12065: RDS-1 2/17/02 (NEGROPONTE, John D.) OR-M

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PEPR, XX
SUBJECT: (S) CENTRAL AMERICAN MEETINGS

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO: AMBASSADOG BOGOTA IMMEDIATE
AMBASSADOG CARACAS IMMEDIATE
AMBASSADOG GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE
AMBASSADOG MANAGUA IMMEDIATE
AMBASSADOG MEXICO IMMEDIATE
AMBASSADOG PANAMA IMMEDIATE
AMBASSADOG SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE
AMBASSADOG SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

TEGUCIGALPA 1236

EXDIS DECAPTIONED

REF: SANSSALVADOR 1296

1. S---- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. I met for half an hour at Costa Rican Embassy in Tegucigalpa with Costa Rican Foreign Minister Niehaus morning February 17 at latter's request. Their Ambassador, Federico Alvarez, was also present.

3. According to Niehaus status of invitations to Central American Chiefs of State for February 27 meeting in San Jose is as follows: Panama's Royo, Nicaragua's Ortega
and Salvador's Duarte have accepted. Invitation is being conveyed to Venezuelans today, February 17. Guatemalans have indicated that they don't want anything to do with regional meetings, although no formal invitation yet extended. If Venezuela accepts, then Niehaus will travel personally to Mexico to extend invitation to Lopez Portillo.

4. As for Honduras, after first indicating favorable inclination, Foreign Minister Paz Barnica has now told Niehaus that Dr. Suazo is too busy to attend. That was reason Niehaus wanted to see me. Could we persuade Suazo of importance of his participation, lest Carazo use Suazo's absence as a pretext for denouncing XX CADC. Niehaus was going to see Suazo personally just after our meeting. Other concern in this regard is that, if Honduras declines, then Duarte might drop out. In such case, Niehaus said, worst of all worlds might conceivably develop, namely meeting of only three heads of government: Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Panamá.

5. I told Niehaus that all of this was pretty new to me and that I would have to seek instructions. Concern that Carazo might denounce CADC was repeated several times by both Niehaus and Ambassador Alvarez.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: Instructions as to what to say
to Dr. Suazo regarding invitation to San Jose. Have appointment to see Suazo at ten a.m. February 19 to discuss other matters at which time this issue could be discussed as well.

NEGROPONTE