

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
SECRETARY OF COMMUNICATION

SIGNING OF A PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND FRENTE NORTE 380

After intense negotiations, on 30 May, Nicaraguan Mother's Day, a peace agreement was signed between the government, presided over by Dr Arnoldo Alemán, and the Chiefs of Staff of Frente Norte 380. The agreement represents significant process in the process for the full pacification of the countryside, which the government has been working toward since the start of its term.

The agreement establishes the date of and procedures for the immediate disarmament of Frente Norte 380, which operates in the zones of Jinotega, Matagalpa, Zelaya Central and the Autonomous South Atlantic Region (*Región Autónoma del Atlántico Sur*, RAAS).

The Deputy Defence Minister, José Adán Guerra, reported that following specific guidelines from President Alemán and after difficult negotiations, the government reached an agreement whereby the seven commanders of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, led by "Pablo Negro," have accepted the call to reintegrate into the country's civil and productive life.

The talks involved the active participation of the Minister of Defence, Jaime Cuadra, and his deputy, José Adán Guerra, in addition to Monsignor Abelardo Mata, Bishop of Estelí, and Sergio Caramagna, representing the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Organization of American States (OAS).

It should be recalled that when President Alemán set out the policies and actions for the 1997–1998 agricultural cycle, he stressed that one of his government's priorities was to resolve the physical security problems affecting producers to strengthen the rule of law. Speaking on the occasion, he pledged: "we shall permanently eradicate the plague of violence and destruction to promote the production of the plough..."

Under this agreement, signed in the presence of His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, Frente Norte 380 will be integrated into civil life under a Government Emergency Plan, covering food, clothing and medical care. There is also an Integrated Development Plan for persons who are demobilised, under which the government will provide land, loans, funding for the self-building of houses, training and technical assistance.

The peace agreement also includes the creation of a list of people to be covered by an amnesty. The list will be sent by the Executive to the National Assembly for due debate and approval.

Managua, 30 May 1997.

MANAGUA AGREEMENT

PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA AND THE FRENTE NORTE 380 CHIEFS OF STAFF

In the city of Managua, on 30 May 1997, the President of the Republic, Dr Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo, representing the Government of the Republic of Nicaragua, and Commanders Luis Guadalupe Borges (Pablo Negro), Bernardo Martínez Rojas (Zapoyol), Mario José Herrera C. (Pajarilla), José Luis García Ríos (Corcel), Rito Cruz García (Pedrito), Justo García Chavarría (Gato) and Xavier Benavides (Xavier), representing the Frente Norte 380 Chiefs of Staff, before His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, Archbishop of Managua, Monsignor Juan Abelardo Mata, Bishop of the Diocese of Estelí, and Dr Sergio Caramagna, Coordinator of the OAS International Support and Verification Commission (*Comisión Internacional de Apoyo y Verificación*, CIAV), as guarantors, agree:

1. ZONES OF PEACE AND SECURITY

The Government of Nicaragua, via the Ministry of Defence, and in agreement with the Chiefs of Staff of Frente Norte 380, have defined the following Zones of Peace and Security:

- Ayapal: Municipality of Cuá-Bocay, Department of Jinotega
- San Pedro del Norte: RAAS
- Kuaskawas: Municipality of Rancho Grande, Department of Matagalpa
- La Uló: Municipality of Río Blanco, Department of Matagalpa
- Kubalí: Municipality of Waslala, Autonomous North Atlantic Region (*Región Autónoma del Atlántico Norte*, RAAN)
- El Manzer: Comarca of Naranjo, Municipality of Waslala, RAAN
- La Piñuela: Zelaya Central, Department of Chontales
- La Mantequilla: Zelaya Central, Department of Chontales

2. DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILISATION

The demobilisation of the members of Frente Norte 380 will take place in two phases:

Frente Norte 380 commits to begin demobilisation and reinsertion into civil life from 6 June this year. By this date it commits to disarm 50% of the total number of troops stationed in

the various Zones of Peace and Security throughout the country. The remaining troops must be fully demobilised in June this year.

Disarmament will proceed in line with the mechanism and procedures agreed by the Ministry of Defence and the Frente Norte 380 Chiefs of Staff, in line with the lists submitted and with the immediate and effective surrender of arms. Arms will be destroyed and burnt as soon as they are surrendered to the government authorities. This will take place under the direction and supervision of officials from the Ministry of Defence and the Civil Defence Brigades.

3. SOCIAL AGENDA

- Once the disarmament process has begun, the Government of Nicaragua, via the Ministry of Defence, will execute the initial phase of the reinsertion project or emergency plan to guarantee food, clothing and possible medical care to the members of Frente Norte 380 and their families in line with the lists presented and verified by the Ministry of Defence.
- The government of the republic will begin an integrated development programme in July this year to allow it to create the social, political and economic conditions for reinsertion and self-sustainability by promoting programmes that will deliver an integrated response to those who live in the affected zones.
- The project will comprise programmes for training and technical assistance, social and productive infrastructure, land provision based on the National Development Bank property register, funding for agriculture and livestock farming, self-building of houses, and the creation and development of micro businesses.
- The government will also facilitate legal advice services for drafting a bill for a Frente Norte 380 Veterans Association to be duly approved by the National Assembly.
- On signing this peace agreement, the government will set up a peace agreement monitoring office headquartered in the City of Managua and with an office in the City of Matagalpa.
- Frente Norte 380 will appoint at least two members of its organisation to form part of this peace agreement monitoring office.

4. DELEGATES

- Fully aware of filling the historic vacuum of civil authorities in key rural areas of the country, the Government of Nicaragua undertakes to consider candidates from a list submitted by Frente Norte 380 for posts with the following state institutions in the municipalities covered by the Zones of Peace and Security: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence and local government. Central government will provide the

necessary cooperation for the appointment of posts, taking into account local problems and the capacities and leadership ability of the proposed candidates.

- Representatives of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior will be selected in consultation with the community and in the presence of the corresponding authorities for these ministries. The selection must be made during the process and their posts must be ratified by the mayor of the municipality and the respective ministers.

5. RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- The Government of Nicaragua will continue to promote policies to strengthen the rule of law throughout the national territory, paying particular attention to the post-war situation in the territories and areas that form part of the reinsertion and development project. It will also strengthen the Peace Commissions and other civil society organisations in the areas of conflict.
- Similarly, the central government will also undertake measures before the Supreme Court of Justice to strengthen its presence throughout the national territory through the judicial authorities with jurisdiction in certain municipalities in areas of conflict.
- As part of the integrated reinsertion plan, the Government of Nicaragua will provide human rights training to all members of Frente Norte 380, with the support of governmental, non-governmental and international organisations.
- Frente Norte 380 will propose to family members of the late Ciriaco Palacios Cruz (also known as “Charro”) the reporting of his death to the Attorney-General, as well as informing the Nicaraguan Pro-Human Rights Association (*Asociación Nicaragüense Pro Derechos Humanos*, ANPDH) and other human rights organisations in the country.
- Given that, on 4 April this year, the Attorney-General reopened the court file for the case of the murder of Frente Norte 380 Commander Enrique Bermúdez Varela with the Second Court of the Criminal District of Managua, the Chiefs of Staff representing Frente Norte 380, support the measures of the Attorney-General before the country’s courts of justice to clarify and discover the real perpetrators, accomplices and accessories of this act.
- Regarding activities that violate human rights, the Government of Nicaragua will assist insofar as possible the facilitation of processes through the corresponding instances and in line with the national legal system.

6. SECURITY

- The Government of Nicaragua, in line with the list of Frente Norte 380 members submitted today to Dr Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo, President of the Republic, will immediately submit a Partial and Selective Amnesty Bill to the National Assembly to allow it to be heard and approved by its members.
- During the disarmament and demobilisation process, until publication of the amnesty bill, the government will guarantee the security of all Frente Norte 380 members by implementing mechanisms to keep peace and order among persons who have demobilised. These persons will be provided with the respective ID card for this purpose during demobilisation.
- The Nicaragua army will maintain its troops withdrawn from the peace zones for the duration of the process for the disarmament and demobilisation of Frente Norte 380.
- The Government of Nicaragua, via the Ministry of Defence, will continue to disarm any remaining groups of irregular fighters and other armed organisations acting on the fringes of the law.

7. FINAL PROVISIONS

Finally, Frente Norte 380 authorises the President of the Republic, Dr Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo and his government a vote of confidence to allow, through the Ministry of Defence and in line with the single Chapter of Title V of the Political Constitution of the Republic, the effective subordination of the military power to civil authority in order to contribute to the professionalism and separation of the armed forces and help promote and preserve human rights throughout the national territory. In agreement, both parties sign this agreement in six copies of equal value.

For the Government of the Republic

Dr Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo – President of the Republic

For the Chiefs of Staff of Frente Norte 380

Luis Guadalupe Borges – Pablo Negro

Bernardo Martínez Rojas – Zapoyol

Mario José Herrera C. – Pajarillio

José Luis García Ríos – Corcel