



OAS Secretary General Presents Recommendations following Visit to Costa Rica and Nicaragua

November 9, 2010

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, today presented before the Permanent Council of the Organization his report on the visit he conducted to Costa Rica and Nicaragua between Friday the 5th and Monday the 8th of November as a result of the situation arisen between the two countries in the border region of the San Juan River.

The report includes four recommendations on possible points of agreement between the two parties: to hold a meeting of the Binational Committee foreseen for November 27; to immediately renew conversations on the demarcation of the border line; to avoid the presence of the armed or security forces in the area; and to instruct the pertinent authorities to review the mechanisms of bilateral cooperation to combat drug trafficking, organized crime and arms trafficking in the border area.

The Secretary General asserted that “with such a commitment, the expressed will to address whatever differences exist between the sister countries in a peaceful way will be reaffirmed, and a broad space for understanding and agreement to their mutual benefit will be strengthened.”

The head of the OAS said that during his visit, which included meetings with Presidents Laura Chinchilla, of Costa Rica, and Daniel Ortega, of Nicaragua, their respective Foreign Ministers, René Castro and Samuel Santos, and other authorities, as well as flights over the zone involved on both sides of the border, he found “the existence of potential points for understanding.”

In this sense, Secretary General Insulza emphasized that “there is no wish for the disagreement to escalate to a level of confrontation,” that the two countries recognized “that the Binational Committee is the appropriate institutional space to address issues of mutual interest,” and that “Costa Rica said it shares the interest of Nicaragua to safeguard the border zone against drug and arms trafficking as well as to combat organized crime in the area.”

Following the Secretary General’s presentation, the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the OAS, José Enrique Castillo, took the floor and said that to his Government the situation “is not about a border dispute,” and reiterated the request for Nicaragua to remove the troops from the zone in question. Ambassador Castillo reiterated his Government’s wish to reach a “good will” agreement and his willingness to “reestablish binational trust and dialogue.”

Afterwards, the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua, Denis Moncada, said his country “has not violated nor does it intend to violate the sovereignty of the neighboring country of Costa Rica.” He added that “Nicaragua insists and reiterates its disposition towards dialogue, and the peaceful solution of disputes as well as the need for cooperation between countries against drug trafficking and organized crime.”

At the suggestion of the Chair of the Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the OAS, Joaquín Maza, it was decided to continue the session on Thursday at 16:00 EST (21:00 GMT) to “concede space for the parties to specifically address the proposals of the Secretary General” and so that “the Member States may contribute with conciliatory



measures and we may also broaden the proposals presented by the Secretary General.”

During the meeting, the following Permanent Representatives also took the floor: Panama, Mexico, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru, Guatemala, Colombia, Guyana (on behalf of CARICOM), Canada, Chile, Ecuador, the United States, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. All of the Permanent Representatives agreed on thanking the Secretary General for the efforts carried out during his recent visit to Costa Rica and Nicaragua and for the presentation of the report.

Today’s meeting of the Permanent Council was the continuation of the Special Session convened at the request of Costa Rica to consider the situation with the Republic of Nicaragua in the border zone of the San Juan River. The session began on Wednesday, was reopened on Thursday, continued today and is expected to be renewed on Thursday, November 11.

