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LETTER DATED 3 OCTOBER 1983 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF HONDURAS TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to inform you that, on 29 September 1983, the Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras, Dr. Roberto Suazo Córdova, wrote to the Presidents of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela to ratify the Document of Objectives adopted by the Central American Foreign Ministers at their recent joint meeting in Panama City with the Contadora Group.

The text of the letter in question, which has already been brought to the attention of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, is attached to this note and it is requested that it be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

In addition, because they provide the background necessary for an understanding of this letter, I am enclosing: (a) the text of the letter which the Constitutional President of Honduras sent on 1 September to the Heads of State and Government of all the countries with which Honduras maintains diplomatic relations, and (b) the text of the presentation made by the Government of Honduras before the Permanent Council of OAS with respect to the threats to peace and security in Central America (Washington, July 1983). The English version of the latter document will be provided as soon as possible for distribution.

I should be grateful if the three texts mentioned above could be circulated as official documents of the Security Council, as was done in the case of my letter dated 20 September, which was issued as a Security Council document on 20 September 1983 under the symbol S/15995 and which explains further the peaceful attitude and political will of Honduras.

(Signed) H. Roberto HERRERA CACERES
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative

Annex I

Text of the letter dated 1 September 1983 from the Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras, Dr. Roberto Suazo Córdova, addressed to the States members of the international community with which Honduras maintains relations, reaffirming the pacifist position of his Government in the context of the Central American crisis

I am particularly glad to inform you of the latest measures adopted by my Government in connection with the critical situation prevailing in Central America.

Within the context of the multilateral negotiations undertaken by the Contadora Group, the Honduran Foreign Minister, Dr. Edgardo Paz Barnica, and his counterparts in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala, submitted an important document containing "Bases for peace in Central America". This document develops extensively the topics included in the agenda adopted unanimously by the nine countries which participated in the Contadora negotiations at the meeting held last May. By participating actively in the formulation and presentation of that document, the Government of Honduras intends to guide the negotiating process towards the conclusion of a regional and global agreement providing solutions to the principal political, security and economic problems facing Central America.

My Government hopes that this will to negotiate will be fully shared by the Government of Nicaragua. To our great regret, and despite the statements made on 19 July by the Co-ordinator of the Junta of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua, Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra, to the effect that his country accepted negotiations of a multilateral character, at the meeting held in July in Panama City the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister, Mr. Miguel D'Escoto, submitted a document in which he not only insists on bilateral negotiations with Honduras but also states as a prerequisite for any other negotiation that satisfaction must first be given in issues which are the exclusive interest of his country. In these conditions, it will be difficult to make progress, unless this attitude is replaced by a political will which respects the commitments made by Nicaragua at earlier meetings of the Contadora Group, such as discussion of the agenda adopted in May and fulfilment of the public promises made by Commander Ortega Saavedra, accepting multilateral negotiation of the Central American crisis.

As you know, since March 1982 Honduras has been urging Nicaragua to negotiate on the basis of a peace proposal made by my Government in the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States. Not only was this proposal accepted and supported by Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala, but its main points are reflected in repeated statements by Heads of State, the most recent being the one issued by the Presidents of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela at Cancún.

These points relate principally to the cessation of the arms race, the freezing of armaments in Central America at existing levels, the limitation and prohibition of imports of a certain type of weapon, the reduction in the numbers of military personnel, the removal of foreign military and other advisers, and the

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banning and effective control of clandestine traffic in weapons - all under international control and supervision.

My Government has also proposed that, in countries that are tragically racked by internal conflicts, political understandings should be promoted between the opposing forces, with the aim of finding the road to national negotiation within a pluralist political framework which, in addition to promoting the economic and social well-being of the Central American peoples, respects individual and public liberties, especially the inalienable right of peoples freely to express their will through universal suffrage at regular and honest elections, and allows genuine democratic systems to exist.

In response to these pronouncements, Honduras has seen an inordinate growth in Nicaraguan armed forces and in the type and quantity of military equipment possessed by that country, creating a real military imbalance in Central America and introducing insecurity throughout the region. This has obliged my Government to take measures to guarantee our own security. Two of these measures deserve to be explained: the establishment of a regional military training and security centre, providing professional training for the Honduran armed forces and for those of any other country which so requests, and the holding of joint military exercises with the United States, with the aim of deterring any attempt at direct aggression against our territory and improving the technical capacity of the Honduran armed forces, on the basis of an agreement on technical assistance in military matters concluded between the two countries in 1954, under which this type of exercise has been held intermittently since 1965, without ever being offensive in character.

My Government would undoubtedly have preferred not to be obliged to take any of the actions described above, since the ardent pacifist sentiment of the Honduran people occupies a high place on the scale of our national values. However, the responsibilities which the Honduran people entrusted to us by their vote require us to prepare for the defence of our democratic institutions and of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Honduran State.

I can assure you that my Government will resolutely pursue its quest for peaceful solutions in the context of the critical regional situation. Despite the climate of international tension prevailing in Central America, there has been no increase whatever in the nation's military budget over the past two years and we shall maintain that budget at the same level during the coming year. Moreover, the Government of which I am President has decided not to increase the strength of the Honduran armed forces, since we have no hegemonic aims in Central America and our principal desire is to live in peace and freedom; thus Honduras requires nothing more than an army with modern techniques which is capable of repelling an attack and contributing effectively to the stability and development of democracy, as prescribed by our Political Constitution.

I also wish to reiterate to you the importance which the Government of Honduras attaches to any assistance extended by your Government, through statements at the highest level, for the purpose of adding impetus within the Central American region to the negotiations in progress, with a view to reaching as soon as possible a general peace agreement which takes into account the interests of all the parties

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and which, above all, provides the basis for a climate of lasting harmony and security in Central America, in order to promote political, economic and social democracy as a foundation for the concord of the peoples of our tormented region.

(Signed) Roberto SUAZO CORDOVA
Constitutional President

Annex II

Text of the letter from the Constitutional President of the Republic of Honduras, Dr. Roberto Suazo Córdova, addressed to Their Excellencies the Presidents of Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela, accepting the Document of Objectives adopted at the Fourth Joint Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua with the Foreign Ministers forming the "Contadora Group", held in Panama City on 9 September 1983

I was pleased to receive the note dated 14 September 1983 which you and the Presidents of the other countries forming the Contadora Group were kind enough to send me and which I am answering only today because I had been away from Honduras for health reasons.

The Foreign Minister of Honduras informed me at the time, from Panama City itself, of the atmosphere during the multilateral negotiations at the latest joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and of their outcome.

From the outset, it has been the aim of my Government to assist in the search for a peaceful global and regional solution to the various problems facing Central America. To this end, the instructions which I gave to our Foreign Minister, Dr. Paz Barnica, were to obtain a document which took into account the legal, political, security, economic and social factors involved in the present crisis and which, while laying the foundations for a serious commitment to future negotiations within a multilateral framework, envisaged suitable machinery for international supervision and control, capable of monitoring any agreements to be concluded at the same time. I find that the draft Document of Objectives adopted by consensus by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs reflects the six points contained in the Honduran peace proposal of 23 March 1982, and may help to promote a global and regional solution through the diplomatic channel, always provided that the terms of reference which it contains are based on a firm political will. In this connection, my Government cannot help but endorse your fervent desire to achieve a responsible understanding in favour of peace, democracy, security and co-operation for development in Central America, taking as a starting-point the intention expressed in the draft document adopted at Panama City on 9 September 1983.

In addition, as you know, Nicaragua has asked that a discussion be held in the United Nations General Assembly about the situation in Central America. I believe that this initiative by Nicaragua violates the commitment given by both Honduras and Nicaragua not to resort to the international organizations as long as the search for a solution to the problems of Central America is being conducted within the sphere of action of the Contadora Group. Nicaragua's request that the topic be open for discussion in the forum of the United Nations would obstruct the peace-making mission entrusted to the Contadora Group, removing the consideration of Central American problems outside the context of that continent and placing them on the level of East-West confrontation, frustrating the noble efforts of the Contadora Group to achieve regional peace, which Honduras supports in good faith.

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If Nicaragua persists in its attempts to torpedo this positive and well-meaning mission, Honduras may reconsider its position with regard to the Document of Objectives.

In the spirit of confidence in the Contadora Group which has characterized the action of Honduras, my Government reiterates to Your Excellency and to the Minister for Foreign Affairs its gratitude for your valuable contribution in such an important and historic task.

(Signed) Roberto SUAZO CORDOVA
Constitutional President of Honduras

Annex III

PRESENTATION MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF HONDURAS BEFORE THE
PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE OAS WITH RESPECT TO THE THREATS
TO PEACE AND SECURITY IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Washington, D.C., July 1983

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Mister Chairman:

Honorable Representatives:

We know full well that all the members of this Permanent Council are aware of the crisis Central America is experiencing. We are also aware that the governments that are members of the Organization as well as their distinguished representatives are familiar with the efforts being made by the countries of the "Contadora Group", that is, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela, to achieve an equitable and sensible solution to the situation.

The Constitutional Government of the Republic of Honduras, presided over by Doctor Roberto Suazo Córdova, is deeply aware of its obligations as a member of this Organization. Therefore, it has offered and continues to offer its full support and cooperation to the efforts of the sister countries in the "Contadora Group" with the clear objective of achieving, through civilized dialogue and as swiftly as possible, crucial regional agreements that constitute a global solution to the problem our region is experiencing.

From the time the Foreign Ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela first established contact with the five governments of Central America, culminating in the first meeting held in Panama City, from April 19 through 21 of this year, the issues at the heart of the Central American crisis became clear. The communiqué issued by the Contadora Group following that first meeting listed those problem areas as follows: the arms race; arms control and the reduction of armaments; traffic in armaments; the presence of military advisors and other forms of foreign military aid; activities aimed at destabilizing the internal order of the states; threats and verbal harassment, and incidents of hostilities and border tensions.

There is an obvious similarity between this list of problems and the list that my Government, through its Minister of Foreign Affairs, would present to this Organization on March 23, 1983, when proposing a Peace Plan for the Central American Region. The similarity is proof of how candid Honduras has been in dealing with this problem from the very outset.

It is likewise important to point out that the list of problem areas shows that these are predominantly multilateral in nature, although this is not to exclude problems that can be resolved through bilateral negotiations and others that are the internal competence of each country.

It is also important to draw the attention of the distinguished representatives to the fact that the principal protagonist in the emergence of the regional crisis is the totalitarian regime that rules in Nicaragua by unleashing activities designed to destabilize governments in other Central American countries. These activities include direct support to terrorist and subversive groups; in this effort it has the backing of antidemocratic groups and countries outside the Central American region. The natural reaction in my country and in others of the region has been a rejection of this behavior. These countries have been compelled to adopt internal security measures in defense of the legitimate rights and the democratic way of life that they freely choose.

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My Government recognizes and supports the efforts made within the Contadora Group to achieve the noble purposes of that Group. Their efforts notwithstanding, the events that have transpired since the start of that Group's fraternal gesture clearly show that the Central American situation is becoming more serious as a direct and immediate consequence of the belligerent and menacing posture adopted by the Sandinista regime.

Nicaragua continues to step up its arms race. It continues to funnel arms from various sources through its territory, particularly in the direction of El Salvador, thus violating our sovereignty. The activities aimed at political destabilization in the area have not let up; instead they have been increased. Acts of provocation and aggression against Honduras have not ceased; instead they have become worse. Additionally, the recent mass mobilization of Nicaraguan troops toward our southern border justifies our alarm and fear that, indeed, swift preparations are underway for a major military onslaught against our country which would wipe out, once and for all, any hope of achieving peace and security in the Central American region.

Everything said thus far clearly shows that Central America is undergoing a generalized conflict provoked by Nicaragua. That conflict has consequences for all the countries of the region. Therefore, it is not confined to a bilateral conflict, as the Sandinista regime would have us believe. If at the discussion table Nicaragua considers it important to bring up its internal problem which, by spilling over, sometimes creates bilateral conflicts with other states, for the other Central American countries the top priority is discussion of regional problems created by Nicaragua, because of that country's alarming arms activities, and its direct role in the destabilization of the other Central American governments and the clandestine arms traffic.

The purpose of the Government of Honduras in calling for this special meeting of the Permanent Council is to lay before the American governments, with the necessary clarity, the conditions that prevail in the Central American region and our pacifist policies, while drawing their attention to the gravity of the situation, we are placing our faith in the fact that their dedication to the cause of peace and security, because of the moral force it represents, will prevent the armed aggression that we observe on the part of Nicaragua.

We want the Organization of American States and its member governments to take due note of the grave situation that prevails in Central America and the elements involved, so that they will calmly consider the possible measures that could be adopted, in accordance with the duties and responsibilities that the Charter attributes to them.

Indeed, the preamble of the Charter of the Organization of American States, signed by all our nations, says the following: "Confident that the true significance of American solidarity and good neighborliness can only mean the consolidation on this continent, within the framework of democratic institutions, of a system of individual liberty and social justice based on respect for the essential rights of man."

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Article 2 establishes the following among the essential purposes of our Organization:

- To strengthen the peace and security of the continent;
- To prevent possible causes of difficulties and to ensure the pacific settlement of disputes that may arise among the Member States;
- To provide for common action on the part of those States in the event of aggression;
- To seek the solution of political, juridical, and economic problems that may arise among them.

In Article 3 of the Charter, we find the following principles:

- International law is the standard of conduct of States in their reciprocal relations;
- International order consists essentially of respect for the personality, sovereignty, and independence of States, and the faithful fulfillment of obligations derived from treaties and other sources of international law;
- Good faith shall govern the relations between States;
- The solidarity of the American States and the high aims which are sought through it require the political organization of those States on the basis of the effective exercise of representative democracy;
- The American States condemn war of aggression; victory does not give rights;
- An act of aggression against one American State is an act of aggression against all the other American States, and
- Controversies of an international character arising between two or more American States shall be settled by peaceful procedures.

A reading of these provisions leaves absolutely no doubt as to the OAS's obligation to contribute, through direct efforts of its own and of its members, to a peaceful settlement of conflicts and to defense of the principle of a democratic organization of our peoples. It also shows that solidarity with member states that are determined to defend their institutions against concealed or open aggression from sectors or countries bent upon destroying man's freedom is obligatory.

In looking at the events transpiring in Central America - which are familiar to many of our countries of this hemisphere - we note that our America is facing a war without borders, one that is inspired, fostered, supported and sometimes even led by outside forces of the marxist ideology, which seek to impose upon us their totalitarian social-political system through the use of armed force.

Regardless of the name of the groups which comprise that international terrorist movement, the important thing is that their terrorist activities and activities aimed at social and economic destabilization are identical; the sources

that supply them with arms, destructive material, training and logistical support are likewise identical. The links and public support that exist among all of these subversive movements and the cooperation that they provide to one another, clearly show that in fact, all of them are part of a worldwide effort at destabilization and terror within the borderless war that threatens our very existence as nations.

Although the destabilization efforts have not been favorably received by the Honduran people, we understand that hanging over us like the sword of Damocles, is the threat of destruction of our style of life and of government, as demonstrated by the following facts and actions:

From the standpoint of the increase in its Armed Forces, the Sandinista Government now has forces totalling at least a 129,200 men at arms.

For the period 1982-83, the International Institute of Strategic Studies of London gives an even higher figure for all branches of the Sandinista Armed Forces, without including the forces of the Ministry of the Interior. That institute sets the combined Sandinista military forces at 136,700.

We must recognize that the Sandinista Government skillfully took international public opinion by surprise, and managed to create the impression, in certain media, that Nicaragua could be the victim of a large-scale military aggression waged by Honduras. I am sure, Mr. Chairman, that were we to compare the data I have contributed with regard to the Sandinista Government's military forces - figures corroborated by the International Institute of Strategic Studies of London - with the number of Honduran troops, which is not more than 16% of the Sandinista figure, the malevolent charges repeatedly brought by that regime against my country become even more implausible.

Nicaragua shattered the military balance of the Central American region. In just four years, 10,000-man Nicaraguan Armed Forces of 1979 had grown by 1300% by 1983. How can one explain this disproportionate increase? Well, Armed Forces of that size could be used to subject the people of Nicaragua to the dictates of the new Government, or to try to impose its political and economic models on the neighboring countries, or to undertake interventionist military ventures in other parts of the world. The size of the Sandinista Armed Forces far and away exceeds the total number of military in the rest of the countries of Central America. This fact alone is grounds for the concern, the insecurity and threat felt by Nicaragua's neighbors.

The rapid increase in the size of the Sandinista Armed Forces has been accompanied by an arms race of unprecedented proportions in Central America. These weapons are intended not only for use by Nicaraguans but are also funneled to Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras for subversive purposes.

In recent years, the army of Nicaragua has been equipped with very substantial anti-aircraft weaponry, anti-tank weapons, field artillery, including 152 mm Howitzers and 40 tube multiple rocket launchers with a range of 20.5 kilometers, tanks and armored vehicles, aircraft such as MI-8 helicopters and Soviet-made transport planes, amphibious landing craft, patrol boats, field equipment and hundreds of military trucks to transport troops.

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One hundred and twenty Nicaraguans were sent to Bulgaria to receive training in how to operate MIG aircraft, and 40 more are studying at the Punta Santa Academy in Cuba. Why is Nicaragua preparing itself in this manner?

The distinguished representatives cannot fail to appreciate the fact that this number of troops, this variety of offensive weaponry gives cause for alarm throughout the entire region, and leads one to prepare for self-defense, because that is the responsibility of any State.

In recent months, arms and munition shipments to Nicaragua have increased. It is well known to all that on April 16 this year, the Government of Brazil detained three Libyan Ilyushin planes and one C-130 Hercules plane carrying 100 tons of arms and munitions to the Sandinista Government. The Nicaraguan leadership admitted publicly that those shipments were being sent to them. Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi also made public statements to the effect that, despite the fact that that shipment had been detained, he would continue to provide the Sandinista regime with any arms it requested.

A few days after the detention of the Libyan planes, Costa Rican authorities discovered a 500-ton vessel flying the Panamanian flag, transporting arms and explosives to Nicaragua. On June 3 this year, a Bulgarian ship unloaded Soviet tanks at the Nicaraguan Port of Bluff. On June 5, a vessel coming from East Germany also docked at the Port of Corinto, Nicaragua, and unloaded 100 military trucks and several tons of arms and war equipment. On June 8, authorities at Puerto Limón, Costa Rica, searched the holds of the Soviet vessel "NADESHKA KRUSKAYA" and found that it was carrying several helicopters for the Government of Nicaragua. On June 15, it was revealed that two gunboats built at the Esterel shipyard near Cannes, France, were transported for the Nicaraguan Navy. It was also learned on that same date that the marxist Government of South Yemen was negotiating with Nicaragua the sale of a specific number of Soviet-made MIG 17 fighters. This information was confirmed by a deserter from the Sandinista counter-intelligence forces, Miguel Bolaños Hunter, who stated here in Washington that Nicaragua was in the process of acquiring a Soviet air-defense system and 80 MIG planes.

The Government of Honduras has also learned that at the beginning of June, the Government of Nicaragua also received at Port Bluff 20 BTR-152 armored personnel carriers, 5 BRDM-2 vehicles, 4 BM-21 multiple rocket launchers and other lighter-weight vehicles, the exact number of which we have not confirmed. Neither has there been full clarification of the destination of 5,000 cases of munition found on the ship "CLOUD", which was towed to the Venezuelan coast after being found in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean without a flag or crew, but which was laden with 122-mm shells that can only be used by Soviet artillery.

How then can it be claimed that the Sandinista Government is acting in good faith in the negotiations that have been undertaken within the framework of the Contadora Group when in the course of this last month alone Nicaragua has received no less than seven major shipments of arms? Is Nicaragua preparing itself for peace or for war?

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Is it possible to believe that Nicaragua is prepared to reach any type of agreement on disarmament when it is arming itself to the hilt? Can we believe that it will reach agreement on the reduction of military personnel when the size of the Sandinista Armed Forces is ever on the increase, and what is more, when its most prominent leaders have declared publicly that they seek to have two hundred thousand Nicaraguans at arms?

A few days ago, on July 6, Commander Humberto Ortega Saavedra declared before three hundred militia leaders that Nicaragua will continue to modernize its army and that it will establish local militias in order to distribute throughout that country more maneuverable and better-armed units. According to that same information issued by France Press, Ortega said that thousands of civilians have been incorporated into the reserve infantry battalions, permanent army units and into the self-defense, of cities and towns mainly located along the borders with Honduras and Costa Rica.

It would be useless to pretend that such quantity of arms could be used for direct confrontation with any of the major powers.

Nicaragua has been constantly preparing for war. From 1979 to 1983 close to 30 new military installations have been built with Cuban-Soviet advisory assistance, to house military personnel, heavy equipment for transportation and logistic supplies. Their placement is a clear indication that the government of Nicaragua is preparing to launch an offensive to the North, against our territory.

Today Nicaragua has three airfields from where MIG-19 and MIG-21 aircraft can operate. The facilities at Montelimar, Puerto Cabezas, Bluffields and Sandino Airport in Managua have been reconditioned and their runways extended to lengths over 2,000 meters. At present Cuban aid is being used to build air facilities at San Ramón, where two runways will be able to handle jets.

The Government of Nicaragua has also built several strategic highways, among them the Managua-Puerto Cabezas one that serves the triple purpose of allowing military control over the population in the Nicaraguan sector of Mosquitia, giving a land route for getting supplies from Cuba on the Atlantic coast, and for the declared purpose of developing the area.

Since the end of last June, the Sandinistas have escalated their activities and deployed their troops along the border of the Honduran Departments of Choluteca and El Paraíso. The Nicaraguan Government has mobilized a great number of troops and equipment to areas close to our country such as León, Ocotal, Chinandega, Somoto, Somotillo, Jalapa, Estelí, Condega and other places along a line extending for some 250 kilometers, forming the so-called Northern Front, which obviously poses a serious threat to our country. The units that have been mobilized include five battalions of Sandinista People's Army (Ejército Popular Sandinista); 19 battalions of trained, active reserves; one tank battalion; one battalion of Ministry of the Interior troops; one battalion of Border Guard Troops; one battalion of the "Pablo Ubeda" Troops; and three companies of special units, making a total of 29 battalions mobilized.

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On 5 July it was informed that the Sandinista People's Army had undertaken another massive mobilization of troops and Soviet-made tanks toward the Honduran border. Such activity was confirmed by the Nicaraguan Ministry of the Interior.

Mr. Chairman, Representatives, another serious problem singled out by the Contadora Group is illegal arms traffic. Since 1980, the Sandinista Government has been engaged in arms traffic in Central America, from Nicaragua to the other countries in the region, particularly to El Salvador. In the specific case of Honduras, this has meant repeated violations of our territory. On January 17, 1981, troops of the Honduran Army and of the Public Security Force of my country confiscated a large shipment of arms and military supplies 16 kilometers from the city of Comayagua. The arms were perfectly concealed in a van-type vehicle that entered our territory through customs at El Guasaule and was intended for the Salvadoran guerrillas. The arms seized included M-16, G-3 and FAL rifles; M-1 rifles; 50-calibre machine guns; Chinese RPG rockets; 81 mm. mortars; cartridge clips; cartridge pouches; communications equipment and medicines. Five Hondurans and 12 Salvadorans involved in this operation were captured.

Arms traffic has continued through different channels and different routes. On April 7, 1981, troops of the Eleventh Infantry Battalion, stationed in Choluteca, seized another van loaded with 7.62 mm. and 5.5 mm. munition packed in plastic bags and hidden in the walls of the van. They also found a great deal of material meant for the Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA) of Guatemala, to which the shipment was headed. This van came from Nicaragua and was seized at the El Guasaule customs.

Honduran territory has also been improperly used for moving troops from Nicaragua to El Salvador. On March 26, 1983, a group of guerrillas crossing our territory from Nicaragua to El Salvador was taken by surprise by a Honduran patrol in the south of Honduras, in a place called "Las Cuevitas," in the municipality of Nacaome, Department of Valle. Two guerrillas were killed in the clash with the Honduran patrol. Equipment then confiscated included M-16 rifles; a 7.65 mm. S.H.E. Czech machine gun; M-16 cartridge clips; machine-gun cartridge clips; cartridge pouches; a portable two-way radio; a flag of the Sandinista National Liberation Front; manuals of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), as well as two notebooks with extensive information on the general route used to move military personnel and weapons through Honduras to El Salvador.

Intervention by the Sandinista regime in all countries of the Central American region is equally exposed by their training of Hondurans in several of the 11 schools operating for that purpose in Nicaragua, scattered around the various military regions of that country. Nicaragua is also the bridge for training Hondurans in Cuba.

On January 24, 1983, a group of 16 Hondurans was captured by national authorities in the nation's capital. According to their own statements, they intended to travel to Cuba via Nicaragua for guerrilla training and then to return to the country for purposes of subversion. The persons captured named Professor Ramón Amílcar Cerna González as responsible for this operation and also as the contact in Honduras for ranking Sandinista authorities.

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Nicaragua has also introduced another disruptive element in intra-Central American relations, inasmuch as it has brought to its territory over 17,000 military and other kinds of advisors, coming chiefly from Cuba, the Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria, North Korea, Vietnam, the PLO, and Libya among others. The foreign presence is so impressive that Nicaragua has become a territory invaded by foreign forces. Nicaragua has brought to the region the tensions characteristic of an extrahemispheric threat. The result is that in more than one respect the East-West conflict has emerged here as well.

Since the Sandinistas came to power and since the escalation of the violent internal conflict shaking El Salvador, Honduras has endured a growing number of actions directed at overthrowing its democratic institutions. These actions are clearly tied to the Nicaraguan Government and the Salvadoran Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front.

As an example of such activities, mention can be made of the abduction of the Italian businessman, Higinio Tarantelli D. Andrea, in January 1980, who was later murdered; the abduction of the Texaco Oil Company manager, Mr. Arnold Quiroz, which took place in San Pedro Sula only three days after elections were held for representatives to the National Constituent Assembly in April 1980; the seizure of the facilities of the Organization of American States in Tegucigalpa, at which time the Representative of that Organization, Mr. Ulises Pichardo, and 13 staff members of the delegation were held as hostages; and the abduction of the banker, Paul Vinelli, by a unit of the People's Liberation Forces, under the Farabundo Martí Front for the National Liberation of El Salvador, in December 1980. Mr. Vinelli was released on 2 May 1981, after paying a high ransom in dollars.

In March 1981, there was the hijacking of an airplane of the Honduran company SAHSA by a unit of the Cinchonero Group consisting of three men and a woman. The airplane was diverted to Nicaragua and finally taken to Panama, from which place the hijackers called upon the Government of Honduras to release the Salvadoran guerrilla leader, Facundo Guardado, of the FMLN, and guerrillas held in Honduras for being involved in clandestine arms traffic through our territory.

On August 5, 1981, the Farabundo Martí Front for the National Liberation of El Salvador abducted Herman Eyl, engineer, who was released on December 11 of that year after paying a high ransom also in dollars. On March 10, 1982, the businessman, Jacques Casanova, was abducted by a unit of the People's Liberation Front, under the aforementioned Farabundo Martí Front. Mr. Casanova was released on May 19, 1982, from terrorist's jail through a police command operation. On April 28, 1982 a Dash-Seven airplane of the Honduran company SAHSA was hijacked in the port city of La Ceiba, Department of Atlántida, Honduras, and the Lempira Command, which had acted in coordination with the Farabundo Martí Front, claimed responsibility. The hijackers finally released the passengers and crew and proceeded to Cuba on May 1 of that year.

On September 17, 1982, in the city of San Pedro Sula, at 6:30 p.m., 12 terrorists raided the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Cortés, firing machine-gun bursts and wounding two Honduran citizens. This action began the criminal abduction of more than 100 persons, including two Ministers of State and the President of the Central Bank of Honduras, who were taking part in a seminar on economic policy.

Responsibility for the act was claimed by the Cinchonero unit, whose ties to Nicaragua, Cuba and the Salvadoran guerrilla forces were established. This unit asked the government to release Salvadoran guerrillas.

After eight days of sensitive talks, with the valuable mediation of the Papal Nuncio in Honduras, the Archbishop of San Pedro Sula, and the friendly cooperation of Panama, the terrorist released the hostages and left Honduras for Panama in a Panamanian Air Force airplane, from where 24 hours later they continued their trip to Cuba.

On December 14, 1982, in the capital of Guatemala, a unit of the People's Revolutionary Movement abducted Dr. Xiomara Suaso Estrada, daughter of the President of Honduras, Roberto Suaso Córdova.

Mr. Chairman:

This list of acts is supplemented by other terrorist activities, such as, for example: the blowing up of two electric plants, which left 80 percent of the Honduran capital without energy; the detonation of bombs in the offices of the Salvadoran airline, TACA, and of the United States companies, Air Florida, Pan American Life Insurance Company and I.B.M.

Beyond our borders, explosive charges were placed in the offices of the Honduran air line, SAHSA, in San José, Costa Rica, and in the capital of Guatemala. The Costa Rican Government expelled two Nicaraguan diplomats implicated in these activities.

On April 14 of this year, while the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, Mr. Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, was on an official visit to Bogotá, Colombia, the Diplomatic Mission of Honduras in that city was dynamited. The act of terrorism was perpetrated with great cruelty since the Honduran Consul was bound and the explosives device was placed in front of him and detonated, leaving him gravely wounded.

Other terrorist acts include the bombs planted in the embassies of Chile and Argentina in Tegucigalpa, in the facilities of the Honduran Brewery in San Pedro Sula and the Texaco Refinery in Puerto Cortés, as well as the machine-gunning of a group of members of the U.S. military mission in the Honduran capital.

Around that same time, the Honduran diplomatic missions in Ecuador, México, Venezuela, France, the United Kingdom and Germany were attacked and subjected to commotions.

Our country is also being hounded along its borders, through Nicaraguan harassment of the Honduran border towns. Since 1979 the Sandinista regime has been behind close to two hundred attacks and violations of our territory and air and sea space. In these incidents unarmed civilians and Honduran soldiers have been killed or wounded. When the Sandinista forces entered our territory, they plundered and destroyed and kidnapped defenseless Honduran citizens. In both the Atlantic and Pacific, within jurisdictional waters, they attacked Honduran fishing vessels with artillery fire; these were seized with their crews and taken to Nicaraguan ports.

The purpose of the threats and verbal harassment by the major Nicaraguan leaders against Honduras and its highest officials is to create a climate of heightened tensions between the two countries. In Madrid, last year, Commander Tomás Borge declared that Nicaragua would support the guerrilla activities in Honduras by every means possible. In March of this year, Commander Humberto Ortega Saavedra threatened Honduras with war, saying that troops, aircraft, tanks, artillery and all the offensive weaponry Nicaragua had were poised for an attack on our country. These statements brought a protest from Honduras, lodged through its Foreign Ministry.

In April of this year, Commander Ortega Saavedra told The New York Times that Honduran "revolutionaries" might overthrow the Honduran Armed Forces if they continued to launch attacks against Nicaraguan territory. My Government rejected this statement as well.

During that same month, in statements made in Panama, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua stated that the possibility of open war between his country and Honduras was increasing. That same Foreign Minister, in comments before the United Nations Security Council in May of this year, stated that Nicaragua could indeed undertake a war against Honduras.

In Caracas, Venezuela, at the end of last June, Sergio Ramírez Mercado, Member of the Board of Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua, stated that all signs pointed to an armed confrontation between Honduras and Nicaragua. At the end of June, in a harangue to workers in his country, Commander Tomás Borge, declared that "terrible and glorious hours are at hand" and asked the workers to make sacrifices in preparation for a war against Honduras.

More recently, on July 2, the same Minister of the Interior of Nicaragua told United Press International that he saw no possibility of an agreement that would avert war with Honduras.

All of these statements and threats have been accompanied by false accusations alleging that Honduran troops are harassing Nicaraguan troops. On May 3 of this year the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua went so far as to say that Honduran soldiers had crossed the border between the two countries and had invaded Nicaragua. The report was so absurd and implausible that the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua had to correct himself, saying that it was an improper interpretation of the communiqué issued by the Foreign Ministry.

Mr. Chairman,

Honorable Representatives:

This is the situation of my country at the present time, a country that is threatened, harassed and attacked by the Sandinista Government.

This is the situation in a Central American region that is threatened, harassed and attacked by the Sandinista Government. That Government has not hesitated to unleash a wild and dangerous arms race.

/...

It has disrupted security in the Central American isthmus.

It is indifferent to the sinister consequences that might follow for the entire area with the creation of an enormous army that has more troops than the combined armed forces of all the other countries of Central America.

It has continued to be the main source of arms supply to subversive and terrorist movements in Central America.

It has no thought whatever for the consequences of allowing its territory to be used by extraregional and extrahemispheric forces that pose a threat to the peace and security of the entire American hemisphere.

It does not desist from its harassment of our southern border, the murder of Honduran farmers and foreigners, as in the case of two American journalists killed recently when a mine planted by the Sandinista People's Army exploded. These incidents involved violation of our territory. They have caused a mass exodus of Hondurans toward the interior of our country.

Honduras has not gone back on its word or the gentleman's agreements into which it has entered. The distinguished representatives are aware of the good will with which Honduras agreed to defer discussion of its proposal to this Council to allow the noble efforts of the Contadora Group an opportunity to bear fruit. They are also aware of the commitment Nicaragua made to refrain from undertaking action within the United Nations, a commitment the Sandinista Government did not honor.

In a press conference held in Mexico City on April 13, 1983, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, His Excellency Bernardo Sepúlveda, acknowledged that the conciliatory attitude Honduras took within the Organization of American States had made the fraternal efforts of the Contadora Group possible. In referring to the meeting which was held in Panama by the ministers who are members of the Group and which decided its course of action, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico said the following:

"At the outset it was noted that the most immediate thing was to ensure that the Permanent Council of the OAS did not inhibit the action of the foreign ministers, members of the Contadora Group, with regard to efforts to find solutions in Central America. This was an urgent question because the Permanent Council of the OAS was to have examined a draft resolution proposed by Honduras that same Monday afternoon. Fortunately, through a series of talks we held with other parties interested in this matter, it was agreed to postpone the consideration of this in the Permanent Council of the OAS. In this way, we eased the pressures so that the matters could be transferred from the regional forum to the Panama forum, i.e., the Contadora Foreign Ministers. At the same time, it became evident that in the case of the United Nations it would be best to defer any action so that within the United Nations no action would be taken that would duplicate the work that was just getting underway in Panama last Monday.

The parties concerned in this matter received the proposal we were presenting with great interest and decided to request the OAS Permanent Council to postpone the matter. This was the first action taken in connection with this matter. It gave us the freedom to act to take direct jurisdiction over the matter".

The passages I have quoted and the well-known circumstances regarding what happened here make any further comment unnecessary. However, they do uphold our view on how imperative it is that the agreements reached among the Central American governments to ensure peace have the guarantee of effective enforcement which, according to the Charter, is part of the nature and basic purpose of our Organization.

It is well to recall also that the regime that Nicaragua has had since 1979 was born under the inspiration and with the support of the Organization of American States. The following was established at that time as essential bases for its historical viability:

- 1) The immediate replacement of the Somoza regime;
- 2) The setting up in Nicaragua of a democratic government to include the principal groups representative of the opposition to the Somoza regime and to reflect the free will of the people of Nicaragua;
- 3) Holding of free elections as soon as possible, leading to the establishment of a truly democratic government which will guarantee peace, freedom and justice.

Of these bases established at the Seventeenth Meeting of Consultation and accepted fully and with notable emphasis by those who headed the Revolutionary Junta of National Reconstruction in Nicaragua, only the first has been affected. The others, which constitute the ethical and juridical commitment of the new regime to this Organization, have been mocked, as has the collective will of the hemisphere.

Mr. Chairman:

We ask the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States that it take note of our presentation supplemented by the illustrated materials we distributed; of the determined will of Honduras to promote peace within our region and, with each day that passes, to strengthen the democratic institutions that are the common goal of our people.

We declare before all of you that Honduras will come to the next meeting of the Contadora Group, in this spirit, and that it will ultimately fulfill its obligations as a peace loving nation and member of the Organization of American States.
