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STRENGTHENING OF SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-first year

Letter dated 31 March 1986 from the Permanent Representative of
the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith an excerpt concerning the Mediterranean from the speech given on 26 March 1986 by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. M. S. Gorbachev, at a dinner in honour of the President of the Algerian People's Democratic Republic and General Secretary of the National Liberation Front, Mr. Chadli Bendjedid.

I should be grateful if you would have this text distributed as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 69 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Y. V. DUBININ

* A/41/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Excerpt concerning the Mediterranean from the speech given by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. M. S. Gorbachev, at a dinner in honour of the President of the Algerian People's Republic and General Secretary of the National Liberation Front, Mr. Chadli Bendjedid

The situation in the Mediterranean affects many countries, including the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union is in favour of turning the Mediterranean, that cradle of many civilizations, into a zone of stable peace and security. We stand by our proposals for extending agreed confidence-building measures to that region, reducing armed forces, removing from the Mediterranean Sea ships carrying nuclear weapons, banning the deployment of nuclear weapons in the territory of non-nuclear Mediterranean countries and securing a commitment by the nuclear Powers not to use such weapons against any Mediterranean country which does not allow them to be deployed in its territory.

We are prepared to go even further. For the Soviet Union there is in principle no need for its navy to stay in the Mediterranean Sea on a permanent basis.

The Soviet Union is forced to keep its ships there permanently for only one single reason - the immediate proximity to our borders of the United States Sixth Fleet, equipped with nuclear missile systems and threatening the security of the Soviet Union, its allies and friends.

If the United States, situated as it is thousands and thousands of miles from the Mediterranean, were to withdraw its fleet from there, then the Soviet Union would do so at the same time. We are ready to enter into talks on this question without delay.

In this first phase there would be no kind of limitations on the naval activities and naval armaments of the coastal States of the Mediterranean. Further steps to strengthen security in the region could, in our view, be determined taking into account the Soviet proposals contained in the 15 January 1986 declaration on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

In the Soviet Union we view with understanding the initiatives of the non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean, who are preparing to hold their second conference this year in Malta. We believe that a useful role could also be played by a larger conference, similar to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, in which, in addition to the Mediterranean States and States bordering on the region, the United States and other interested countries could participate.