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Item 25 of the preliminary list\*\*

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

#### Letter dated 9 May 1984 from the Permanent Representative of Honduras to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to draw to Your Excellency's attention the note which the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country addressed on 8 May to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, Mr. Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, protesting most forcefully at the brutal and deceitful act of aggression committed by the Sandinist Army against an unarmed national helicopter carrying eight Hondurans, who perished tragically as a result of this treacherous behaviour. I also enclose official press communiqué No. 75 on the same subject.

These texts have been brought to the attention of the Governments of the Contadora Group and of the Organization of American States.

I should be most grateful if you would arrange for the texts annexed to this note to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 25 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) H. Roberto HERRERA CACERES  
Ambassador,  
Permanent Representative

\* Previously circulated as document S/16546 and Corr.1.

\*\* A/39/50.

ANNEX I

Letter dated 8 May 1984 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Honduras  
addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua

I have the honour to submit to the distinguished Government of Nicaragua, through Your Excellency, the most forceful protest of the Government of the Republic of Honduras at the brutal downing today of a helicopter of the Honduran Air Force, in violation of all the norms of peaceful coexistence, with the tragic result of the loss of its crew and accompanying persons.

The unarmed helicopter, identified with national markings under registration number UH1-B No. 928, was making a scheduled flight between Tegucigalpa and the port of Amapala. It deviated from its route because of bad weather conditions in the Gulf of Fonseca and, when it resumed course towards Amapala, it was shot down by anti-aircraft fire from the Sandinist Army in the peninsula of Cosiguina, according to a communication from the Sandinist Air Force.

The persons on board the helicopter were: Second Lieutenant of Aviation Honorato Arzú and Corporal Technician Oscar Armando Flores Amador; a Technical Commission consisting of José Napoleón Castellanos, engineer, and Alejandro Alfaro M., lawyer; the auditors Harry J. Ortíz and Roberto Turcios D.; Major Hernán Bárcenas and Lieutenant Francisco Suazo A., both of the Service Corps.

It should be emphasized that this Commission was performing a purely administrative mission for the purpose of inspecting some work at Amapala and that it had no intention whatsoever of approaching Nicaraguan territory.

The completely unacceptable aspect of this situation is that the helicopter was given no warning and that no attempt was made to establish radio contact; it was the victim of a clearly aggressive attitude when it was shot down.

In view of the grief overwhelming the Honduran people at the irreparable loss of such highly esteemed compatriots, in such regrettable circumstances which in no way justify so despicable an act, the Government of Honduras urges the distinguished Government of Nicaragua to make the necessary amends for this action and to abandon the bellicose attitudes which are endangering peace and tranquillity in the Central American area.

I also request you to authorize the necessary arrangements for the transfer to our country of the remains of the compatriots who died in this deplorable incident.

Edgardo PAZ BARNICA  
Minister for Foreign Affairs

ANNEX II

Press communiqué

No. 75

The Secretariat of State for Foreign Affairs deeply regrets to denounce to national and international public opinion the tragic event which occurred this morning in the Bay of Fonseca, in which eight Hondurans died:

The facts behind this tragic event are as follows:

1. At 8.08 a.m. today, 8 May, the unarmed personnel-carrying helicopter UH1B-No. 928 left the Hernán Acosta Mejía air base at Tegucigalpa D.C. and flew in the direction of Amapala, carrying an Armed Forces commission which was making a technical inspection of the constructions at our naval base at Amapala.

The following persons were travelling in the helicopter: Crew: Second Lieutenant of Aviation Honorato Arzú, Corporal Technician Oscar Armando Flores Amador; Technical Commission: José Napoleón Castellanos, engineer, and Alejandro Alfaro M., lawyer; Auditor: Harry J. Ortiz and Roberto Turcios D.; Major Hernán Bárcenas and Lieutenant Francisco Suazo A., both of the Service Corps.

2. At 2.50 p.m., the Commander-in-Chief of the Sandinist Air Force, Commander Raúl Venerio, informed the Chief of the Honduran Armed Forces, Brigadier-General Walter López Reyes, by telephone that the Sandinist anti-aircraft artillery in the Potosí military zone had shot down a Honduran helicopter, alleging that it had flown over a military installation and announcing that all those on board had perished.
3. As soon as it received this communication, the Command of the Armed Forces requested the Commander-in-Chief of the Sandinist Air Force to allow a commission of the Honduran Air Force to travel to Nicaragua in order to recover the remains of the members of the crew and of the Technical Commission which was travelling in the helicopter. The repatriation of the victims of this tragic event will take place tomorrow, Wednesday, 9 May.
4. The Government of Honduras expresses its deepest indignation at this brutal and deceitful act committed, in peacetime, by regular armed forces of the Republic of Nicaragua against a personnel-carrying Honduran helicopter which was not armed.

This action is in complete contrast to the behaviour of the Honduran Armed Forces when, on 10 November 1980, an H500C helicopter of the Sandinist Air Force violated Honduran airspace and was obliged to land in the village of Duyure, department of Choluteca. On that occasion, the following crew members were taken prisoner: Captain Roberto Sánchez,

Pilot Ernesto Venerio and the journalist Carlos Durán Palavicini, from whom were confiscated a UZI sub-machine-gun, a 9-mm Czech sub-machine-gun, a 38 revolver, a camera, a hand grenade, an aerial navigation chart and a road map.

The helicopter and its crew were returned unharmed to the Government of Nicaragua, after preparation of a report on the subject.

5. Similarly, on 13 March 1982, the then Colonel Walter López Reyes, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Honduran Air Force, handed over to His Excellency Dr. Guillermo Suárez Rivas, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Nicaragua, the Douglas C-47 (DC-3) aircraft, with mottled camouflage, registration No. FAS-208, belonging to the Sandinist Air Force of the Republic of Nicaragua. The aircraft had landed in irregular circumstances during the evening of Sunday, 7 March 1982 at the Toncontín International Airport, Tegucigalpa.

The Government of the Republic offers its deepest sympathy to the relatives of the victims of this unspeakable act - the dramatic expression of the warlike designs of the Nicaragua régime.

The Government of Honduras has submitted its most forceful protest to the Government of Nicaragua, with a copy to the international organizations and to the Governments of the Contadora Group, explicitly reserving the right to take the actions permitted by international law in order to request the application of the necessary sanctions.

Tegucigalpa D.C., 8 May 1984

Press and Information Division  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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