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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA
OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION

CONVOCATION OF A WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE UNDER
THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Letter dated 4 October 1973 from the Permanent Representative
of the United States of America to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

The Government of the United States of America proposes the inclusion on the agenda of the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, as an important and urgent matter, of an item entitled "Convocation of a world food conference under the auspices of the United Nations".

The general purpose of the proposed conference, as explained by the Secretary of State in his address to the General Assembly on 24 September, ^{1/} would be to discuss ways to maintain adequate food supplies, and to harness the efforts of all nations to meet the hunger and malnutrition resulting from natural disasters.

The problem of the world's food supplies requires urgent attention. The world has had a clear warning that we need to develop better means to assure adequate food supplies over the longer term.

We must act to develop better ways of coping with the danger of a recurrence sizeable declines in production simultaneously in many critical areas of the world. At the same time, we cannot take for granted that the increasing demands on the world's food supplies as a result of population growth and rising incomes will be automatically met by the policies of the past. Nor can we remain indifferent to the fact that in the developing countries as a whole food production is not increasing quickly enough to improve over-all nutritional levels.

Problems of this order call for co-operative action by the entire world community. Rich and poor, large and small, market or centrally-controlled economy, each nation has its interest, its obligation, its role to play.

^{1/} A/PV.2124, p. 21.

Major producing countries, including the United States, are already engaged in discussions of the situation in order to determine the true dimensions of the problem of supply. The wheat grain situation has been reviewed by the members of the International Wheat Council. At the seventeenth Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in November, member nations will consider proposals for an undertaking on minimum world food security.

The proposed conference would bring these and similar activities into one central focus. It is our hope that the conference will produce guidelines for individual and co-operative action which will enable the international community to meet the tests it will face in this area in the years ahead.

I should be grateful if you would consider this letter as an explanatory memorandum within the meaning of rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and if you would circulate it as an official document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) John SCALI
