

JUN 29 1989

A

UNITED
NATIONS

UN/SA COLLECTION



General Assembly

Security Council

Distr.
GENERALA/44/344
S/20699
26 June 1989
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Forty-fourth session

Item 34 of the preliminary list*

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA:

THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE
AND SECURITY AND PEACE
INITIATIVESSECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fourth yearReport of the Secretary-General

1. This report is being submitted pursuant to resolutions 530 (1983) of 19 May 1983 and 562 (1985) of 10 May 1985 of the Security Council and resolution 43/24 of 15 November 1988 of the General Assembly.

2. In this last resolution, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, commended the desire for peace expressed by the Central American Presidents in signing on 7 August 1987 at Guatemala City the agreement on "Procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace in Central America" and in issuing on 16 January 1988 at San José their Joint Declaration; expressed its strongest support for the agreement; exhorted the Governments to continue their efforts to achieve a firm and lasting peace in Central America and fervently hoped that the Central American Presidents would evaluate and give a new impetus to the process of fulfilling the undertakings assumed in the agreement concluded at the Esquipulas II summit meeting; urged the five Central American countries to adopt immediately formulae that would enable them to overcome the obstacles impeding the advancement of the regional peace process and appealed to the countries which are outside the region but which have links with it and interests in it to facilitate the implementation of the agreement concluded at the Esquipulas II summit meeting and to abstain from any action which might impede such implementation.

* A/44/50/Rev.1.

3. The General Assembly also exhorted the five Central American countries, with the utmost urgency, to promote and supplement the agreed verification machinery, with the co-operation of regional or extra-regional States and bodies of recognized impartiality and technical capacity, which had shown a desire to collaborate in the Central American peace process and requested me to afford the fullest possible support to the Central American Governments in their efforts to achieve peace, especially by taking the measures necessary for the development and effective functioning of the essential verification machinery.

4. Lastly, the Assembly urged the international community and international organizations to increase their technical, economic and financial co-operation with the Central American countries for the implementation of the activities supporting the goals and objectives of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America, as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 42/231, and as a way of assisting the efforts being made by the countries of the region to achieve peace and development.

5. In the initial months following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 43/24, the situation in the region was seen to evolve favourably. An increasing number of contacts took place at various levels between Central American Governments, public recriminations ceased almost entirely and, at the same time, foreign interference seemed to be on the decline. The renewed interest shown by the Central American Governments in the establishment of impartial machinery for on-site verification of the undertakings in respect of security contained in the Esquipulas II Agreements, namely, cessation of aid to irregular forces and insurrectionist movements operating in the region and non-use of the territory of a State for attacking others was a clear manifestation of the new climate. That interest was expressed in the request from the Executive Commission set up under the Esquipulas II Agreements, consisting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five Central American States, at its sixth meeting, held on 30 November 1988 at Mexico City, that I should take steps, as a matter of urgency, for the development and effective functioning of impartial machinery for on-site verification, control and monitoring of the implementation of the undertakings in respect of security, which request I answered in detail on 5 January 1989.

6. Acting on the suggestion of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, with a view to clarifying certain ideas and considerations contained in my reply of 5 January and to moving ahead with the definition of the verification machinery for the security commitments, I proposed to the five Central American Ministers for Foreign Affairs that they meet with me and my principal advisers in New York on 8 February 1989, that is, prior to the summit meeting of their Presidents in order to assist them in preparing for that meeting. At the close of the New York meeting, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs handed me a note in which they clarified the request contained in the letter of 30 November and requested, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/24, that I proceed to appoint a technical group of the Secretariat for the purpose of defining, with Central American representatives, the terms of reference for the establishment of the verification machinery, and on that basis, draft the relevant proposal.

/...

7. In the Joint Declaration issued on 14 February in El Salvador (A/44/140-S/20491), the Central American Presidents adopted several specific commitments with a view to implementing the Esquipulas II Agreements and in turn entrusted three important tasks to the United Nations. Those tasks were additional to those relating to the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation referred to in paragraph 4 above and to the International Conference on Central American Refugees, which are the subject of separate reports to the General Assembly. Specifically, the Presidents entrusted the Executive Commission with the task of immediately organizing technical meetings to establish the most appropriate and effective mechanism for verification of the security commitments "in accordance with the talks held in New York with the Secretary-General of the United Nations". The Presidents, in turn, welcomed the willingness expressed by the President of Nicaragua "to undertake a process of democratization and national reconciliation in his country", by amending the electoral laws and the laws relating to the communications media to enable "political parties to organize and to be politically active in the broadest sense", to move up the elections to no later than 25 February 1990 unless the Government and opposition political parties should decide, by mutual consent, that they should be held at another date, and to invite international observers, in particular the representatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) to be present in all electoral districts in order to verify that the electoral process is genuine during every stage. Finally, the Presidents undertook 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 which end they would request technical advice from specialized agencies of the United Nations.

8. In reply to the request made by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs in their note of 8 February, as confirmed in the Joint Declaration of their Presidents, I immediately proceeded to establish a Secretariat technical group, which prepared a working paper on a possible international mechanism to verify security commitments. This paper was considered and discussed at a technical meeting held on 14 and 15 March in New York with representatives of the Central American Governments. The paper prepared at that meeting provided for the creation of a United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA), which would operate on the basis of mobile units deployed in the territories of the five Central American countries, carry out its assignment by means of regular patrols, and unannounced visits and inspections in the event of reports of violations, and be equipped with land, air and sea transport. Although the definitive composition of ONUCA and its operational procedures would depend on the agreement of the Security Council, the paper recorded the wish of the five Central American Governments that the Group should consist of personnel from Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany and Spain, with Latin American participation.

9. The paper was submitted to the Governments of the five Central American States and, after some revisions, served as a basis for the letter dated 31 March 1989 addressed to me by the Executive Commission following its eighth meeting, held at San José (A/44/287-S/20642). The letter requested me to take the necessary steps to establish the Observer Group. That request would, in principle, have permitted me to dispatch a reconnaissance mission to the region, on the basis of whose report

I would have submitted a formal proposal to the Security Council. Nevertheless, as I indicated in my letter of 14 April 1989 to the five Ministers for Foreign Affairs (A/44/288-S/20643, annex), I did not believe that I was in a position to take those steps in view of the reservation formulated by one of the signatories. Since that date, numerous but fruitless efforts have been made to overcome this obstacle. The verification of compliance with the security commitments entered into by the Presidents under Esquipulas II remains, therefore, in suspense.

10. With respect to the electoral process in Nicaragua, I received a formal request from the Government of Nicaragua to proceed, in accordance with the Joint Declaration of Costa del Sol and within the framework of the Esquipulas II Agreements, to set up a group of observers to verify implementation of the measures which had been announced, as well as the genuineness of the electoral process during every stage. I am in contact with the Government of Nicaragua concerning the performance of this task, which, as I have mentioned on various occasions, belongs in the context of the Central American peace plan. I have twice reported to the President of the General Assembly on this subject (A/44/210 and A/44/304). Meanwhile, I have sent several missions to Nicaragua to observe the debate in the National Assembly on the reforms, which were in due course promulgated, of the electoral laws and the laws regulating the mass media, as well as to carry out a study of the new legislation. I have also been in contact with the Secretary General of the Organization of American States with a view to performing the observation in Nicaragua jointly.

11. The joint plan for the voluntary demobilization, repatriation or relocation of members of the Nicaraguan resistance and their families, for the adoption of which the Presidents had set a deadline of 90 days from 14 February 1989, has not been approved by the Central American Presidents or by the Executive Commission.

* * *

12. In the course of my contacts with authorities and representatives of the many Member States of this Organization, I have noted the international community's serious concern regarding the continuing picture of conflict which characterizes the situation in Central America. The agreements reached in El Salvador in February 1989 raised legitimate hopes to the extent that, building on the foundations laid in Esquipulas II, they envisaged practical means of circumventing some of the principal obstacles to implementation of the agreements as planned. I have felt encouraged, particularly in the course of recent months, to redouble my efforts to help the countries of the region attain their chosen goals. Without prejudice to the need to identify fundamentally regional solutions for the crisis facing the Central American countries, and for the purpose of contributing to such solutions, my colleagues and I have established contact with Governments outside the region, as well as with other forces or de facto entities operating there. These contacts are particularly important in the context of the possibility of creating the verification machinery mentioned earlier.

13. At the time of writing this report, it is my understanding that agreement has not yet been reached on the dates for the next summit meeting of the Central American Presidents. I am bound to express my concern over the difficulties that

/...

this delay entails, of itself, for the synchronized implementation of the indivisible whole which, in accordance with the Guatemala Procedure, is constituted by the measures agreed upon therein. I am, of course, aware that this is not simply due to a scheduling problem. Obviously, since the last summit, the political climate has deteriorated and, in some cases, there has been a resurgence of violence. I do not intend in this report to describe in detail the various factors which have given rise to this situation; I have referred to them on various occasions in the past, particularly in my address to the inaugural session of the International Conference on Central American Refugees on 29 May 1989 at Guatemala City (A/44/311, annex). I do consider it my duty to emphasize my view, which I believe is widely shared in the international community, that the means to address the problems affecting the Central American countries and their peoples exist in the instruments which have been signed by their leaders. More precisely, I should like to express my conviction that it is essential, if the peace process is to be set on the right track once again, to put into practice without delay the specific decisions referred to in paragraph 7 of this report, all of which envisage a role for the United Nations. For my part, I remain willing to do all in my power to ensure that the Organization may be of assistance to that end.
