

No. 7399

GUATEMALA, HONDURAS and NICARAGUA

**Agreement on the establishment and operation of the
Central-American Defence Council. Signed at Guatemala City, on 14 December 1963**

Official text: Spanish.

Registered by Guatemala on 28 August 1964.

GUATEMALA, HONDURAS et NICARAGUA

**Accord relatif à la création et au fonctionnement du Conseil
de défense de l'Amérique centrale. Signé à Guatemala,
le 14 décembre 1963**

Texte officiel espagnol.

Enregistré par le Guatemala le 28 août 1964.

[TRANSLATION — TRADUCTION]

No. 7399. AGREEMENT¹ ON THE ESTABLISHMENT AND
OPERATION OF THE CENTRAL-AMERICAN DEFENCE
COUNCIL. SIGNED AT GUATEMALA CITY, ON 14 DE-
CEMBER 1963

The States of El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama,

Considering that they are a geographical unit for purposes of continental defence, and aware of the obligations which they have assumed in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of the Organization of American States,² the Charter of the Organization of Central-American States,³ the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance⁴ and other international instruments for the common defence and the maintenance of the peace and security of the American continent,

CONSIDERING :

That the integration of the countries of the Central-American Isthmus as a single unit within the defence system of the American continent is the most effective way of fulfilling their obligations, of assuring peace through adequate means, of providing for effective reciprocal assistance to meet armed attacks, and of dealing with threats of aggression,

CONSIDERING :

That the Republics of the Central-American Isthmus base their institutions on the democratic system, in which they find complete satisfaction for the ideals of a better life, and that joint action is required in order to preserve that system in the Isthmus and to defend it against the forces which are attempting to destroy it by violence and the infiltration of totalitarian ideas,

¹ In accordance with article 21, the Agreement came into force on 18 May 1964, the date of deposit of the third instrument of ratification, in respect of the following States on behalf of which the instruments of ratification were deposited with the Government of Guatemala on the dates indicated :

Guatemala	24 January 1964
Nicaragua	7 April 1964
Honduras	18 May 1964

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 119, p. 3 ; Vol. 134, p. 388 ; Vol. 171, p. 419 ; Vol. 186, p. 322 ; Vol. 209, p. 338 ; Vol. 233, p. 304, and Vol. 377, p. 400.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 122, p. 3.

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 21, p. 77 ; Vol. 26, p. 417 ; Vol. 82, p. 330, and Vol. 209, p. 330.

CONSIDERING :

That the permanently aggressive character of the international communist movement constitutes today more than ever before, a grave and immediate threat to the peace and security of the Isthmus States, and that the subversive action of that movement, profiting by the principle of non-intervention so deeply rooted in America, is causing unrest among the peoples of the Isthmus and endangering the freedom and democracy on which their institutions are based,

CONSIDERING :

That the armed forces or their equivalents in the Central-American Isthmus constitute an important factor in the social, cultural and economic development of its peoples and can, by their structural organization, effectively help to combat the dissemination and effect of alien ideas, and that they should combine their efforts in defence of the democratic interests, freedom and institutions of their peoples, and of human rights,

NOW THEREFORE :

The High Contracting Parties, in accordance with the resolutions adopted at the first meeting of Central-American Defence Ministers held at Antigua in 1956, at the first meeting of the Special Combined Commission held at San Salvador in 1957 and at the first meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the Central-American Isthmus held at Guatemala City in 1961,

Agree to the establishment of the Central-American Defence Council.

CHAPTER I

THE COUNCIL

Article 1

The Central-American Defence Council shall serve as the highest organ of consultation on questions of regional defence and shall be responsible for the collective security of the participating States.

Article 2

It shall be the duty of the Council to submit to the Governments of the participating States proposals for closer collaboration between those States for the defence of the Central-American Isthmus.

Article 3

The Central-American Defence Council shall consist of the Ministers of Defence, or of officials of the appropriate department equivalent in rank and functions, of the respective participating States.

Article 4

The Defence Council shall be presided over by the member of the country in which it is meeting. Nevertheless, this prerogative is optional and may be declined, in which case the president of the Council shall be elected, by majority vote or the drawing of lots, from among the other members of the Council.

Article 5

The Council shall meet regularly once a year, at a time mutually agreed upon by the members. Special meetings shall be called at the request of any Government of the Central-American Isthmus.

Article 6

If, for exceptional reasons, any member of the Council is unable to attend any of the meetings provided for in the preceding article, he may be represented by a duly accredited and authorized special delegate, who shall have the legal status of member with full powers at the meetings of the Council.

CHAPTER II

THE PERMANENT DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Article 7

The Permanent Defence Committee shall be established as a subsidiary and dependent organ of the Defence Council.

Article 8

The Permanent Committee shall consist of members of the armed forces, or their equivalents, of the signatory countries. Each participating State shall have one representative on the Permanent Committee holding the rank of delegate ; nevertheless, each State may at the same time nominate an alternate delegate and such other personnel as it may deem appropriate.

Article 9

The Permanent Defence Committee shall :

- (1) Act as a General Staff,
- (2) Perform administrative duties.

For the more effective fulfilment of its tasks, the Permanent Defence Committee shall have a General Secretary who shall be appointed by the Committee itself and whose responsibilities shall be defined in the relevant rules of procedure.