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U.N. Preparing For Observation Of Nicaraguan Electoral Process

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On June 29, UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar's assistant, Alvaro de Soto, told Notimex that the UN is studying "points of reference" toward participating in observation of the Nicaraguan electoral process. He said that in the first half of July UN officials will travel to Nicaragua. At present, he added, Nicaraguan officials, including Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto, are discussing arrangements with UN representatives. An unidentified Nicaraguan diplomat told Notimex that UN observers are to participate in a joint effort with the Organization of American States (OAS). The joint OAS-UN teams, he said, will be incorporated into the next phase of the electoral process, scheduled to begin Aug. 25. According to the diplomat, Iqbal Riza, a high-level UN official, has visited Nicaragua to organize logistical and related matters for the observer teams. Next, the Nicaraguan diplomat emphasized that the presence of organizations such as the UN and the OAS is crucial for Managua during the entire electoral process culminating in the February 1990 general elections. He said, "We do not want to find ourselves on election day with only partisan evaluations. We know the US will try to achieve by means of the vote that which it could not realize war-making: depose the Nicaraguan government." Consequently, said the diplomat, it is important that prestigious international organizations observe how the democratic process develops step by step to determine whether all parties have equal opportunities to spread their messages and attract voters. Finally, the diplomat emphasized that Nicaragua does not support the establishment of a norm under which foreign representatives observe elections held by sovereign nations. Under present circumstances, he said, Nicaragua considers such observation useful, and therefore extended invitations to a variety of organizations and foreign governments to observe the electoral process "as a sovereign act." (Basic data from Notimex, 06/29/89)

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