

The rival proposals

The Reagan Plan

Ceasefire, suspension of aid, restoration of rights: As soon as possible, negotiation of an immediate ceasefire, on terms acceptable to the parties involved, subject to verification by the Organization of American States, or an international group of observers. With a ceasefire in place, the immediate suspension of military aid to the Contras by the US and a cut-off of military aid to Nicaragua by communist countries. Humanitarian aid allowed. Immediate suspension of emergency law in Nicaragua and restoration of civil rights. Establishment of a multi-party electoral commission. Within 60 days, establishment of a timetable and procedures for elections.

Withdrawal of outside troops: The withdrawal of foreign military personnel and advisers, in excess of normal and legitimate needs, from Nicaragua and its immediate neighbours, subject to negotiations among countries of the

region. The suspension of combat manoeuvres in Honduras by the US.

Regional negotiations: With the ceasefire in place, negotiations among the US, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua on reducing standing armies, withdrawing foreign military personnel, restoring the regional military balance, guaranteeing security against outside support for insurgents and provisions for verification and enforcement.

National reconciliation: National reconciliation and dialogue in Nicaragua, including amnesty for ex-combatants and the right of all to take part in politics.

Trade and assistance: Expanded trade and long-range economic assistance for the democratic governments of Central America.

Timetable: The negotiating process shall begin immediately and be completed by September 30.

The Arias Plan

Amnesty and dialogue: After 60 days, in countries where there are armed struggles, a general amnesty for political crimes, to be verified by commissions made up of government, opposition, Roman Catholic Church and Inter-American Human Rights Commission representatives. Immediately, a broad dialogue with unarmed opposition groups.

Ceasefire: An immediate ceasefire.

Democratization: Immediately, the start of a democratic and participatory process, promoting social justice without foreign intervention and including press freedom.

Elections: After the creation of conditions for democracy, simultaneous elections in the five countries, under supervision of the Organization of American States, to form a Central American parliament.

Suspension of military aid: Immediately, a request by the five countries for suspension

of aid to insurgents and irregulars.

Use of territory: A commitment by the five countries to prevent use of their territories to destabilize the region's governments.

Arms reduction: Within 60 days, the beginning of negotiations on controlling and reducing arms inventories and troops strength, along with measures to disarm irregulars.

Supervision and follow-up: Within 30 days, formation of a committee to supervise achievement of the agreement's goals, to be made up of the UN Secretary-General, the OAS Secretary-General and foreign ministers of the countries supporting the Contadora peace initiative.

Evaluating progress: Within six months, a meeting of the five Presidents from the region.

Economic agreements: Efforts to achieve economic and cultural agreements to promote development.