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

Letter dated 22 July 1985 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 addressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Honduras to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries of the Contadora Group, on the occasion of their meeting which began on 21 July (see annex).

The purpose of the note is to stimulate the renewal of the Contadora negotiating process, which had been obstructed by the attitude of the Government of Nicaragua at the last meeting of plenipotentiaries, held at Panama City on 18 and 19 July 1985, and to detail the principal items left pending in accordance with the agenda specified in connection with the convening of that meeting (see documents A/39/920-S/17302 of 24 June and A/40/495 of 19 July).

Thus Honduras reaffirms its spirit of conciliation with a view to putting an end to the Central American crisis by concluding a comprehensive agreement which will be binding simultaneously on all parties and compliance with which will be fully and effectively verifiable.

I request you, Sir, to circulate this text, which has already been brought to the attention of the Organization of American States, as a document of the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session in connection with agenda item 25.

(Signed) H. Roberto HERRERA CACERES
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Note dated 19 July 1985 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Honduras to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries of the Contadora Group

I have the honour to write to you in connection with the next meeting to be held at Contadora Island, Panama, by the four Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member countries of the Contadora Group, with a view to analysing the present state of the multilateral negotiations being conducted under the auspices of the distinguished Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela.

On the occasion of that important event, Honduras wishes to express its complete readiness to continue the negotiating process which was interrupted by the Government of Nicaragua at the Third Meeting of Plenipotentiaries, held at Panama City on 18 and 19 June 1985.

My Government assigns high priority to the resumption of the negotiations, since it firmly supports a comprehensive political solution of the crisis confronting the Central American region. This determination has been reflected in the efforts made by Honduras in the course of the negotiations, most especially during the meetings of plenipotentiaries, at which the parties reached a series of consensuses in the political, security and socio-economic fields.

There are three principal items which, in my Government's view, still depend on a clear reply on the part of Nicaragua:

(a) Commitments relating to security, most especially the question of determining of the limits and time-tables for the reduction of armaments, troops and military installations and of foreign military and security advisers;

(b) Commitments on national reconciliation with full respect for political pluralism and a democratic and representative system of government; and

(c) The establishment of truly effective machinery for verification and supervision in political, security and socio-economic matters.

The Nicaraguan Government's lack of political will to make commitments on these three items constitutes the only real obstacle to the successful culmination of the peace-making process.

It is our interpretation that the Nicaraguan attitude in breaking off the negotiations has a twofold purpose: on the one hand, to avoid making commitments on these three subjects and, on the other hand, to make a new attempt at bilateralizing the handling of the regional crisis, thereby deviating from the course adopted as early as 1983 for solving the complex problems involved.

My Government also finds cause for concern in the ideas expressed by Mr. Víctor Hugo Tinoco, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, when he stated at the last meeting of plenipotentiaries that Nicaragua was not prepared to

accept any "substantive" revision of the draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America which the distinguished Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela had submitted to the Central American countries for consideration on 7 September 1984 with a view to obtaining their comments. That attitude is truly surprising, since on 15 March 1985, at Brasília, Brazil, we, the Central American Ministers for Foreign Affairs, including of course Mr. Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua, decided to resume negotiations through plenipotentiaries, whose specific mandate was to review the draft Act of 7 September 1984 and arrive at consensuses which would make its signature possible.

Deputy Minister Tinoco added to the aforementioned comments an even graver statement when he said that Nicaragua did not recognize the negotiations and consensuses that had been reached at the meetings of plenipotentiaries as having any validity.

Such conduct naturally constitutes cause for anxiety and distrust concerning the seriousness and good faith with which we thought the Government of Nicaragua had been negotiating at Contadora. Nevertheless, the Government of Honduras is confident that the countries of the peace-making group will be able to ensure compliance with the consensuses arrived at and the pending agreements which, one hopes, will be reached, in order to put an end to the critical situation in the region. With that aim in mind, Honduras is prepared to resume diplomatic negotiations starting from the same point at which Nicaragua broke off the peace talks.

The spirit of conciliation guiding my Government is based on a firm conviction that only through a comprehensive agreement which is simultaneously binding on all parties and is fully and effectively verifiable shall we be able to attain the goals of peace, democracy, security and co-operation for development in our tormented Central American region.

Expressing the fervent wishes of the Honduran Government for the success of the meeting which you will hold, beginning on 21 July, with the other Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group, I take particular pleasure in extending to you the renewed assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

(Signed) Edgardo PAZ BARNICA
Minister for Foreign Affairs
