



**The United Church  
of Canada  
General Council**

# **GC32 Human Rights and Aid to Central America**

True Document Date: October 31, 1988

WHEREAS we believe that the Canadian government's policy and practice of aid for Central American countries do not respect the situation as we see it through our partner's experience and from our visits; and

WHEREAS the churches have used two traditional criteria for the appropriateness for government aid:

1. whether or not a receiving government protects the human rights of its citizens, and
2. whether or not the receiving government is committed to authentic development which will benefit the whole of its people, and there is now a regionally created peace plan (the Esquipulas II Peace Accord) to which all concerned countries have agreed, a country's compliance to its terms is not an additional criterion; and

WHEREAS statements by the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark on the resumption of aid to Guatemala, the small amount of aid given to Nicaragua (especially in comparison to the large amounts given to Honduras), and the continued aid for El Salvador don't respect the criteria above:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 32nd General Council support the recommendations on Canada aid made by the Inter-Church Committee for Human Rights in Latin American in its 1987 Annual Report as follows:

1. That the Canadian government reconsider its November 1987 decision to restore Canadian bilateral aid to Guatemala, given the continuing grave concerns about human rights in that country;

2. That there be no new bilateral aid to El Salvador given the continuing negative human rights climate in that country;
3. That in view of the Nicaraguan government's demonstrated desire to provide for the basis of economic and social needs of all Nicaraguans and the absence of a pattern of gross violations of civil and political rights the Canadian government make significant new bilateral aid commitments to Nicaragua;
4. That the Canadian government focus on pressing each country in the region to move ahead with policy changes which will contribute to the improvement of the human rights situation and the creation of peace, justice and true democracy.

GC32 1988 ROP, p. 732, Executive Minutes, Nov. 1988, pp. 53-54

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