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After Some Confusion, Central American Summit Set For Feb. 8-9

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According to a Jan. 18 announcement by Costa Rican Foreign Minister Rodrigo Madrigal, Central American governments have agreed on Feb. 19-20 as the dates for a summit meeting. Then, on Jan. 19, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto said the summit would take place on Feb. 8-9. After the Costa Rican minister's announcement, Honduran President Jose Azcona Hoyò quickly announced that he had plans to leave Feb. 17 for trips to the US and Japan and asked that the summit be held before his departure. Hours later the Nicaraguan minister announced the meeting would be held Feb. 8-9, a date he said was suggested by Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo. In a statement on Jan. 19, Azcona said it was up to Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte, as host of the summit, to announce the date. D'Escoto, in a later statement, reiterated that the summit would occur on Feb. 8-9, and called on his counterparts in Central America to attend a preparatory meeting in Managua Feb. 6-7. There was no immediate response from the other Central American capitals. The summit, originally to be held in mid-January in San Salvador, was postponed at the last minute at the request of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, author of the 1987 peace plan. He suggested the meeting should be held following the Jan. 20 inauguration of George Bush, and the Feb. 2 inauguration of Venezuelan President-elect Carlos Andres Perez. On Jan. 20, Costa Rican President Arias confirmed that the summit had been set for Feb. 8-9. (Basic data from AFP, 01/18/89, 01/19/89; Xinhua, 01/20/89)

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