

## Interview: Ricardo de la Espriella

---

# Panamanian president: unity of the debtors would make itself felt

*Ricardo de la Espriella, the President of Panama, gave an exclusive interview to EIR correspondent Carlos Wesley in Panama City March 2. President de la Espriella took office on Aug. 1, 1982.*

**Wesley:** Mr. President, was the delegation that left today for the Non-Aligned Summit in New Delhi given any instructions to join with the other countries on finding a solution to the debt problem?

**De la Espriella:** What can the Non-Aligned do about the debt?

**Wesley:** Well, for one thing, they could establish a debtors' cartel. . .

**De la Espriella:** (laughing) About 95 percent of the world qualifies for membership in a debtors' cartel, and the other 5 percent does not have enough resources to solve the problem.

**Wesley:** On previous occasions you have stated that you favor the establishment of such a debtors' cartel, and you have also stated that you think that it is not a bad idea to bring about global renegotiations of the debt. Are you still of the same opinion?

**De la Espriella:** Everything that is a cartel carries weight, can make itself felt politically. That does not mean that a debtors' cartel is the solution, but we have a saying: "In unity there is strength."

## Interview: Juan José Amado

---

# Panamanian foreign minister: we need a Central American solution

*In an interview with EIR correspondent Carlos Wesley, the foreign minister of Panama, Juan Jose Amado, expressed his opposition to reported plans to increase the number of American military advisers in El Salvador. During the interview in Panama City March 2, Foreign Minister Amado also stated his opposition to the formation of a debtors' cartel, and gave his views on the possibility of building a new sea-level canal through Panama.*

*Excerpts from the interview follow.*

**Wesley:** Several countries in Ibero-America are now voicing the opinion that the Third World ought to band together in a debtors' cartel to bring about joint debt renegotiations.

**Amado:** It is difficult for us to look at global debt renegotiations, be it in the framework of joint action on the part of the Non-Aligned countries, or the Group of 77, or the Latin American countries, as an effective way to achieve immediate solutions.

What we can and should do is to make the international credit and financial institutions conscious of our needs, so that they make the length and terms of payments more realistic, more in keeping with the internal conditions of each country.

**Wesley:** What you are proposing has been proposed many times before. It has been proposed at many meetings of UNCTAD. It was also proposed at the Non-Aligned summit of 1976, which called for the establishment of a new world economic order. So far, what has resulted is a dialogue among the deaf. American economist Lyndon LaRouche, EIR's founder, has stated that the only way to force the international financial institutions and advanced countries to listen is to form a debtors' cartel, to use the threat of a debt moratorium as a weapon to obtain better terms of payments, and obtain financing for productive investments. . . .

**Amado:** I must insist, in all honesty, that it would be difficult for you to achieve a common position among the countries to deal with their foreign debts when there are intrinsic variations in each of those countries that do not allow for a unification of the criteria for repayment.

I don't know the situation of neighboring countries, either about their revenues, or their obligations.

I do know Panama's situation; and what we have to do to meet our obligations. But we cannot draw any generalizations from that, nor force general conditions that are not in keeping with the real situation of each country.

Panama could not at any time adapt its own conditions to that of the countries of South America, or to the other coun-