11-21-1986

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U.S. Presidential Envoy To Central America Begins Regional Tour In Costa Rica

by Deborah Tyrolo

Category/Department: General
Published: Friday, November 21, 1986

A two-meeting Nov. 20 with Costa Rican President Oscar Arias marked the first leg of a regional tour by US presidential envoy to Central America, Philip Habib. Local newspapers reported that major topics during the meeting were aspects of the regional crisis and Costa Rican president's upcoming visit in the United States. A meeting between Arias and President Reagan is scheduled for Dec. 4. In remarks to reporters after the encounter, Arias said he told Habib there would be no peace in Central America as long as "democracy" does not exist. This statement was interpreted as an allusion to Nicaragua, target of several verbal attacks in the past few days. Arias added that he intends to speak with Reagan about Costa Rican economic problems, including negotiations on the country's over $4 billion foreign debt.

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