

*Appendix IV*ARRIVAL STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT FORD  
May 4, 1989

On behalf of this international delegation, that includes bipartisan U.S. representation, I will make a brief statement about our mission, its purposes, and its expectations.

First and foremost, we are here to show our steadfast support for democratic values, and the worldwide movement toward greater individual and political freedom.

Panama stands at a threshold, facing a critical election in 72 hours. We are not here to take sides in this election. We are here simply to lend our support to a free and fair election process, which will move Panama toward a resolution of its internal political problems, and its international isolation.

Our efforts over the next several days will be strictly neutral. We will meet with all sides in the election and we will be forming our own opinions independently. We do not plan to offer premature judgements, nor hasty conclusions.

We believe that the most important element in any free and fair election is the active participation of all the people, and the guarantee that they be allowed to vote, and that their votes be respected.

We believe that regardless of the outcome, a dynamic has begun in Panamanian politics that must inevitably lead toward more political freedom and self-expression. We are here to support that process, and to provide the international community an accurate and fair assessment of the electoral process and its outcome.

Ultimately, we recognize that the most important judgement is that which is determined by the Panamanian people themselves. We wish them well in the days ahead.

*Panama*

THE  
CARTER CENTER  
OF EMORY UNIVERSITY



STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER  
May 5, 1989

I have come to Panama with President Ford and other political leaders from around the world because this election is so crucial for the people of this country and for all of us interested in democracy and good relations between the United States and Panama. We come here as friends of Panama to bear witness to what we hope will be a free and fair election.

Ten years ago, Omar Torrijos and I worked to build a new partnership between Panama and the United States based on mutual respect and new canal treaties. Torrijos told me then that the fulfillment of Panama's aspirations for national sovereignty was a first step toward better relations between our two countries. The second step, he said, would be the fulfillment of Panama's aspiration for democracy. I have come with the hope of seeing Torrijos's second promise fulfilled.

President Ford, Prime Minister George Price of Belize, and I represent the Council of Freely-Elected Heads of Government based at the Carter Center of Emory University in Atlanta. This group of hemispheric leaders work to reinforce democracy. Along with John Spender of Australia, we are leading a bi-partisan and international delegation of 30 leaders from eight countries. Our delegation is associated with the National Democratic and Republican Institutes for International Affairs. We gratefully acknowledge their support and assistance.

We are here as observers without prejudgements and with a desire to be fair. We have no intention of interfering in the electoral process. We want to listen to all sides. The delegation will visit a number of cities on election day and will regroup in Panama City on Monday, May 8 to discuss our observations. We will make a statement after assessing our observations. A complete report will be issued several weeks after the elections.

Although many Panamanians have debated the fairness and openness of the process, we are encouraged that they are committed to participating in the elections. In every election, there are people who try to intimidate voters or distort the result. Such efforts will not escape our attention or yours in the press. Most important, they will not escape the attention of the Panamanian people.

Cartter Statement  
Page 2

Because of the deep friendship I feel for the people of Panama, I urge you to vote in peace and with confidence. We are here to show that you do not stand alone. The world community of democratic people support a free vote.

I am deeply committed to the full implementation of the Panama Canal Treaties and the eventual restoration of normal political and economic relations between our two countries. Free and fair elections provide an opportunity to move toward these goals by promoting national reconciliation.

On Sunday, we hope that the second promise of Omar Torrijos will be fulfilled and that Panamanians will have proved not only to be independent but genuinely free to choose their own elected leaders.