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## Nicaragua Presents Anti-drug Trafficking Plan

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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On March 30 in San Jose, Costa Rica, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto presented a plan to fight drug trafficking to his counterparts from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Costa Rica. According to the Nicaraguan initiative, each Central American nation would establish centralized drug enforcement authorities and appoint special attaches responsible only for drug-related issues in each country's diplomatic missions in the region. The five nations would then coordinate those efforts at monthly regional meetings. Representatives from the US State Department and Drug Enforcement Administration would regularly be invited to these meetings. It was also suggested that the US be invited to host an annual meeting of the Central American drug enforcement agencies. Regional leaders would be encouraged to cooperate with and help expand the efforts of the USDEA in the area. The plan was drafted under the terms of a regional peace accord signed Feb. 14 in El Salvador. On March 29, the Nicaraguan government announced the detention of two pilots aboard a small plane forced to land in northern Nicaragua. Officials said they believe it was a drug-related flight. According to official statements, the Aerocommander craft requested permission for an emergency landing on the morning of March 25 at Puerto Cabezas after suffering a damaged fuel tank. The two men aboard, who identified themselves as Arthur Burton, a 37-year-old US citizen, and Abimael Castillo Canur, a 38-year-old resident of Belize, were carrying no identification or flight plan. Nicaraguan officials said they had requested assistance from the US and Belize in investigating the incident. (Basic data from New York Times, 03/31/89)

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