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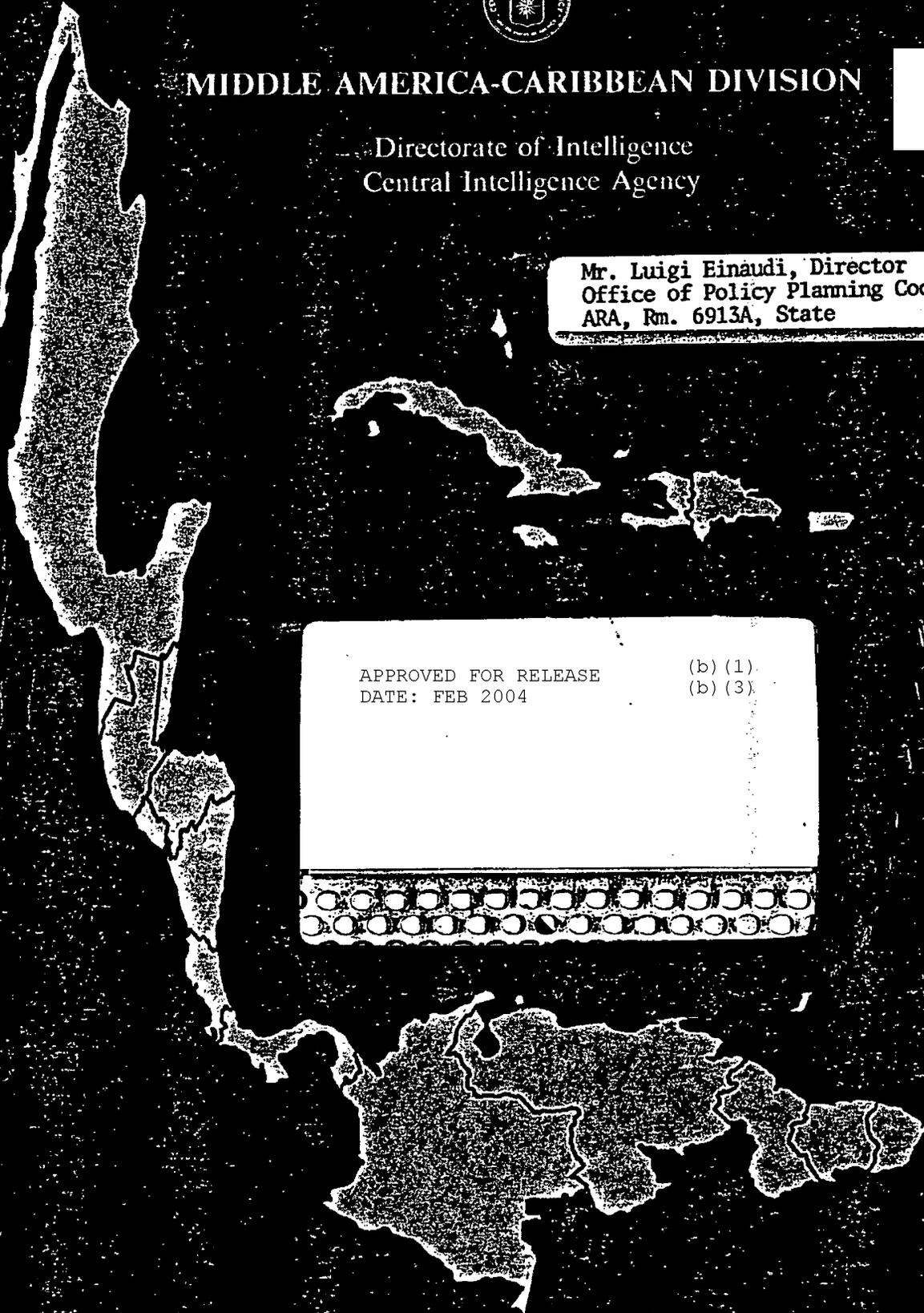


MIDDLE AMERICA-CARIBBEAN DIVISION



Directorate of Intelligence
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APPROVED FOR RELEASE (b) (1)
DATE: FEB 2004 (b) (3)



**CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PLAN
WEEKLY UPDATE**



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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PLAN WEEKLY UPDATE

28 April 1988

This weekly Situation Report is prepared by the Central America and Nicaragua Branches, Office of African and Latin American Analysis. This paper was coordinated with the Directorate of Operations. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Middle America-Caribbean Division, ALA, [redacted]

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CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PLAN
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Perspective: Peace Process Inertia

Despite the apparent progress on verification issues at the Executive Commission meeting on 7 April, the Central American democracies appear unable to control the peace process. Honduras, the host of the next meeting in May, is now unilaterally threatening to suspend its participation until Nicaragua irrevocably withdraws its suit at the World Court. Meanwhile, the democracies have not pressed Managua recently for democratization, and their support for US deliveries of humanitarian aid to the anti-Sandinistas appears tenuous. []

Tegucigalpa's threat reflects its belief that Nicaragua will somehow manage to back away from a commitment made at the Executive Committee meeting to withdraw the suit when a regional treaty on peace and friendship is signed. Honduras probably is as much motivated by its lack of confidence in its democratic allies as it is by Managua's maneuvering. Guatemala and Costa Rica likely fulfilled Honduras's expectations by issuing tepid responses to its demarche, including a Costa Rican offer to mediate between Tegucigalpa and Managua. In our view, the Sandinistas will continue to insist on settling the suit and the treaty simultaneously and they soon may publicize the reluctance of the democracies to respond to their invitation to meet to draft the treaty. []

All the democracies have told US officials in recent weeks that they will press Managua to democratize, but their public silence likely reflects their belief that criticism is inappropriate while the Nicaraguan cease-fire talks occupy center stage. The democracies apparently believe that endorsement of the internal opposition's demands for 17 constitutional changes would constitute interference in Nicaragua's internal affairs or set a precedent for their own insurgents to demand constitutional changes. Moreover, many of the specific incidents that indicate Nicaraguan noncompliance--such as denial of permits to demonstrate--are not sufficiently dramatic to gain the democracies' attention. Apart from these considerations, recent internal problems in El Salvador and Honduras have absorbed their policymakers' energies and undercut their willingness to press Managua. []

The democracies sidestepped the issue of US humanitarian aid to the anti-Sandinistas at the last Executive Commission meeting, but Honduras later boldly challenged Nicaragua by announcing that it was cooperating with aid deliveries. Costa Rican President Arias has also

[redacted]

said he will cooperate, but his public statements suggest that his approval was grounded in a belief that the Sandinistas had in the Sapoa accord accepted a direct US role. We expect that he will give his full support to aiding child war victims but in the light of the Sandinista statements he may now delay allowing use of Costa Rica to provide aid through US channels to insurgent combatants in Nicaragua. In its cease-fire talks, Nicaragua has been calling for using international agencies for aid deliveries. Managua may resort to the UN Security Council to press its case and probably will attempt to gain the public backing of OAS Secretary General Baena Soares, who already has told US officials that he supports using international agencies. [redacted]

Developments This Week

Democratization

- An opposition labor march on 17 April in the Nicaraguan town of Chinandega drew 1,000 participants [redacted]. On 25 April, 27 workers began a hunger strike to protest low wages, according to press. [redacted]

-- [redacted]

Cease-Fire/Amnesty

- Nicaraguan Vice Foreign Minister Tinoco traveled to Miami late last week to meet with rebel leaders, according to press. The two sides planned to finalize arrangements for cease-fire zones, and both expect to sign an agreement at negotiations scheduled for 28-30 April in Managua [redacted].
- Nicaraguan President Ortega denied on 20 April that criticism of Cardinal Obando's broadcast the previous day on Sandinista-controlled radio reflected the official view of the government, according to press. Obando had threatened to resign as a witness to the Sapoa accord if the statements were not clarified. The Vatican foreign minister said he would urge his government to issue a public statement of support for Obando, [redacted].

- [REDACTED]
- Former Nicaraguan rebel leader Eden Pastora said he would return to Nicaragua in August if political conditions were ripe for elections, according to press. [REDACTED]
 - A Guatemalan judge granted amnesty to two leftist political exiles who returned to the country last week, even though both returnees claim they committed no crimes and did not request or accept amnesty. [REDACTED] Defense Minister Gramajo strongly criticized the returnees in remarks to the press but denied that the military opposed the court's action. Gramajo added that amnesty should now be applied to cases such as the seven civil defense patrol members imprisoned in 1983 for participating in a massacre of guerrilla sympathizers. [REDACTED]
 - Salvadoran Archbishop Rivera y Damas told the press on 17 April that President Duarte should take into account popular demands for peace and drop his opposition to renewing talks with the rebels. The Archbishop also revived a proposal made two years ago for a national dialogue which would encompass all sectors of Salvadoran society. [REDACTED]

National Reconciliation

- Participants in the Nicaraguan national dialogue on 19 April rejected a Sandinista-proposed agenda that offered to discuss electoral laws and a date for municipal elections [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] Opposition parties called the proposal a ruse to distract attention from more significant issues, such as the separation of the party and army. The 14-party opposition bloc withdrew from the dialogue on 26 April, saying they would only return after the government settled strikes with construction workers and auto mechanics in Managua. [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

International Verification

- President Ortega said on 22 April that Nicaragua will insist that the verification committee chosen by the Central American foreign ministers last month be expanded to five members, according to press. In addition to Canada, West Germany, and Spain, Managua will demand that one Latin American and one Nordic country be included.

Aid to Insurgents

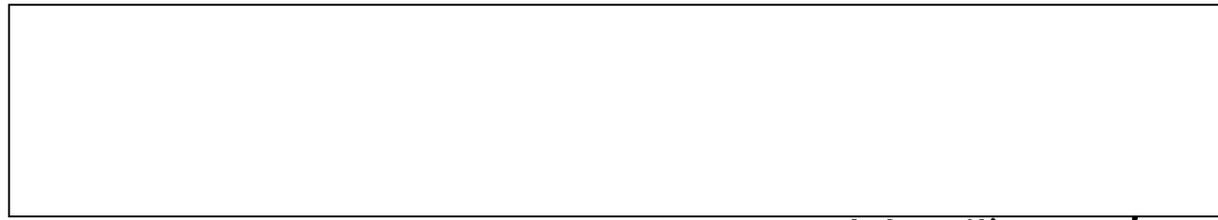
- Nicaraguan President Ortega said on 22 April that Honduras was transporting arms and ammunition from Swan Island to the Honduran mainland for distribution to the anti-Sandinista guerrillas. Ortega said that both the Honduran actions and US nonlethal aid to the insurgents violated the peace accord and he was considering calling the UN Security Council into session to consider the matter.

Refugees

- Honduran troops shot and killed a Salvadoran refugee at the Colomoncagua refugee camp on 23 April, according to the press. The armed forces and UN refugee officials have not yet commented on the incident.

Other Developments

- Nicaragua recalled its ambassador to the United States on 21 April for consultations and sent formal protests to Washington and Tegucigalpa after USAID delivered humanitarian assistance to insurgents in Honduras. President Ortega said the rebels must either disarm and accept refugee status in Honduras or assemble in cease-fire zones in Nicaragua before they can receive aid. Ortega also called for an end to the US trade embargo and proposed that bilateral talks between the United States and Nicaragua begin on 15 May.



- The Central American democracies have turned down Nicaragua's invitation to name technical representatives for talks in Managua on a peace and friendship treaty
 The Central American Foreign Ministers had

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[redacted]
decided at the Executive Commission meeting earlier this month
to choose their representatives by 15 April. [redacted]

- [redacted]
- Catholic bishops of Central America and Panama, meeting in El Salvador on 14-15 April, issued a communique which denounced the war in Central America and reiterated support for the regional peace process. The bishops also demanded that both the US and the Soviet Union refrain from sending more arms to the region. [redacted]