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Deborah Tyroler

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Resolution Approved By U.S. House & Senate In Response To Nicaraguan Suspension Of Unilateral Cease-fire

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Oct. 31, the Senate voted 95-0 to condemn Nicaragua for suspending the unilateral cease-fire with the contras. The House Representatives passed a similar resolution on Nov. 2 by a vote of 379-29. The resolution is reproduced below. [From 11/04/89 report by Nicaragua Network, Washington, DC.] Whereas a cease-fire has been in effect in Nicaragua for 18 months. Whereas although there have been periodic violent incidents, and accusations of violations of the cease-fire by each side against the other, there has been no major, widespread breakdown in the cease-fire to date. Whereas US policy has been to discourage the contras from undertaking any offensive military actions, and we have withheld American aid from Contra units which have initiated such actions. Whereas on October 28 Daniel Ortega announced the Sandinista regime's intention to unilaterally end the cease-fire. Whereas Ortega's announcement was made at a hemispheric meeting held in Costa Rica to celebrate democracy in the region another instance in which Ortega and other Sandinista leaders have shown disregard for their democratic neighbors and their own commitments. Whereas many of the democratic leaders of the hemisphere, including Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, have already denounced Ortega's announcement. Whereas many observers are concerned that Ortega's announcement could be the prelude to a Sandinista effort to cancel or postpone election scheduled to be held in February 1990. Whereas despite incidents of Sandinista intimidation and harassment, and the fact that the voter registration period was limited to four Sundays in October, nearly two million Nicaraguans registered to vote in the February 1990 elections. Whereas in the Bipartisan Accord on Nicaragua and Public Law 101-14, the Congress indicated its intention to provide humanitarian assistance to the Contras until after the February 1990 elections: Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the Congress: 1. Condemns Daniel Ortega's announced intention to abrogate the cease-fire they originally declared in Nicaragua as totally unjustified, a major breach of the Sandinista regime's commitments to its democratic neighbors and its own people, and a serious threat to regional peace and stability; 2. Calls on Daniel Ortega to cease his reckless rhetoric, and to begin to fulfill the many commitments he and his regime have made to end their aggression in the region, end their tyranny over their own people, and permit the establishment of democracy inside Nicaragua; 3. Urges the Sandinistas to renew their commitment to continuing the cease-fire inside Nicaragua; 4. Insists that Ortega and the Sandinistas reaffirm their pledge to hold elections on February 25, 1990, and to begin to carry out in good faith their commitment to a free and fair electoral process leading up to those elections; 5. Deplores any effort by the Sandinista regime to terminate, postpone or curtail the limited progress they have made to date in fulfilling their commitment to the free and fair electoral process, or to impose emergency laws, under the phony pretext of a major Contra initiated breakdown of the cease-fire; 6. Strongly urges the extension of the period during which Nicaraguans are permitted to register to vote for at least 60 days; 7. Reaffirms its intention to abide by the provisions of the Bipartisan Accord on Nicaragua and Public Law 101.14 to include continuing to provide humanitarian assistance to the contras until February 28, 1990,

and; 8. Reminds Ortega, the Sandinista regime, and the other leaders of the hemisphere that US policy articulated in the Bipartisan Accord on Nicaragua and Public Law 101-14 is contingent on the Sandinistas fulfilling the commitments they have undertaken as part of the Central American peace process.

-- End --