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Group Of 8 Foreign Ministers Meet: Summary
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On July 29-30, Group of 8 (Rio Group) foreign ministers met privately in Cartagena, Colombia. Member nations are Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. Panamanian participation was suspended following the ouster of President Eric Arturo Delvalle in February 1988. Ministers in attendance were Guillermo Larco (Peru), Domingo Carvallo (Argentina), Luis Barrios (Uruguay), Roberto de Abreu Sodre (Brazil), Julio Londono (Colombia), Enrique Tejera (Venezuela), and Fernando Solana (Mexico). July 27: Notimex reported that unidentified diplomatic sources said that on request by the Colombian government, the ministers' agenda included the replacement of Panama in the Group of 8 by Ecuador. Diplomats from Ecuador and member nations agreed that such a replacement at this time would not be approved. Although the government in Quito is reportedly interested in joining the Rio Group, it would prefer to do so under different circumstances. July 28: Colombian Minister Londono declined comment on whether the Panamanian political situation is included on the meeting agenda. The ministers' major task at the meeting, he said, was preparation of the agenda for the Group of 8 summit scheduled for October in Lima, Peru. July 29: Aides to the ministers told reporters that they had agreed to strengthen communications and transportation infrastructure in the region as a means to advance Latin American integration. Respective ministers of member nations are to meet in Mexico to organize collaboration in both areas. July 30: On Sunday evening, the Rio Group ministers announced that they had concluded discussions on measures to curb trafficking, the foreign debt, regional cooperation and economic integration. In a joint statement, the ministers reiterated the need for a return to democracy in Panama and the retirement of Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, and voiced approval of a recent declaration by the Organization of American States on Latin American economic integration. Mexican Minister Solana Morales announced that the meeting of transportation and communication ministers would take place in late August. (Basic data from several reports by Notimex, 07/27-31/89; Xinhua, 07/31/89)

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