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Deborah Tyroler

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Latin American Political Party Leaders Agree To Facilitate Cenam Peace Negotiations, Speak To U.S. Public

by Deborah Tyroler

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Participants at the conclusion of a three-day meeting of the Conference of Latin American and Caribbean Political Parties (COPPAL) Dec. 14 in Panama City, issued a declaration stating plans to facilitate peace negotiations in Central America, and positions on the foreign debt. COPPAL will send a commission to Honduras and Nicaragua in an attempt to "create conditions for dialogue...and peace between the two nations." Following these visits in Central America, the commission plans to travel to the United States with the aim of "mobilizing US public opinion" on the Central America issue. The COPPAL declaration also stated that the region's foreign debt is unpayable. Delegates agreed to organize a seminar on the Latin American foreign debt in the near future. The declaration said the foreign debt problem is an irrevocably political and economic issue, and that conditions imposed by creditor banks and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have rendered the debt unpayable. According to COPPAL, the following developments are considered the most serious obstacles to peace and prosperity in the region: US aggression against Nicaragua; British claims to the Malvinas (Falklands) islands off the Argentine coast; US violations of the Torrijos-Carter Canal treaties; foreign intervention in El Salvador, and the economic blockade against Cuba. Conference participants expressed agreement that negotiations sponsored by Contadora and its Support Group continue being the only valid alternative to settle the Central American conflict. They also called on Central American governments to take further steps toward overcoming disagreements so that the peace treaty can be signed and implemented. COPPAL will meet again in February 1987 in Lima, Peru. (PRENSA LATINA, 12/16/86)

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