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U.S. Agency For International Development Report On State Of Democracy, Government Institutions & Economy In Nicaragua

by Deborah Tyroler

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On April 15, the US Agency for International Development (AID) released a statement asserting that democratic advances in Nicaragua remain fragile, and additional reforms of the nation's military and police forces are necessary. Next, the report noted that the National Assembly lacks experience. Independent labor unions, municipal governments and communications systems were described as weak, and in need of assistance. The report said that Washington has allocated \$541 million to the Nicaraguan government since President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro took office in April 1990. To date, only \$207 million have been disbursed. Of the remaining \$334 million, \$50 million were earmarked for debt service payments on loans from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). According to AID, the remaining funds will be disbursed when economic reforms announced by President Chamorro in March, are implemented. Nicaragua's foreign debt totals about \$11 billion. Debt service arrears owed to the World Bank come to \$260 million, and to the IDB, \$100 million. Interest arrears must be settled before new loans are forthcoming from the multilateral financial institutions. (Basic data from EFE, 04/15/91)

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