Canada issued a statement condemning such actions and welcomes the UN Secretary General's action to send a team to the area to investigate the situation.

## Central America

Canada's approach to the situation in Central America has been based on vigorous support for the peace process, in respect to the earlier "Contadora" initiative of eight Latin American countries as well as the indigenous efforts of the Central American governments themselves, since their signing of the Guatemala Agreement of August 1987. Canada opposes the promotion by third parties of armed insurgency anywhere in Central America, and has expressed this view on numerous occasions to all governments concerned.

When the Guatemala Agreement was signed, the Canadian government offered assistance to the Central American countries in the design of a verification and control mechanism. Speaking at the Americas Society Awards Dinner on March 28, 1988, Prime Minister Mulroney took Canada's offer a step further in saying that "Canada stands ready to undertake a peace supervisory role anywhere in the region where it might be helpful, provided the Central American governments themselves desire our involvement and create a framework for effective action."

On April 7, 1988, the five Central American governments announced that they would extend an invitation through the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Canada, Spain, and the Federal Republic of Germany to create a verification, control and follow-up mechanism.

Canada has taken in over 20,000 refugees from the area (3,900 in 1987 alone), and has promoted efforts to improve human rights and to strengthen democratic institutions. Canadian observers have witnessed elections in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

Canada maintains a substantial program of development assistance to Central America (Honduras $43.7 million, Nicaragua $40 million, Costa Rica $44 million, El Salvador $17 million, Guatemala $13 million, Panama $3 million over the past 5 years). It has given no military aid to any country in the region.