

1-17-1990

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Deborah Tyroler

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Recommended Citation

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Minister Says Socialist Nations Committed To Continue Aid To Nicaragua

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Wednesday, January 17, 1990

On Jan. 13, External Cooperation Minister Henry Ruiz told reporters that socialist nations have committed themselves to continue aid flows to Nicaragua despite their current economic difficulties. Ruiz attended the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) meeting last week in Sofia, capital of Bulgaria. According to the minister, the Soviet Union had agreed to permit postponement of Nicaragua's loan payments until 1991, providing "significant economic breathing room." Ruiz said he told COMECON members that Nicaragua needed \$80 million to implement its economic program for 1990. The socialist bloc nations' response, he added, was positive. The minister pointed out that over 50% of Nicaragua's oil needs for 1990 a total estimated at 700,000 metric tons has been met through agreements with the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, East Germany and Cuba. (Basic data from AFP, 01/13/90)

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