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Support urged for Contras

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A leading Nicaraguan opposition leader, Arturo Cruz, has urged that U.S. aid to resistance forces in that country continue until Soviet and Cuban military assistance is withdrawn and a peace "based on mutuality" be achieved.

In a prepared statement given here yesterday at a news conference, Mr. Cruz said there was a consensus among all democratic groups in Nicaragua that "there should be no unilateral withdrawal of U.S. aid to those in the armed opposition." At the same time, Pedro Juaquin Chamorro, editor of Nicaragua's remaining independent newspaper, after endorsing Mr. Cruz's statement, also announced he would not return until freedom of the press was restored in his country.

"I cannot stand this situation any longer," he declared. "Unless there is a genuine change in the direction of permitting the right to dissent, and of allowing freedom of the press, both for the daily newspaper La Prensa and for the people's communication media, which have been outrageously monopolized by the FSLN [Sandinista] party, I will not return to Nicaragua."

(In Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Foreign Minister Edgardo Paz Barnica said yesterday that Honduras will expel Nicaraguan rebels who have operated from its territory since 1981.

"All these people will be kicked out immediately from our territory because they have compromised our sovereignty," he said.

(The Reagan administration has backed the rebels, calling them freedom fighters for their efforts to oust the leftist Sandinistas who

took power in Nicaragua in a 1979 coup.)

Mr. Chamorro at the same time denounced the arrest last week of Salomon Calvo Arrieto, a reporter for Managua's Radio Impacto who was detained on the 29th, and the forced hiding of Luis Manuel Mora Sanchez, another Radio Impacto reporter.

Mr. Chamorro currently lives in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Under questioning, Mr. Cruz, a former ambassador to the United States in the early part of Sandinista rule and the democratic opposition's leading presidential candidate in Nicaragua's November elections, said for "any solution to be feasible, it is essential that the opposition can discuss these matters from a position of strength — otherwise the Sandinistas will become even more inflexible."

He said that while he had "no organic link" with the armed oppo-

sition, "a unilateral withdrawal [of American aid] would be insane, senseless" because the political options continue to narrow in Nicaragua.

Mr. Cruz's statement represented his first expression of unconditional support for U.S. backing for the insurgent forces.

Mr. Cruz, who plans to return to Nicaragua on Sunday, added, "Since the Sandinistas are reluctant to give a real political opening toward the establishment of a permanent peace in Nicaragua, unfortunately those who have chosen the military struggle in my judgment have a point."

He acknowledged that his personal safety could be at risk in light of his new position on aid to the rebels.

"I am not afraid," he said. "I don't know what will happen, but I am going."

— Roger Fontaine