, schools or other installations; the withdrawal of foreign military or security advisers; prohibition of the traffic in arms; the cessation of support for irregular forces; the denial of encouragement or support for acts of terrorism, subversion or sabotage; and lastly, the establishment of a regional system of direct communication.

To that end, the Parties undertake to take specific action in accordance with the following:

Section 1. Commitments with regard to military manoeuvres

16. To comply with the following provisions as regards the holding of national military manoeuvres, with effect from the signing of this Act:

- (a) When national military manoeuvres are held in areas less than 30 kilometres from the territory of another State, the appropriate prior notification to the other States Parties and the Verification and Control Commission, mentioned in Part II of this Act, shall be made at least 30 days beforehand.
- (b) The notification shall contain the following information:
  - (1) Name;
  - (2) Purpose;
  - (3) Participating troops, units and forces;
  - (4) Area where the manoeuvre is scheduled;
  - (5) Programme and timetable;
  - (6) Equipment and weapons to be used.
- (c) Invitations shall be issued to observers from the neighbouring States Parties.

17. To comply with the following provisions as regards the holding of international military manoeuvres:

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\* See the "Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America" (A/40/737-S/17549, annex V, chap. III).

International military manoeuvres shall be prohibited in their respective territories. Any manoeuvre of this kind which may be in progress shall be suspended within a maximum period of 30 days after the signing of this Act;

This prohibition shall include the holding of manoeuvres in the territory of any Central American country by the troops of any country situated outside the area.

Section 2. Commitments with regard to armaments

18. To begin negotiations immediately on the establishment of maximum limits for, and control of, weapons classified as offensive, with a view to establishing a reasonable balance of forces in the area.
19. The fulfilment of the commitments contained in paragraph 20 of this section shall be subject to the cessation of policies of direct or indirect use of force by States situated outside the region but having links with and interests in the region, and to the solemn commitment made by those States to renounce the use of force against any Central American State, with the aim of creating minimum conditions of security in the region.
20. On the basis of the foregoing, the Parties agree on the following implementation stages:

First stage

- (a) The Parties undertake not to acquire, for a period of up to 180 days after the signing of the Act, any more weapons classified as offensive, with the exception of replenishment supplies, ammunition and spare parts needed to keep existing matériel in operation, pending the establishment of maximum limits for the development of such weapons classified as offensive.
- (b) The Parties undertake to submit simultaneously to the Verification and Control Commission within 30 days after the signing of this Act, their respective current inventories of weapons classified as offensive.
- (c) Within 60 days after the signing of this Act, the Verification and Control Commission shall conclude the technical studies and shall suggest to the States Parties, taking into account their national security interests and without prejudice to any negotiations which they have agreed to initiate, the maximum limits for weapons classified as offensive, in accordance with the basic criteria laid down in paragraph 21 of this section and in accordance with the respective timetables for the establishment of such limits.

Second stage

At the end of 60 days after the signing of this Act, the Parties shall establish within the following 30 days:

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- (a) Maximum limits for the types of weapons classified as offensive, as well as timetables for complying with such limits;
- (b) If the Parties do not reach agreement on the above-mentioned maximum limits and timetables within such period, they may, by mutual agreement, amend the periods established for the negotiation of and compliance with such limits;

Should an agreement on maximum limits not be reached, the fulfilment of commitments on the freezing of weapons classified as offensive, and on international military manoeuvres, foreign military bases and installations and foreign military advisers, time-limits for which have been laid down in the Act, shall be suspended except in cases where the Parties agree otherwise;

The maximum limits referred to in subparagraphs (a) and (b) and the timetables shall be regarded as an integral part of this Act and shall have the same legally binding force as this Act, with effect from the day following the expiry of the 30 days established for the second stage, or the day following that on which they have been established by agreement among the Parties.

Unless the Parties agree otherwise, in accordance with subparagraph (b), the maximum limits shall be agreed upon within 180 days after the signing of this Act, or within the period to be fixed by the Parties.

21. In order to satisfy the requirements of peace, stability, security and economic and social development of the countries of the region, the Parties shall consider the following basic criteria in order to establish the maximum limits for those weapons of the Central American countries that are classified as offensive.
  - (1) The internal and external security needs of the State;
  - (2) Characteristics, geographical situation and geopolitical position;
  - (3) Area of the territory;
  - (4) Population;
  - (5) Nation-wide distribution of economic resources, infrastructure and population;
  - (6) Range and characteristics of land and sea boundaries;
  - (7) Military expenditure in relation to gross domestic product (GDP), public expenditure and other social indicators in conditions of peace;
  - (8) Level of advanced military technology suited to the security needs of each country.

22. Not to introduce new systems of weapons classified as offensive that alter the quality or quantity of current inventories of war matériel.
23. Not to introduce, possess or use lethal chemical weapons or biological, radiological or other weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects.
24. Not to permit transit, stationing, mobilization or any other form of utilization of their territories by foreign armed forces.
25. To initiate constitutional procedures so as to be in a position to sign, ratify or accede to treaties and other international agreements on disarmament, if they have not already done so.

#### Annex I

##### Definition of reasonable balance of forces

This shall be the size of the military force of a defensive nature required by each State for the defence of its national territory against external aggression in the face of which it has to mobilize all the human and material resources of the State in order to preserve its sovereignty, self-determination and national independence.

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