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LETTER DATED 10 AUGUST 1983 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF HONDURAS TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from Dr. Edgardo Paz Barnica, Minister for Foreign Affairs, I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a note addressed to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Colombia, Panama and Venezuela, which reads as follows:

"Sir,

"I have the honour to refer to the statements made to his nation's press by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, at the conclusion of the recent joint meeting of the Contadora Group. According to a cable of the International News Agency ACAN-EFE, datelined Managua, 31 July 1983, the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister, Miguel D'Escoto, declared here today, Sunday, that during the recent meetings of the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group with the Central American Foreign Ministers in Panama, 'militaristic intentions continued to be pressed'. The same agency cable goes on to say: 'He stated that only "lip-service" had been paid to the Declaration of Cancún, Mexico, issued by the Presidents of the countries that make up the Contadora Group'. The statements of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua run counter to the text of the press communiqué issued by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs at the end of their meeting in Panama and call for formal clarification if the negotiating process now under way is not to be jeopardized. As you know, in the course of our meeting in Panama I had the opportunity to express on behalf of my colleagues from Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala and on my own behalf, the reaction of our Governments to the Cancún Declaration highlighting the points of agreement that we found between that Declaration and the positions of our respective Governments. The participation of the four Central American countries was characterized by a definite conciliatory and constructive spirit that cannot be ignored by Nicaragua. As evidence of our attitude, I shall quote the text of my statement at our joint meeting of 28 to 30 July 1983.

'The Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras have carefully studied the Cancún Declaration on peace in Central America and believe that it constitutes a significant contribution towards practical solutions to all the problems of our region, solutions which we hope will enable peace, social justice, security and international co-operation for development to be established and strengthened. They have consequently considered it appropriate to issue this document as an endeavour by the four countries to incorporate all aspects of the Cancún Declaration within a framework that would encompass, in a structured and systematic way, the different factors that have combined to create the regional crisis situation. They do so, moreover, in the certainty that as protagonists on the Central American scene, they are primarily responsible for making the utmost effort to reach agreements on concerted action that will ensure peaceful co-existence in Central America. The problems of the region must be analysed and approached as a whole, so that due consideration may be given to all countries' interests, without singling out any particular country. Accordingly, the solutions sought must be designed to cover the topics that have already been under discussion, so as to prevent the particular interests of some countries from being served at the expense of the interests of others.

'The Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras are in agreement with the Cancún Declaration concerning the need for the dialogue that has been initiated to be strengthened by the participation of all the Governments of Central America, together with the negotiating machinery that has been set up, and concerning the need for a thorough and exhaustive discussion of the agenda adopted during the second plenary meeting at Panama, which covers the major topics in the spectrum of regional problems. We agree, moreover, that it is necessary to eliminate all the factors of insecurity, imbalance and threat that have disrupted strict observance of the essential principles governing international relations, thereby causing a generalized state of hostilities or crisis, the principal manifestations of which are a build-up of armaments, the presence of foreign advisers, clandestine traffic in weapons, actions of all kinds aimed at destabilizing established Governments, in the just demand of peoples for the establishment and development of genuinely democratic, representative, participatory and pluralistic systems and the observance and promotion of human rights and in the tensions prevailing between neighbouring and non-neighbouring States, caused by the spilling over of internal conflicts. We also concur with the Cancún Declaration on the need to agree on a general programme to guarantee regional peace and security, by discussing the problems that stand in the way of harmonious co-existence in Central America in order to discover and agree on satisfactory procedures for solving all of them, at the same time establishing the machinery for implementing, overseeing and monitoring any agreements adopted.

'On the basis of the foregoing general considerations, we are also in agreement with the Cancún Declaration that:

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1. It is a matter of urgency to tackle the question of the arms build-up in the Central American region in all its aspects, with a view to restoring military balance in the region; these negotiations would include the halting of the arms race, agreements on acceptable limits and arms limitation, procedures involving reductions by any one party with respect to the accepted limits, a ban on the introduction of specific types of arms in the region and all the factors that influence the military capacity of States - including equipment, troops, the services of foreign advisers, logistics, infrastructure and other facilities - with a view to establishing in Central America a genuine zone of peace and security for all parties;
2. Effective international mechanisms must be established to control the clandestine traffic in arms both within and from outside the region, eliminating logistic and any other type of support intended to promote, facilitate or support terrorism and subversion and putting an end to the violations occurring to that end in the air space, territory and waters of other States;
3. It is essential that there should be a demonstration of commitment of individual States to strive for mutual respect which will foster a climate of détente and co-existence within the region and result in more harmonious relations through diplomatic communication and the observance and reaffirmation of the commitments assumed by States in regional agreements that prohibit any type of intervention or aggression;
4. Communication mechanisms aimed at achieving a climate of mutual respect among States must also comprise international supervision and monitoring of frontiers, strategic zones, ports and airports as sensitive sites or installations, since the absence of any duly agreed-upon international supervision and monitoring, may impede or prevent the implementation of any agreements reached;
5. It is necessary to conclude serious and consistent internal agreements to establish and strengthen democratic, representative, pluralistic and participatory institutions; to ensure respect for human rights; to improve methods of consulting the people in those countries where such methods exist and, in countries in which they have not yet been established, to ensure that the will of the people is freely expressed by giving all currents of opinion free access to the electoral process, thus bringing about their full participation in the political life of their own countries. To this end, we attach the utmost importance to promoting the establishment of measures or instruments that would foster internal reconciliation in countries, with a view to establishing genuine democratic systems as a means of putting into practice the principle of the self-determination of peoples and as an expression of each people's sovereignty through free and fair elections. Internal conflicts have a disturbing influence in that they also cause tensions between neighbouring and non-neighbouring States which can be avoided by integrating all political groups in democratic electoral processes;

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6. There is a need to respect officially delimited frontiers and, where they exist, the traditional divisions of jurisdiction between States and also to respect treaties pertaining to territorial matters so as not to heighten tension or give rise to new disputes that might worsen the critical situation in the region;

7. Finally, we agree with the Cancún Declaration that any mechanisms for international supervision and monitoring that may be necessary must be discussed and approved, and that, furthermore, adequate mechanisms for monitoring and verifying the general agreement on Central American peace and security must be established having the necessary effectiveness and permanence to guarantee our people and future generations a lasting system of peaceful co-existence and economic and social progress.'

"I would also like to point out that our participation in the most recent meeting of the Contadora Group went beyond the aforementioned considerations and that, with the intent of contributing to the global and regional peace and security of Central America, in the context of the agenda and proceedings which were unanimously supported by the nine countries participating in the second joint meeting of Foreign Ministers held at Panama from 28 to 30 May 1983, the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras also submitted a document setting forth a basis for peace in Central America; this document will be developed further, but would help to guide the discussions aimed at reaching agreements to ensure peaceful co-existence in the region. For all the foregoing reasons, I must reject the sentiments expressed by the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua, while at the same time reminding you of my Government's firm resolve to reach an understanding that will enable us to achieve the desired goal of regional peace and security. Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration. Edgardo Paz Barnica, Minister for Foreign Affairs."

I should be grateful if you would have this note distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Enrique ORTEZ COLINDRES  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

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