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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 8 May 1989 from the Permanent Representative
of Honduras to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the note dated 5 May 1989 which the Minister for Foreign Affairs addressed to you on behalf of the Government of Honduras.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this note and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 34 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Roberto MARTINEZ ORDOÑEZ
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/44/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Letter dated 5 May 1989 from the Minister for Foreign
Affairs of Honduras addressed to the Secretary-General

I have pleasure in writing to you to follow up the note dated 31 March 1989 from the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Central America.

In that note, we asked you to take the necessary steps to set in motion the mechanism for the verification of fulfilment of the commitments undertaken in the Esquipulas II and Tesoro Beach Agreements concerning non-use of territory and prohibition of support for irregular forces and insurrectionist movements operating in the Central American region.

As you know, the idea of setting up this International Verification Commission came from a Honduran initiative, made in November 1987, at the Organization of American States and it was reaffirmed in October 1988; this time the Government of Honduras referred to it as an International Peace Force. The Honduran initiative contained three other elements: initiation of a series of negotiations, on various levels, in order to resolve the Central American crisis; action to deal with the problem of Central American refugees in Honduras; and withdrawal of the legal action instituted by Nicaragua against Honduras in the International Court of Justice.

This proposal enabled the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Central America to ask you, on 30 November 1988, to:

"Co-ordinate, as a matter of urgency, the establishment and effective operation of an impartial mechanism for on-site verification, control and follow-up of fulfilment of the commitments relating to termination of aid to insurrectionist movements and irregular forces operating in the region, and non-use of territory to support those movements and forces."

Pursuant to that request, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the area met with you on 8 February 1989, at which time we asked you to establish a technical United Nations group on Central America to draw up the terms of reference of that verification mechanism and to draft a proposal on that basis.

On 14 February 1989, the Central American Presidents met at Tesoro Beach, El Salvador, and decided, inter alia, that:

A. The Executive Commission should 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"; and that

B. "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 latter point refers to the "gentlemen's agreement" between the Presidents of Honduras and Nicaragua concerning withdrawal of the legal action instituted against Honduras in the International Court of Justice. This solution is a natural follow-up to the progress made in the political negotiation concerning the Central American crises.

Not only did Honduras propose that an international verification mechanism be established under United Nations auspices, but it was also behind the requests addressed to you on 30 November 1988 and 8 February 1989. In addition, Honduras attended the technical meeting, convened in New York, to draw up the Commission's terms of reference, and all who attended that meeting, including the Secretariat staff, can testify to the positive and active contribution which Honduras made.

In spite of the progress that has been made on this issue and on others in which we have participated, the Government of Nicaragua did not take any action to comply with the "gentlemen's agreement" to withdraw the legal action instituted against Honduras in the International Court of Justice.

Because of Nicaragua's failure to fulfil its obligations, on 31 March 1989, the Government of Honduras signed the note which the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Central America addressed to you:

"Subject to the effective fulfilment of the commitment to seek negotiated solutions to the conflicts that have arisen as a result of the Central American crisis entered into the Joint Declaration of the Presidents on 14 February."

On behalf of the Government of Honduras, I wish to express interest and a firm readiness to see the Verification Commission set up as soon as possible, once the Government of Nicaragua fulfils the commitment it assumed, at Tesoro Beach, to withdraw the legal action instituted against Honduras in the International Court of Justice.

Recourse to legal action in this case, is not only incompatible with the process of political negotiation, but is also contrary to the agreements reached among the Presidents of Central America at their meeting at Tesoro Beach on 14 February 1989. Accordingly, the Government of Honduras would welcome any steps which the Secretary-General might take for the speedy resolution of the current situation regarding Nicaragua's non-compliance, which is impeding the complete implementation of the Presidential agreements. This would ensure the successful outcome of the ongoing normalization process in the region.

(Signed) Carlos LOPEZ CONTRERAS
