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STRENGTHENING OF SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/38/50/Rev.1.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 108th meeting, on 16 December 1982, the General Assembly adopted resolution 37/118, entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", the operative part of which, inter alia, reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"....

"15. Considers that the security of the Mediterranean and the security of the adjacent regions are interdependent and that further efforts are necessary for the creation of conditions of security and fruitful co-operation in all fields for all countries and peoples of the Mediterranean, on the basis of the principles of sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, security, non-intervention and non-interference, non-violation of international frontiers, non-use of force, the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force, peaceful settlement of disputes and just and viable solutions of the existing problems and crises in the area on the basis of the Charter and relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the withdrawal of foreign forces of occupation, respect for sovereignty over natural resources and the right of peoples under colonial or foreign domination to self-determination and independence;

"16. Calls upon all Governments that have not done so to submit before the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly their views on the question of the strengthening of security and co-operation in the region of the Mediterranean and requests the Secretary-General to submit, on the basis of all replies received, an analytical report on this question to the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session;

"17. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-eighth session an item entitled 'Strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region'."

2. Pursuant to paragraph 16 of resolution 37/118, the Secretary-General, on 7 April 1983, addressed a note verbale to the Governments of States Members of the United Nations that had not submitted their views under paragraph 15 of resolution 36/102 of 2 December 1981, requesting their views on the question of strengthening of security and co-operation in the region of the Mediterranean.

3. As at 15 July 1983, replies containing such views had been received from the Governments of Indonesia, Jordan, Poland, Spain and the Syrian Arab Republic. The substantive part of these replies is reproduced in section II below. Replies which may be received later will be published as addenda to the present report.

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

INDONESIA

[Original: English]

[6 June 1983]

1. The Indonesian Government fully supports the efforts to strengthen security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region.
2. Further efforts to attain these objectives should appropriately emanate from and be initiated by States of the region.

JORDAN

[Original: Arabic]

[20 April 1983]

1. The Government of Jordan is well aware of the importance of the subject of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region. It considers that the security of this region is an important part of the question of international security. Moreover, Jordan believes that the national security of all States is linked with regional security and, more widely, with international security. Accordingly, it is a fixed principle of the policy of the Jordanian Government to support all efforts aimed at strengthening security and stability in the Mediterranean region while pointing out that it is not possible to separate that process from total commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and its objectives.
2. The Government of Jordan considers that such a vital and sensitive region as that of the Mediterranean should remain aloof from military rivalry and bloody conflicts and that its problems should be tackled on the basis of complete respect for the principles of international law, insistence on its implementation and compliance with all international covenants, chiefly the Charter of the United Nations.
3. In keeping with this policy, Jordan supports and welcomes all initiatives and recommendations adopted in all forums and at all levels, in particular by the United Nations, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, for the strengthening of security and stability in the Mediterranean region.
4. As a first step towards accomplishing the goal of making the Mediterranean region a zone of peace and co-operation, immediate steps should be taken for the reduction of foreign military forces, the disengagement of warring forces and, subsequently, the withdrawal of all naval fleets belonging to the great Powers from

the Mediterranean waters. The ultimate aim must be the elimination of all foreign military bases from the Mediterranean region and non-adherence to external military pacts and treaties. Above all, nothing less should be accepted than the declaration of the Mediterranean region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, together with the granting of sufficient guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States that they will not be attacked, threatened or blackmailed with such weapons.

5. In this connection, the Jordanian Government welcomes Malta's adherence to its neutral position in keeping with the objectives and principles of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. In order to strengthen security and stability in the Mediterranean region, it is necessary to refrain from the use or threat of use of force against the territory of others. Efforts must also be made for the resolution of disputes by peaceful means and for compliance with the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others.

6. Expansionist practices and policies of hegemonism and the use of unrestrained force, such as we have recently witnessed against Lebanon, cannot possibly be of help and cannot contribute towards strengthening stability and security in the Mediterranean region. They are in flagrant contradiction of the aspirations of the parties interested in strengthening security and stability in the Mediterranean region.

7. The blatant invasion and occupation of Lebanon by Israel is a crushing blow to the notion of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region.

8. Israel's encirclement and occupation last year of the Lebanese capital, Beirut - one of the most ancient ports on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean - represents a murderous thrust and an open challenge to all efforts and recommendations aimed at bolstering security and stability in the Mediterranean. In fact, Israel's occupation of Lebanon and its refusal to withdraw therefrom threaten not only regional security but place international peace and security in imminent danger.

9. Moreover, there are numerous focal points of tension and sources of threat to security and stability in the Mediterranean region which require to be defused if that region is to experience true security. The basis and framework of any solution to these problems must be complete respect for the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, followed by the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

10. The Jordanian Government firmly believes that no progress can be made towards making the Mediterranean region a zone of peace and co-operation without a just and permanent solution to the Middle East problem and the question of Palestine. For any solution to be such, it must be based in its entirety on the two principles of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of the territories of others by force and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination on the soil of its homeland, Palestine. Within the framework of such a settlement and through absolute respect for those two principles, it will be possible to provide for the right of all peoples of the region to live in peace within internationally recognized borders.

11. Finally, the achievements of such a solution to the Middle East problem will be a decisive political act and a great diplomatic accomplishment. It will remove the greatest obstacle to security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region. It is, moreover, a formidable international responsibility requiring not only the concerted efforts of the international community but goodwill, a sense of international responsibility and humane commitment on the part of all parties concerned, as well as on the part of the great Powers.

POLAND

[Original: English]

[1 July 1983]

1. The region of the Mediterranean, because of its strategic and economic advantages, occupies an important place in international relations. At the same time, it is among the most militarized regions of the world. Already for two decades nuclear weapons have been stored in the region and their stockpiles are to be increased in the near future in pursuance of the plans of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Political and ideological discrepancies between the Mediterranean countries, unresolved territorial issues, remnants of colonialism in the area of political, economic and cultural relations, attempts at exerting pressures and threats on the part of some Western States, in particular the United States, with regard to the countries of the region - all this makes the Mediterranean a region of numerous tensions and conflicts that, in practice, never die out. Simultaneously, the nations and many Governments of the Mediterranean countries are ever more aware of the threats hanging over them and of the need to undertake efforts for relaxation of tensions and consolidation of security and mutual co-operation. This state of mind has found its expression in many postulates and political initiatives and the slogan "the Mediterranean Sea - the zone of peace and co-operation" gains ever greater public support in the countries of this region.

2. Poland, together with other signatories of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, has assumed a political obligation to co-operate in promotion of détente and security in the Mediterranean region and to develop co-operation with the countries of this region. Poland maintains close political, economic and cultural relations with the Mediterranean States. With majority of these States Poland has concluded agreements on trade, cultural, scientific and technological co-operation, as well as co-operation in the domains of radio and television. Poland maintains regular shipping and airline connections with these States. Mutually advantageous cultural and sports exchanges are being developed. Poland is interested in the furtherance of these relations, in particular with the developing Mediterranean countries, and in the gradual transformation of the structure of trade towards a greater share of manufactured goods.

3. At the meeting of experts of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe at La Valetta in 1979, Poland made its contribution to the quest for the

most appropriate forms of co-operation between the States-signatories to the Final Act of the Conference and the non-participating Mediterranean countries. Voicing its support for diversification and growth of co-operation in all areas between the States participating in the Conference and the non-participating Mediterranean States, in particular on a bilateral basis, Poland also supports the recommendations of the La Valetta meeting regarding mutual co-operation of the Mediterranean countries in areas of their interest. Poland also gave its approval to multilateral endeavours undertaken within the framework of international organizations, in particular the Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme, to promote co-operation in the Mediterranean region in the areas of economy, transportation, environmental protection, science and culture. At the same time, it does not lose sight of the fact that, according to the Final Act, all Europe is a homogenous region of co-operation and security.

4. Poland is not and cannot be indifferent to the threat of peace stemming from the region of the Mediterranean Sea adjacent to European continent. Poland shares the view that the security of Europe, conceived in a wider context of global security, is directly related with the security in the Mediterranean region. Poland, together with other States members of the Warsaw Treaty, has always opposed the installation of nuclear arms in the Mediterranean region. Poland has always supported the proposals to transform this region into a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It spoke in favour of extending the confidence-building measures in the military field, provided for in the Final Act, to include the Mediterranean region, to withdraw nuclear-armed warships from that sea, to refrain from deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of all Mediterranean States that do not have such weapons.

5. Today, reciprocating the strivings of the Mediterranean nations and acting in the interest of security in the Mediterranean region and Europe as a whole, the States members of the Warsaw Treaty, including Poland, urge that the Mediterranean Sea be transformed into a zone of peace and co-operation and to hold appropriate negotiations to this end. Poland is confident that a positive conclusion of the Madrid meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, where the questions of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region are also discussed, would add to the pursuance of this objective. This would contribute to the cause of consolidation of security and stability in the Mediterranean region, to the non-use of force and to the peaceful resolution of tensions existing there and increased confidence, thus adding to the establishment of détente in all of Europe.

SPAIN

[Original: Spanish]

[29 June 1983]

1. The Mediterranean is an important geostrategic and geopolitical region of the world, in which there is a variety of trade between North and South, along with

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confrontation between East and West, amid the existence of socio-political, cultural and religious traditions of varying origins and significance.

2. Spain has an important Mediterranean dimension, which is not only geographical but also historical and cultural, and constitutes one of the essential aspects of its foreign policy. Consequently Spain attaches great importance to the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean.

3. Spain believes it desirable that there should be an enhancement of the relations of economic, technical and cultural co-ordination and co-operation, in the broadest sense of the word, with the coastal countries, especially in Euro-Arab relations; all this for the sake of the prosperity and security of the coastal countries, and with the purpose of as far as possible avoiding excessive dependence on powers outside the region. It must be understood that this objective cannot be attained all at once, but will be the result of a process in which Spain wishes to participate. In this context, Spain is receptive to initiatives which may be put forward for active collaboration between the Mediterranean countries.

4. Spain is concerned about the state of security in the Mediterranean. Along with a tendency in the region to accumulate arms, which in the current circumstances is not expected to change in the near future, there are currently conflicts and confrontations in the region, and there is always the risk that other confrontations might develop. It should be noted that the reasons for these conflicts are not homogenous in nature: in some instances, local causes explain the situations which prevail, while in others the conflicts are the result of the antagonisms between the two super Powers. A large proportion of these conflicts have local origins and roots and, therefore, it is not advisable to isolate them from their local context and forcibly include them in the Mediterranean area in the broad sense, since this would lead to an undesirable globalization.

5. The building of security in the Mediterranean is impeded by the difficulty arising from the absence of a definition of the Mediterranean region. Clearly, the Mediterranean region cannot be confined solely to the Mediterranean sea, but should also include the adjacent areas. In this respect, the main difficulty lies in determining the boundaries of those adjacent areas, which in most cases are themselves strategic regions. The absence of a definition is all the more significant considering the range of modern weapons and the great mobility of armed forces which makes it conceivable that, even without being present in the region, they would be able to operate in it within minimum periods of time.

6. It should be recalled that the Final Act of Helsinki includes a chapter concerning Mediterranean questions which indicates that security in Europe is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean. Spain is desirous that security should be strengthened in this area and it believes that the question should be discussed in suitable forums such as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and also the forthcoming disarmament conference in Europe which will no doubt adopt measures of benefit to the Mediterranean area.

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

[Original: Arabic]

[18 May 1983]

1. The Syrian Arab Republic supports all efforts, whether at the international or the regional level, aimed at strengthening international peace and security, on the basis of its adherence to the purposes and principles of the Pact of the League of Arab States and the Charter of the United Nations, to the purposes and principles of the Non-Aligned Movement and, in particular, to the statements contained in the final documents of the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries concerning the transformation of the Mediterranean region into a nuclear-weapon-free zone and linking the security of this region with that of neighbouring regions.

2. True security and co-operation cannot be achieved in the region as long as the causes of tension and foreign military bases posing a continual threat to the peace and security of the region and increasingly aggravating tension there are not removed.

3. The transformation of the Mediterranean region into a zone of peace requires:

(a) The withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories and the achievement of a just solution to the cause of the Palestinian people which would guarantee its legitimate rights, in particular its right to return to its homeland and to establish its own independent State there in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations;

(b) The withdrawal of foreign fleets and the removal of foreign colonial military bases, whose presence constitutes a threat to the security and independence of the States of the region and a form of political, economic and military domination, in particular through the military manoeuvres which they undertake and the threats which they present to the States of the region;

(c) A halt to the political, military and economic support provided by the United States of America to Israel, whereby Israel is encouraged to persist in its aggressive and expansionist policy, the annexation of territories, intimidation, interference, sabotage, invasion, racial separatism and discrimination and denial of the right of the Palestinian Arab people to self-determination and to the establishment of its own independent State wherein it acts in contravention and defiance of the resolutions of the United Nations, the purposes and principles of the Charter, the principles of international law and, in particular, the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force;

(d) A ban on the stockpiling of nuclear weapons in the region, a halt to the arms race, action for general and complete disarmament and the reallocation of resources now devoted to military budgets for the benefit of the developing countries;

(e) The achievement of a solution to the question of Cyprus which will safeguard the rights of the two communities and ensure the country's unity, integrity, independence and non-aligned character.
