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Nicaragua: Notes On Transition Team Agreement

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On March 27, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and Nicaraguan Opposition Unity (UNO) transition teams reached agreement on procedural protocol for the April 25 transfer of power. The negotiating teams were led by Humberto Ortega and Jaime Wheelock for the FSLN, and Antonio Lacayo for UNO. The agreement states: "All undertakings must be based on national recognition of popular achievements and transformations to date and on full legal respect for the Constitution of Nicaragua and the Laws of the Republic." Highlights of the agreement follow: * Contra demobilization is essential for a peaceful transfer of power. * The Nicaraguan military and police are to be under control of the executive, in accordance with the Constitution. The structural integrity of the Sandinista Popular Army (EPS) and of the police will be maintained, while the size of Nicaragua's security forces, the quantity and type of weaponry and other "characteristics" of the army and police are to be adjusted in relation to available financial resources, and toward fulfilling the letter and spirit of regional peace accords. * Members of the armed forces are prohibited from holding leadership positions in political parties. * Combat equipment is the exclusive preserve of the armed forces. [Since the Constitution allows for the Nicaraguan people to bear arms, the practical effect of this point is unclear. One possibility is that members of military reserves or militias will be permitted to keep their weapons.] * Persons who received property from the government before Feb. 25, 1990, will not see it repossessed. Claims by non-governmental entities and individuals to said property will be handled by the court system. * Government employees will not be fired for political reasons alone. * Monuments dedicated to Nicaraguans who died in the war against the Somoza regime, and in defense of the country will be respected. [Basic data from 04/06/90 report by Nicaragua Network (Washington, DC)]

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