



## General Assembly Security Council

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Thirty-eighth session

Items 64, 66, 78 and 125 of the preliminary list\*

DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF

GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS BETWEEN STATES

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION

ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN STATES

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-eighth year

Letter dated 19 July 1983 from the Permanent Representatives of  
Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela to the United Nations  
addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you the text of the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America, drawn up by the Presidents of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela at the close of the meeting which they held on 17 July 1983 at Cancún, Mexico.

\* A/38/50/Rev. 1.

We would request you to have the text of this Declaration circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 64, 66, 78 and 125 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Carlos ALBAN-HOLQUIN  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative  
of Colombia

(Signed) Miguel MARIN-BOSCH  
Ambassador  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
of Mexico  
Chargé d'Affaires a. i.

(Signed) Leonardo KAM  
Ambassador  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
of Panama  
Chargé d'Affaires a. i.

(Signed) Alberto MARTINI-URDANETA  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative  
of Venezuela

Annex

CANCUN DECLARATION ON PEACE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

In view of the worsening of the conflicts in Central America, the Heads of State of Colombia, Belisario Betancur; of Mexico, Miguel de la Madrid; of Panama, Ricardo de la Espriella; and of Venezuela, Luis Herrera Campíns, decided to meet at Cancún, Mexico, today, 17 July 1983.

We considered the critical situation in Central America and agreed that we were all deeply concerned at the speed with which it was deteriorating, as evidenced by an escalation of violence, the progressive mounting of tensions, frontier incidents and the threat of a flare-up of hostilities that might spread. All this, combined with the arms race and outside interference, creates a tragic setting affecting the political stability of the region and ruling out any progress and consolidation of institutions responsive to the democratic yearning for freedom, social justice and economic development. The conflicts in Central America present the international community with the dilemma of either resolutely supporting and strengthening the path of political understanding by offering constructive solutions or passively accepting the accentuation of factors which could lead to extremely dangerous armed confrontations.

The use of force is an approach that does not dissolve but aggravates, the underlying tensions. Peace in Central America can become a reality only in so far as respect is shown for the basic principles of coexistence among nations: non-intervention; self-determination; sovereign equality of States; co-operation for economic and social development; peaceful settlement of disputes; and free and authentic expression of the popular will. The creation of conditions conducive to peace in the region depends mainly on the attitude and the genuine readiness for dialogue of the countries of Central America, which must shoulder the primary responsibility and make the major effort in the search for agreements ensuring coexistence.

Accordingly, it is essential that the political will to seek understanding, which has been displayed since the very beginning of the Contadora Group's activities should continue to be clearly expressed in continued efforts for peace, so that it may be translated into concrete actions and commitments.

It is also necessary that other States with interests in and ties to the region should use their political influence in helping to strengthen the channels of understanding and should unreservedly commit themselves to the diplomatic approach to peace. The efforts of the Contadora Group have so far led to the initiation of a dialogue involving all the Governments of Central America, the establishment of machinery for consultation and the drawing up, by unanimous agreement, of an agenda covering the salient aspects of the problems of the region.

These achievements, although still inadequate, have been encouraged by the support of many countries, of a number of organizations and of the most varied opinion groups at the international level. All are agreed that the activities of

the Contadora Group have helped to mitigate the dangers and reduce the risks of a widespread confrontation and have made it possible to identify problems and causes of what is now a landscape of conflict and fear.

This generous support by the international community impels us to persist in our endeavours and to make every effort in a cause, the noble purposes of which outweigh any possible lack of understanding.

Inspired by our countries' broad spirit of solidarity with the fraternal peoples of Central America, we consider it necessary to expedite the process that may transform the will for peace into proposals which, if properly developed, can effectively contribute to the settlement of conflicts.

To that end, we have agreed on the general lines of a programme to be proposed to the countries of Central America which requires, in addition to strict compliance with the essential principles governing international relations, the conclusion of agreements and political commitments that will lead, region-wide, to effective control of the arms race; the elimination of foreign advisers; the creation of demilitarized zones; the prohibition of the use of the territory of some States for the development of political or military destabilization actions in other States; the eradication of transit of and traffic in arms; and the prohibition of other forms of aggression or interference in the internal affairs of any country in the area.

In order to implement this general programme, it will be necessary to conclude agreements embodying political commitments designed to ensure peace in the region. These agreements could include:

Commitment to put an end to all prevailing situations of belligerency;

Commitment to freeze offensive weapons at their current level;

Commitment to begin negotiations on agreements for the control and reduction of current stocks of weapons, with the establishment of appropriate supervisory machinery;

Commitment to prohibit the existence in national territory of military installations belonging to other countries;

Commitment to give prior notice of troop movements near frontiers, when the contingents exceed the limits set in the agreement;

Commitment to organize, as appropriate, joint boundary frontier or international supervision of frontiers by groups of observers chosen by common agreement by the parties concerned;

Commitment to establish mixed security commissions, with a view to preventing and, where appropriate, resolving frontier incidents;

Commitment to establish internal control machinery to prevent the transit of weapons from the territory of any country in the region to the territory of another;

Commitment to promote a climate of detente and confidence in the area by avoiding statements and other actions that jeopardize the essential climate of political confidence required;

Commitment to co-ordinate systems of direct communication between Governments with a view to preventing armed conflicts and generating an atmosphere of mutual political confidence.

Similarly, we consider that, simultaneously with the implementation of this general programme, the task of resolving specific differences between countries should be tackled initially by the signing of memoranda of understanding and the establishment of mixed commissions that will enable the parties to undertake joint action and guarantee the effective control of their territories, especially in frontier areas.

These measures, aimed at eliminating the factors which disturb the peace of the region, should be accompanied by a major internal effort to strengthen democratic institutions and guarantee respect for human rights.

To this end, it is necessary to improve methods of consulting the people, ensure that the various currents of opinion have free access to the electoral process and promote the full participation of citizens in the political life of their country.

The strengthening of democratic political institutions is closely linked to evolution and progress in the field of economic development and social justice. In fact, these are two aspects of a single process whose ultimate goal is the implementation of the fundamental values of mankind.

The economic backwardness which lies at the root of instability in the region and is the immediate cause of many of its conflicts should be approached from this standpoint.

Some of the steps most urgently needed to offset the effects of the world economic crisis are the strengthening of integration machinery, an increase in intra-zonal trade and the exploitation of opportunities for industrial complementarity. However, such efforts by the countries concerned must be supplemented by the support of the international community, especially the industrialized countries, through development credits, co-operation programmes and access of Central American products to their markets. The Governments of the countries of the Contadora Group reiterate their decision to continue the programmes of co-operation that benefit the subregion and offer their assistance in channelling international support towards these goals of economic reactivation. On the basis of these general outlines we have requested our Ministers for Foreign Affairs to prepare specific proposals that will be submitted to the Central American countries for their consideration at the next joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

We appeal to all members of the international community, especially those which have expressed sympathy with the efforts of the Contadora Group, and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, to contribute, with their experience and diplomatic capability, to the search for peaceful solutions to the problems of Central America. For all these reasons we have contacted the leaders of the countries of the Americas with a view to obtaining their solidarity, which is necessary.

We, the Heads of State of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, reaffirm the aims that unite our Governments in the task of seeking to contribute to the establishment of the just and lasting peace desired by the peoples of Central America.

Done at Cancún, Mexico, on 17 July 1983.

(Signed)

Belisario Betancur,  
President of the Republic  
of Colombia

Ricardo de la Espriella,  
President of the Republic  
of Panama

Miguel de la Madrid H.,  
President of the United  
Mexican States

Luis Herrera Campíns,  
President of the Republic  
of Venezuela

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