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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

Letter dated 3 August 1977 from the Permanent Representatives
of France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern
Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-
General

We have the honour to inform you that a meeting was held in Paris from 19 to 21 July 1977 between representatives of the two administering Powers and a New Hebridean delegation in order to discuss future constitutional developments in the Territory and that the enclosed joint statement was issued at its conclusion.

We should be grateful if this letter and its enclosure could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 24 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Jacques LEPRETTE
Permanent Representative
of France to the
United Nations

(Signed) Ivor RICHARD
Permanent Representative
of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern
Ireland to the United Nations

* A/32/150.

ANNEX

Joint statement on future constitutional developments in
the New Hebrides

Delegations of the two metropolitan Governments, led respectively by Mr. Olivier Stirn, State Secretary to the Minister of the Interior in charge of Overseas Departments and Territories, and the Right Honourable Lord Goronwy-Roberts, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, held discussions in Paris on future constitutional developments in the New Hebrides. They were assisted by representatives of New Hebridean political groups and of the chiefs of the Malfatu Mauri. They regretted that the leaders of the Vanuaaku party finally decided not to attend the conference. However, they tried their best to take account of the views of the party in so far as these were known to them.

The two Governments agreed as follows:

(a) New elections would be held for the Representative Assembly before 1 December 1977: because of the limited time available to make the necessary arrangements, the current electoral rules and the present voting age would be maintained for the election;

(b) They would hold another Ministerial conference in Vila in December 1977 or January 1978: the purpose of this meeting would be to consult the members of the new Representative Assembly, and in the light of their views to decide on how the Council of Ministers would be composed and a detailed time-table covering the stages leading to independence;

(c) A system of internal self-government would be set up in the first months of 1978 and for this purpose decisions were taken about the respective powers of the bodies elected to represent the population of the New Hebrides and of the metropolitan Governments;

(d) New elections and a referendum would be held during the second half of 1980. In the referendum the population would be asked to decide whether they wished to proceed to independence, in accordance with the principle of self-determination. If they so decided, independence would then be proclaimed.