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

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Forty-fourth year

Letter dated 24 February 1989 from the representatives of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you herewith the "Joint Declaration of the Central American Presidents" (see annex), adopted by our respective Heads of State on 14 February 1989 at the end of their summit meeting held in the Department of La Paz, El Salvador.

We should be grateful if you would have this note and the text of the Declaration distributed as official documents of the General Assembly, under item 34 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Francisco VILLAGRAN DE LEON  
Ambassador,  
Permanent Representative of Guatemala  
to the United Nations

(Signed) Roberto MARTINEZ ORDOÑEZ  
Ambassador,  
Permanent Representative of Honduras  
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(Signed) Alfredo J. ORTUÑO  
Ambassador, Alternate  
Representative of Costa Rica  
to the United Nations  
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

(Signed) Jorge E. RAMIREZ  
Minister Counsellor,  
Alternate Representative of El Salvador  
to the United Nations  
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(Signed) Alejandro SERRANO CALDERA  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of Nicaragua  
to the United Nations

\* A/44/50.

ANNEX

Joint Declaration of the Central American Presidents

The Presidents of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, meeting in the Department of La Paz, Republic of El Salvador, on 13 and 14 February 1989, reviewed the status of the Central American peace process and adopted decisions required to put it into effect, on the understanding that the commitments entered into under the Esquipulas II Agreement and the Alajuela Declaration constitute a single, indivisible whole.

The Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras were informed by the constitutional President of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, that he was prepared to undertake a process of democratization and national reconciliation in his country, in the context of the Esquipulas II Agreement and involving, inter alia, the following action:

Once the electoral laws and the laws regulating freedom of expression, information and public opinion have been amended to enable political parties to organize and to be politically active in the broadest sense, a four-month period will commence for the preparation, organization and mobilization of political parties. Immediately following that period, there will be a further six-month period of political activity at the end of which elections will be held for the offices of President, Vice-President and representatives to the National Assembly, municipalities and the Central American Parliament.

Such elections shall take place no later than 25 February 1990 unless the Government and opposition political parties decide, by mutual consent, that they should be held at another date.

The Government of Nicaragua will set up the Supreme Electoral Council with the balanced participation of representatives of opposition political parties. In that connection, the Presidents appeal to Nicaragua's political parties to participate in the electoral process.

International observers, in particular the representatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, will be invited to be present in all electoral districts during the two stages just mentioned in order to verify that the electoral process is genuine.

The Government of Nicaragua will guarantee the unrestricted functioning of communication media by reviewing and amending the legislation governing the mass media and will give all political parties equal access to State television and radio in terms of both the timing and the length of broadcasts. The Government of

Nicaragua will authorize all communication media to obtain either within the country or abroad, as they see fit, all the materials, implements and equipment they need to perform their task fully.

In accordance with the proposal by the President of Nicaragua and at the initiative of the President of Honduras, the Central American Presidents undertake to draw up, within a period not exceeding 90 days, a joint plan for the voluntary demobilization, repatriation or relocation in Nicaragua or third countries of members of the Nicaraguan resistance and their families. To that end, they will request technical advice from specialized bodies of the United Nations.

In order to help create conditions for the voluntary demobilization, relocation or repatriation of Nicaraguans who have been involved in direct or indirect armed activities and are currently in Honduran territory, the Government of Nicaragua has decided to release prisoners in accordance with the classification made by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

The joint plan will also provide for assistance with the demobilization of all those who have been or are involved in armed actions in the countries of the region, when such persons voluntarily request it.

To fulfil security verification commitments, the Executive Commission will be entrusted with the task of immediately organizing technical meetings to establish the most appropriate and efficient mechanism in accordance with the talks held in New York with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Presidents reaffirmed the powers of the National Reconciliation Commissions to continue to perform specific verification functions in the areas indicated in the Guatemala Procedure and the Alajuela Declaration and to report periodically to the Executive Commission on the results of their work.

The Central American Presidents firmly reiterated the request contained in point 5 of the Esquipulas II Agreement that Governments of the region and Governments from outside the region which are providing either overt or covert aid to irregular forces or insurrectionist movements should immediately terminate such aid, with the exception of humanitarian assistance which furthers the purposes of this document.

The Presidents urge all sectors, and in particular the insurrectionist movements and irregular forces operating in the area, to join in the constitutional political processes of each country. In this connection, they appeal to all Salvadorian sectors to participate in the forthcoming elections.

The Presidents reiterated the importance of the Central American Parliament as a forum in which the peoples of the area, through their freely and directly elected representatives, will discuss and formulate appropriate recommendations concerning the political, economic, social and cultural problems of Central America.

The Presidents called urgently on the international community to support the social and economic recovery process of the Central American nations in both the short and the medium term, taking into consideration the seriousness of the external debt problem and the need to revitalize intraregional trade as a basic factor in the strengthening of the integration process.

In particular, they asked the European Community for support in implementing the programme to restructure, reactivate and strengthen the economic integration process of the Central American Isthmus, which was formally presented in Guatemala in January.

At the same time, they welcomed with satisfaction the report of the International Commission for Central American Recovery and Development, which makes a significant contribution to the strengthening of democracy and the creation of a system of economic and social well-being and justice in the region.

The Presidents remain committed to seeking, as a matter of priority, directly negotiated solutions to the conflicts that have arisen as a result of the Central American crisis.

The Presidents agreed to establish a Central American commission on environment and development as a regional co-operation mechanism to ensure optimum and rational utilization of the natural resources of the area, pollution control and restoration of the ecological balance. The Executive Commission will set up that commission at its next meeting and will convene it immediately so that it may draw up a draft agreement regulating its nature and functions.

The Presidents likewise expressed firm support for the holding of the International Conference on Central American Refugees in Guatemala in May 1989, since the Conference will contribute positively to the search for solutions to the flow of refugees and displaced persons affected by the crisis in the region.

They agreed to promote a regional co-operation agreement to eradicate drug trafficking. To that end, the Executive Commission will draw up a draft agreement which shall be delivered to the Governments affected.

They also express their Governments' desire to support the initiative of drafting a convention on the rights of the child within the context of the United Nations.

The Presidents agreed to meet in the Republic of Honduras at a date to be determined later.

The Presidents of Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica thank the people and Government of El Salvador, and in particular its President,

Mr. José Napoleón Duarte, for their hospitality which provided a fitting context for this meeting.

Department of La Paz, El Salvador, 14 February 1989.

Oscar Arias Sánchez  
President, Republic of Costa Rica

José Napoleón Duarte  
President, Republic of El Salvador

Vinicio Cerezo  
President, Republic of Guatemala

José Azcona Hoyo  
President, Republic of Honduras

Daniel Ortega Saavedra  
President, Republic of Nicaragua

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