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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 22 November 1985, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. DE PINIÉS (Spain)

later: Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Vice-President) (Costa Rica)

- The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives: report of the Secretary-General [21]
(continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 21 (continued)

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND PEACE INITIATIVES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/40/737)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to remind representatives that in accordance with the decision taken at this morning's plenary meeting, the list of speakers in the debate on this item will be closed at 5.00 p.m.

Mr. PHILIPPE (Luxembourg) (interpretation from French): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Community, of its members and of Spain and Portugal. Developments in Central America have continued to cause us serious concern. The exacerbation of conflicts for the past year in a region with which we share many historical and cultural traditions has not only caused great suffering and material losses to the victimized population but it also involves a serious risk of escalation and expansion.

We remain convinced that the crisis in Central America cannot be successfully solved by resort to force but solely by an amicable settlement based, as required under the United Nations Charter, on respect for national sovereignty and independence, territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders, as well as on the non-interference by one State into the affairs of another, the absence of any resort to the threat or use of force and, more generally, non-intervention by any foreign forces into the region.

These principles are closely linked to the ideals and values of our pluralistic democracies, of which the participation of all political ideologies, the periodic holding of free elections and the guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedoms constitute the essential elements. Therefore, we must encourage by all possible means respect for the integrity of the individual,

(Mr. Philippe, Luxembourg)

the freedom of the press, trade union and religious freedom, as set forth in international covenants and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Complete success of this endeavour will be guaranteed by commitment to a national scale dialogue aimed at putting an end to violence and instability to pave the way in each of the countries involved to national reconciliation within the framework of democratic and pluralistic social and political institutions.

The origin of the instability in Central America is complex. It derives to a large extent from unjust internal political and socio-economic structures. Hence, the solution to the problems depends, as the Secretary-General reminds us in his introductory report, primarily on the political will of Governments to consolidate their State institutions and to remedy the root causes of existing social and economic difficulties.

The European Community and its member States, and Spain and Portugal, wish to help them as far as they can to remedy the causes of the present instability and to preparing the ground for a better future through economic development, social justice, the restoration of peace and the safeguarding of democracy.

That is why we have, from the very beginning, spontaneously given our support to the process begun two years ago and assiduously pursued since that time by the four countries of the Contadora Group, with a view to establishing a solid structure on which peace in Central America can be built.

This initiative lays the foundation for an overall peaceful settlement coming from the region itself, a settlement negotiated and freely accepted. It may well restore a climate of confidence, itself an essential pre-condition for a resumption of dialogue and co-operation among all parties concerned.

With a view to studying the means of encouraging in a tangible way the achievement of social, economic and political objectives to which the countries of Central America subscribed on 9 September 1983 in the document on the objectives of

(Mr. Philippe, Luxembourg)

the Contadora Group, a meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was held in San José, Costa Rica on 28-29 September 1984 between the European Community and its member States, and Spain and Portugal, on the one hand, and the States of Central America and those in the Contadora Group on the other. That meeting, described by all as historic, laid the basis, by means of political dialogue and economic co-operation, of a new structure of relations between the European Community and Central America.

Encouraged by the favourable international reception given this initiative, the participants intend to make it permanent in order to contribute to the promotion of confidence within Central America as well as between the European Community, on the one hand, and Central America on the other, the ultimate goal being to facilitate both the gradual expansion and deepening of that co-operation.

We are pleased that this summer four democratic countries of Latin America - Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay - joined formally in the reconciliation work of the four mediating countries and gave it their active support. It must be hoped that the revised Act on Peace and Co-operation will lead, within the deadline set up by its authors, to a final agreement conducive to a peaceful and overall settlement, together with effective and adequate implementation and follow-up machinery.

(Mr. Philippe, Luxembourg)

Such a viable system of regional security, established in accordance with international law, should put a brake on the arms race in all its forms and establish means of controlling and reducing armaments and military personnel; it should eliminate the presence of foreign troops and prevent acts of intimidation and destabilization, terrorism, subversion and sabotage.

We are convinced that meanwhile it is necessary for the countries concerned to refrain from any action which might jeopardize the process under way, to contribute actively to reducing tension and endeavour to put together appropriate solutions to existing disputes.

On 11 and 12 November 1985 in Luxembourg, the member States of the European Community, Spain and Portugal, together with the States of Central America and those of the Contadora Group, held a second conference, at Foreign Minister level, to follow up and further the political dialogue and economic co-operation begun last year, in conformity with the principles set out in the San José Declaration of 29 September 1984.

The participants in the Luxembourg conference stressed the importance of continuing the present negotiations in a constructive spirit on the basis of a draft agreement on peace and co-operation in Central America, dated 12 September 1985. They once again urged the Contadora Group to persist in its work on the final details of a peaceful solution in Central America. When those negotiations have been successfully concluded, the necessary constitutional procedures will have to be begun for the entry into force forthwith of the Contadora Act.

The countries of the European Community, Spain and Portugal reiterate their readiness to support, as far as they are able and if so requested, the action of the States responsible for the application of the terms of the Contadora Act on

(Mr. Philippe, Luxembourg)

Peace and Co-operation in Central America. They could, in particular, contribute to the implementation and follow-up mechanisms.

In Luxembourg a model agreement on interregional co-operation was signed between the States parties to the general treaty on the economic integration of Central America and Panama on the one hand and the European Economic Community on the other. By establishing close and institutionalized co-operation, that agreement is intended to strengthen the economic integration of the Central American region and to sustain its economic development and social progress, in the interest of greater political stability.

The European Community, Spain and Portugal intend to give assistance to regional projects on the basis of the priorities and objectives of the region, identified by common agreement. We hope thus to be able to make a constructive and effective contribution to the efforts of those that are seeking to disentangle by peaceful means the difficulties in one of the most sensitive conflict zones of this planet, in order to replace confrontation by dialogue - and ensure that negotiations lead to a lasting peace based on freedom, justice and progress.

Mr. ORAMAS OLIVA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Peace for and in Central America has been called for by many speakers throughout the entire debate at this session, reflecting the growing clamour of peoples and many organizations and institutions of different types that have repeatedly made this appeal.

Peace for Central America can be achieved only through an end to the interference by the United States, which is openly violating all the principles of international law and its own commitments under legal instruments to which it is a party, militarily attacking Nicaragua by arming, supporting and advising the so-called contras, which are mercenary forces in the service of United States interests.

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

Peace in Central America means promoting economic and social development, restoring stability to millions of human beings who are anxiously pursuing their right to a better life, with education, health and food.

What right has the United States to consider covert or overt aid to Nicaraguan contras who have caused the death of thousands of children, women and old people, farmers, workers and students, and destroyed property, schools and hospitals? Why is the United States afraid to accept peace with Nicaragua and the possible challenge of the Nicaraguan people devoting all its energy to economic and social development? Is not all of this a pretext to concentrate large naval and air units in the region on a permanent basis? Bullets and the roar of cannons cannot quiet the volcanic outcry of peoples for justice, peace and liberty in our America.

Latin America and the Caribbean form one of the parts of the world that has suffered most directly and continues to suffer acts of aggression by the colonial and imperialist Powers.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the non-aligned countries, meeting in Luanda,

"pointed out with deep concern that the situation in Central America at the present time makes it one of the main hotbeds of tension at the international level". They went on to say that in spite of "the unceasing appeals from the Non-Aligned Movement and the rest of the international community and of the efforts made in the search for a political solution negotiated by the Contadora Group, that situation was constantly deteriorating as a result of the application of imperialist policies of interference and intervention, and, together with the situation of poverty and oppression that has historically afflicted the region, represents a real threat to peace and security."

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

Since 1983 the countries of the Contadora Group have persistently and patiently, overcoming many difficulties, tried to find a peaceful solution to the problems of Central America. The Group has had, and still has my country's support. The Group has been joined, in a deep desire for peace, by the Lima Support Group, composed of Argentina, Peru, Uruguay and Brazil, a fact which shows the deep concern of all in our region to ward off the catastrophe that is being visited on us by the rough and brutal North, which disdains us, as the national hero of my country, Jose Marti, said.

Nicaragua has given a great deal of tangible proof of its sincere desire for peace, as the victim of military aggression, paying generously with the blood of thousands of its sons for its inalienable right to decide for itself its national destiny. The revised Contadora Act of 7 September 1984, despite some aspects that are difficult to accept, was welcomed by Managua, and President Daniel Ortega declared his readiness to sign it. Washington chose to regard that as demagoguery, since it had no genuine argument to advance for refusing to sign the Act on peace, and wanted to close the door on it in order to continue its dirty war against Nicaragua.

The Contadora Group is today continuing its efforts to bring about a meeting of minds and draft a document that can provide a guarantee for all. If it is to be a genuine guarantee for all, it must contain the necessary elements to safeguard the peace and security of Nicaragua, which is under attack, as President Daniel Ortega explained recently. The reality of the situation is that there will not be peace in Central America until the United States shows the political will to reach agreement.

Just a few days ago, from this very rostrum, the President of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega, made a constructive appeal to the President of the United States to

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resume the bilateral talks between the two countries, since the Gordian knot that has to be cut to resolve the regional conflict is the attitude of the leaders in Washington, who do not want to recognize the right and the natural desire of the Nicaraguan people to act as it sees fit within its own territory.

President Ortega's offer was met with silence. The strong, the powerful, has shown itself to be weak. In this case it is afraid of direct dialogue with a country that has extended a hand to it, a hand holding not a gun but an olive branch.

In the general debate at this fortieth session of the General Assembly, 108 speakers out of 137 devoted a large part of their statements to comments about our region. Does not that reveal the deep concern felt by all at the continuance of an explosive situation that could lead to a serious conflagration? If they would just study those statements the Washington authorities would realize that here in the General Assembly their main allies called for peace. Further study of those statements would be enough for them to understand that we all want peace.

Why does the United States not behave in a way worthy of its economic, military, technological and human importance, by committing itself during this debate to ending aid to counter-revolutionary assassins in Nicaragua, resuming the Manzanillo dialogue and resolutely supporting the countries of the Contadora Group in order to bring peace to the region and promote the ardently desired economic and social development of our peoples? Why is the United States not following the commendable example of the European Economic Community, which has announced here an agreement with the countries of Central America?

The need to assist the peace-making efforts in the region also means that the General Assembly should reiterate the appeal to the Government of El Salvador and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front-Revolutionary Democratic Front to resume peace talks as soon as possible. It also means that all States should be

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

asked to refrain from intervening in the internal affairs of El Salvador and, instead of supplying arms or any other kind of military assistance, should encourage the resumption of dialogue, which we all want, because we all want peace. It is not possible to conceive of peace for one country and not for all, and the stability of the region also depends on a negotiated solution to the conflict in El Salvador.

Nicaragua has been criticized for having declared a state of emergency, but there is no mention of the cause - the hand of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which is trying to destabilize the Sandinist Government as the the former CIA agent, Mr. Edgar Chamorro, told the International Court of Justice. What do the North Americans expect - that the Sandinist revolution and its people will not defend themselves, and will simply "cry Uncle"? A self-respecting revolution such as the Sandinist revolution, will never surrender; it will defend freedom tooth and nail.

Why are there so many hypocritical and perverse campaigns against the Nicaraguan people? Why is it suffering an economic and trade blockade, when the Pretoria racists have recently killed about 1,000 South African blacks and Washington, which claims to be so protective of human rights, has prevented the Security Council from applying measures under Chapter VII of the Charter, as the international community wants? Where is the logic and the political consistency to which Washington lays claims?

From this rostrum Cuba clearly reaffirms its readiness to contribute to peace in Central America, as President Fidel Castro has said. Cuba respects and will support the arrangements freely accepted by the Nicaraguan people and the Sandinist revolution.

Mr. ARTACHO (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): The crisis in Central America has from the very beginning been a source of special concern to the Government of Spain. The delegation of Spain expressed that view in the debate on Central America during the last session of the General Assembly and also, through the voice of the Head of Government of Spain, during this fortieth session.

Today we must recognize, with regret, that the development of the situation in Central America, considered globally, has not been positive in the past 12 months. On the whole, the problems underlying the crisis in the region persist, and in some cases have worsened. The crisis has continued to have a negative impact on the Central American economy, and it has been sharpened by the massive allocation of resources to non-productive tasks. That has brought about a further worsening of the region's structural problems.

As for the political situation, it has developed in an unbalanced way. While in some countries a process of democratization has moved forward, in others processes of national reconciliation have been interrupted. At the same time as dialogue and negotiations have been taking place between the countries of the region, policies of harassment have been pursued which, at times, have endangered the climate of trust so necessary for the progress of negotiations.

It is against that background of profound economic deterioration and serious political difficulties that the work of the Contadora Group stands out in particular. Spain once again pays a tribute of admiration and gratitude to that Group. Rising above the tragedies that have recently struck two members of the Group, the four countries making it up have continued their efforts to reach a comprehensive, peaceful, negotiated and regional solution to the Central American crisis. Those efforts have resulted in the preparation of the final draft of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, submitted to the countries of the region last September and now the subject of intense negotiations.

(Mr. Artacho, Spain)

The delegation of Spain attaches the utmost importance to the setting of a time-limit for the conclusion of these negotiations. That is in accordance with the broad conviction that the time has come to take the necessary political decisions to conclude a peace agreement.

The developments during the past twelve months have shown that in Central America time is working against peace. At this crucial moment, the Central American countries must shoulder their historic responsibilities and exert an additional effort of political will to put an end to the sufferings of their peoples and to transform the region into a zone of peace. In the final analysis, it is up to them to lay the foundations for the solution to the problems afflicting them, without yielding to the temptation to place the Central American conflict in the framework of global dialectics, from which it is basically separate both in origin and in development.

The Central American crisis, however, by its magnitude goes beyond the work of the Contadora Group and the political will of the Central American countries. In order to fulfil their objective of peace completely, the negotiations under way require the resolute support of the international community. The Latin American countries met in this historic challenge. Latin American solidarity with the Contadora Group has been expressed, most recently, through the establishment of the Support Group. The European countries have also demonstrated their unreserved support for the regional peace process. The conference held recently in Luxembourg - to which the representative of Luxembourg, on behalf of the European Community and Spain and Portugal, has just referred in more detail - has made it

(Mr. Artacho, Spain)

possible to consolidate the political dialogue and economic co-operation between the European Community and Central America that began in San José in 1984.

If the international community's support is to be truly effective, the countries with ties to and interests in the region must contribute resolutely to promoting the Contadora work, not only by refraining from taking actions that may obstruct the development of a peace agreement but also by taking concrete initiatives to promote such an agreement. In that respect, Spain believes that the resumption of the Manzanillo dialogue and the non-use of coercive measures in economic and trade relations are elements that could contribute to the objectives to which I have referred.

Spain, which is concerned that time is passing without a final agreement being reached, repeats that it is determined to continue to support the efforts now being made to overcome the crisis in the region through dialogue and negotiation.

Mr. BUI XUAN NHAT (Viet Nam): Central America, as part of the Western Hemisphere, has been going through worsening tension, coupled with a serious debt crisis that is crippling a number of countries in the region. Nobody would be so naive as to believe that it falls within the context of East-West confrontation. Everything that has been stated with so much conviction by the previous speakers boils down to the fact that its deep roots lie in a political, economic and social crisis caused by the imperialist and reactionary forces. One can see throughout the region poverty and disease, illiteracy and unemployment - in other words, unhappiness and suffering for hundreds of millions of persons.

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

That needs to be overcome, and eradicated; and that is exactly what these people are striving for: to make a decent living, to create prosperity for their countries. To do so, they need peace and stability; they need time and assistance; above all they need to do whatever they consider best for themselves, and they need to master their own destiny.

But the evil forces do not see things in that light. They would like to continue imposing their will on these peoples. They cannot get used to the feeling of having them as independent and equal States in the very region that used to be considered their own backyard. By means of an unequal economic relationship and heavy-handed pressure they wish to turn them into dependent States, susceptible to their diktat. And whenever a country chooses to go its own way, they simply get hysterical. Just two years ago, Grenada, the country of Prime Minister Morris Bishop, was victimized, as Nicaragua has been victimized. From the dawn of the Sandinist Revolution, they adopted a hostile policy towards it. They have organized, trained, equipped and financed the contras and used them to carry out acts of aggression, sabotage and destabilization against Nicaragua. Throughout the world people have condemned in the strongest possible terms the killing and kidnapping by the contras of innocent Nicaraguans, as well as the mining of ports and the bombing of civilian targets inside that country.

The covert war against this country is gradually becoming an overt war. The participation of mercenaries has been widely reported in newspapers; a trade embargo has been declared. The presence of warships off Nicaragua's coast serves as a reminder of the constant threat of force against Nicaragua. Twenty-seven million dollars in "humanitarian aid" was approved. Everybody knows that humanitarian aid, to be given exclusively to the contras, with none for their victims, is indirect military aid. Meanwhile the imperialist forces try to sow the seeds of discord among the Central American countries: border incidents

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

are invoked to serve their purpose; at some point, they may provide a convenient pretext for direct military action against Nicaragua. That is really to their liking, for they have more than once made public their resolve to "remove the Sandinist Government" and to "get rid of the Sandinistas", by force if necessary.

Nicaragua has nothing against its neighbours; nor can it be a threat to anyone. United States military sources themselves have to admit that Nicaragua lacks the capacity to mount an attack against its neighbours and that its defensive capacity has grown as a direct response to the threats from the counter-revolution and the United States. In a study on Central America in February 1985, the Council on Hemispheric Affairs notes that no country in the region is capable of launching an offensive campaign against another, and that none of them fear an attack from their neighbours. The study concludes:

"The truth is that the only country in the region which confronts the danger of an invasion by regular forces is Nicaragua, and the only country which could possibly carry out that threat is the United States".

That is the root cause of tension, instability and insecurity in Central America, whether in Nicaragua, El Salvador or in Puerto Rico.

There will be no military solution to the crisis of the region. It can never be solved by sheer force of arms. It should be resolved by a comprehensive solution that deals with all its political, economic and social aspects, a solution that takes account of the legitimate interests of all parties concerned. Such a solution could well be found through the Contadora process, which is supported by many countries inside and outside the region. The Government of Nicaragua has on many occasions shown its good will regarding the peaceful settlement of regional issues. It is still committed to the bilateral talks with the United States in Manzanillo, Mexico, directed to a breakthrough in the relations between the two

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

countries. Unfortunately in all these cases, the United States resorts to double standards. As for the bilateral talks, it adopts an arrogant and somewhat megalomaniac attitude by setting preconditions that are not acceptable to Nicaragua. It stalls the Contadora process by demanding numerous amendments to the basic elements of the Contadora Act, knowing that they would surely distort it. The motive is clear. As the Christian Science Monitor put it in its issue of 16 August:

"the United States does not want any peace agreement in Central America that does not include the United States goals of overthrowing the Sandinistas or of forcing them to share power with the rebels now fighting them".

The New York Times of 27 August 1985 stated:

"The Contadora will be stymied, which is just the way the Administration wants it, for it is thus free to pursue its confrontational approach unencumbered by a regional agreement or the compromises implied by negotiations".

The savage acts committed by the imperialist forces and their hirelings against Nicaragua have been denounced by the entire international community; they are even criticized by their allies. Their anachronistic "gunboat" policy is very unpopular. Nicaragua and her people are not alone; they have enjoyed whole-hearted support and effective assistance from their friends. The Special Meeting and the Declaration of the Luanda Conference on Central America confirm the Non-Aligned Movement's solidarity with the Nicaraguan people and the Sandinist Government.

The delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam admires the people and Government of Nicaragua for their steadfast determination to defend their revolution and their country. Their struggle has become a symbol of a small nation that takes up arms and fights for its survival against an enemy many times bigger and stronger, both economically and militarily. At the same time we welcome the good will and position of principle taken by the Nicaraguan Government towards a

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

negotiated solution of regional issues. We fully support the legitimate right of the Nicaraguan people to self-defence.

We support the Contadora countries and others that firmly oppose the threat of armed aggression against Nicaragua and which are working towards a negotiated solution to regional disputes and conflicts. We commend the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his tireless efforts in the search for such a solution. We are also in full agreement with the position of the Non-Aligned Movement vis-à-vis Central America.

The delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam deplores the rejection by the United States of the ruling by the Hague International Court of Justice and its refusal to implement the relevant General Assembly resolutions. We believe that only if the United States puts an immediate end to its activities in meddling with the internal affairs of the regional countries can a peaceful, negotiated solution be found for all the issues of this region.

Mr. KURODA (Japan): Japan believes that peace and stability in Central America are a matter of world-wide concern. Events in Central America can have serious implications for Latin America as a whole and, indeed, can affect the peace and stability of the entire world.

The Government of Japan is therefore closely following the situation in Central America. A number of recent incidents, in particular, are a source of serious concern to my Government. On 13 September the military forces of Nicaragua and Honduras clashed along their common border. And, following a period of relative quiet along the border area between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, on 7 October the two countries once again exchanged fire. Tensions remain along the borders of those countries.

The easing of tensions in the region is a matter of the utmost urgency. The issues in the region cannot be solved by armed conflict. My Government is convinced that political settlement must come from the efforts of the countries and peoples of the region themselves. From this point of view, the Government of Japan has consistently and strongly supported the Contadora Group since it was founded in January 1983. At many high level meetings between my country and the countries of the Contadora Group and other countries of Central America during the past year my Government has reaffirmed its confidence in the efforts of the Group. Japan hopes that, with wider international support, as demonstrated in the formation of a Support Group by South American countries, the Contadora Group will make genuine progress toward peace in the region.

My Government wishes to pay a high tribute to the countries of the Contadora Group and other countries of Central America for their tireless efforts to find a solution to the problem through long and extensive negotiations. It is the firm belief of my Government that the Contadora process provides the best opportunity to achieve a political solution to the regional crisis.

(Mr. Kuroda, Japan)

The Contadora Group has already made a significant contribution in an effort towards the political settlement of the Central American problem. In its Document of Objectives it set forth the principal goals for political negotiation, and in the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America it laid the basis for political agreement.

The efforts of the Contadora Group, which in the past year have been concentrated on revising and finalizing the Act, included a 45-day meeting in Panama, which ended only yesterday, 21 November. Since certain issues needed to be resolved to ensure the smooth and effective implementation of the Act, my Government followed the meeting with keen interest. I wish to thank the representative of Mexico for providing the General Assembly this morning with up-to-date information on the negotiations.

My Government believes that the General Assembly should renew its support for the Contadora Group and should avoid confrontational deliberations while the efforts of the Contadora Group are going on.

Dialogue between the Government and people of any nation must be promoted in order to reduce political uneasiness within its borders. The strengthening of democratic principles is also an essential component of the Contadora efforts. Japan therefore strongly hopes that Central American countries themselves will make even greater efforts to achieve democratization and national reconciliation. In this context, Japan warmly welcomes the democratic election which took place in Guatemala on 3 November.

While supporting the efforts of the international community, Japan too is working for the promotion of peace and development in the region. Japan holds the view that economic development and the improvement of living standards in those countries is essential in bringing stability to the region.

(Mr. Kuroda, Japan)

I wish to take this opportunity to assure the Assembly that Japan will continue, to the best of its ability, to expand its economic and technical co-operation towards this end.

Mr. FAJARDO MALDONADO (Guatemala) (interpretation from Spanish): In accordance with Security Council resolutions 530 (1983) and 562 (1985) and General Assembly resolutions 38/10 and 39/4, once again we are debating the situation in Central America. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his report (A/40/737).

Guatemala, concerned at the steady deterioration of the situation in Central America, is participating once again in this forum in the conviction that only an equitable, comprehensive, negotiated solution which at the same time stems from the will of the Central American Governments can put an end to the regional crisis.

The Central American region is suffering a profound crisis which affects it in all areas and which results from different internal and external factors. Never before in our history have so many adverse elements converged: serious economic, social and political problems which, reflected in tension and confrontation, affect each and every one of our Central American countries equally. Peace and security are seriously threatened by a worsening of the internal conflicts that create friction among countries, with the risk of causing a widespread confrontation with unforeseeable consequences for the international community. It is difficult to accept that Central America, united in history by a shared destiny and by its economic system of regional integration, is now living in an atmosphere of uncertainty, lack of understanding and distrust.

(Mr. Fajardo Maldonado,
Guatemala)

This historic challenge of an inevitable common destiny obliges us Central Americans on the one hand to make use of all available resources to prevent military escalation and on the other hand to use our creative imagination to strengthen our traditional relations of co-operation and understanding to achieve a final reconciliation of the countries of the Isthmus.

Guatemala accepts, respects and is attached to the principles of the United Nations Charter, which guide and underlie its foreign policy. That is why we are participating in and actively promoting all initiatives of negotiation conducive to a stable and permanent peace in the Central American region. We Central Americans must not set aside dialogue and negotiation, even when they are arduous and complex, in confronting the crisis before us. The patient efforts steadfastly made by the Contadora Group constitute our sole alternative in order to arrive at the comprehensive solution to which we all aspire.

The meeting of plenipotentiaries in Panama, which ended yesterday represents a further stage in this important Latin American diplomatic mediation. This project of peace, which has the firm support of the international community, has made it possible for us to keep negotiations fluid and alleviate tension.

Guatemala firmly believes in the Contadora Group. With foresight and an objective sense of the magnitude that the Central American crisis could assume, Contadora has proposed formulas based on the principles and norms of international law and has fostered honest and sincere dialogue, as well as the consensus of the Central American Governments, for the adoption of the document of objectives, which contains the principles and commitments that could guarantee peace in Central America.

(Mr. Fajardo Maldonado,
Guatemala)

The revised version of the Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America was discussed in Panama within the agreed 45-day time limit. In the Guatemalan Government's view that document, which has been improved by the contributions of other Governments, could be made a legally binding instrument. Central Americans and the Contadora Group are familiar with Guatemala's unswerving and consistent position. They may therefore be assured of our constructive attitude and our support, so that the agreements reached may enter into force as soon as possible.

Furthermore, Guatemala was very pleased to welcome the establishment of the Contadora Support Group composed of Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay, which introduces a new, dynamic element into the negotiating process.

We know how important and necessary it is to promote and foster a comprehensive final agreement among the Governments of Central America, laying the foundations for regional coexistence based on respect. This comprehensive agreement, in addition to resolving political and security differences, should basically promote the strengthening of Central American integration as a strategy which stimulates and reaffirms the economic and social development of all our peoples, in order to strengthen the democratic, pluralist and representative institutions which can make national reconciliation possible.

The democratic process which is being carried out in Guatemala represents a particularly important stage for our country, in clearing the way for a civilian government resulting from political dialogue and the will of the people of Guatemala. That event is in turn a factor of stability in the region, the importance of which was recognized in the Joint Communiqué of the recent Luxembourg meeting between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the other Central American countries, the Contadora Group and the European Community, Spain and Portugal.

(Mr. Fajardo Maldonado,
Guatemala)

Guatemala will continue to insist that Central American integration is, even in the context of the present-day structural problems of the region, an adequate strategy for promoting understanding, comprehension and, above all, the joint development of the Central American countries within the framework of mutual respect and recognition of the specific characteristics of each of its members. We cannot aspire to uniformity in Central America. On the contrary, we must accept and recognize unity within diversity. We are pleased to note that this unequivocal position was also recognized at the Luxembourg meeting in the signing of the framework treaty of co-operation between two regions committed to promoting their respective processes of integration. The Ministerial Joint Communiqué emphasizes the strengthening of the common Central American institutions in order to foster economic integration.

The impact and importance of these agreements to the region may not be immediately perceptible, nevertheless we are convinced that they represent one more factor of stability for the economic and social development of Central America. At the same time they make it possible for Central Americans to diversify their external economic relations and to stimulate the co-ordination and harmonization of their external activities towards the rest of the world. It can rightly be stressed that desire for integration has been and remains the heritage of all Central Americans.

We reaffirm our resolve to continue to work indefatigably with the countries of the Contadora Group to achieve peace and harmony in the region. We are aware that any process of negotiation is necessarily long and difficult and that it requires patience and perseverance. We accept dialogue as the only way to achieve stability in Central America. Geo-political and political realities cannot be

(Mr. Fajardo Maldonado,
Guatemala)

disregarded. If we want to achieve lasting and stable solutions, pragmatism and creative imagination must replace the monotony and tedium of ideological rhetoric. The recent summit meeting in Geneva illustrates that principle.

My delegation believes that the contribution of the United Nations in Central America is useful and important in so far as it promotes negotiations and the process of peace in the region. This debate, therefore, should lead to realistic and constructive recommendations to complement the work that we achieve within the Contadora context. It should also contribute to détente and to facilitating the mandate of the Secretary-General in the quest for objective solutions. My delegation believes that any resolution that is inconsistent with the negotiating process and with Central American reality will be untimely and illusory. This forum must act in a different way.

Mr. PERM (Sweden): The region of Central America continues to be plagued by armed conflicts, subversion, direct or indirect coercion and external interference. Aggression has grown and threats have increased during the past year. There is continued suppression of civil, political and trade union rights in several parts of the region. My Government deplores these developments. The situation in the region is a cause for grave concern.

The origin of the conflicts is glaring economic and social injustice existing in the region. The roots are found in the social, economic and political conditions of Central America. They date back far beyond the present period of East-West ideological and strategic confrontation in the world.

My Government has from the outset declared that the conflicts of Central America must be settled by political, and not by military means. The future of Central America must be built on economic development and social justice. The peoples of Central America must be allowed to develop their societies in peace and freedom. The national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of each State must be scrupulously respected.

The Contadora process is now at a critical stage. The Contadora Group has attempted to find, through peaceful means, a comprehensive solution applicable to the entire region. The process is a genuine Latin American effort to promote peace and co-operation in the region. To achieve a climate conducive to this process a demilitarization of the area is imperative. The objective of disarmament is also included in the basic principles of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation, principles which are more important than ever.

The Contadora Group must be given the opportunity of completing its work for peace in a climate which is not marked by increased militarization or by East-West tensions.

(Mr. Fern, Sweden)

The Contadora Group is further strengthened by the special support of four other Latin American countries. My Government welcomes the addition of this group to the Contadora process, which underlines the regional and independent character of the process and the importance of regional co-operation.

Another positive sign is the continued interest in Europe to promote peace and development in Central America. That interest was significantly demonstrated at the recent meeting in Luxembourg between the European Economic Community, Portugal and Spain, and the Central American countries concerned resulting in the conclusion of an important agreement.

The United States has a great and undeniable influence in this region and thus an important role to play to promote a peaceful process there. We appeal to the United States to give its unconditional and active support to the Contadora process and to act in its spirit.

The international community must reject any measures such as boycott actions and support of armed groups in violation of international law to overthrow a legitimate government. The Swedish Government takes exception to the decision to impose economic sanctions against Nicaragua and it has endorsed Security Council resolution 562 (1985) of May 1985. The sanctions make peace negotiations in Central America more difficult, since they are contrary to the principles expressed in the peace proposals put forward by the Contadora Group. The sanctions also contribute to jeopardizing Nicaragua's possibilities of conducting an independent foreign policy. There is an obvious risk of the sanctions leading to increased domestic difficulties and further confrontations.

My Government attaches great importance to the fact that the principles of democratic and human rights, as well as social and economic justice, take a prominent place in the work of the Contadora Group.

(Mr. Fern, Sweden)

The Government of Nicaragua has committed itself to a pluralist political system, to democracy. This is a serious commitment, which is of utmost importance. We also realize the difficulties in transforming a society from a dictatorship to a democracy, in particular under the pressure of economic difficulties and military insurgency. Nicaragua, in our view, should be encouraged and helped in this transformation. Likewise should the democratic process in other Central American countries be supported. In the case of Nicaragua we believe that the external assistance to the so-called contras has undermined the efforts to improve the conditions to achieve a pluralistic society.

Acts that were threatening the national sovereignty of Nicaragua were, in our view, an important factor leading to the recently proclaimed state of emergency regulations in that country. These circumstances notwithstanding, the Swedish Government deplores the decision taken by the Government of Nicaragua to reintroduce and extend the state of emergency restricting civil rights and liberties, including the freedom of expression. We hope that those measures will be lifted as soon as possible.

My Government's strong support of the Contadora Group includes encouragement of bilateral peace talks between the parties concerned. We noted with satisfaction the establishment of the border commission between Costa Rica and Nicaragua. We joined in welcoming the bilateral discussions between the United States and Nicaragua and the call of the Security Council in resolution 562 (1985) to the two Governments to resume the dialogue they had been holding in Manzanillo, Mexico, towards normalizing their relations, thereby contributing to regional détente. Consequently we learned with great concern that the recent resumption of contacts between the Governments had broken down. Once again we are calling for resumption of the bilateral talks without pre-conditions and based on mutual respect.

(Mr. Ferm, Sweden)

In this context, let me express our concern about the collapse of the talks between the contending parties in El Salvador. Those talks constituted a hopeful and welcome sign in the spirit of the Contadora initiative. Sweden has long held the view that a negotiated settlement of the conflict in El Salvador is not possible without the participation of the Revolutionary Democratic Front and the Faribundo Marti Front for National Liberation. We continue to urge the parties to resume the talks to achieve a comprehensive negotiated political settlement. An open and flexible mind on both sides seems to be a prerequisite for progress.

The situation in Central America has been specifically characterized by an increase in bilateral incidents between countries in the region, in particular involving Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua. We have before us a considerable amount of information giving details of border incidents, threats and instances of foreign intervention. My Government shares the view of the United Nations Secretary-General that:

"Concurrently with the Contadora Group's search for a comprehensive solution any border incidents that arise should be dealt with directly by the parties".

(A/40/737, para. 11)

Unanimous international support for the Contadora process is of crucial importance. The involvement of the Secretary-General and his readiness to assist is highly appreciated by my Government.

For my own country, the support to the Contadora Group is in line with the central aims of Sweden's foreign policy. The objectives of the Contadora process is of great significance for us and for all nations. Furthermore, we extend our support in the spirit of deep solidarity with peoples who have so often been the victims of foreign domination and exploitation. At the present crucial moment, it is imperative actively to support the Contadora Group with deeds and for all countries to refrain from any action that might adversely affect its highly commendable peace efforts.

Mr. VONGSAY (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): At this commemorative session, the examination by the General Assembly of the item with which we are now dealing is of great significance and burning urgency, for far from becoming normalized, the situation in Central America is becoming worse every day. The international community is perfectly aware of what is happening in this delicate region of the world. A careful examination has been made of the sociological causes and factors behind the serious crisis shaking the countries of Central America whose peoples have experienced catastrophic consequences. We also know that an appropriate therapy has been prescribed by the international community for these endemic ills, in particular by this Assembly and the Security Council.

The consistent position of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on this important question has been explained and reaffirmed many times over in this universal Organization and in various other international forums. This position which is, furthermore, the same as that adopted by the entire international community, is as follows:

Peace and security in Central America, as in the Latin American continent as a whole, are and remain inseparable from peace and security in general. It would seem that everyone agrees on this principle of indivisibility.

The root causes of the crisis raging there, or the real threats to peace and security in this region are both endogenous and exogenous. Domestically, it is the anti-democratic social, economic and political system holding sway in some countries of the region which is responsible for the impoverishment, misery, obscurantism and other endemic social scourges, the victims of which are the peoples of these countries. The exogenous causes derive from the bellicose policy of provocation and direct or indirect intervention pursued by the aggressive

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

circles of an imperialist super-Power in the internal affairs of many countries of the region, some of which have become the unconditional allies and protégés of that super-Power. These are the fundamental facts of the problem which must be understood and accepted if we are to find a just and lasting solution to the serious crisis in Central America. It is a deplorable fact that the aggressive imperialist circles refuse to acknowledge this fundamental postulate or basic truth. They continue to take up the problem from the ideological standpoint, emphasizing the so-called East-West confrontation. Even worse, they have even dared to threaten to strangle revolutionary Nicaragua whose independent domestic and external policy is not to their liking. The entire world has seen that the present United States Administration is incapable of hiding its phobia of the new Nicaraguan régime which was established, as we all know, after the glorious victory of the Sandinist revolution in July 1979. The leaders of that Administration never fail to use the phobic term "communist" to designate the present régime in Nicaragua. One may deduce from that that all countries in the world whose Governments are pursuing a policy of radical social and economic transformation for the good of the entire society and abolishing the exorbitant privileges of a handful of local and foreign exploiters, should be strangled, overthrown or excommunicated on the pretext that they are communists or communist sympathizers. It goes without saying that this state of mind and this policy on the part of aggressive imperialist circles are contrary to the cardinal principles and lofty purposes of the United Nations Charter, the fortieth anniversary of which has just been celebrated solemnly by the international community. It is precisely this bellicose and interventionist policy which poses a serious threat to the peace, security, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Nicaragua.

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

The Lao People's Democratic Republic, together with the international community and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has always condemned the series of acts of provocation, of undeclared war, acts of aggression, including the mining of ports and the recent total trade embargo decreed against Nicaragua by the present United States Administration. The international community has certainly not failed to take note with alarm and distress of the terrible loss of human life and material damage which the revolutionary Government of Nicaragua and its heroic people have suffered as a result of these hostile acts - in addition to the destruction of social and economic infrastructures, such as schools, hospitals, ports and so forth. It is above all the poor peasants of border towns and villages, as well as their young children, who have been the victims of the crimes committed in cold blood by the band of Somozist counter-revolutionaries armed, trained and financed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and by a large number of mercenaries based in the territories of certain neighbouring countries. These terrible facts were provided by the President of the Republic of Nicaragua himself, Mr. Daniel Ortega Saavedra, during a speech he made in this very Hall on 21 October last on the occasion of the commemorative session of this universal Organization. Each of us surely remembers that the Nicaraguan leader told us in moving terms of the conditions in which his Government and his heroic people have had to fight for their survival. The international community also learned with sadness and indignation that the White House had just appropriated a further \$27 million, for so-called humanitarian assistance, whereas in reality those funds are to be used to finance this "undeclared war" against Nicaragua.

The picture we have here is far from pretty. However that may be, something which we have to admire is the truly remarkable way in which the Government and

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

people of Nicaragua, despite this adversity, have tried to find a solution to the crisis that is destabilizing this region of the world and to normalize their relations with the United States of America, and with all countries in the region. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, following the example of the international community, wholeheartedly supports the peace proposals put forward to date by the Republic of Nicaragua and by the Contadora Group.

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Men of good faith will certainly not fail to praise the persistence with which the Government of Nicaragua has been struggling to resume the Manzanillo dialogue which the United States side broke off unilaterally without any explanation at all at the beginning of January last. Representatives will also recall that the international community, particularly the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Contadora Group, have urged and are continuing to urge the resumption of such bilateral negotiations. But it is unfortunate that the United States Government has so far put spokes in the wheels of such efforts. For example, the United States side has brazenly subordinated any resumption of dialogue to Nicaragua's agreement to dissolve its National Assembly; its second diktat, just as insulting as the first, is that the dialogue should take place solely between the Government of Nicaragua and the Somozist counter-revolutionary band. We very sincerely hope that the United States Government will reconsider its unreasonable position and agree as soon as possible to resume the dialogue with the Nicaraguan Government, on an equal footing, with mutual respect for independence and sovereignty and for their mutual interests. At the same time, it is desirable that the decision of the International Court of Justice, taken on the complaint of Nicaragua, should be put into effect.

Now, let us see to what extent the Contadora Group has been able to contribute to the quest for a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the crisis.

My country, like the entire international community, commends and supports the tireless efforts by the countries making up that group in their efforts to restore peace and security in the region. In that respect, one cannot pass over in silence the sincerity and good will displayed by Nicaragua in its stated intention scrupulously to apply the Contadora Agreement of 7 September 1984.

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Every one is aware that the United States Administration as well as its principal allies in Central America have shamelessly chosen to invalidate that Act, which is an important instrument.

Clear proof of that act of sabotage is contained both in the secret document of the National Security Council as well as in the secret memorandum of Mr. Elliott Abrahams, Under-Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, entitled "The view from Washington", of 4 September 1985. We also know that Nicaragua's detractors have lately set about making substantial changes in the original text of the Contadora Act to the detriment, of course, of the legitimate national security interests of the Sandinista régime.

What is admirable is that this tiny, independent and sovereign country, a full-fledged Member of the United Nations and of the Non-Aligned Movement, despite the incredible difficulties created for it by its adversaries, is continuing to struggle stubbornly to safeguard its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, acquired at such a great price, and also for the restoration of peace, security and mutually advantageous co-operation in the region. It is high time for the imperialist super-Power and its regional allies to understand that it is in the legitimate interest of their own peoples who so cherish peace and justice to work sincerely for the normalization of their relations with this heroic and peaceful people, the people of Nicaragua, and thereby to ensure that Central America becomes an oasis of peace, stability and co-operation.

In that context, it is encouraging to note the fairly recent formation of a support group, the Contadora Support Group, comprising four Latin American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay. We hope that group will play the role of a catalyst within the machinery of the Contadora Group. The Lao People's

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Democratic Republic would like to reaffirm its support for the Contadora Group in their tireless and sincere efforts that they are making now to find as soon as possible a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the crisis in Central America.

Having themselves experienced the nefarious consequences of an imperialist war of aggression in the recent past, the Lao Government and people are in a good position to understand the extremely difficult situation of the Government and valiant people of Nicaragua at the present time, and would therefore like to reaffirm to them their unswerving solidarity and support. At the same time, we reiterate our support and sympathy for the peoples of Central America and Latin America, courageously and creatively struggling either to safeguard their national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity or to exercise their right to self-determination and to abolish oppressive social and political systems of which they are still the victims.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to inform the Assembly of the situation as regards the continuation of our work on Monday on this item. As the Assembly knows, according to our programme we should begin with the Question of the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) on Tuesday morning, 26 November. None the less, I must point out to the representatives that, in closing the list of speakers this afternoon at 5 p.m., apart from those already on the list for Monday morning's meeting, we have 46 speakers for the afternoon. In the circumstances, I must point out the following.

First of all, it is not possible to have an evening meeting because of a lack of interpreters. They are all busy in the Committees, so it would be impossible to extend the meeting beyond 9.30 or 10.00 in the evening.

(The President)

I would therefore suggest to the Assembly that, if possible, we begin Monday's meeting punctually at 9.30 a.m. to alleviate the situation. We would then have an afternoon meeting which would continue until we exhaust our list of speakers. If any problem arises, we can consider how it should be resolved at the end.

If there is no objection to our Monday morning meeting beginning at 9.30, I should appreciate the Assembly's co-operation in ensuring that we begin at 9.30 precisely.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In order to make full use of the time available to us, I should be grateful if those representatives scheduled to speak on Monday afternoon would be prepared to do so in the morning if we exhaust the morning's list of speakers earlier than anticipated.

AGENDA ITEM 21 (continued)THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY:
REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/40/737)

Mr CHEOK (Singapore): On 26 October 1984 the General Assembly, after a two-day debate, adopted resolution 39/4, on the situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives, which comprehensively covered various aspects of the issue. One year later the General Assembly is again considering this important item, and the situation, as depicted by the Secretary-General in his report, dated 9 October 1985, is that

"despite the efforts of the Contadora Group, the situation in Central America has been steadily deteriorating this year." (A/40/737, para. 8)

My delegation agrees with this bleak assessment and notes that the present situation clearly demands self-restraint, moderation and vision on the part of all the parties concerned.

Recent developments have once again demonstrated the need for a continued and meaningful dialogue aimed at arriving at certain understandings in a spirit of reconciliation. In this respect, the constant state of tension and turmoil has brought about a refugee problem for many countries in the region, thus creating serious socio-economic problems for small countries, including Belize, Costa Rica and Honduras.

As a country geographically removed from the Central American region, Singapore does not possess first-hand information about or knowledge of the region or its problems. The Secretary-General, who has prepared a very comprehensive and detailed report on the subject, has greatly assisted my delegation in understanding the intricacies and difficulties of the problem and the current initiatives being undertaken to attempt to resolve them. My delegation pays a tribute to him for the excellent report before us.

(Mr. Cheok, Singapore)

My delegation understands that the Contadora Foreign Ministers, from Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, met the Secretary-General in New York on 26 September 1985 and handed him the final draft of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America as well as other relevant materials. The final draft incorporates some of the comments made by certain Central American Governments on the original draft of September 1984, as well as some proposals which the Contadora Group considers to be fair and viable compromises on the most controversial issues.

The final draft would, inter alia, bar outside intervention in the area or any support for insurgent forces, while providing for free elections and other democratic reforms. It would also affirm the sovereign equality of States, the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, rejection of the threat or use of force and the export of terrorism or subversion, and support for democratic institutions and the promotion of social justice.

The Contadora Foreign Ministers also informed the Secretary-General that the plenipotentiaries of the nine countries concerned would be meeting in Panama, starting on 7 October 1985, to discuss for a period not exceeding 45 days the unresolved aspects of the Act, relating to the following headings: first, control and reduction of armaments; secondly, implementation and follow-up mechanism with regard to security and political matters; and thirdly, military manoeuvres. At the end of that period - 21 November 1985 - the Contadora Group would convene a joint conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs in order to proceed to the signing of the Act. My delegation takes this opportunity to urge all the parties concerned to make every effort to reach a regional consensus for the restoration of peace and security and the enhancement of economic and social development in the region.

(Mr. Cheok, Singapore)

My delegation has not been able to obtain much information about the outcome of the plenipotentiary meeting. However, from the information my delegation has managed to obtain, we understand that to date little progress has been made in the talks. Nevertheless, my delegation hopes that by this time next year the Secretary-General will be able to present a more optimistic report on the situation.

In its statement to the General Assembly last year, my delegation strongly supported regional initiatives to resolve the problems arising in each region. In this regard, my delegation firmly believes that the Contadora process represents the best opportunity of achieving a comprehensive political solution to the crisis in Central America through political means, and we urge the international community to endorse the praiseworthy efforts of the Contadora Group.*

Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela deserve our commendation for their efforts to find a solution to the problem. In this respect, my delegation is happy to note the recent creation by the Governments of Argentina, Peru, Brazil and Uruguay of a Contadora Support Group, which also deserves our support. The formation of that Support Group reflects the strong concern of the Latin American countries to strengthen the political actions of the Contadora Group.

As a small State in a region where the Cambodian conflict continues to be a major preoccupation, Singapore firmly believes that no State should be permitted to impose its will on its neighbours. Absolute security for any State must mean absolute insecurity for all other States in the region. The States of the Central American region can therefore coexist only in a climate of relative security.

While the approach of the Contadora Group represents the best hope for security, in the search for a comprehensive solution to the problem of the Central

* Mrs. Castro de Barish (Costa Rica), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Cheok, Singapore)

American region it is necessary for us to look at the root causes of the conflicts within the region. The Secretary-General states in his report that

"the roots of the Central American crisis are to be found in unjust

socio-economic structures and domestic policies" (A/40/737, para. 11),

and he concludes that the solution to the crisis depends on the political will of the States in the region.

My delegation shares the view that the turmoil in the region has its origins in the grave socio-economic crisis in the region and the pressures for political change arising from a desire for more just and equitable societies. It is also clear, however, that, while the conflicts in the region do not arise from East-West rivalry, the competition between the military blocs has exacerbated conflict in the region. It is therefore a matter of regret to my delegation that the arms build-up in the region is still continuing, as are acts of aggression, border incidents, destabilizing operations and the presence of foreign military forces.

My delegation reiterates that it believes that every State in the region must have the right to determine its own future free of foreign interference and that it is for the peoples of each State to decide their own future. We reaffirm the need for strict adherence to the principle of non-intervention and non-interference in the internal and external affairs of States. My delegation is opposed to acts of armed aggression and subversion. We do not believe that militarily powerful States, particularly the super-Powers, should be permitted to impose their will on smaller, militarily insignificant and economically weak States. We also do not believe in the notion of revolutions without frontiers, of the right of States to impose their political will on neighbouring States. It is vital, in this era of a multi-polar State system, that we accept the existence of differing models of

(Mr. Cheok, Singapore)

political, social and economic organization. Only if this is accepted can the real threat of conflict and war in Central America be avoided.

My delegation is very aware that a peaceful solution to the problems afflicting Central America is not an easy objective to attain. It requires not only an end to violence and non-intervention, but also far-reaching changes in the region. All political and social groups must be allowed to share in any economic progress and participate actively in the political process. The States of the region must firmly commit themselves to working towards that goal. The partners in the hemisphere and the international community as a whole must give them full support. That is the only way in which the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of Central America can be met.

Mr. RACZ (Hungary): The situation in Central America - the topic of our present discussion - has remained one of the main focal points of international tension. It has done so despite promising efforts, supported by the international community, on the part of the Contadora Group to find a peaceful, negotiated settlement to the pressing problems of that long-suffering region.

Before I deal with the concrete issues, let me turn briefly to the root causes of the situation as we see it, because the perspective from which one starts is fundamental.

The root causes of the political, social and economic crisis in Central America have been identified by many of us here: they are the outdated power structure and exploitation that produced only backwardness, poverty and misery. These conditions cried out for change, and peoples of the region, just like peoples everywhere else, wanted to take their destiny into their own hands. A fierce struggle ensued between those who wanted a change and those who benefited from the old system.

It was in Nicaragua that the people finally won and started out on the road of a democratic transformation of their society. It was Nicaragua, therefore, that aroused fear and hatred on the part of those who wanted to resist change. Soon after the victory of the Sandinista revolution, the forces of reaction set out to reverse the course of events and we have witnessed an unceasing struggle to undermine the legitimate Government of that country. The situation has been aggravated by constant intervention from outside, utilizing the territories of neighbouring States for aggression against Nicaragua. The counter-revolutionary forces, the so-called contras, are made up almost entirely of former members of the hated National Guard of the former dictator Somoza. It is no secret that the sources of funding for the contras come from Washington. Were it not for that

(Mr. Racz, Hungary)

support, the contras would not have a chance against the lawful Government of Nicaragua, which is supported whole-heartedly by the people.

Even in the most adverse conditions of an undeclared war against them, the people of Nicaragua have achieved notable success in the democratic transformation of their society. They have held free and fair national elections; they have made great advances in the field of public health and education, in the fight against illiteracy. The tasks in the economic field are enormous. There is nothing the Nicaraguan people and Government need and want more than peace, so that they can devote all their talents and energy to the advancement of their country in every facet of life.

It is no exaggeration to say that the history of the Sandinista Government is a history of peace initiatives, which have concerned both relations with its neighbours and relations with the United States. The efforts that held - and still hold - the best promise of finding a negotiated, peaceful solution to the problems are embodied in the activities of the Contadora Group. After almost two years of painstaking negotiations, the Group presented in September 1984 the revised draft of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. We know all too well what happened with that Act, which was presented after consultations with the Central American countries: only Nicaragua offered to sign it without changes; Honduras, El Salvador and Costa Rica demanded new, substantive revisions.

In our view, despite the serious difficulties it has encountered, the activity of the Contadora Group still holds out the best prospects for peace in the region - first, because it seeks a political solution to the problems and, secondly, because it represents an authentic, regional initiative. The regional character was further enhanced by the formation of the Lima group of support for the Contadora

(Mr. Racz, Hungary)

Group. That Support Group is composed of Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay. We sincerely hope that this initiative will contribute to strengthening the efforts for peace in the region.

However important institutions and frameworks may be, we must not lose sight of the substance of the issues as well. The key question, in our well-considered opinion, is the de-emphasizing of the military element. That is why we favour initiatives aimed at prohibiting all types of international military manoeuvres, as well as prohibiting the establishment of foreign military bases and dismantling the existing ones in the region. In order to become a zone of peace, free of any foreign military presence, Central America should agree to prohibit all military training centres and the stationing and even transit of foreign military troops, and it should agree also to the withdrawal of all foreign military advisers. We welcome the fact that Nicaragua has expressed its willingness to make commitments regarding arms reduction and control, so long as there are basic conditions to guarantee its national security. We understand that in order to achieve that, the United States should also make commitments.

The basic prerequisite for peace in the region is the ending of foreign intervention, both overt and covert. There must be an end to efforts aimed at subverting the Government of Nicaragua; there must be an end to embargoes and other coercive measures. Bilateral talks between Nicaragua and the United States should be renewed. The only viable solution to the crisis in the region must be a solution based on a peaceful, negotiated settlement, which, in turn, should be based upon the rule of law, upon the fundamental principles of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.

(Mr. Racz, Hungary)

We hope that all the parties concerned will make renewed efforts to achieve a peaceful solution. That would create favourable conditions for solving the serious economic problems the countries of the region are faced with, and it would also contribute to the cause of peace beyond the regional context.

In conclusion, we express our solidarity with the people of Nicaragua, with all the peoples in the region, in their just endeavours to achieve their noble goal: to live in peace, dignity and freedom.

Mr. KEBEDE (Ethiopia): The Ethiopian delegation listened with keen interest to the statement made by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua this morning regarding the situation in Central America and the serious developments arising from the mining of Nicaraguan ports and the economic pressure and embargo which the United States Administration has imposed on Nicaragua. All those who have spoken so far seemed to be unanimous in the view that what is being considered by the Assembly today is a matter of grave concern for the maintenance of international peace and security. What is at stake here is respect for the fundamental principles of the Charter and the accepted norms governing inter-State relations.

Drawing the attention of the Assembly to the recent past, it has become evident that ever since the downfall of the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua the heroic people of Nicaragua have been subjected to a series of acts of aggression and coercive acts of destabilization in an attempt to create a society much more amenable to the wishes of the perpetrator of those acts. Having failed to preserve the tyrannical rule of the Somoza family, the United States Administration embarked upon a policy of direct aggression and subversion with a view to undermining and eventually reversing the course of the revolution of the Nicaraguan people. To this end, Nicaraguan ports were blockaded and mined while mercenaries were organized, trained, financed, equipped and infiltrated into Nicaragua to murder innocent people, destroy the country's economic and social infrastructure and create havoc in a country which has yet to see peace.

Furthermore, a co-ordinated and continuous form of pressure and intimidation is being pursued through the never-ending military manoeuvres of the United States very close to the Nicaraguan border, thus creating an ever-present threat of direct invasion.

(Mr. Kebede, Ethiopia)

The events taking place in Nicaragua should be viewed in the light of the unfortunate predicament in which Nicaragua finds itself. It is well known that Nicaragua is a non-aligned developing country whose economy continues to suffer from the aftermath of natural disasters and a war imposed on it from outside. It is also indisputable that to help contain the consequences of these natural and man-made disasters and to assist the Government of Nicaragua in its reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, the General Assembly, at its thirty-ninth session, adopted resolution 39/204 (1984), in which it urged all Governments to contribute to the reconstruction and development of Nicaragua. In these circumstances, Nicaragua's preoccupation can only be a quest for peace and stability within its borders and for solutions to the many economic problems with which it continues to grapple.

It is inconceivable, therefore, that a small developing country like Nicaragua can pose a threat to the security of its neighbours, let alone to that of a super-Power, the United States of America. To assume that Nicaragua would wage war against a well-armed nation or pose a threat to the sovereignty of the United States is not only to misconstrue the facts as they obtain in the Western hemisphere but to accord legitimacy to the illegal measures taken by some countries against a country whose major concern is development, peace, justice and democracy.

That is why we deplore the trade and economic embargo imposed by the United States on Nicaragua, in violation of the letter and spirit of the resolution adopted by consensus only a year ago.

The issue before this Assembly is emphatic and clear. It constitutes the systematic violation by the United States of the basic principles of the Charter and of international law. It has now become more evident than ever before that the objective of the United States Administration is to nullify the sovereign decision of the people of Nicaragua and overthrow their legitimate elected Government.

Representatives of the United States Government, including the President of the United States himself, have confirmed that intention on more than one occasion. No amount of obfuscation, therefore, can hide the truth about the United States aggressive and hegemonistic pursuits, originating in its strategic designs in Central America - as, indeed, is the case elsewhere in the world.

On the other hand, Nicaragua has demonstrated its good faith to the international community beyond doubt by accepting the Contadora Act without reservation, and continues to co-operate closely with the Contadora Group in its persistent search for a just and lasting framework for peace and co-operation among the nations of Central America. In this spirit, Nicaragua participated in bilateral talks at Manzanillo, Mexico, until the talks were unilaterally discontinued by the United States. Nicaragua's efforts to create the necessary conditions for peace and stability in that troubled region cannot be disputed.

I therefore submit that Nicaragua deserves the recognition and appreciation of the international community as a peace-loving country which has become the target of unwarranted military provocation and aggression, as well as economic sabotage and diplomatic blackmail.

For more than a decade Ethiopia and its revolution have been subjected to similar imperialist onslaughts. These are continuing unabated. We understand and empathize with the unparalleled valour and perseverance with which the people of Nicaragua have withstood the hardships imposed on them.

(Mr. Kebede, Ethiopia)

The Government and the people of Socialist Ethiopia regard with admiration the determination of the Government and people of Nicaragua to protect the gains of their revolution, as well as the territorial integrity of their motherland, against the forces of imperialism and reaction, and we reaffirm once again our full support to, and fraternal solidarity with, their gallant struggle.

We also congratulate the Government and people of Nicaragua for their perseverance in the pursuit of peace and diplomatic solutions to the problems of Central America and, indeed, for their commitment to international legality. We are confident that the people of Nicaragua will eventually emerge victorious.

Mrs. JORGENSEN (Norway): The developments in Central America during the last year have dimmed the cautious optimism my delegation felt when the General Assembly considered this situation a year ago. Since then, we have witnessed a worsening of the general situation, marked by increased bilateral incidents, escalation of warfare and a stalled negotiation process. We fully understand and share the concern expressed by the Secretary-General in his recent report on the situation in Central America.

The problems of this region are not new. They have been caused by centuries of social injustice and exploitation. Political change in Central America was inevitable, but the escalation of violence we have seen in recent years offers no true hope to the peoples of this troubled region. The path to peace is through dialogue.

My Government fully supports the initiatives of the Contadora Group. We are concerned that little progress has been made during the last year. We would strongly welcome, however, political and economic support to the area from other countries and groups of countries, in the hope that broad and constructive involvement will contribute to a peaceful solution of the problems in this region.

(Mrs. Jorgensen, Norway)

My Government feels that it is essential for the people of the region themselves to be allowed to solve their problems free of outside interference. The root causes of the problems are economic and social, and continued warfare can only exacerbate these problems. Outside interference can only intensify the warfare.

The Contadora accord remains the only widely accepted basis upon which a peaceful solution can be found. It affirms the sovereign equality of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the rejection of the threat or use of force, as well as the export of terrorism and subversion, support for democratic institutions and promotion of social justice. The accord and its regulations would also bar outside intervention in the area or any support of insurgent forces, while providing for free elections and other democratic reforms.

In Central America, as in other conflict areas of the world, a durable peace can only be found if all parties involved agree on the provisions of peace treaties or necessary security arrangements. The Norwegian Government supports the continued efforts of the Contadora Group to search for peace agreements which can be acceptable to all parties involved. We urge the parties to show a constructive willingness for dialogue and compromise, not to shy away from necessary negotiations or contacts, and to approach such negotiations without preconditions.

It is important that we do not forget the human aspect of the political crisis in Central America. The upheavals and the fighting are still causing a flood of refugees. An estimated 347,000 refugees are hosted by various countries of the region. I should like to pay a tribute to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the invaluable assistance it provides for a large number of those refugees, and I should also like to extend this tribute to other international and non-governmental organizations active in this field. My Government has contributed to this humanitarian effort and will continue to do so as long as it is required.

Mr. GAYAMA (Congo) (interpretation from French): In the international system established 40 years ago on the basis of the United Nations Charter, Latin America, Asia and Africa have had the smallest share of peace and security.

It is all too well known that since the end of the Second World War the third world has had to bear the main burden of most of the wars and conflicts which have occurred throughout the world, with all that that entails.

In this atmosphere of general insecurity which is aggravated by various political, economic and social factors, the Central American subregion is sinking deeper and deeper into crisis every day, no doubt to the great satisfaction of arms merchants and other cold blooded Machiavellian strategists.

For let us not forget that behind these so-called localized conflicts which are engulfing the third world can always be seen the shadow of a Great Power devoured by ambitions of hegemony, which has the direct effect of transforming - with the zealous assistance of that Power - situations with well-defined limits into a battleground for the notorious East-West rivalry.

However much that view of problems may suit some, it has the disadvantages, to say the least, of reducing entire nations, with their own specific values and institutions, to mere pawns on the chessboard of a grand remote-controlled game in which small nations are merely summoned to obey or perish.

The life of entire peoples in the Caribbean and in Central America has thus become transformed into a constant struggle to defend their dignity and sovereignty, which absorbs substantial resources and energies for ends which have nothing to do with the fundamental concerns of the peoples concerned.

(Mr. Gayama, Congo)

Through military interventions and interference of all types, including the permanent economic blockade against Cuba and, in the past, against other island States, the objective of transforming the Caribbean into a zone of peace is becoming more and more remote, as though such an objective constituted in its very principle an act of unbearable insubordination to the Powers which have arrogated to themselves the role of protectors and world decision-makers. Of course it is not a question for any nation to flee from the need to promote active co-operation for the benefit of peace and general progress. This is above all a problem of collective responsibility which must be solved on a just, sound and mutually advantageous basis instead of serving to maintain poverty and social structures which create social tragedy.

The situation which today has its epicentre in Nicaragua has no other origin, in our view, than such misunderstandings deliberately maintained by an imperialism which cannot see the real facts that are creating such frustration and social calamity.

The only thing Nicaragua did wrong was to carry out a radical revolution under the banner of the Sandinista Front, in order to change the face of a country for which the Somoza dictatorship promised neither social reforms nor true independence. Thus Nicaragua is living today in a state of undeclared war - undeclared, but proclaimed by a neighbouring Super-Power which does not even seek to hide that fact. That Power, not content with providing total support for the Somozistas, whom it trains and equips, in May last declared a total embargo on trade and transportation between itself and Nicaragua, after having unilaterally suspended, in January 1985, direct negotiations in the talks in Manzanillo, Mexico, between the two countries.

(Mr. Gayama, Congo)

Congo cannot approve of such a use of economic coercion on the part of a very great Power against a small, developing country which can in no way constitute a credible threat to its interests or its security. Furthermore, such a policy is clearly not inspired by respect for the principles of the non-use of force and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, principles enshrined in the Charter along with the principles of non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other sovereign States. My country has always made the policy of co-operation and good-neighbourliness one of the cornerstones of its foreign relations and has endeavoured, especially over the course of the last ten years, to establish an atmosphere of understanding and peace between the countries and peoples of Central America; and we have no greater wish than to see established in Central America, and especially in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras, a détente which alone can guarantee progress for economic, social and cultural plans, between the fraternal peoples of those States, as advocated in Security Council resolution 562 (1985) adopted on 10 May this year, which called for the cessation of political, economic or military actions of any kind against any State in the subregion and reaffirmed the right of each freely to decide on its own political, economic and social system.

In its admirable initiatives the Contadora Group has always been guided by those principles, hence the universal support which the Group receives throughout the world. In its tireless efforts to reduce tension in Latin America and promote the coexistence of States in the sub-region, on the basis of the fundamental principles of peaceful coexistence, the Contadora Group has always distinguished itself by the judiciousness of its proposals, which have all been in conformity with the fundamental provisions of the Organization of American States and other international conventions. Support for the initiatives of the Group is all the

(Mr. Gayama, Congo)

greater in Latin America and we can only welcome the establishment by the Lima Group supporting the Contadora Group, thus reflecting a common destiny among most of the countries of that hemisphere.

Latin America, like the Caribbean region, is made up of developing countries, for the most part members of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Governments and peoples of which are endeavouring, in the midst of a particularly difficult economic and social situation, to develop original approaches in order to overcome obstacles in the path to their development. It is only fair to allow them to assess by themselves the ways and means of promoting the political, social and other conditions conducive to meeting the innumerable challenges facing them. Any interventionism oriented less towards Latin American priorities - for example, reducing the debt burden - than towards ideological as well as geographical considerations would, my delegation fears, only have the effect of perpetuating outdated doctrines such as the Monroe Doctrine, justifying the division of the world, as well as other crimes which can be committed in the name of liberty and in the final analysis would have the effect of transforming peace and security themselves into mere slogans at the service of State terrorism.

Some major Powers, and not the least powerful among them, have recently been justifying their withdrawal from multilateral institutions and their choice of isolated individual initiatives by a desire for pragmatism and harmony between political morality and reality. Following that concept it would be only just and normal to apply all sanctions, including the most extreme, against Nicaragua to destabilize its régime, but the international community, paralyzed by that logic, is wondering why South Africa, where a racist minority is oppressing a majority by the odious system of apartheid, has been free from any sanctions or any of the other coercive measures applied against Nicaragua.

(Mr. Gayama, Congo)

Peace and security are indivisible. It would be tantamount to betraying the cause of peace and security if we were to allow their achievement to be ruled by partisan subjective feelings, in total disregard for the system of collective security established by the United Nations Charter.

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): At its thirty-ninth session the General Assembly adopted without a vote a resolution on the situation in Central America with a view to making it possible for all parties concerned to let the Contadora peace initiative run its course. At that time we held out great hopes for seeing Central America move towards peace, coexistence and co-operation, the bases and details of which have been enshrined, after arduous negotiations, in the provisions of the revised Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America dated September 1984.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

The dangerous course of events in that part of the world has dashed our hopes, and this suggests that peace, security, co-operation and coexistence are far from achieved, and indeed, much further away than the international community had thought. The rapid deterioration of security, economic and social conditions in that part of the world means that the General Assembly has a heavy responsibility to bear in dealing with this agenda item. The situation means that we have to display determination and a sense of seriousness in coming to grips with this issue, especially since the peace and the security of peoples are interdependent in today's world where the distance between tension and war focal points is continually shrinking. The irony of the situation is that all the peoples of Central America aspire to peace, whereas the policy of the heavy hand is pushing events in a direction which is contrary to the interest of these peoples in pursuit of security, integrity and stability.

Central America today is witnessing the application of the most dangerous ideologies and practices resulting from an approach pursued by an imperialist super-Power which, ever since the nineteenth century, has never stopped pursuing a policy of military and other forms of intervention in the affairs of that region under the pretext that its peoples, their system of government and social and economic structure are the property of imperialism which decides their fate as it wishes, and deals with their affairs as if independence, the right to self-determination, the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, and that of the territorial integrity of States do not exist, either in international law or in the norms of relations among peoples and States. It is as though geographic proximity gave the giant the right to crush the freedom of others and to impose economic, political and social systems consistent with its interests in regions which it considers are within its zone of influence.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

The crisis in Central America did not arise with the explosion of the victorious Sandinista revolution against the despotic Somoza régime. That crisis was the result of unequal economic and social relationships that were imposed by the stronger on the weaker in that region. The real crisis in that part of the world therefore reflects the continuous struggle between the peoples in their effort to achieve self-determination, to consolidate their independence, and to defend the integrity of their territory, on the one hand and, on the other, reactionary forces which are insisting on perpetuating the relations of dependence which the United States has been accustomed to impose. Tension and crises are accordingly the unavoidable result of situations which are at variance with the independence of peoples and countries and their aspirations for liberation and self-determination. The policy of hegemony and domination in various economic and political fields where relationships are unequal is contrary to the basic principles underlying the modern international system, and to the logic of the history of human civilization.

The United Nations Secretary-General has mentioned, in some of his reports, the malady that prevails in Central America. In his latest report contained in document A/40/737 - Security Council document S/17549 - dated 9 October 1985, we are told that the roots of the crisis in Central America are to be found in iniquitous economic and political structures and internal policies.

The Secretary-General's report affirms that the crisis in Central America has become more complicated, contrary to what we had expected earlier. Despite the efforts made by the Contadora Group, the Secretary-General indicates that the situation steadily deteriorated during the year and draws attention to the growing number of incidents which have taken place between countries of the region, and which, besides hampering the action of the Contadora Group, have given rise to fears, at certain moments, that more serious violations of peace could occur.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

In this connection, the Secretary-General, as an illustration, notes the tension between Costa Rica and Nicaragua, on the one hand, and between Nicaragua and Honduras, on the other in spite of the fact that Security Council resolution 562 (1985) inter alia calls upon all States to refrain from carrying out any political, economic or military actions aimed against any State in the region which might impede the attainment of the peace objectives of the Contadora Group. That resolution was adopted as a result of an emergency meeting held by the Security Council in the wake of the arbitrary imposition by the United States of trade and other economic sanctions against Nicaragua, whereas the United States has been and still is against the imposition of sanctions against the racist colonialist régimes which are enslaving millions of our African brethren in southern Africa.

Referring to the deterioration of the situation and the increasing tension in Central America, the Secretary-General mentioned the suspension of bilateral negotiations between Nicaragua and the United States, which are required because of the responsibility incumbent on the United States and its role in that part of the world, and added that "as of now there is no sign of their being resumed". These developments strike serious blows against peace efforts in the area. The exacerbation of the crisis in Central America at the same time as the Contadora Group was making sincere efforts to put an end to it is the result of overt United States interference in the domestic affairs of Nicaragua. That interference began the very day that the Sandinista revolution succeeded in putting an end to the puppet Somoza régime. Ever since the popular revolution broke out and undertook reforms in all fields to put an end to what the Secretary-General called unjust economic structures, the United States decided to wage its covert and overt war with a view to toppling the régime there. Thus it created crises between Nicaragua and its neighbours and threatened to use force, which it actually did when it laid mines in the ports of that small country, in order to bring about its economic and

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

commercial suffocation. The whole world denounced this act. The United States also used force when it recruited mercenaries and supplied them with arms and funds with which to perpetrate large-scale acts of aggression inside Nicaragua. Washington has adopted the sabotage movement consisting of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) elements, which the President of the United States has called a "national liberation movement".

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

All mankind laughed at this mockery and nobody believed it.

Washington has allocated millions of dollars under the heading of "humanitarian aid" to finance this subversive war being waged against a peaceful people, thus inciting the mercenaries to destroy the social and economic structures of that developing country, which is threatened by invasion and aggression.

Washington has imposed starvation on that people and a heavy burden on the development efforts to which the Sandinist revolution aspires. The United States has encouraged its agents and puppets, notably Israel, to supply equipment and arms to the anti-revolutionary and other elements, thus helping Israel to dispose of its excess military production. It has equipped the saboteurs with arms tested on the bodies of children, women and old people in Lebanon and other parts of the world.

The sabotaging role of Israel in Central America is well known.

President Ortega declared on 8 August 1985, according to an Israeli broadcast:

(spoke in English)

"We must take into account that the Israeli Government was a major partner in the United States support for Somoza. I do not know to what extent the Israeli people supported its Government's policies, but the fact is that Israel supplied Somoza and continued to do so even after the United States itself stopped. Even after our revolutionary victory Israel did not learn its lesson and continued to support Governments which served United States interests in Central America. On this issue one only need mention Ariel Sharon's visit to Honduras in December 1982."

(continued in Arabic)

The United States supported the saboteurs when it made of terrorism a culture and a political and social system. The CIA has distributed the manual entitled Psychological Operations in Guerilla Warfare which is evil and indicative of blood

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

lust. It is but an encyclopaedia designed to teach murder, assassination and kidnapping and how to carry out assaults against individuals and institutions. It contains instructions on how to commit other crimes that violate international law, as well as the laws of the United States itself, particularly Executive Decision 12333, of 4 December 1981. The United States learnt a great deal from its war against Viet Nam. Thus, it was able to prepare a complete code of conduct for terrorism against States, and this has been distributed as an official document of the United Nations A/39/596-S/16789, dated 22 October 1984.

At the same time, Washington, which has appointed itself the trustee of peoples' interests, the preacher of democratic values, the defender of basic human liberties and rights, and the champion of the supremacy of law, refused to recognize the competence of the International Court of Justice and rejected voluntary acceptance of its obligation in this regard as soon as Nicaragua submitted its just case to the Court. The United States persists in rejecting the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, protesting that Nicaragua's complaint is political, although every international complaint involves political and legal factors. Washington has thus damaged the credibility of the oldest world court that mankind has known since the advent of the modern international system. Washington has not only sought to diminish the prestige and the attributes of the Court, to which countries attach great importance in settling their disputes by peaceful means, but has also launched and is pursuing a campaign against United Nations systems as a whole, with a view to silencing the voice of the peoples, although in every instance it raises its voice in condemnation of acts that violate the Charter and international ethical values.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

The International Court of Justice, however, rejected the United States objection to the judicial procedure and adopted provisional measures against the action and violations of that major Power. The first measure, which was adopted, unanimously reads:

"The United States of America should immediately cease and refrain from any action restricting, blocking or endangering access to or from Nicaraguan ports, and, in particular, the laying of mines." (S/16564, para. 41 B 1)

The second measure was a resolution adopted by a majority of 14 votes in favour to 1 against - that of the American member of the Court. It reads:

"The right to sovereignty and to political independence possessed by the Republic of Nicaragua, like any other State of the region or of the world, should be fully respected and should not in any way be jeopardized by any military and paramilitary activities which are prohibited by the principles of international law, in particular the principle that States should refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or the political independence of any State, and the principle concerning the duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of a State, principles embodied in the United Nations Charter and the Charter of the Organization of American States." (para. 41 B 2)

All signs indicate that the situation in Central America is deteriorating and that the danger of a general war exists. The United States hypocritically declares its support for the Contadora Group's course of action while covertly or overtly, using money and weapons, it is striving to destroy Nicaragua from the inside and preparing direct aggression against that independent country, which we respect for the efforts it has been exerting to overcome underdevelopment and get rid of world imperialism.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

Moreover, countries throughout the world stand in solidarity with the Nicaraguan people and denounce and condemn the aggression by a major Power, a permanent member of the Security Council, with a view to destroying the revolution of the Nicaraguan people, which is a revolution against backwardness, Samozism and all forms of hegemony. It is the revolution of a State which has opted for non-alignment in its foreign policy. Nicaragua has repeatedly and steadfastly declared its firm determination to bring peace to Central America. It has co-operated sincerely with the countries members of the Contadora Group and has welcomed the efforts of the Lima group of countries - Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay - in their effort to bring peace, coexistence and harmony to that part of the world.

We all heard the statement delivered by President Daniel Ortega at the General Assembly on 21 October, when he said:

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

"Nicaragua respects the principles of the Charter, and we wish to live in peace with all nations of the Earth, including the United States. Nothing in our revolutionary project is incompatible with normal and friendly relations with the United States.

"Nicaragua therefore appeals from this lofty rostrum to the Government of the United States truly to abide by the norms of peaceful coexistence among States enshrined in the Charter, to cease its policies of aggression against Nicaragua ..."
(A/40/PV.42, p. 9)

However, notwithstanding this sincere appeal, backed by action, the United States responded negatively not only in terms of President Reagan's speech during the commemorative week here at the United Nations, but also in terms of the 31 October statement of Mr. Fred Ikle, United States Under-Secretary of Defense for Policy, wherein he said that the United States Government might find itself obliged to use force in the near future to bring down the Nicaraguan régime.

As a member of the non-aligned group of countries, Syria is committed to the Luanda statement of the Ministerial Meeting of the non-aligned countries. It is a declaration which stresses solidarity with Nicaragua and the need to put an end to all threats and aggressions by the United States against it. It calls for an end to all financing of mercenaries as well as for the lifting of the United States economic sanctions against Nicaragua, deeming those to be acts which are designed to bring down the Nicaraguan Government, something which might lead to a heightened risk of a generalized war in that part of the world.

We are convinced that peace and security cannot come about so long as United States military action continues in Central America. We believe the crisis indeed has grown steadily worse, inasmuch as we know having learned recently that the United States will be furnishing sophisticated air weaponry to one of the countries

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

in that part of the world. That would disrupt the balance there and encourage large-scale aggression against Nicaragua.

Given these aggressive trends, it is incumbent upon the General Assembly, over and above the support to be given to the Contadora Group, to consider making Central America a denuclearized peaceful area free from foreign military presence in accordance with the revised Contadora Act of 7 August 1984.

My delegation fully backs the proposals contained in President Daniel Ortega Saavedra's letter dated 11 November 1985 addressed to the Presidents of the States members of the Contadora Group and of the Support Group. I should like to point out that we support those principles set forth on 11 November 1985 distributed in document A/40/894. We hope that the proposals contained in those documents will in fact be adopted since they would advance the efforts of the Contadora Group.

That document is the litmus test of the political will of the United States, which referred to the previous documents as no more than a dead letter. We stress the need to resume bilateral negotiations between the United States and Nicaragua because in the absence of negotiations the United States would not deviate from its aggressive aims.

We are convinced that all the peoples of the world will stand by the people and Government of Nicaragua, convinced that they are able to stand up to and defeat the forces of aggression, however powerful they may be.

Mr. WALTERS (United States of America): The United States is vitally interested in peace and stability in Central America. Central American countries are our neighbours. Central America is a critical testing ground for whether the future will belong to the advocates of peaceful change and democracy or to revolutionary violence and totalitarianism.

Earlier this year the people of El Salvador held elections for the fourth time in only three years. Just three weeks ago Guatemala voted in free and fair elections to determine which among fourteen competing political parties should govern that nation. The process will be completed in a run-off election next month. This Sunday the people of Honduras will exercise this same right of political self-determination. And early next year, the oldest democracy in Latin America, Costa Rica, will demonstrate its continuing commitment to democratic ideals and practices.

In contrast, Nicaragua on 15 October officially suspended the most basic civil liberties including freedom of expression, freedom of the press, the right of assembly, the right to trial, freedom from arbitrary imprisonment, the right to organize labour unions and to strike, and the right to habeas corpus. The subsequent reinstatement of the rights to trial and to habeas corpus did not alter the thrust of that action. Speaking before this Assembly, and in a 11 November statement in Managua as well, President Ortega sought to blame the imposition of that emergency upon my Government because we provided humanitarian aid to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. Few found this explanation convincing. These include the more than 120,000 Nicaraguans who have fled that régime to a safer place abroad.

This unhappy juxtaposition of trends tells much of the story of what has happened since this body last met to consider the situation in Central America. On the one hand, we see a continuing process of transition to and consolidation of

(Mr. Walters, United States)

democratic Government in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala as well as a proud democratic tradition in Costa Rica. On the other hand, we are witnessing a continuing process of transition to, and consolidation, of totalitarian Government in Nicaragua.

From the beginning, the Sandinistas wanted "a complete break" from the concept of Western democracy. They sought to stage elections to appeal to the Western democracies, to appear correlative and akin to democratic systems in countries whose original support for the revolution was waning. Yet the Sandinistas prevented the large majority of their opposition from actively participating in those elections. This was presaged on 25 August 1981 when Comandante Humberto Ortega, the Minister of Defence, said, "Marxism-Leninism is the scientific doctrine that guides our revolution". Marxism-Leninism does not envisage power-sharing with any other group anywhere.

The root source of the conflict in Nicaragua is the political repression of this would-be totalitarian régime, which desires to contaminate its neighbours. As Sandinista repression has grown and become institutionalized with the aid of totalitarian advisers, popular opposition of every kind has increased. That is what the conflict in Nicaragua is about. No amount of Sandinista talk about so-called counter-revolutionaries can obscure it.

(Mr. Walters, United States)

And yet hopes for peace die hard. The surest hope of peace in situations of conflict is to be found in dialogue. Dialogue means talks between Governments and the groups that oppose them, to establish conditions in which citizens determine their form of government, in an atmosphere free of coercion. That approach can work. The history of the past five years in the western hemisphere demonstrates that free elections are the only means by which those in power can achieve the moral authority and legitimacy to justify their rule. We are encouraged that more than 90 per cent of Latin America now lives and prospers under a democratic system of government.

The Sandinista Government of Nicaragua, however, approaches democratic national reconciliation with a most curious perspective, as though it were an outside conspiracy to undermine peace in the region. As Nicaraguan Foreign Minister D'Escoto told the press here in New York last month:

"The subject of reconciliation is a new element of obstruction introduced by the Reagan Administration..."

And according to Nicaragua's Vice-President Sergio Ramirez:

"We will never hold a dialogue with the counter-revolutionaries, because not even Contadora has proposed it."

Well, we have news for the Government of Nicaragua. National reconciliation through dialogue and elections is a fundamental principle of the Contadora process, and has been from the start. It was explicitly accepted by all five Central American States, including Nicaragua, in the September 1983 Document of Objectives. All three drafts of a Contadora agreement, including the draft which Nicaragua said it would accept - as long as no changes were made - contain a section entitled: "Commitments with regard to national reconciliation". Those

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commitments oblige States experiencing insurgencies to create mechanisms for dialogue with opposition groups. The drafts also provide that the commitments of the parties "are of a legal nature and are therefore binding". Let us recall that on 23 June 1979 the Organization of American States unanimously removed diplomatic recognition from the Somoza régime and conferred it on the Sandinistas and the genuine democrats. That diplomatic recognition was conditional on the implementation of democracy. The Sandinistas accepted that condition.

The Government of Nicaragua does not oppose national reconciliation in other countries. A year ago last month Daniel Ortega publicly stated:

"Another evidence [of the peoples' desire for peace] is the dialogue taking place in El Salvador. This dialogue was proposed many years ago by the Salvadoran revolutionaries and has been supported by the Nicaraguan Government."

However, when the Sandinistas are asked to accept dialogue in their own country, they reject it as a foreign conspiracy.

Let us recall that both the civil opposition and the democratic resistance have made concrete offers. On 22 February last, when Nicaragua was proclaiming its intention to hold a national dialogue, the civil opposition set forth the conditions under which such a national dialogue could be conducted. They included the lifting of the state of emergency, freedom of expression, a general amnesty and pardon for political crimes, restoration of constitutional guarantees and the right of habeas corpus, guarantees of the safety of members of the resistance movement who participated in the dialogue and the implementation of these measures under the supervision of guarantor Governments. Faced with this specific proposal, the Sandinistas' enthusiasm for national dialogue quickly waned. They said no more about it for months.

(Mr. Walters, United States)

On 1 March representatives of the Nicaraguan resistance proposed that the Catholic Church in Nicaragua mediate a national dialogue. This proposal contemplated a cease-fire. Although the resistance had been unable to participate in the elections of November 1984, the proposal accepted Daniel Ortega as President until such time as the Nicaraguan people decided to confirm or deny his authority through a plebiscite. The other major element of the proposal was to confer authority on the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference to establish a definitive agenda for talks, through mutual agreement by the parties concerned. On 22 March the Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference reiterated its previously expressed support for a national dialogue, and declared its willingness to act as mediator. The Sandinistas immediately rejected that offer. No counter-offer was made. They have repeatedly rejected dialogue since then.

On 4 April my own Government undertook an initiative to keep the possibility of dialogue alive. A key feature was the offer to refrain from providing military assistance to the democratic resistance if the Sandinistas accepted the 1 March offer. Over the course of the summer and fall the United States further sought to encourage national reconciliation by affirming our willingness to resume bilateral talks with the Sandinistas if and when they undertook an internal dialogue.

On 29 October, in Washington, United States Ambassador-at-Large and Special Envoy to Latin America, Harry Shlaudeman, again reiterated to the Nicaraguan Ambassador to the United States, Carlos Tunnermann, that we would resume bilateral talks if the Sandinistas accepted the 1 March offer of the Nicaraguan resistance. Incidentally, that offer, which was signed in San Jose, Costa Rica, did not contain as a pre-condition the dissolution of the National Assembly, as the Sandinistas had suggested. Ambassador Shlaudeman made clear that progress in the internal dialogue would lead to progress on bilateral issues. Ambassador Tunnermann responded on 31 October that the March offer was totally unacceptable.

(Mr. Walters, United States)

We often hear in this forum criticism that military solutions are being sought for social, economic and political problems. The record shows, however, that the United States has consistently backed economic and political reform in Central America. For example, our economic aid to the region for 1985 was \$976 million. In contrast, security assistance was only \$212 million. In other words, the United States spends four times as much on economic and social assistance to the Central American region as it does on military assistance.

Secretary Shultz has said:

"Our strategy proceeds from an analysis that recognizes, in fact emphasizes, that there are legitimate social, economic and political grievances in many parts of the region ... our conclusion is that we face two related challenges: to help alleviate long-standing political, economic and social problems and to help counter a communist strategy which seeks to aggravate and exploit these problems and so seize power by force of arms."

President Reagan has said:

"In response to decades of inequity and indifference, we will support democracy, reform and human freedom ... In response to the challenge of world recession and, in the case of El Salvador, to the unrelenting campaign of economic sabotage by the guerrillas, we will support economic development ... In response to the military challenge from Cuba and Nicaragua - to their deliberate use of force to spread tyranny - we will support the security of the region's threatened nations ... we will support dialogue and negotiations - both among the countries of the region and within each country."

(Mr. Walters, United States)

Let me underscore President Reagan's point. While the United States is actively promoting the economic development of Central America by its assistance and policies, other forces are attempting to destroy the economic base essential for development and progress. For example, on 8 July, the International Herald Tribune reported that the senior military commander of the Salvadoran guerrillas, Mr. Joaquin Villalobos - and I quote here from the article -

"outlined what he said was the new guerrilla strategy of a war of attrition ... a campaign of sabotage, assassination and ambushes, backed by the increased use of mines and booby traps. The strategy, Mr. Villalobos said, is to ... bleed the economy to the point of collapse ..."

(Mr. Walters, United States)

Often overlooked in the debate over United States policy towards Nicaragua is one fundamentally important fact. The Sandinistas began to intervene in El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica within a year of seizing power in July 1979, and they have actively continued that aggression ever since. At the same time, Nicaragua tries to sustain its carefully fostered image as an innocent and aggrieved victim of unprovoked aggression, by denying that it has ever engaged in armed subversion within neighbouring countries. The facts, however, show Nicaragua's solemn denials to be untrue.

By the same token, the Sandinistas charge that the defensive reactions of the United States, including support for the democratic resistance, constitute aggression against Nicaragua. This charge, of course, stands the facts on their head. It is Nicaragua, and not the United States and its friends, that committed the aggression leading directly to the reactions about which the Sandinistas now complain.

We often hear that the East-West conflict has produced the Central American crisis. But let us face facts: the actions of the Sandinistas bear the responsibility for the crisis.

The Sandinistas have supported insurgent forces tied to Cuba and the Soviet Union. The Sandinistas are today host to some 8,000 Soviet-bloc and Cuban personnel, including about 3,500 security and military personnel. The Sandinistas, with Soviet and Cuban support, have built the most powerful military forces in the region.

The Soviets and their allies have been shipping weapons to Nicaragua since the early days of the Sandinista Government. We estimate that Soviet-bloc arms shipments to the Sandinista Government have totalled more than \$500 million. These shipments have included some 340 tanks and armoured vehicles, 70 long-range

(Mr. Walters, United States)

howitzers and rocket launchers, and 30 helicopters, including half a dozen fast, heavily armed attack helicopters. This flow continues. Even now an increase in arms shipments to the Nicaraguan Government is apparently under way.

The first Soviet-made armour arrived in Nicaragua in 1981, shortly after the 200,000-man militia build-up was announced, but about a year before the development of significant internal Sandinista opposition. The mainstays of this armoured force are some 110 Soviet-made T-55 medium tanks. None of Nicaragua's neighbours has tanks with the T-55's firepower. The Sandinistas have also received in the past year alone nearly 30 PT-76 light tanks. The river-crossing capabilities of these tanks vastly enhance their usefulness and tend to inhibit internal dissent.

Is it merely coincidental that new arms shipments are increasing just as the Sandinista Government launches its latest campaign to intimidate its citizens and crush all opposition? One does not have to be a sophisticated political observer to realize how the presence of tanks inhibits popular dissent. Why are those tanks there? They represent the peculiar contribution to humanity by the totalitarian political régimes of the world.

I hope the General Assembly will support the continuation of the Contadora process for a peaceful settlement of the regional crisis. The Contadora mediation effort, in our view, offers the best hope to achieve peace in Central America. We will continue to give it our full support. As President Reagan has said, we wish to bring about "the simultaneous implementation of all Contadora objectives with effective verification".

The Contadora process has encountered serious obstacles in the last year. Why? First, Nicaragua's violation of the right of asylum earlier this year created a dispute with Costa Rica that prevented meetings from being held. In June, just as the Contadora meeting convened, Nicaragua's insistence on a radical change in

(Mr. Walters, United States)

the agenda caused negotiations to be suspended for four months. Concern within the Latin American community that this action had put Contadora in jeopardy led to the creation in July of a support group made up of Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay. My Government welcomed the formation of that group and believes it has been and can continue to be a helpful influence.

In September, in response to proposals put forward jointly by Costa Rica, Honduras and El Salvador, the countries participating in the Contadora process agreed to reconvene negotiations in an effort to reach final agreement. Less than a week after talks resumed, however, the Sandinista Government suspended civil liberties. It had been agreed in September that incidents in the region would neither condition participation in nor be subjects of discussion within Contadora. The democratic Central American States, true to their pledge, have not raised Nicaragua's suspension of civil liberties in Contadora councils. Yet can anyone pretend that the suspension of civil liberties in Nicaragua is not an obstacle to a Contadora agreement? When President Ortega says, as he did on 11 November that Nicaragua accepts draft treaty language on national reconciliation but rejects dialogue with the democratic resistance, how can we conclude that the Sandinistas are serious in their approach to the negotiations?

The Sandinistas have demanded that the internal insurgency in Nicaragua must be ended as a pre-condition to a Contadora agreement. Their allegation is that they cannot accept the obligations of such an agreement when they face so-called outside aggression. They ignore the reality that any Contadora treaty would entail no more than an agreement to negotiate arms and troop reductions. Their demand is thus exposed as a subterfuge obscuring the Sandinistas' refusal to take the one step that might lead to an end to the insurgency. That step is, of course, to participate in internal dialogue.

(Mr. Walters, United States)

My Government has made clear repeatedly, in public and in private, that we will abide by any agreement the Central Americans reach. In the light of this position, the Sandinista demand that agreement with the United States must precede a Contadora agreement can only be seen as an effort to thwart the Contadora process and waste nearly three years of effort. The Sandinista demand is an attempt to portray the complex issue of peace in Central America as merely a dispute with the United States. In reality, what is occurring in Central America is a conflict between the Sandinistas and their neighbours as well as repression by the Sandinistas of their fellow Nicaraguans.

On a somewhat more optimistic note, I should like to record my Government's satisfaction that in Luxembourg on 12 November the European Economic Community and the Central American States concluded an economic assistance agreement. My Government has long favoured increased economic assistance to the Central American region. We ourselves are providing additional funds to Central American regional institutions, such as the Central American Bank for Economic Integration. I should also like to note that, with respect to Nicaragua, every proposal that the United States has made during the last four years has included a strong economic component. Most recently, the President's Initiative on Regional Conflicts, presented to this body on 24 October, contemplates substantial economic assistance once progress is made towards resolution of internal conflicts in Nicaragua.

I should also like to note our satisfaction at the political communiqué issued in Luxembourg. That communiqué, in which Nicaragua joined, endorsed the Contadora process and expressed hope for a speedy and successful conclusion of negotiations. It called for full respect for civil liberties, for national reconciliation, and for democratic pluralist political and social systems. The resolution this body will seek to adopt should do no less. Let us hope that this commitment will be fulfilled.

(Mr. Walters, United States)

At the conclusion of this debate on Central America, I hope that the General Assembly will support the continuation of the Contadora process. Once again, we remain firm in our conviction that the Contadora process represents both the proper forum and the best hope to achieve peace in Central America.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In conformity with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX), adopted on 20 November 1974, I now call on the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): In observing the fortieth anniversary of this Organization, it is imperative that we recall here and remember the purposes of the United Nations. Very often we hear statements drawing attention to various paragraphs and articles of the Charter. More often than not Article 1 is left in oblivion and yet more often the Preamble is totally disregarded. Let us consider how it starts. It begins with a statement that arose from the hearts and consciousness of the founding fathers, those who paid with their blood to defeat the Nazis and attempted to bring us peace:

"We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war"

and so on; it also expresses our determination

"to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom; and for these ends" the peoples determined "to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples".

Nowhere in the Holy Scripture of the sacred Charter is the perpetuation of banana republics envisaged. What is to be saved are the peoples, the human beings, their dignity and their freedom, and the collective endeavours to improve the standard of life.

Central America is no longer the backyard of the United Fruit Company. Central America is a territory where human beings exist, live with aspirations and hopes for improving their lot. Unfortunately, it is the existence of people, of human beings, whom the Administration in Washington, D.C. insists on forgetting or ignoring. The "Macho" in the White House cannot and should not be permitted to manipulate the mode of life and behaviour of the peoples of Central America or, for that matter, of any other place in the world.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Forty years ago, the Charter proclaimed as one of its purposes:

"To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace."

Yet Washington, D.C. still insists on denying some people, including the Palestinian people, their right to self-determination. By its deeds, Washington, D.C. has launched an abominable crusade, through a policy of gunboat diplomacy and mercenaries, and it is the duty of this Organization to act immediately and take effective collective measures to suppress the acts of aggression committed by Washington, D.C. against a Central American State Member of this Organization, namely, Nicaragua.

It is the Nicaraguan people who brought the Sandinistas to power and entrusted the defence of their freedom and the social and economic development of the Nicaraguan people to the Sandinistas. Naturally some circles - transnational and others - have decided to arrogate to themselves supra-national powers to deprive the Nicaraguan people of their inalienable right to self-determination.

Article 2 of the Charter tells us that:

"All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state".

But does not United States financial, overt action and its millions of dollars constitute interference and intervention in the relations between the two nations, Nicaragua and the United States of America?

Honouring its commitment to the Charter, in particular under Chapter VI, Nicaragua has brought the dispute with the United States before the United Nations Security Council as well as the International Court of Justice.

(Mr. Terzi, PIO)

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Nicaragua informed us this morning of all the peaceful processes for a pacific settlement of the dispute with the United States. She expressed a sincere desire to participate in the quest for a prompt solution of the problems which are confronted by the peoples of Central America and which endanger world peace. On the other hand, we know that the United States is adamant and, as we have just heard, insists on the application of its own concept and manifestation of Western democracy, without regard to the free will of the peoples most directly concerned, that is, the Nicaraguan people itself.

The other day, the United States Assistant Secretary of Defence, Fred C. Ikle, openly declared:

"If democratic forces are not aided now, a future Administration may have to use force directly."

Since when did the divine power entrust the Washington Administration with the task of defending Western democracy? Apparently in the Administration in Washington, D.C. it is the Defence Department that decides what is democracy and what are democratic forces. That fact in itself is revealing.

The Contras, like their counterparts, the Judeo-Nazis in occupied Palestine, depend exclusively on the material support they receive from the authorities in Washington, D.C. In addition to moral and diplomatic support, the Contras receive aircraft, helicopters and heavy-duty vehicles for their insurgent and anti-Nicaraguan activities. If Washington, D.C. had really been intent on helping the development and improving the standards of life of the Nicaraguan people, could it not have offered tractors and expertise? It could have lifted the economic embargo to help the economy and not to strangle the country by a blockade.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Hundreds of thousands of Nicaraguans are the victims of the direct overt and covert intervention of the United States. The dead, the injured and the homeless appeal to this Assembly to put an end to their plight and to help them to live in peace in their own country.

The general tone of and hope expressed in these deliberations here fully support the endeavours and good offices of the Contadora Group and the Support Group.

As we learned this morning, Nicaragua welcomes the enormous efforts of the Contadora Group in its noble and important task. We were told that:

"This unprecedented Latin American peace initiative has [enjoyed] the enthusiastic support of the international community". (A/40/PV.88, p. 8).

The question is whether Washington will respond in concrete terms, or whether it will maintain its lip-service and rhetorical support, yet maintain its subversion, intervention and contempt?

A political solution is possible through dialogue and negotiation between the parties directly concerned without foreign bayonets or gunboats. It is the will of the Nicaraguan people that the world must recognize and respect, and the Nicaraguan people want to live and prosper in peace and tranquility. After years of deprivation, exploitation and denial of human, social and economic rights, the peoples of Central America deserve our attention, and effective steps should be taken by this Organization and its Members.

The Nicaraguan people sees a hope of developing into free human beings and recognizes that the Sandinistas are worthy of their confidence, so let us give them a chance. It is not an easy task that is being shouldered by the Sandinistas; we admire their courage.

The meeting rose at 7 p.m.