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LETTER DATED 27 JANUARY 1984 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF HONDURAS TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the note dated 25 January 1984 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Honduras, Dr. Edgardo Paz Barnica, addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, which refers to the charge made by Mr. Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, concerning the alleged murder of 200 Nicaraguan Miskitos by a Honduran patrol. The text has been transmitted to the Organization of American States and the letter reads:

"Communication No. 86-DSM. Tegucigalpa, D.C., 25 January 1984. Sir, I acknowledge receipt of your note of yesterday's date, in which you inform me that the Government of Nicaragua has been notified that Mr. Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, winner of the 1980 Nobel Peace Prize, has charged that about 200 Nicaraguan Miskitos were murdered at a frontier post between Honduras and Nicaragua by a Honduran military patrol. According to Mr. Pérez Esquivel, the alleged killings took place on 6 January, as the Miskitos were trying to return to Nicaraguan territory. You add that this charge 'squares with other charges of massive violations of the right to life which the Government of Nicaragua has been receiving from citizens of Miskito origin who have managed to escape from Honduras and return to their homeland', and that your Government therefore calls for a rigorous and urgent inquiry into this charge, as well as punishment of the alleged culprits. In reply, I must first state that I today contacted the Ambassador of Honduras in Argentina with a request that he confer with Mr. Pérez Esquivel and ascertain whether he really made such a serious and groundless charge. If the answer is in the affirmative, I could only consider the charges as being extremely unfortunate, since on the date of the alleged killings Mr. Pérez Esquivel was visiting Honduras - a country in which, as he stated to the mass media, there is a democratic government that guarantees complete freedom of the press. It therefore seems logical to me that, if he had learnt of the imaginary massacre, he would not have denounced it to the Honduran and foreign journalists, who exercise their profession in this country without any kind of censorship. Probably - and perhaps involuntarily - Mr. Pérez Esquivel mistook Honduras for Nicaragua, since in my country there is no persecution and, still less, any assassination of the Nicaraguan Miskitos who entered as refugees,

precisely because they were fleeing the treatment which they receive from their own Government. This is not a capricious opinion, since the annual report for 1982-1983 of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights states textually, on pages 15 and 16: 'during the period covered by this report, the state of emergency was also maintained in Nicaragua and, combined with the existing laws granting discretionary powers to the Executive, resulted in abuses committed against political dissidents, many of whom were arbitrarily detained, placed in solitary confinement and kept in prison for periods of time exceeding those permitted under the same rules governing such matters. Among the cases of particular concern to the Commission - in addition to the hundreds of Miskitos, who are the subject of a special report being prepared by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights - are those of the leaders of the Partido Conservador Democrata.' In addition, the newspaper La Prensa of San Pedro Sula for that date contains statements by Mr. Brooklin Rivera, a true Miskito leader of recognized honesty, currently in exile in Costa Rica, in which he directly accuses the Government of Nicaragua of engaging in a systematic extermination of the Miskito people, constituting the crime of genocide. Once again, the Government of Honduras states that the Nicaraguan Miskitos who are in Honduras entered voluntarily, have been admitted for purely humanitarian reasons and have been given the protection which they need, as can be confirmed by the representatives of UNHCR, as well as members and officials of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, who have visited our country and seen at first hand the suitable manner in which the Government of Honduras is treating the Miskito refugees. For all these reasons, and with all due respect for Mr. Pérez Esquivel, the Government of Honduras most emphatically denies the slanderous accusation that the Honduran army has assassinated 200 Miskitos, as can be verified by any impartial investigation of the matter, which would prove conclusively that it is in Nicaragua, and not in Honduras, that the Miskitos are being persecuted and exterminated. I take this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration. (Signed) Edgardo Paz Barnica, Minister for Foreign Affairs."

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this text to be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Roberto FLORES BERMUDEZ
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
