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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Letter dated 16 October 1987 from the Permanent Representative of
Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

As Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a joint statement of the delegations of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the question of international economic security.

I would request you, Sir, to circulate the text of the joint statement as an official document of the General Assembly under items 12 and 82 of its agenda.

(Signed) László ESZTERGALYOS
Ambassador

JOINT STATEMENT

of the delegations of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the forty-second session of the General Assembly on the question of international economic security

The interaction of economics and politics on the international arena is today closer than ever before. Recognizing this, and guided by the wish to make détente an effective and also a continuous process, increasingly viable many-sided and universal in scope, the socialist countries consistently advocate that the international community should undertake concerted efforts to establish favourable conditions for the development of economic co-operation as well - for confidence-building and the removal of barriers to the solution of global problems, and for the normalization of international economic relations. The elimination and prevention of mass diseases, hunger and malnutrition, the protection of the environment and the solution of other problems which have become global in scope can be achieved only on the basis of world-wide economic co-operation founded on the existence of political will. The socialist countries are convinced of the need for joint efforts towards the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security, inter alia, in the economic sphere.

The socialist countries note with satisfaction the work being done in the United Nations towards agreeing on a concept of international economic security, and regard this work as one of the important areas of the Organization's socio-economic activities, flowing directly from the realities of today's world and directly connected with the need for a new approach towards the solution of world problems, including that of overcoming underdevelopment.

International co-operation in the field of trade, in the monetary and financial sphere, in industry, science and technology, and environmental matters is becoming one of the most important factors in the economic growth and social progress of all States. Furthermore, the significance of such co-operation is outgrowing the purely economic framework. It may become the material basis for political and military détente, a factor of prime importance in strengthening peace and security throughout the world. Far-reaching changes have taken place in world economics and in international economic relations since the founding of the United Nations. Growing economic interdependence is a spur to more active joint efforts to solve world economic problems, and spells the need to increase stability and predictability in international economic relations.

Interdependence embraces a whole system of varied economic, political, social and other links and affects the world economy both at the macro-economic level and at the level of national economies, sectors and individual enterprises. The transfer of problems arising in individual national economies to the economies of other countries is no solution. The absence of integrated long-term approaches to the solution of complex international economic problems under conditions of internationalization of economic links leads to a situation in which any State,

whatever the level of its development and whatever the socio-economic system to which it belongs, becomes vulnerable to external factors. National actions of individual countries are more and more frequently affecting the totality of international economic relations and individual sectors, and having an impact on other countries' possibilities of action.

In spite of many efforts and initiatives aimed at regularizing international economic relations, there has as yet been no success in overcoming the instability and unpredictability of the world economy. The intensification of negative factors in international economic relations over the past few years testifies to the need for a new approach which, being based on past experience and having absorbed everything useful that has already been achieved, might give impetus to the development of positive trends and the strengthening of confidence in international economic relations, making them safe for all parties. The essence of the new approach consists in establishing conditions for constructive dialogue and mutually advantageous co-operation based on respect for one another's interests; this would be conducive to the development of stable and predictable economic relations ensuring greater equality of chances both at the level of individual countries and at that of the world economy.

It is precisely such a dialogue that the socialist countries propose in advancing the idea of the joint elaboration of the concept of international economic security. Within the framework of such a dialogue all countries could exchange their experience, express their interests and, on that basis, determine those factors which weigh most heavily on international economic relations, find common approaches to global socio-economic problems and agree on joint measures for solving them founded upon collective responsibility and readiness for compromise. The concept of international economic security must objectively reflect a balance of the interests of all members of the international community. To elaborate it and bring it into effect will be a lengthy and complex process calling above all for the rejection of confrontationalist stereotypes in thinking and in action.

The socialist countries regard international economic security as a method of achieving a state of the world economy and of international economic relations which would be based on just, mutually advantageous and mutually acceptable principles and would provide conditions for peaceful coexistence and co-operation for the good of the socio-economic advancement of mankind as a whole and of all States, irrespective of their social systems, levels of development or other differences.

Under these conditions broad prospects would open up for the realization of the goals laid down in the United Nations Charter and in resolutions and decisions of promoting the well-being and economic development of all countries, establishing a new international economic order and eliminating everything hindering the normal development of world economic ties.

The United Nations should play a more substantial and active role in solving the urgent problems of the world economy and international economic relations affecting the security of States, and should ensure their sovereign right to choose independently the paths of their socio-economic development. A significant

contribution to the formulation and subsequent evaluation of the implementation of collective measures to solve these problems could also be made by other international forums, meetings of interested countries, and non-governmental organizations.

An important step towards the normalization of international economic relations would be the conscientious observance of multilateral agreements already concluded and fuller participation in existing international economic organizations on the basis of the proportional representation of all those concerned by their activity.

The achievement of real progress in the area of disarmament and the strengthening of peace and international security is of fundamental importance for the normalization of international economic relations. The arms race not only diverts resources from economic growth and social development but also causes instability in economic and other spheres of inter-State co-operation.

In turn, the strengthening of international economic security could also assist in the solution of the problems of disarmament and development, and create favourable conditions for working out principles for the diversion of resources from military to peaceful purposes.

The formulation of the concept of international economic security would be facilitated by a significant improvement in the reciprocal supply of information at the international, interregional and regional levels, and by the establishment on this basis of a comprehensive system for forecasting risk factors which affect national economies in varying degrees. Such a system, based on co-ordination of the efforts of regional economic organizations, of the United Nations and other international economic organizations would significantly contribute to enhancing the predictability of international economic relations and averting conflicts in a timely manner.

The objective of making joint use of scientific achievements and organizing joint research with a view to solving global problems affecting all mankind is becoming particularly urgent. Areas of co-operation could be the peaceful exploration of outer space in the interests of all States, the establishment of an international research centre on problems of the treatment and prevention of AIDS and other infectious diseases, the conclusion of an international treaty on co-operation in preventing and eliminating the consequences of large-scale industrial, transport and natural disasters, and environmental protection, including the free exchange of relevant experience and technologies.

The establishment of international teams of scientists and the organization of open scientific laboratories which would work on solving world-wide problems, from physical and technical to medical or social, would help solve the global problems of mankind. The conduct of projects involved in solving such problems would be assisted by the establishment of a special fund.

Immediate joint action is required on the part of States to combat the mass hunger periodically recurring in a number of areas of the world. This action could

be carried out on the basis of observing meteorological, soil and biological and economic processes in order to alert Governments and international organizations to dangerous situations in individual areas and regions. In order to bring about a long-term and final solution to this problem, the efforts of the international community must also be directed at eliminating the roots of mass hunger and removing its deep-seated national and international, political, economic, social and natural causes.

At a later stage an important contribution to ensuring international economic security could be made by multilateral measures to regulate international economic and monetary and financial ties and improve institutional arrangements, taking into account the far-reaching changes which have occurred in the world economy. This could involve the development of non-discriminatory mutually advantageous forms of economic ties, and the regulation of the international movement of investments and capital, of other forms of international economic co-operation and of their influence on the economic structure of individual countries; it would include the long-term solution of the debt problem on the basis of combined efforts by debtors and creditors and a just distribution of the burden of this problem, and completion of the formulation in the United Nations of codes of conduct for transnational corporations and the transfer of technologies.

The socialist countries are deeply convinced that in the current complex international situation the common problems and goals of preserving civilization and ensuring the survival of mankind require a new political thinking and collective action. Indisputably, the formulation of foreign and domestic policy is the sovereign affair of States. However, the growing economic interdependence makes it necessary for each country, in choosing the directions of this policy, and the means of realizing it to abide by the principles of co-operation approved by the world community.

The socialist countries call upon all States to express their views about ways of developing international economic dialogue and co-operation under conditions of interdependence. An open and universal exchange of views is required at all levels, from the expert and non-governmental levels to the highest inter-governmental level, including the convening in the future of a world congress on these questions.

The discussion of the problem of international economic security initiated in the United Nations has been the first major step in this direction. It has revealed differences in approach, but also possibilities of finding points of convergence and of bringing countries' positions closer on the most important issues of international economic relations. The results of the work accomplished demonstrate the advisability and necessity of continuing efforts to formulate the concept of international economic security in the interests of all States.
