

11-29-1989

# El Salvador Suspends Diplomatic Relations With Nicaragua; Venue, Date Of Central American Summit Changed

Deborah Tyroler

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen>

---

## Recommended Citation

Tyroler, Deborah. "El Salvador Suspends Diplomatic Relations With Nicaragua; Venue, Date Of Central American Summit Changed." (1989). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen/3573>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiCen by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [amywinter@unm.edu](mailto:amywinter@unm.edu).

## **El Salvador Suspends Diplomatic Relations With Nicaragua; Venue, Date Of Central American Summit Changed**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

*Category/Department: General*

*Published: Wednesday, November 29, 1989*

On Nov. 26, Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani broke off diplomatic and trade relations with Nicaragua. In a radio and television address, he said he had taken this decision because the Nicaraguan government was supplying weapons to the guerrillas, and that he would denounce Managua's interference in El Salvador's internal affairs before the United Nations and the Organization of American States. Cristiani told a news conference relations will remain suspended until Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega "stops intervening in El Salvador" or loses in the Feb. 25 national elections. Missiles and other weapons taken from the wreckage of the plane that crashed were displayed at the news conference. (See article above on plane and contents.) Cristiani said he would not attend a Central American summit scheduled for Dec. 8-9 in Managua, adding that he would demand a change in venue. The major agenda item was to be the demobilization and relocation of the contra army. In Managua, President Ortega said it gives "honor and price" to the Nicaraguan people that the government "of assassins of priests and religious workers" in El Salvador broke relations with his country. "We will demand that the international community and the peoples of the world break relations with this bloody and murderous government until they have punished the assassins of the priests and people of El Salvador," he added. On Sunday evening, in a statement Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto urged the Salvadoran government to reconsider suspension of diplomatic relations with Nicaragua. The statement said although there was clear evidence that the Salvadoran military was involved in supplying the Nicaraguan contras, the Nicaraguan government had "sought to overcome the crisis through dialogue, and never resorted to breaking diplomatic relations." Nov. 27: Costa Rican President Oscar Arias condemned "all illegal foreign interference" in El Salvador's domestic affairs. Although he expressed dismay at the break in relations, which to him constituted "a new obstacle to the peace process in Central America," Arias said the summit should still be held on Dec. 8-9, but in another location. In a communique read by Information Minister Jorge Urbina, Arias said the FMLN's actions in the past few days "seemed to indicate direct and destabilizing interference in El Salvador by governments in the region supported by the Cuban regime." He recalled that "the legitimacy of governments, the integration of rebels into the political life of nations, and the end of all manner of support of those who pursue political objectives through the force of arms, are the fundamental pillars of the peace plan and the inexcusable obligation of those who have signed the Esquipulas accords." Next, Arias called on "the Central American governments and in particular Nicaragua to fulfill the Esquipulas accords as a base for the reestablishment of confidence that contributes to peace in Central America." Arias acknowledged that the Salvadoran government's decision to suspend all economic and political relations with Nicaragua "expresses the gravity of the previous days' events...This decision, regrettably, constitutes an obstacle to dialogue and understanding in Central America." The president reiterated a call for a cease-fire in El Salvador, and respect for civilians and their rights. In a Radio Venceremos broadcast, the FMLN accused the Salvadoran government of attempting to divert attention from its own failures and crimes to Nicaragua by breaking off relations with that country. Examples of crimes were recent aerial

bombings of Salvadoran civilians and the murder of the six Jesuit priests by soldiers in uniform. According to the FMLN, Cristiani's announcement was part of a larger plan to repair El Salvador's political and military image following the two-week rebel offensive. The Salvadoran government requested that the UN Security Council meet on Nov. 29 to discuss the Nicaraguan government's "policy of intervention and aggression" against El Salvador. Late Monday night in Managua, President Ortega told a group of church leaders, "The problem is not whether the plane got there [El Salvador]. The problem is that the people of El Salvador are being murdered, their human rights violated. The Salvadoran government bombs the population... The government of Nicaragua must be on the side of the people that suffer." A statement by the Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry said the Salvadoran government was trying to create a new "Hasenfus" case. Eugene Hasenfus was a US citizen whose cargo plane was shot down in Nicaragua on Oct. 5, 1986. The plane had taken off from a Salvadoran airport and carried weapons and supplies for the contras. Hasenfus was tried and sentenced, but was released in December of that year and returned to the US. President Ortega said that in the Hasenfus case "there was clear evidence that the contras were being supplied with the cooperation of the Salvadoran military...We did not break relations then. On the contrary, we have always sought a negotiated solution." Ortega said the Salvadoran government was using the plane incident to "divert attention," from the "murdering and bombing of the population." In El Salvador, he said, the problem is the "need to have a cease-fire to reach a peace agreement." US administration officials told the New York Times that the Soviet Embassy was accused of indirect responsibility for the alleged attempt by Nicaragua to ship advanced Soviet-made weapons to the Salvadoran rebels. The Embassy was told the arms shipment was a clear violation of explicit Soviet promises to the US to get Nicaragua and Cuba to halt such activities. White House spokesperson Marlin Fitzwater said, "The president will tell Gorbachev that the introduction of surface-to-air weapons in the guerrilla war in El Salvador is a dangerous escalation of a conflict, contrary to high-level Soviet assurances...It is an example of old thinking. The president will press the Soviets to take action to insure that their allies cease this outrageous behavior." Hours after the aircraft carrying a weapons cargo crashed in El Salvador, Secretary of State James Baker called the State Department and ordered that the Soviet Ambassador, Yuri V. Dubinin, be summoned and handed a formal protest. An unidentified senior administration official cited by the Times said Dubinin was told that Nicaragua and Cuba could not provide military assistance to the Salvadoran guerrillas were it not for the fact that the Soviet Union was providing these two countries together with between \$6 billion and \$7 billion a year. Nov. 28: Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo told reporters that he has suggested Guatemala as venue for the next Central American summit. He added that the summit would take place on Dec. 10-15. Cerezo said Costa Rican President Oscar Arias and Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani had accepted his proposal, and that within hours he would speak with Honduran and Nicaraguan counterparts, Jose Azcona Hoyo and Daniel Ortega, respectively. Next, Cerezo said that he requested the United Nations and the Organization of American States to send observers to the summit. (Basic data from AFP, 11/26/89, 11/27/89; AP, 11/26-28/89; Xinhua, 11/27/89; Notimex, 11/27/89, 11/28/89; New York Times, 11/27/89, 11/28/89)

-- End --