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On Sept. 16 in Tegucigalpa, contra military leader Enrique Bermudez said the Dec. 8 deadline for contra demobilization set by the five Central American presidents in early August should be postponed, given the tremendous difficulty of the task at hand. He added that a postponement would be relatively easy to arrange, given a "positive attitude" on the part of the Nicaraguan government. Bermudez and Aristides Sanchez, members of the Nicaraguan Resistance directorate, met for three hours with Hugo de Zela and Francesca Vendrell, representatives of the International Support and Verification Commission (CIAV), created by the United Nations and Organization of American States secretaries general to provide assistance in the demobilization, repatriation and relocation of the contras and their families in Honduras. Zela said the CIAV would reconvene with contra leaders in October. Regarding the Dec. 8 deadline, he said the CIAV is acting with the intent of following the calendar established at the Tela summit in August, but that should "circumstances" arise to change the deadline(s), "there must be flexibility on all sides." On Sept. 19, Honduran President Jose Azcona Hoyo said his government is willing to participate in demobilizing the Nicaraguan contras. However, he said, there must be incentives for the contra fighters to repatriate, such as fair elections. Meanwhile, Honduran union leaders have made public statements asserting that if the contras refuse to leave Honduras, immigration laws could be applied to deport them. Moreover, some have said that the workers have their own plans to "defend the country's sovereignty" should the contras refuse to respect the Tela summit accords. (Basic data from Notimex, 09/16/89; Xinhua, 09/19/89)

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