

COMMUNIQUE

(NOTE: Unofficial translation) San Salvador, El Salvador, February 7, 2000

The Ministers of Foreign Relations of the Republics of Honduras and Nicaragua, in following up on their meetings in Miami and Washington, met in the city of San Salvador on February 6 and 7, 2000, along with the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), and agreed to communicate the following:

With the purpose of preventing actions that could affect regional peace and good neighborly relations and promoting Central American integration, the Ministers have agreed to establish the following system of confidence-building and tension-reducing measures in the Caribbean Sea, which will be in effect while the International Court of Justice determines the maritime boundary between Honduras and Nicaragua in the Caribbean Sea.

Honduras and Nicaragua will not maintain any military or police posts in the Caribbean Sea other than those in existence before September 1, 1999.

Thus both parties commit to restoring within a period of 30 days, their respective positions in effect before the indicated date.

Honduras and Nicaragua will refrain from carrying out any military or police action in the Caribbean Sea that could provoke incidents or serve as an obstacle to resolving any controversy by peaceful means.

The parties agree to the establishment of a combined Honduran-Nicaraguan patrol mechanism, with the possibility of inviting representatives of another member or observer State of the Organization of American States, subject to agreement between the parties and in compliance with the laws of both countries.

At the request of either one or both parties, the combined patrol mechanism will participate in the following tasks:

- Prevention of incidents between naval craft of Honduras and Nicaragua.
- Verification of any possible military presence that would violate this agreement.
- Drug-interdiction operations.
- Control of piracy against fishermen of both countries.
- Rescue operations.

The remaining details of how the joint patrol mechanism will function will be agreed a technical level within 45 days from the present date, and will be put in effect within 15 days after that agreement.

The Ministers agreed that, in cases of doubt or discrepancy relating to the interpretation and application of this agreement, the parties will find a friendly solution, using the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

The parties agree that nothing stipulated in this document, or resulting from its implementation, will prejudice the positions and rights maintained by each



state, nor will it create rights, nor will it constitute a precedent that will grant rights to either State.

The Foreign Ministers reaffirm the will of their respective countries to resolve their differences peacefully and to faithfully comply with the judgment that the International Court of Justice will make in determining the maritime boundaries between Honduras and Nicaragua in the Caribbean Sea.

The Ministers expressed their conviction that the content of this communiqué contributes to the peace and to reducing tensions, and reaffirm the integrationist spirit of both countries.

Roberto Flores Bermúdez Foreign Minister of Honduras

Eduardo Montealegre Rivas Foreign Minister of Nicaragua

Luigi R. Einaudi Special Representative of the Organization of American States

February 7, 2000

