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CONVENING OF THE SIXTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Note verbale dated 25 February 1974 from the Secretary-General
to the Permanent Representatives to the United Nations

The Secretary-General of the United Nations presents his compliments to the Permanent Representative of ... to the United Nations and has the honour to refer to the Secretary-General's note of 31 January 1974 transmitting a request from His Excellency Mr. Houari Boumediène, President of the Revolutionary Council and of the Council of Ministers of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to consider an item entitled "Study of the problems of raw materials and development" (A/9541 and Corr.1).

On 14 February, the required majority of Member States had concurred in this request. Consequently, under rules 8 to 10 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the special session should have been convened not later than 1 March. In this connexion, however, the Secretary-General received a letter dated 14 February from the Permanent Representative of Iran to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77, informing him of a general desire among the members of the Group to postpone the opening of the special session to a later date and requesting him to take appropriate steps to consult the membership about this proposal and take the necessary action accordingly. The Permanent Representative added that some members of the Group had suggested the date of 2 April as appropriate for convening the session. In this regard, it will be recalled that in the past there have been instances in which regular sessions of the General Assembly were postponed, at the request of a Member State and after consultations with the other Member States, beyond the scheduled opening date specified in the rules of procedure.

By letters of 15 February, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, on behalf of the Secretary-General, brought the communication of the Chairman of the Group of 77 to the attention of the Chairmen of the various regional groups, requesting them to ascertain and to inform him whether a postponement was acceptable to the members of their groups and, if so, whether the suggested date of 2 April was suitable. Similar letters were also sent to those Member States which do not belong to any regional group.

By 19 February, the Secretary-General was informed by the Chairmen of all the regional groups that there was a consensus among the members of the groups in favour of a postponement of the opening date of the special session. The Member States which do not belong to any of the regional groups also informed the Secretary-General that they concurred in the postponement.

On 21 February, the Secretary-General received a further letter from the Chairman of the Group of 77 informing him that the Group had unanimously decided in favour of the date of 9 April for the opening of the special session.

After consultations, the Chairmen of the five regional groups informed the Secretary-General that the members of their groups had concurred in the date of 9 April. The Member States which do not belong to any regional group also informed the Secretary-General that they concurred in that date.

The Secretary-General therefore has the honour to inform the Permanent Representative that the sixth special session of the General Assembly will convene at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 9 April 1974, at 3 p.m.

Three copies of the provisional agenda, drawn up in accordance with rule 16 of the rules of procedure, are attached (A/9543). Further copies will be distributed through the usual channels.

The Secretary-General wishes to remind the Permanent Representative that the credentials of those representatives who are not already authorized to represent their Governments in the General Assembly should be issued in accordance with rule 27 of the rules of procedure.
