



Introduction by
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The visit of President Oscar Arias will help us all to a greater understanding of Costa Rica. In that effort the FIRST report can play a valuable part.

In the case of Costa Rica, to understand is to admire. A small country in Central America, she has moved modestly but firmly in the direction towards which the rest of the world aspires. We all aim at reducing the burden and danger of armaments; Costa Rica has no army. We aim to encourage the spread of democracy across the world; Costa Rica is a robust democracy established for more than fifty years with a network of institutions designed to prevent

arbitrary government. We now in the rest of the world recognise the need for a determined effort to control the harm done by climate change: Costa Rica has been a pioneer in its own continent, for example organising one fourth of its territory as national forest, and relying on hydro electric power for its electricity.

As a result of these policies and its natural beauty more and more foreign visitors are attracted to Costa Rica. Like all countries Costa Rica has its social and economic problems but they are being tackled with a consistency and determination which invites not just tourism but substantial investment, based on a solid past record and well based hopes for the future. **F**