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of the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA:
THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE
AND SECURITY AND PEACE INITIATIVES
REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING
OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION
DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF GOOD-
NEIGHBOURLINESS BETWEEN STATES
PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES
BETWEEN STATES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-ninth year

Letter dated 1 May 1984 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 information bulletin issued at the conclusion of the sixth joint meeting between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Contadora Group and the Central American Ministers for Foreign Affairs, held at Panama City on 30 April and 1 May 1984.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and the text of the bulletin circulated as a General Assembly document, under items 25, 68, 80, 124 and 125 of the preliminary list, and as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Flora L. NORIEGA
Ambassador
Alternate Representative
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
of the Mission

* A/39/50.

ANNEX

Information bulletin

On 30 April 1984, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, comprising the Contadora Group, met at Panama City with their counterparts the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

The purpose of the sixth joint meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs was to continue and intensify the diplomatic process aimed at preventing the aggravation of tension and conflict in Central America, creating the necessary conditions for stable peace, generating a climate of trust and improving prospects for understanding and co-operation among the countries of the region.

As announced in the notification about the meeting, the Ministers had before them the conclusions of the Political Affairs Commission, the Security Commission and the Commission for Economic and Social Questions, established pursuant to the "Measures to be taken to fulfil the commitments entered into in the Document of Objectives" of 8 January 1984.

In the past three months, the Commissions held four working sessions, at which they examined various documents and a number of proposals relating to their respective agendas. Under the supervision of the Technical Group, they performed highly satisfactory work.

The Political Affairs Commission made a careful and comprehensive review of all the proposals submitted to it for consideration. It divided its work into four main areas: national reconciliation, human rights, electoral processes and regional détente. Agreement was reached on items relating to the establishment of mechanisms for the development and implementation of a policy of détente based on trust between States, as an effective way of easing political and military tensions. There was also consensus on the adoption of measures to establish or improve institutions on which representative and pluralistic democracy is based, as well as measures to ensure full respect for human rights with a view to promoting and bringing about national reconciliation. Another result was the agreement on measures to guarantee the inviolability of the lives, freedom and safety of persons granted amnesty.

There was a consensus on the need to guarantee the stability and autonomy of the judiciary, thus enabling it to function free from political pressure, and on recommendations relating to free access to the electoral process and the exchange of experience and information among the relevant agencies of the Central American countries.

The Security Commission achieved consensus on various agenda items. All the countries agreed on the need to restore a climate of trust, stability and security in the region and considered practical measures to that end.

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This Commission reached important agreements on legal principles relating to security, on specific confidence-building measures, on the prohibition of the installation of military bases, and on the prohibition of any other form of foreign military intervention.

In addition, there was consensus on principles relating to the prevention of the use of territory by irregular forces for action against neighbouring countries and the prevention of destabilization operations, sabotage and terrorism. The Commission considered specific options for the prevention and settlement of border incidents.

There was broad agreement that foreign advisers should be withdrawn, but there were differences on how best to go about it. The Commission carefully considered the problems caused by the arms build-up and identified basic criteria for determining the levels of military development of the Central American countries and drawing up terms of reference for a military inventory in the region.

Lastly, various proposals concerning the most appropriate means and instruments of verification and monitoring were discussed; in that connection, the need to ensure the impartial constitution of the mechanism concerned became apparent.

The Commission for Economic and Social Questions, for its part, reached significant agreements on the items constituting the basis of its mandate. In order to carry out its work more effectively, it obtained valuable external advice from various international and regional bodies. In addition to its own programme of meetings, it held special meetings at which it heard the views of the representatives of UNHCR, ILO, PAHO, SIECA, CADESCA, CABEL, ECLA and UNDP. It formulated specific recommendations concerning integration, intra-zonal trade and technical co-operation, investment and finance, labour questions and health. It treated the situation of the refugees as a question of great importance and the countries proposed various initiatives in that regard which are to be studied with a view to ensuring the joint handling of this problem.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs emphasized the contributions made by the Commissions, which represented an extremely constructive step forward in the process of political and diplomatic negotiation. They welcomed the work done by the delegates and expressed their satisfaction with the progress made. The work done made it possible to identify the areas where greater efforts were needed to overcome differences, and above all, to achieve a comprehensive approach corresponding to the complexity and gravity of the various problems currently existing in Central America.

After a preliminary exchange of views, each of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs offered to make a detailed study of the materials produced by the Technical Group and the Working Commissions. In order to facilitate the next phase of the process and enable the Contadora Group to perform its conciliatory function, it was agreed to proceed by arranging, systematizing and integrating the documents produced by the Commissions in order to present them, in the near future, for the consideration of the Central American Governments. It was also decided that once

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the Technical Group had completed this task of organizing, systematizing and integrating, it would consider the recommendations and agreements, propose consensus formulas, complete the agenda and prepare the draft political and legal instruments needed to concretize the agreements reached and set up the appropriate mechanisms for implementing them.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs warned that the progress achieved nevertheless, contrasted with the increase in violence, military escalation, the arms build-up and the foreign military presence in the area, whose most recent manifestations constituted a serious threat to peace and caused justified alarm in the international community. They therefore expressed the determination of their Governments to intensify efforts to prevent the conflict from spreading and to facilitate dialogue and negotiation. They renewed their unswerving commitment to the peaceful solution of regional problems, and once again urged the countries with links to or interest in the area to lend their resolute support to détente, peace and genuine co-operation in the region.

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Central American countries, for their part, reaffirmed their belief that the negotiation process promoted by the Contadora Group represented the genuine regional alternative and the appropriate forum for the resolution of the conflicts those countries are currently facing.

It is therefore essential that the Central American States should remain committed to serious and sincere political and diplomatic negotiations, with a view to reaching a negotiated resolution of the Central American crisis, fostering the desire for understanding and concertation, with due respect for the negotiating processes and bodies agreed upon by those States themselves, which will lead to the conclusion of a regional peace treaty.

If these efforts are to succeed, there can be no delay in achieving the definitive consolidation of an institutional system which guarantees freedom, justice, democracy and social progress at the internal level, and in ensuring that the promotion and maintenance of relations among the Central American countries are effected in accordance with the principles of international law that govern the conduct of States.

Panama, 1 May 1984
