

A REQUEST RECEIVED FROM ALBANIA FOR ASSISTANCE IN
ALLEVIATING CONDITIONS CREATED
BY A RECENT WIDESPREAD FLOOD

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The following cable, dated 28 October, has been received by the Secretary-General from Colonel General Enver Hoxha, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania:

"In the name of the Albanian Government and people I appeal to you to make representations to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and to the Assembly so that economic assistance may speedily be granted to Albania which has suffered immeasurable damage as a result of great floods. In the night of 22, 23 October an unprecedented downpour of rain descended upon all parts of the country. This great flood covered our lowlands. The extent of the damage has not yet been ascertained. Two big bridges and four small ones were destroyed; yet another big bridge was damaged. Roads were carried away by the flood or cut at several points. Hundreds of village dwellings were swept away. A large number of cattle perished. The number of people who lost their lives in this disaster is not yet known. The produce of many villages was destroyed. In the town many stores and warehouses suffered extensive damage. Agriculture has suffered stupendous loss. A large proportion of the fields had been sown; now two-thirds of this area will have to be resown since the floods have destroyed the present seedlings. Not only will it be necessary to do the whole work again but we shall also require new seed which we cannot find because we have not yet reached the point of ensuring more than a small part of our bread supply. For all those reasons, we ask you once again to lend us your valuable assistance.

I think that the United Nations will not fail to help the small Albanian people which honourably performed its duties towards the freedom-loving nations.

I have the honour to be, etc.

Colonel General Enver Hoxha

Albanian Prime Minister and Minister for
Foreign Affairs"

Since receiving this cable the Secretary-General has been informed that the Director-General of UNRRA has issued the following statement on action which UNRRA is taking to relieve the distress and repair the damage caused by the flood:

"I have just received an urgent cable from Colonel General Hoxha, Chief of the Albanian Government, and from the UNRRA Mission in Albania, about a disastrous flood in South Albania. I have directed the UNRRA Mission to survey the extent of the damage to see what additional requirements UNRRA can fulfil in order to relieve suffering and hardship in this area.

"In the meantime, acting under the emergency authority conferred upon the Director-General on the 14 March 1945 by the Central Committee, I have today (October 31) authorized a special and supplementary relief programme in the amount of \$300,000.00 in addition to the regular UNRRA programme for Albania. I hope to be able to obtain blankets and other emergency supplies in Europe so as to expedite relief work to meet this emergency.

"In addition, I am having the present supply programme for Albania studied with a view to substituting supplies required to meet this emergency in so far as practicable."

In these circumstances, the Secretary-General has, as an interim measure, sent the following message to Colonel General Hoxha:

"I am transmitting your cable of 28 October to the General Assembly of the United Nations which will learn of the disaster which

has overtaken your country with deep concern. May I express my own deep sympathy and my gratification that the Director-General of UNRRA has announced a special relief programme to help meet the emergency."

The Secretary-General suggests that the following message also might be sent by the General Assembly to Colonel General Hoxha and that a copy of this message be communicated to the Director-General of UNRRA:

"The General Assembly has learned with deep concern of the disaster which has befallen the Albanian people and countryside as a result of the recent widespread flooding. All of the Members of the General Assembly sympathize profoundly with the Albanian people in their distress. Members of the United Nations who are also members of UNRRA welcome the opportunity of contributing in some measure to the alleviation of suffering in Albania through the special assistance which UNRRA is arranging to provide in this emergency."

In proposing this course of action in this particular emergency the Secretary-General is mindful of the need for early consideration of the general problem of providing relief to countries which may suffer from similar disasters in the future and which may themselves be unable to mobilize or finance the necessary assistance. In the light of the discussion on relief questions during the current session of the General Assembly the Secretariat, in consultation with international agencies and voluntary societies, will undertake a study of the facilities and resources available for meeting such contingencies in the future. The General Assembly may wish to request the Economic and Social Council to consider, and make recommendations on, the measures required to ensure that adequate resources are readily available to meet this sort of emergency.
