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LETTER DATED 14 MARCH 1986 FROM THE ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Permanent Mission of the USSR to the United Nations would like to draw the attention of the members of the Security Council to the decision taken by the President of the Security Council for the month of March, the representative of Denmark, to circulate document S/17865 of 5 March 1986 as an official Security Council document.

The question of the publication of the aforementioned document was discussed at the consultations of the Security Council held on 28 February 1986; however, not all members of the Security Council were agreed on that question. It was no accident, therefore, that the President of the Security Council in February did not circulate the letter as an official document.

Some members of the Council emphasized at those consultations that letters from observers to the United Nations which had been published in the past as official documents had related either to questions directly involving their interests, irrespective of whether or not the Council was currently concerning itself with those questions, or to questions officially included in the agenda of the Council meeting to which the observer referred. It was pointed out that document S/17865 did not fall into either of the above-mentioned categories, and therefore its circulation was contrary to established practice.

It should be noted that the Soviet Union has always opposed any limitation of the circulation of official statements made by Governments, whether those of States Members of the United Nations or of non-member States, on matters which are within the competence of the Council. In a letter from the representative of the USSR to the United Nations dated 23 May 1972 (S/10660) it was pointed out that the President of the Council has an indisputable right to circulate as official Security Council documents letters from Governments both of States Members of the United Nations and of non-member States. However, the letter specifically emphasized that the President must be guided in the matter by the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations and must follow the established practice in the system of work of the Security Council rather than by the arbitrary judgements of individual Members of the United Nations.

Thus, the circulation of the letter from an observer to the United Nations in connection with a reference to a statement made by a member of the Security Council at a meeting which dealt with a completely different question is a flagrant violation of established practice.

We regret that in this matter the President of the Council was unwilling to settle the question on the basis of consensus, as is customary at informal consultations of the Security Council, did not take into consideration the views of some countries members of the Council and let himself be ruled by a particular group of countries members of the Security Council.

I request that this letter should be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) V. SAFRONCHUK
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Acting Permanent Representative
of the USSR to the United Nations
