

NICARAGUA

Representatives of the Nicaraguan government and of the Miskitu MISURASATA organization met again on April 20-22 in Mexico in order to find a peaceful solution to the conflict that has existed between them since 1979. SAIIC supports these peace talks, whose purposes are to avoid more suffering for the Miskitus, Sumos, and Ramas people of the Atlantic Coast, and to succeed in involving the Indian population in the revolutionary process while assuring their autonomy.

SAIIC is hopeful that an agreement will be reached soon, keeping in mind the continuous intent of the Reagan administration to intervene in Central America and to destroy the Nicaraguan Revolution.

The following statement was sent to SAIIC by the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP, 555 King Edward Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 6N5):

"The MISURASATA delegation was headed by Brooklyn Rivera and included Ronas Dolores, Delano Martinez Zamora, Samuel Mercado, Julian Holmes and Armstrong Wiggins. The delegation of the Government of Nicaragua was headed by Comandante Luis Carrion Cruz, Vice Minister of the Interior; Comandante Guillermo Omar Cabezas Lacayo; Comandante Guillermo Humberto Campbell; Dr. Mirna Cunningham; Dr. Augusto Zamora and Orlando Gonzales Ubilla. Observer-Guarantors were the World Council of Indigenous Peoples headed by the President, Mr. Clem Chartier and Vice-Presidents Donald Rojas Maroto and Hayden Burgess; Asuncion Ontiveros (CISA); Alejandro Swaby (CORPI); Louis Bruyere, North American Regional Council and Rodrigo Contreras from the Secretariat of WCIP. Also, Government Observer-Guarantors included representatives of Mexico, Colombia, Canada, Sweden and Holland.

"In addition to the Observer-Guarantors, were indigenous leaders from the Six Nations Confederacy [Iroquois]; Confederation of Indian Nations from the Amazonas in Ecuador; Inter Ethnic Development Association of the Amazonas in Peru; the National Indian Youth Council from Albuquerque, New Mexico and the National Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Colombia (ONIC). Also present at the meeting was the president of the Moravian Church, Rev. Andy Shogreen."

The following is an unofficial translation of a communique issued by both parties to the negotiations.

"The delegations of the Republic of Nicaragua and MISURASATA organization that have met in Mexico City April 20-21-22 of this year, giving continuity to the negotiation process initiated in Bogota last year, communicate to the people of Nicaragua, and to the international community, the following:

"A) During the course of the conversations, maintained in an atmosphere of mutual respect, we have achieved concrete advances to the mutual understanding in the exploration of measures to promote peace and the well being of the people of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.

"B) The Government delegation and MISURASATA, as they have not arrived at definite agreements regarding the fundamental issues to a just solution to the present conflict and as a consequence, pacification in the region has not been achieved between the Government Armed Forces and the MISURASATA Forces. They will continue discussing in future rounds such issues (land, autonomy, natural resources, total cease fire in the region, etc.)

"C) Both delegations demonstrating good faith and good will to progress concretely in these negotiations, have established the following agreements:

"1) To bring immediate relief to the present situation to the Indigenous Communities of the Atlantic Coast, and to create a more favorable climate to the continuation of the negotiations, the Government of Nicaragua and MISURASATA, establish:

"a) The Government of Nicaragua will facilitate the reestablishment of medical and food supplies through its own institutions, as well as assistance to the communities by humanitarian institutions in coordination with the Government of Nicaragua. Also, we will facilitate the reestablishment of subsistence activities, (fishing, hunting, agriculture and trading) of the indigenous and creole communities affected by the present conflict in the region. MISURASATA will orient its bases to support and observe the realization of this agreement.

"b) The Government and MISURASATA agree to avoid offensive actions between the Government Armed Forces and MISURASATA Forces, in this way to support the implementation of the commitment of the content in section a.

"2) The Government of Nicaragua will extend immediately the Amnesty Decree of December 1st, 1983, to include all Miskitu, Sumo, Rama and Creole that are still in jails due to their participation or connection with MISURASATA or MISURA. This will take effect within seven (7) days after signing this document.

"D) The next round of discussions will take place in the City of Bogota, May 25-26, 1985.*

"E) Both delegations express their gratitude for the hospitality and the facilities given by the Government of Mexico to the realization of the meeting.

"As well, both delegations express their gratitude for the presence of the Ambassadors and Representatives of the Governments of Canada, Colombia, France, Netherlands,

Sweden and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, that have been stimulating the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Nicaragua and the Organization MISURASATA. We wish to extend special recognition to the Government of Colombia that hosted the two first meetings of this process."

Mexico D.F., April 22, 1985

For the Government of Nicaragua,
Comandante Luis Carrion.

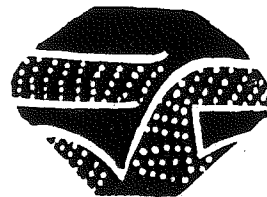
For MISURASATA,
Brooklyn Rivera.

*Preliminary reports on the May negotiations in Colombia indicate difficulties between the principal negotiators. SAIIC expresses the hope that the talks produce positive results soon.



EL SALVADOR

The National Association of Indigenous Salvadorans (Asociacion Nacional Indigena Salvadorena, or ANIS) is conducting a campaign to force a trial of government military forces who killed 74 members of an Indian farming cooperative called Las Hojas. According to an article in the New York Times on February 25, 1985, leaders of the community say the attack resulted from a dispute between the village and "two large neighboring landowners who wanted access to the Indians' lands." The landowners enlisted the aid of local military forces by claiming that the villagers were supporters of the leftist guerrillas who operate in other parts of El Salvador. About 200 soldiers entered Las Hojas early on February 23, 1983, and dragged away Indians singled-out by hooded informants who villagers claim work on the neighboring estates. The bodies of those abducted were later found scattered in the surrounding countryside, most with their arms and legs tied together and bullet wounds in their heads.



Although the identities of the army officers who commanded the attack are known, they have not been disciplined by the army or indicted by civilian courts. A lawyer for ANIS is quoted as saying that judges are afraid to pursue the case. "If they touch the army they will be threatened or killed." ANIS leaders have met with two presidents of El Salvador, the chief of staff of the army, the attorney general, and the United States ambassador in an effort to bring the killers to trial. Both the United States embassy and the Salvadoran government's official Human Rights Commission have conducted investi-