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LETTER DATED 11 MAY 1984 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
NICARAGUA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a note sent by His Excellency Mr. Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, to His Excellency Dr. Edgardo Paz Barnica, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Honduras, concerning the downing in Nicaraguan territory of a helicopter of the Honduran Armed Forces.

I also enclose a chronological list of the air and naval attacks launched from Honduran territory between April 1983 and March 1984 against the Nicaraguan sector of the Gulf of Fonseca and Punta Consigüina, near which, in Nicaraguan territory, the helicopter was shot down. Within the next few days I will send you an updated list, including the attacks that occurred in that sector in March, April and May.

The Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua considers it extremely important that the Security Council and, through it, the international community, should be fully informed of the truth about this matter, since incidents of this type can be used as a pretext to launch a large-scale attack on my country using combined forces that might include United States forces.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and annexes I and II thereto circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Javier CHAMORRO MORA  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of Nicaragua  
to the United Nations

Annex I

Letter dated 11 May 1984 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of Nicaragua addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of  
Honduras

I have the honour to reply to your letters Nos. 332-DSM of 8 May, 338-DSM of 9 May and 346-DSM of 11 May, the last of which was addressed to the Ambassador of Nicaragua in Honduras and all of which refer to the downing of a military helicopter which recently completed investigations show to have belonged to the Honduran Air Force.

The Minister states in his first letter that the military helicopter "deviated from its route because of bad weather conditions in the Gulf of Fonseca ...". In this connection, the meteorological reports issued by the stations at the airports of Choluteca, Ilopango and Chinandega for the period between 7.00 a.m. and 12.00 noon state that in all sectors of the Gulf of Fonseca the wind was calm, visibility was unlimited and temperatures were normal. The assertion that the weather was bad in that area is therefore false.

Furthermore, it is completely illogical to assert that the helicopter had deviated from its route, because the two military helicopters which intruded into our airspace had taken a route totally different from that described by you, for Tegucigalpa lies north-east of Amapala and the helicopters were heading for Punta Cosigüina, situated to the south-west. Furthermore, both helicopters were heading for places where military installations exist, leading to the conclusion that they were carrying out specific observation missions.

In his second letter, the Minister rejects the statement that the downed helicopter bore United States Army inscriptions. We consider it unnecessary to enlarge on this point, since we have in our possession the inscription on the helicopter in question, and there can be no doubt that it reads "U.S. Army matériel - Command", as has already been widely reported in the press.

In his third letter, the Minister states that a "correct Honduran request for permission for a national commission to visit the site of the incident" was presented and that "the Sandinist Government suspiciously refused such permission". We are justifiably surprised by this assertion, since prior to receiving the letter in question, the Nicaraguan authorities were unaware of this request. Since the request was not presented to any known authority in Nicaragua or to our mission in Tegucigalpa, we should be grateful for clarification as to when, to whom and how a request to that effect was presented. Similarly, despite the fact that the assertion in question is untrue, I wish to inform you that the Government of Nicaragua has no objection to permitting a Honduran commission to visit Punta Cosigüina, if the Government of Honduras wishes to present a correct request to that effect. Moreover, Nicaragua is requesting the countries of the Contadora Group to appoint representatives to accompany the Honduran mission on that visit.

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Furthermore, it is very significant that the Minister ignores the fact that the sector where the military helicopter was shot down has for many months been the scene of a series of air and sea attacks by mercenary forces coming from Honduran territory, and that there have been many attacks on Nicaraguan vessels in the same sector by Honduran coastguard vessels and armed aircraft, not to mention the innumerable violations of our sovereign airspace by aircraft and helicopters likewise coming from Honduran territory, in addition to the constant naval manoeuvres carried out by United States forces in the Gulf.

The Government of Nicaragua considers it necessary to draw attention to the fact that the dangerous warlike escalation under way in Honduras at the instigation of the United States Administration conceals ulterior motives of aggression against Nicaragua and a desire to unleash an armed conflict between the two countries which would only cause suffering and destruction for our peoples and from which only the United States Government could benefit.

We also wish to state that Nicaragua is not and never will be an aggressor State or an enemy of the Honduran people, as the enemies of peace in Central America would have it believed. The death of the eight Honduran citizens travelling in the military helicopter is the responsibility of those who, forgetting the true interests of their people, have accepted foreign domination.

The decision of the Government of Honduras to declare our Ambassador in Tequigalpa persona non grata without any justification is simply a new act of provocation designed to achieve the aims we have already mentioned. Despite the gravity of this decision, the Government of Nicaragua will take no step that could be used to increase the climate of tension that interests alien to our peoples have been fomenting.

Miguel D'ESCOTO BROCKMANN  
Minister for Foreign Affairs

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Annex II

Attacks launched on Nicaragua from Honduras in the Gulf  
of Fonseca and Punta Cosigüina (1983)

On 17 April 1983, two Honduran coastguard vessels entered Nicaraguan territorial waters in the Gulf of Fonseca in blatant disrespect for, and violation of, our sovereignty and attacked a Nicaraguan patrol boat that was routinely patrolling national territory. The commander of the Nicaraguan coastguard vessel, Marcos Torres, and crew members Jorge Castellón Peña, Julio Castellón and Secundino Vásquez were wounded in the attack, which took place at 4 a.m., approximately two miles from Punta El Papayal. (A protest concerning this attack was submitted in Note No. 054.)

On 20 April 1983, at 6.30 a.m., three coastguard vessels flying the Honduran flag penetrated Nicaraguan territorial waters in the Gulf of Fonseca and attacked two patrol boats of the Sandinist Navy which were engaged in surveillance duties in the Farallones sector. Later, at 9.10 a.m., the Honduran coastguard vessels returned, accompanied by a "Super Mystery" aircraft of the Honduran Air Force, and conducted a series of provocative manoeuvres. At 3.50 p.m., other Honduran vessels conducted further manoeuvres, to which no response was made. (Note of 20 April 1983).

On 20 July 1983, at 6.55 a.m., two coastguard vessels of the Honduran Navy attacked the Nicaraguan patrol boat 4 de Mayo off Punta San José, 13 kilometres north-west of Potosí, in Nicaraguan territorial waters in the Gulf of Fonseca. The confrontation lasted 90 minutes. (Note No. 106 of 20 July 1983).

On 28 August 1983, at 8 a.m., a counterrevolutionary group travelling from Honduras in a white vessel arrived at the village of Catalina, 12 kilometres south of Potosí, abducted three Nicaraguan citizens who were members of the reserve, and took them to the Las Casitas counterrevolutionary camp in Honduran territory, where two of the abducted Nicaraguans were killed in an atrocious manner, while the third managed to escape. (Note of 20 August 1983).

On 20 October 1983, at 7.05 p.m., two Nicaraguan coastguard vessels that were engaged in surveillance duties in Nicaraguan territorial waters in the Gulf of Fonseca were attacked by four coastguard vessels flying the Honduran flag off Punta San José, 10 kilometres from Potosí. (Note dated 28 October 1983).

On 1 November 1983, two patrol boats of the Honduran Navy, escorting two high-speed launches, attacked two Nicaraguan coastguard vessels that were carrying out routine surveillance duties in territorial waters in the Gulf of Fonseca. The attack occurred in the El Papayal sector, 5 kilometres north of Punta Cosigüina. Two members of the crew of one of the coastguard vessels were wounded in this attack, which began at 11.45 a.m. and ended at 12.15 p.m. (Note No. 218 of 1 November 1983).

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On 2 November 1983, at 4.30 p.m., two coastguard vessels of the Honduran Navy, supported by a Honduran helicopter, penetrated territorial waters in the Gulf of Fonseca and attacked three Nicaraguan coastguard vessels which were engaged in surveillance duties. The attack was aimed at protecting three high-speed launches manned by Somozan mercenaries which were seeking to penetrate Nicaraguan territorial waters. (Note dated 2 November 1983).

On 29 November 1983, at 6 a.m., three high-speed launches of the "Pirafña" type belonging to the Honduran Navy illegally entered Nicaraguan territorial waters and attacked the fishing vessel Gonzalo Brenes, which was flying the Nicaraguan flag, off Punta San José, 12 kilometres north-west of Potosí. The attack lasted for 55 minutes, after which the launches withdrew to Honduran territorial waters. (Note No. 238 of 29 November 1983).

Attacks on Nicaragua from Honduras in the Gulf of Fonseca  
and Punta Cosigüina (1984)

On 3 January 1984, at 12.30 a.m., two high-speed launches coming from Honduran waters in the Gulf of Fonseca entered Nicaraguan territorial waters and launched a 10-minute mortar attack on the port of Potosí, in Chinandega Department. At the same time, an aircraft of undetermined type harassed the same port, fired rockets that landed 400 metres from the installations there, and subsequently withdrew towards Honduran territory, from which it had come.

On the same day, 3 January, at 10.50 p.m., another aircraft of undetermined type, coming from Honduras, flew over the port of Potosí, in Chinandega Department, firing rockets that landed on the installations of the ferry that operates in that locality, destroying the house of a peasant family. The aircraft subsequently withdrew towards Honduran territory, there having been no loss of human life. (Note dated 5 January 1984).

On 5 January, between 12.20 a.m. and 12.40 a.m., two aircraft of undetermined type, proceeding from Honduran territory, fired four rockets at the port of Potosí, in Chinandega Department, causing considerable damage to the customs building and the health centre. One civilian was killed in this criminal attack and four other civilians were wounded. The treacherous attack was carried out in the presence of a high-speed launch of the "Pirafña" type, which had likewise come from Honduran territory. (Note No. 003 of 6 January 1984).

On 6 January, at 6.45 p.m., two high-speed launches of the "Pirafña" type attacked the port of Potosí, in Chinandega Department, for 5 minutes, firing four shells, and withdrew in the direction of the port of San Lorenzo in Honduran territory. On the same day, at 8 p.m., two aircraft of undetermined type launched a 20-minute attack on the port of Potosí and fired nine rockets, later withdrawing towards the port of San Lorenzo in Honduran territory. Later, at 9.10 p.m., two fast aircraft of undetermined type launched a 15-minute attack on sectors adjoining the port of Potosí, firing nine rockets and setting fire to a sesame plantation. Two peasants were wounded in this criminal attack. The aircraft later withdrew to Honduran territory. (Note No. 004 of 7 January 1984).

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On 12 February 1984, at 6.20 a.m., two high-speed launches of the "Piraña" type, coming from Honduras, penetrated Nicaraguan territorial waters in the Punta San José sector, 8 kilometres north-west of the port of Potosí, in Chinandega Department, and then withdrew to their point of origin. Furthermore, at 3.20 p.m. on 12 February an olive-drab helicopter of undetermined type, coming from Honduras, overflew Punta San José, 8 kilometres north-west of the port of Potosí, in Chinandega Department, and thereafter withdrew to its point of origin. (Note No. 034, dated 9 February 1984).

On 3 March, at 6 a.m., a helicopter coming from Honduran territory launched a rocket attack on the Potosí ferry installations in the Gulf of Fonseca, without causing any damage. The attack having been repelled, it withdrew in the direction of Honduras. Later, another helicopter fired two rockets at a Nicaraguan patrol boat that was carrying out routine surveillance duties in the Punta San José sector in that Gulf. The helicopter withdrew in the direction of Amapala Island. (Note of 4 March).

On 5 March, at 2 a.m., two high-speed launches of the "Piraña" type, accompanied by a gunboat and aircraft of undetermined number and type, attacked three Nicaraguan coastguard vessels in the Punta San José sector in the Gulf of Fonseca. Second lieutenant Javier Mayorga, commander of coastguard vessel 308, and crew members Francisco Mena Baltodano, radio operator, and Jorge Castellón Peña, first engineer, were killed in this criminal attack. Crew members Iván Cerna, warrant officer, Humberto Calero, chief engineer, and Henry Arias Amaya, radio operator, were wounded. (Note No. 042 of 5 March 1984).

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