

NICARAGUA - THE FRENCH VIEW*

STATEMENT OF THE FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL
(2 APRIL 1984)

"France wishes to express her strong feelings over the increasing seriousness and frequency of armed action in Nicaragua. According to what we heard in the previous session, eight ships have been damaged or destroyed by mines in Nicaraguan ports.

"Grave threats are endangering not only the country's economic life, which could be paralysed by asphyxia, but the very lives of its inhabitants. Indeed, whole shiploads are being diverted from their destination due to the fear of repetition of such tragic accidents. Means of transport from the neighbouring countries permitting, these consignments will reach Nicaragua only after considerable delays and at great cost. They include cereals and other vital commodities, humanitarian aid sometimes sent by Europe and France, medicines indispensable for the health protection of a population already affected by malnutrition, under-development and natural disasters.

"France therefore resolutely condemns this escalation of violence, this new kind of action which, by impeding freedom of access to the port installations of a sovereign country, is causing a form of covert blockade that is fundamentally contrary to the major principles of international law.

"The Security Council already proclaimed in its resolution 530 (1983) the right of Nicaragua and all the other countries of the region to live in peace and security, safe from all foreign interference; it also gave its support to the action undertaken by the Contadora Group.

"This position was confirmed on 11 November 1983 by the General Assembly, when, by adopting resolution 38/10, the countries of the international community undertook to encourage efforts to bring about peaceful developments in Central America.

"Yet what have we been recording of late? An increased foreign military presence, continuation of the arms race, an escalation of destabilising activities. These rising tensions, with the attendant increased risks of an irreversible extension of the conflicts in that region, are viewed by my country with deep concern.

(The text of French statements on the mining of Nicaraguan ports was provided by the French Embassy, Canberra)