



# General Assembly

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## Sixty-eighth session

Agenda items 15, 33 (a) and (b), 41 and 76 (a)

### Culture of peace

#### Prevention of armed conflict

#### Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution

#### The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

#### Oceans and the law of the sea

## Letter dated 11 November 2013 from the Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Government of El Salvador, I have the honour to transmit herewith the position of El Salvador (see annex) in connection with the interventionist statements which various officials and former officials of the Government of Honduras have made concerning the modest efforts of El Salvador to strengthen its national capacities in the face of challenges to national security — statements which have converged in a communiqué prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Honduras on 7 November 2013.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter and its annex as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 15, 33 (a) and (b), 41 and 76 (a).

(Signed) Carlos Enrique **García González**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



## **Annex to the letter of 11 November 2013 from the Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

[San Salvador, 11 November 2013]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of El Salvador informs the distinguished representatives of the States Members of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the United Nations system as a whole as follows:

The people and the Government of El Salvador expressly renew before the international community their firm commitment to peace, democracy and the principles that are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

### **El Salvador, a model for peacebuilding**

El Salvador, as a State member of the Central American Integration System and a sponsor of the historic Central American unity and greater homeland initiative, wishes to remind the international community of the advances that the region has made since the late 1970s, including the Contadora and Esquipulas processes, towards becoming a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development.

Having experienced an internal armed conflict, El Salvador has not the least interest in involving its people and its Government in warfare, which would be a setback for democracy in the Central American region.

El Salvador advocates the pacific settlement of disputes through dialogue and understanding and is therefore regarded at the United Nations as a model for peacebuilding that other countries should emulate. This explains our major participation in peacekeeping operations around the world, which faithfully reflects the nation's commitment in this matter.

As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, El Salvador has offered its cooperation and experience in peace processes and negotiations in various conflicts around the world and has consistently demonstrated its commitment to the pacific settlement of disputes.

### **The new model of regional security in Central America**

At the regional level, El Salvador has promoted the implementation and effective enforcement of the new model of regional security instituted in the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, which establishes the principles and mechanisms that underpin peacebuilding and democracy in the region.

Recently, various officials and former officials of the Government of Honduras have made interventionist statements concerning the modest efforts of El Salvador to strengthen its domestic capabilities in the face of challenges to national security.

El Salvador expresses its profound disquiet in this regard. Those statements relate to matters that are the exclusive domestic concern of the people and the Government of El Salvador, including the dignification and modernization of the Salvadorian armed forces, an objective identified by the President of the Republic of

El Salvador, Mauricio Funes Cartagena, with a view to fulfilling the constitutional mandate of having permanent professional armed forces, as provided for in the Chapultepec Peace Accords, 1992.

El Salvador invites the international community to refer to the principles established in the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America and to compare the military capabilities of the States of Central America, so that they may corroborate that by no stretch of the imagination is El Salvador disrupting the reasonable balance of forces or the confidence-building measures set out in the Treaty.

El Salvador stresses before the international community that the scourges of transnational organized crime and drug trafficking are the worst enemies of democracy and development in the region. Accordingly, El Salvador has wholeheartedly promoted various efforts to deal with them and supports the security strategy for Central America and the numerous bilateral actions launched to strengthen national and regional capabilities in that respect.

El Salvador reminds the international community that the public statements of the senior officials of the Government of Honduras, by threatening the use of military force against neighbouring countries in order to be able to exercise sovereignty, clearly violate the provisions of the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America.

El Salvador informs the international community of the various steps that the Republic of Honduras has taken to strengthen its military capabilities, including additions to its troop strength and expansion of the means of combat in several of its zones of interest. The following in particular deserve mention:

- (a) The leasing, with a purchase option, of two patrol vessels of Netherlands origin (Corvette type) and six speedboats, at an estimated cost of \$61.4 million;
- (b) The acquisition in 2013 of two militarily equipped speedboats and their transfer from the Caribbean to the Gulf of Fonseca;
- (c) The announcement of the purchase from Israel of three air radar systems, at a cost of \$30 million;
- (d) The expansion of the air fleet owing to the donation of six military helicopters by the United States of America;
- (e) The violation of the right of innocent passage owing to the navigation in the Gulf of Fonseca since 2007 of the military vessels *Ulúa* and *Chamelecón* with guns exposed;
- (f) The overhaul of its military tanks and their equipment with body-heat-detecting radar; and
- (g) The purchase from the Government of India of modern military transport and communications equipment at a cost of several million dollars.

In addition, the Republic of Honduras possesses a fleet of F-5 supersonic fighter aircraft, which are far superior to the aircraft that El Salvador bought recently and that senior Honduran officials have described as obsolete.

The boosting of Honduras's military strength in the area of the Gulf of Fonseca directly impinges on the freedom of movement of Salvadoran fishermen, in full violation of their human rights, especially the right to work.

### **Good-faith discharge of international obligations**

El Salvador requests the international community to differentiate between the country's initiatives to stamp out transnational organized crime, the requirements of the Judgment of the International Court of Justice of 11 September 1992 in the Land, Island and Maritime Frontier Dispute (El Salvador/Honduras), and El Salvador's legitimate complaint against the Government of Honduras for its de facto and illegal military occupation since 1983 of Conejo Island, a territory that both historically and legally belongs to El Salvador.

El Salvador, a country which fulfils its international obligations, has always striven for the full implementation of the Judgment of the International Court of Justice of 11 September 1992, on the terms therein stated. It strongly urges the brotherly Republic of Honduras to comply with all the pending requirements, especially those mentioned in the convention resolving the problems of nationality and property ownership in the areas delimited by the International Court of Justice on 11 September 1992 (*Convención sobre Nacionalidad y Derechos Adquiridos en las Zonas Delimitadas por la Sentencia de la Corte Internacional de Justicia del 11 de septiembre de 1992*), since the failure to do so has gravely impaired the rights of the population in those areas.

### **Trilateral Managua Declaration**

The Government of the Republic of El Salvador respectfully reminds the international community of the proposal put forward by the President of El Salvador, Elías Antonio Saca González, in his statement before the General Assembly on 26 September 2007, on the establishment in the Gulf of Fonseca of a regime to facilitate overall and sustainable development, with the consent and participation of the three coastal republics.

The result was the signing on 4 October 2007 of the Managua Declaration: The Gulf of Fonseca, a zone of peace, sustainable development and security, which was ratified by the Presidents on 30 March 2012.

As a further step, the Presidents of Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador, in their Joint Declaration of 4 December 2012, agreed to set up a tripartite commission for the purpose of maintaining the Gulf of Fonseca as a zone of peace, sustainable development and security, presided over by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of their respective countries. They expressly informed the international community that all issues relating to the Gulf of Fonseca would be addressed by the tripartite commission. Moreover, in the Joint Declaration of 8 May 2013, the Presidents reiterated to the international community that all issues relating to the Gulf of Fonseca would be addressed by the tripartite commission.

In view of the foregoing, El Salvador reiterates its concern about the repeated statements of the Government of the brotherly Republic of Honduras, which make no mention of the progress agreed upon by the three nations with respect to issues relating to the Gulf of Fonseca, run counter to the requirements of the Judgment of

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the International Court of Justice of 11 September 1992 and violate the spirit of Central American integration.

### **Situation of Conejo Island**

The Government of El Salvador avails itself of this opportunity to clarify for the benefit of the international community the situation of Conejo Island, which is located in the Bay of La Unión and forms part of Pasaquina municipality, Department of La Unión, Republic of El Salvador, as is confirmed by abundant historical, legal and geographical documentation that supports and confirms El Salvador's sovereignty over Conejo Island.

In view of the de facto and illegal military occupation of Conejo Island by the Republic of Honduras, the Government of El Salvador has sent notes of protest on repeated occasions with requests for the immediate military evacuation of the Salvadorian territory for the sake of the brotherly relations between the two States.

The Government of El Salvador affirms that the legal status of Conejo Island as Salvadorian territory was not affected by the Judgment of the International Court of Justice of 11 September 1992. It has therefore asserted its sovereignty over the Island.

The Government of the Republic of El Salvador, in keeping with its vocation for and commitment to peace, has emphatically requested the Government of the brotherly Republic of Honduras to address the above issues in diplomatic dialogue and negotiations, relying on established regional agreements, the Tegucigalpa Protocol to the Charter of the Organization of Central American States and the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America. It takes this opportunity to renew its request.

Lastly, El Salvador emphasizes to the international community that the aforementioned disputes with the brotherly Republic of Honduras are insignificant by comparison with the ties that bind the two nations together. We share the vast cultural legacy of our ancestral peoples and a common history in the shaping of our States. We are united, too, by strong economic and social ties, by the challenges posed in furthering development and consolidating civic security in our countries and, above all, by our common future in our region.

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