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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE  
STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 11 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of  
Bulgaria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request you to have the enclosed text circulated as an official document of the General Assembly.

I should have liked this text to be circulated under agenda item 39 of the fortieth session. However, since that item has already been closed and in accordance with the practice of the General Assembly the text could not be distributed under it, I request you to have it circulated as an official document of the forty-first session of the General Assembly under the item entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security".

(Signed) Boris TSVETKOV  
First Deputy Foreign Minister  
Permanent Representative of  
the People's Republic of Bulgaria

ANNEX

As it is known, in its letter of 8 November 1985 addressed to the Secretary-General (A/40/869), the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations expressed the position of my country concerning the unprovoked attack of the Prime Minister of Turkey, Mr. Turgut Ozal, against Bulgaria during the solemn commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations. On 26 November 1985 the Permanent Mission of Turkey circulated a letter (A/40/904) containing new slanders, derogatory statements and falsehoods about the history of the Bulgarian State and its current policies.

Guided by the desire not to divert the attention of the world organization at the closing stage of the session, when it was adopting decisions on the cardinal problems of peace and security, the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bulgaria decided to refrain from immediately replying to the Turkish letter. In fact, by its hostile tone, arrogance and jingoistic fervour the letter speaks volumes about the mentality and motives inspiring the anti-Bulgarian campaign launched by Turkey.

Nevertheless, the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations finds it impossible to remain silent in the face of the insinuations contained in the Turkish letter. My country is of the view that it would be unfair and even ludicrous if a document in the United Nations archives that so flagrantly distorting reality and inciting hatred and tension in relations among countries and peoples should be left unanswered.

Without dwelling in detail on all slanders, we wish to call attention mainly to the falsification of history by the Turkish side for the obvious purpose of bending it to suit the preposterous assertions aimed solely at discrediting Bulgaria. The centrepiece of these falsifications is the unseemly endeavour to depict the Ottoman Empire, a most vicious enslaver of the Bulgarian and other peoples for almost 500 years, as the legitimate ruler and even benefactor of these peoples. The message this thesis seeks to convey is unmistakably clear. It serves to imply a certain "vested right" of Ankara to intervene in the internal affairs of these peoples and their sovereign States.

One of the basic tenets of this antihistorical platform is the assertion about the "positive impact" of the Ottoman rule on the national destiny of Bulgaria, including the blatant lie about the "happy life" of the Bulgarian people under the Turks.

But this argument is beneath criticism. It is a universally recognized fact that the Bulgarians and all the other peoples subjugated by that Empire were deprived of all rights and lived like slaves. There are numerous historical sources, among them eyewitness accounts by travellers at that time, which testify vividly to the disenfranchised status of the enslaved peoples, the forcible abduction of Bulgarian children to recruit them as janissaries and the coercive mass Turkification of the Bulgarian population.

The Turkish letter credits the Ottoman Empire with "saving" the Bulgarian people from extinction. The absurdity of this assertion becomes evident against the backdrop of bare historical facts: 1,600 revolts and the destruction of some 680,000 Bulgarians in the first several decades of the Ottoman yoke, the violent death of several more million for its entire duration, the Batak massacre and other acts of genocide during the ruthless suppression of the April 1876 uprising, as well as the heroic risings of other peoples and nationalities under Ottoman rule and many other similar facts.

The allegations of the Turkish side about some salvation mission of the Ottoman Empire are disgraceful and insulting to the memory of the countless victims slain in the struggle for the liberation of Bulgaria. The Bulgarian people have survived not because of the tender mercies of Turkey, but due to the fortitude of their national spirit and national awareness, and also as a result of the self-sacrifice of thousands of their sons and daughters in the struggle against the oppressor and for liberty. The true role of the Ottoman Empire at that time is described in a number of famous publications by V. Hugo, J. MacGahan, W. Gladstone, E. Schuyler and many other eminent contemporaries who raised their voices against the merciless annihilation of the Bulgarian people. It is intriguing to know if at least the insights of the illustrious Turkish statesman Kemal Attaturk concerning the oppressive character of the Ottoman State are of any value as far as the Permanent Representative of Turkey is concerned.

In trying to make the salvation mission of the Ottoman Empire more credible, the Turkish side resorts to ridiculous twisting of historical facts. Thus, for example, the aforementioned letter alleges that Bulgaria owed to the Ottoman Empire its liberation from the rule of Byzantium. A mere check with history books will confirm that the Bulgarians liberated themselves from Byzantium's domination in 1187, i.e., until its fall under Ottoman yoke the Second Bulgarian Kingdom had existed for more than 200 years.

The Turkish side's slanders regarding the so-called forcible change of names in Bulgaria, made from the position of a self-styled arbitrator and mentor, are utterly baseless. In our letter (A/30/869) we provided substantial clarification in this respect. The Turkish reaction to this statement of facts has been, understandably, one of confusion. Only thus can one explain, for instance, the whimsical and illogical interpretation of Mithad Pasha's article, which, according to the Turkish letter, was allegedly influenced by post-war conditions in Bulgaria. However, this interpretation cannot convince anyone, since the article of Mithad Pasha employs the language of historical truth. It contains the analysis of the most eminent Turkish statesman of that time. He was consecutively Governor of the Danube provinces and Grand Vizier of the Empire - positions that enabled him to pass knowledgeable and firm judgement about the national origin of Bulgarian Muslims.

My country sees no necessity to further expose one by one the above-mentioned concoctions. The reality in Bulgaria is the best answer to them. We are an open tourist country. Every year millions of tourists visit Bulgaria, over 7 million of them in 1985 alone. In 1985 more than 2,300 foreign journalists, including Turkish ones, came to Bulgaria, some of them having arrived specifically to probe for

evidence of some violence. Foreign diplomats enjoy full freedom of movement in Bulgaria. Not one of them has been able to ascertain a single instance of violence. All writings in the Turkish press and other mass media about violence, murders, rapes etc., have no foundation in reality whatsoever. They have not been substantiated by anyone. All those persons, reported as killed in the Turkish media, have since appeared alive and well on Bulgarian radio and television and before foreign reporters.

As to the so-called "documents" annexed to the Turkish letter and presented as of Bulgarian origin, the truth about them is very simple - all of them have been faked by the Turkish secret service and are therefore forgeries.

Neither can we ignore the insinuations, contained in the Turkish letter, concerning some imaginary complicity of Bulgaria in international terrorism and in illicit arms and drug trafficking. In this respect the Permanent Representative of Turkey only repeats already familiar defamatory contentions made up by well-known agencies, which have been already repudiated, including at the Rome trial on the attempted assassination of the head of the Roman Catholic Church. Our country flatly rejects these slanders as unwarranted, groundless and politically inspired. The position of the People's Republic of Bulgaria regarding terrorism and the illegal traffic in arms and drugs is well-known. Not only has Bulgaria condemned these ills, but it has worked to combat them, for which there is ample evidence. One can cite specific facts and figures about traffickers and narcotic drugs coming from Turkey that have been regularly intercepted by Bulgarian customs officials.

Turkey's attempts to abrogate to itself some "humane" right justifying its interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and its manipulation of Bulgarian Moslems for the sake of its own Pan-Turkish objectives lack any international legal basis and are devoid of any common sense. The same is true of the Turkish propaganda materials that Ankara is trying to sneak into certain international forums. Turkey has the least historical, political or moral right to concern the world with an issue which it has fabricated and fanned up for obvious internal and external reasons of its own, particularly in view of the dismal human rights situation in Turkey itself. The international community as a whole is well aware of this situation as well as of the fact that Turkey is party neither to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights nor to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination for the self-evident purpose of preserving its freedom of action in brutally oppressing and persecuting its own citizens, in particular its national minorities.

On behalf of my Government, I would like to repeat that in spite of all this, the People's Republic of Bulgaria still wishes to normalize its relations with Turkey. Our position is known to the Turkish Government: Bulgaria is ready to negotiate and seek solutions to bilateral problems on an equal and mutually advantageous basis. A reflection of this readiness are the invitations still in force extended to the President, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey to make official visits to Bulgaria. In order to make these visits possible, however, the Turkish side must cease its interference in the internal affairs of Bulgaria and its citizens.