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Honduras Demands Nicaraguan Withdrawal Of Suit Before Arrival Of U.N. Monitoring Team & Contra Demobilization

by Deborah Tyroler

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In a May 23 statement, Honduran President Jose Azcona said his government will not permit the presence of a regional peace treaty verification and monitoring team organized by the United Nations at the country's borders until Nicaragua withdraws a World Court suit against Honduras. The suit, filed in 1986, charges Honduras with permitting foreign troops to use Honduran territory for their base camps to launch aggression against Nicaragua. Azcona said withdrawal of the suit is also necessary toward proceeding with the contra demobilization and relocation plan. In response to statements by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, who accused Honduras of obstructing the activities of the observer force, President Azcona placed the blame on the Nicaraguan government. He said, "We have contributed to making the `contra' a passive element, and Nicaragua should be thankful," he said. [At a May 19 press conference, Nicaraguan Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Leon Talavera reiterated denials of hostile actions against Honduras in the border area. He said his government was anxious for the rapid installation of the international verification commissions to provide proof of the "real situation" at the Honduran-Nicaraguan border. Talavera added that Managua does not understand the Honduran government's reluctance to permit the UN-sponsored observer team to begin its activities.] (Basic data from Notimex, 05/19/89, 05/23/89)

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