

United States suspended , for two years, its recognition of the Court's jurisdiction on matters related to Central America. By mid-1987, the *contras* had received at least \$180 million in official United States military aid, in addition to logistic and material support, as well as donations from private sources and United States allies. Nevertheless, the *contras* have not succeeded in establishing a territorial base within Nicaragua or in gaining significant popular support.

In addition to organizing and sustaining the military opposition to the Sandinista government, the United States has worked to isolate Nicaragua economically. Its representatives in international financial institutions have consistently voted against loans to the country. The United States has also attempted to persuade its Western allies not to provide aid to Nicaragua. All bilateral trade between the two countries was cut off in May 1985.

Despite its declared support for the Contadora process, the United States has repeatedly opposed all initiatives implying the disbandment of the *contras* and recognition of the legitimacy of the Sandinista government. At a news conference in February 1985, President Reagan stated that his objective was "to remove [the Nicaraguan government] in the sense of its present structure." A leaked National Security Council memorandum of October 1984 noted: "We have effectively blocked Contadora group efforts to impose a second draft of the Revised Contadora Act." A May 1986 White House document, made public during the Iran-*contra* hearings, referred to the Administration's efforts to block possible agreement on the June 1986 draft treaty. The strategy outlined in the document involved "denouncing the Sandinistas for refusing to negotiate" while portraying the treaty as unacceptable to the other nations of the region.

These Reagan Administration policies towards Nicaragua, and especially the support provided to the *contras*, were discussed at length in the course of the Roundtable.

In conjunction with their efforts to arrive at a comprehensive settlement, the Contadora and Support groups have repeatedly encouraged bilateral discussions between the United States and Nicaragua. Several meetings between the two governments did take place in Manzanillo, Mexico, during the second half of 1984 but the talks were eventually broken off by the United States. In July 1985, the United States rejected a call by the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group to resume the bilateral talks.

The Support Group was formed in mid-1985 to generate momentum for an apparently stalled peace process. In January 1986, the Foreign