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SECURITY COUNCIL

Forty-fifth year

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PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES  
BETWEEN STATES

Letter dated 3 October 1990 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Secretary of  
State of the United States of America addressed to the  
Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Joint American-Soviet  
Statement: Responsibility for Peace and Security in the Changing World (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex  
circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 12,  
28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 79, 80, 81, 84, 86, 87, 89, 105, 108, 110, 117, 118, 119 and  
139, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) James A. BAKER III  
Secretary of State  
of the United States of America

(Signed) Eduard A. SHEVARDNADZE  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the Union of Soviet  
Socialist Republics

ANNEX

Joint statement issued on 3 October 1990 by the Union of Soviet  
Socialist Republics and the United States of America

Responsibility for Peace and Security in the Changing World

The forty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly is taking place amidst the most profound changes in international affairs that have occurred since the Second World War. The confrontational nature of relations between East and West is giving way to a co-operative relationship and partnership. The United Nations is fast becoming a real centre for agreed common actions and the Security Council is re-establishing its crucial role in the maintenance of international security, peaceful settlement of disputes and prevention of conflicts. Yet there remain many challenges to meet and problems to solve on the way to a peaceful and prosperous future.

Reaffirming the resolution presented last year by the United States and the Soviet Union and unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, our two countries will attach special importance in the United Nations and its specialized agencies and programmes to promoting practical, multifaceted solutions to the issues of international peace and security, political, economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems.

To accomplish this we will pursue co-operation with all Member States in attainment of the following:

(a) Strengthen the United Nations efforts to promote international peace and security in all its aspects by working to improve United Nations peace-keeping, peace-making and crisis-prevention functions, by encouraging more active use of the Secretary-General's good offices and, at the request of individual countries, electoral assistance;

(b) Establish a new sense of responsibility at the United Nations by encouraging the trend away from rhetorical excess towards efforts to deal pragmatically with the major issues of the 1990s, including transnational issues such as narcotics, the environment, development, terrorism and human rights;

(c) Promote a new way of conducting diplomatic efforts within the United Nations system to eliminate duplicative programmes and activities and ensure that the United Nations system is utilized in the most efficient manner possible - we call this a "unitary United Nations";

(d) Ensure the availability of sufficient resources to the United Nations for it to function effectively and efficiently by timely payment of financial obligations to the United Nations.

Promoting peace and security in all its aspects

Joint efforts have contributed significantly to the easing of tensions in southern Africa and Central America, and are part of efforts to prepare a peaceful settlement in Cambodia. But serious problems still remain. Our search continues for workable solutions to conflict and instability in the Persian Gulf, the Middle East, Afghanistan and El Salvador.

In the Persian Gulf, we face a most serious threat to the integrity of the emerging international system. The United States and the Soviet Union are working together with other members of the Security Council to fashion a concerted response, unprecedented in United Nations history, to this crisis. The swift reaction of the international community to Iraq's dangerous and unwarranted aggression serves as a sobering reminder to any future aggressor; the international community will not tolerate the kind of wanton aggression that Iraq has committed. We call upon all United Nations Members to continue to support the sanctions invoked by the Security Council in its resolution 661 (1990) and 670 (1990) until Iraq abides by the call of the Security Council to withdraw its forces from Kuwait immediately, totally and unconditionally. We call also for the restoration of the legitimate Government of Kuwait.

The rapidly changing structure of international relations requires a United Nations that, while remaining faithful to its original purposes, can also respond flexibly and effectively to new challenges as they occur, such as drugs, the environment and the need to ensure the protection of human rights.

Tangible examples of the United Nations movement away from divisive rhetoric and political excess were last December's special session of the General Assembly on apartheid and the resumed session last month, where the world community underscored its resolute opposition to apartheid while agreeing, by consensus, on a positive approach based on dialogue among all South African parties. We will work for equally positive results at the General Assembly this year.

The special session of the General Assembly on international economic co-operation, held in April 1990, also reflected the growing convergence of views world wide on the need for more effective approaches to national economic development, in the context of a supportive international economic environment. Our two countries will continue working together to promote further convergence in this direction. We will also support efforts to ensure careful and pragmatic preparation for the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development. We want to see the Conference fashion a realistic action plan to set the United Nations course in the coming decades.

Another area in which the United Nations is actively promoting peaceful change is in facilitation of free and fair elections. United Nations assistance in Namibia and Nicaragua was dramatically successful, and there are many other situations where the United Nations services are being requested. Our two countries will work with other United Nations Members and the Secretary-General to structure a United Nations electoral assistance process to enable the Organization, at the request of countries concerned, to carry out effectively this important new effort.

### Promoting a unitary United Nations and assuring needed financial resources

An important area of our bilateral and multilateral co-operation has been the administration and management of the United Nations, particularly its budget. As major contributors to the United Nations, we believe it is essential that all views on the budget are taken into account, and that the agreement of all major contributors is required in order to approve the budget.

For there to be consensus, the United Nations system must improve the setting of priorities and improve co-ordination among various United Nations programmes. The aim should be to eliminate duplicative programmes and activities and ensure that the various components of the United Nations are utilized in the most efficient manner possible. For priority-setting and co-ordination to be effective, Members will need clearer and more comprehensive data on what the United Nations and the specialized agencies are doing with assessed and voluntary contributions.

Our two countries provide an important element of United Nations resources. As such, we recognize our responsibility to pay assessments promptly so that the United Nations has the resources required to perform the tasks as expeditiously as possible, keeping in mind the necessity of strengthening the administrative and budgetary reforms that have taken place in recent years.

We intend to work for further enhancing the efficiency of the executive machinery of the Organization.

### Establishing a new sense of responsibility for peace

The challenges before the international community and the United Nations are great. So, too, are the opportunities for more and better multilateral co-operation to confront and master the problem of our time.

In all spheres of United Nations activities the renunciation of sterile and rigid positions dictated by ideology rather than by practicality constitutes an essential prerequisite for creating an atmosphere of confidence within the United Nations among all United Nations Members.

The United Nations can play a leading role on issues of global concern. We will actively support efforts, throughout the United Nations system, to implement and strengthen the principles and the system of international peace, security and international co-operation laid down in the Charter.

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