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THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE  
AND SECURITY AND PEACE INITIATIVES

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Fortieth year

Letter dated 10 January 1985 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the  
Permanent Mission of Panama to the United Nations addressed to the  
Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the text of the Declaration (annex) issued by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group at the conclusion of the meeting held at Panama City on 8 and 9 January 1985.

I request you to have this letter and the annex thereto circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 25 of the thirty-ninth session and under the items entitled "Peaceful settlement of disputes between States", "Development and strengthening of good-neighbourliness between States", "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" and "Development and international economic co-operation", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Leonardo KAM  
Ambassador  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Mission

ANNEX

Declaration of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group  
Meeting of 8 and 9 January 1985

At the start of 1983, the situation in Central America threatened to trigger a widespread armed conflict.

Faced with that prospect, the Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela decided to combine their efforts for the purpose of promoting a peaceful settlement of the Central American disputes, on the basis of conciliation and the recognition of the legitimate interests of all the States involved, and of ensuring that the principles of non-intervention and self-determination of the Central American peoples remained fully in effect.

Since that time, the Governments of the Contadora Group have stressed the socio-economic roots of the Central American crisis and have expressed their deep concern about the foreign military intervention in the area and the dangers of making the conflict part of the East-West confrontation.

The process initiated by the Contadora Group has achieved, inter alia, the following objectives, which are also its most important accomplishments:

1. It established regional political machinery which facilitated a process of dialogue and negotiation between the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.
2. It identified the problems affecting the Central American countries and drew up an agenda listing the main subjects of controversy.
3. It promoted specific commitments among the Central American Governments, which were adopted in the Document of Objectives and in the norms for the implementation of those commitments.
4. It co-ordinated a broad process of consultations and negotiations between those Governments, which culminated in the elaboration of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, a legal instrument that will promote peaceful coexistence and the just and stable development to which the peoples of the region are entitled.
5. It triggered an international awareness of the Central American crisis and enlisted the support of the community of nations for a peaceful solution of that crisis and for the Contadora Group as the body capable of achieving that goal.

These achievements and other political contributions have helped to prevent the outbreak of an armed conflict in the region; the repercussions of such a conflict would be extremely grave for Central America, for Latin America and for international peace and security as a whole.

Despite the persistence of a variety of serious threats to regional stability, it is necessary to recognize some of the positive steps which have been taken recently in the search for détente. Foremost among the steps taken in 1984 were the establishment of the Commission for Supervision and Prevention of Frontier Incidents in Costa Rica and Nicaragua, the initiation of bilateral talks between the Governments of the United States and Nicaragua, the setting up of the Committee for Action in Support of the Economic and Social Development of Central America (CADESCA) and, finally, the meeting held at San José between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the European Economic Community, Spain and Portugal and their counterparts from Central America and the Contadora Group.

It is also necessary to acknowledge the improvements that have taken place in the institutions and democratic life of a number of countries in the region, where elections have been held. In El Salvador, the dialogue between the Government and FDR-FMLN, in addition to arousing hopes for an end to the internal conflict, is fostering regional détente.

It is necessary also to draw attention to the decisions of the International Court of Justice, the United Nations General Assembly and the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, which reaffirm that it is essential for the international legal order to prevail. In the two latter cases, the community of States has also expressed universal and whole-hearted support for the Contadora Group and has called on the Central American Governments to endorse in the near future the Contadora Act as an instrument for the peaceful solution of disputes.

In the present context, it would be inadmissible to allow political intransigence and the use of force to stand in the way of dialogue and negotiation. Accordingly, it is deeply disquieting to observe the manifestations of intimidation and the destabilizing actions which are today disrupting coexistence in Central America, affecting the sovereignty of the nations of the region and impeding the peace process, key elements of which are the signing of the Contadora Act and the start made in fulfilling the commitments agreed therein.

In order that the stated goal may be attainable, the Central American Governments are urged to demonstrate their political will unreservedly, by honouring the commitments embodied in the Document of Objectives which they signed on 9 September 1983. It is imperative to refrain from any action which would thwart the ongoing efforts to achieve peace, security and stability in the region and to expand every form of consultation and contact capable of fostering the negotiation process and averting any incident that might impede that process.

The Contadora Group calls on the Governments of the United States and Nicaragua to intensify the talks which they have been holding in Manzanillo, with a view to reaching agreements that will promote the normalization of their relations and regional détente. It likewise recognizes that it is important that the dialogue initiated between the Government of El Salvador and FDR-FMLN should acquire greater depth, with the aim of ending the conflict which is convulsing that country and of promoting national reconciliation.

A number of Central American Governments have made observations concerning the draft Act on Peace and Co-operation. The Contadora Group has identified the observations which help to make the document more precise and will propose formulations for reconciling the positions that still diverge.

Today, the Contadora Group again affirms its determination to continue to work for the conclusion of a definitive agreement between the Central American Governments which will establish the basis for respectful coexistence in the region and will promote sustained economic and social development and the strengthening of democratic and pluralistic institutions.

The Contadora Group notes with satisfaction that the itinerary arranged on 7 September 1984 in connection with the delivery of the draft Contadora Act has now been completed. Accordingly, the round of technical discussion and observations on the Act within the defined framework having been accomplished and intensive bilateral consultations having taken place, the phase of political negotiations has now begun.

Therefore, the Contadora Group gives notice to the Governments of the Central American countries of a meeting of plenipotentiaries, to be held on 14 and 15 February for the purpose of deciding on the verification and control procedures and other outstanding questions that have to be resolved prior to the signing of the Contadora Act. The meeting would prepare the elements for a conference at which the Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America would be signed.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group will promptly forward the terms of the present declaration to their Central American counterparts. They express their appreciation at having been afforded the opportunity of a meeting with President Nicolás Ardito Barletta of Panama, who reaffirmed the unqualified support of his Government for the Contadora Group's peace démarches.

Panama, 9 January 1985

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