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CONSIDERATION OF MEASURES FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

LIBYA

[Original: English]
8 September 1970

I am pleased to convey to you, as follows, the reaction of the Government of the Libyan Arab Republic:

1. My Government would like to express its thanks to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for its initiative to include the question of strengthening the international peace and security in the agenda of the General Assembly, particularly, in the present circumstances of instability in the world. My Government also welcomes the discussion of this matter in depth at a time when the United Nations is celebrating a quarter of a century of its existence.

2. In the course of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Government of the Libyan Arab Republic availed itself of the opportunity of expressing its views regarding the realization of the sovereignty of law and order and the respect of the United Nations principles.

3. This world of ours has become interrelated so that any event of serious effect that takes place in one part of it would necessarily affect the other parts. This makes it imperative on all of us to endeavour for a mutual establishment of international peace and security.

4. We believe that the United Nations should be the only guardian on international peace and security and its role in this regard should be strengthened.

5. The Security Council has, under the Charter, the responsibility to maintain international peace and security. However, it has proven to be a negative organ in this regard. The best example of this is its failure to check the Israeli aggression of June 1967 against three Member States and its failure to stand up against the Zionist expansion in the Middle East.

6. The deterioration of the Palestinian problem over the last twenty years represents a distinct failure of the United Nations to implement its own resolutions. Consequently, any efforts by the Organization to promote

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international peace and security anywhere else would be meaningless unless the various resolutions on Palestine are implemented.

7. The Libyan Arab Republic sees that the only effective way of strengthening the international peace and security is to take basic steps to eliminate colonialism and to enforce the principle of self-determination in various parts of the world. The problem of apartheid and colonialism in the whole region of South Africa and South West Africa is a loud cry for the United Nations to take immediate and effective measures to combat colonialism and enforce the principle of self-determination.

8. There is a strong relationship between international peace and security and the socio-economic development in the world. We believe that the increasing gap between the developed and developing nations will continue to create a threat for peace. Therefore, extensive efforts by the United Nations to narrow the gap would eventually serve to establish the road to international peace and security.

SOUTH AFRICA

/Original: English/
11 September 1970

1. The Government of the Republic of South Africa has the honour to communicate the following comments on resolution 2606 (XXIV), adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 1969, on the strengthening of international security.
2. The United Nations was founded twenty-five years ago in the hope of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. It is therefore natural that in the purposes and principles of the Organization, as set out in Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter, the primary purpose of the United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security.
3. The Organization was created in the hope, furthermore, that world peace would take the place of armed aggression, that peaceful and fruitful co-operation would replace discord and friction and that the rule of law would internationally be restored to an honourable position. Those who at the time subscribed to the Charter believed that the United Nations would maintain justice and uphold respect

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for international obligations, that higher living standards and well-being would be promoted within the framework of freedom, self-determination and the sovereign equality of all Member States, and that friendly relations between States, based on the equal rights of Members, would be developed. In undertaking to carry out their Charter obligations, Members also agreed to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

4. For some time now there has been frustration in United Nations ranks over the intractability of the problems of the world and the apparent lack of progress made by the Organization in grappling with them. Often one hears that the remedy would be in revising the Charter. The South African Government believes however that the Charter has stood the test of time well and that it is a matter rather of Members returning to the spirit of San Francisco.

5. It is difficult to avoid the impression that many of the serious problems confronting the United Nations today are of its own making. The Organization has shown a tendency to deviate from the provisions of the Charter and has allowed itself to be turned into an arena where nations struggle for personal political advantage, oblivious of the high ideals enshrined in Chapter I of our Charter. In recent years, indeed, the Organization has permitted itself to be used by the majority as an instrument to attack the integrity of Member States by directing hostile propaganda at them in the hope of subverting their citizens. In this process scant attention is paid to the interests of the international community as a whole and much of the energy of the United Nations is dissipated in the pursuit of selfish aims. Friction between nations has consequently increased rather than diminished, in spite of the original ideal to make the United Nations a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

6. What is required for the strengthening of international security is the collective will of the United Nations membership to do so, with particular reference to the position of the Security Council and the great Powers. The primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security has been conferred on the Security Council, and the great Powers have a special obligation in this regard as permanent members of the Council to use their influence towards peaceful ends, rather than in the pursuit of selfish interests or cold war tactics.

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7. Apart from the principles and ideals enumerated in paragraph 3 above which were considered fundamental for harmonious multilateral relations between States when the United Nations was founded, special mention should also be made of the injunction in Article 2 of the Charter that Member States should at all times refrain from intervening in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of other States. The South African Government considers this principle as one of the corner-stones of the Charter and would suggest that the Organization abandon the contentious adversary role now conceived for it by some of its Members in obvious contravention of both the letter and the spirit of the Charter.

8. The strengthening of international security has in recent years, despite the requirements of international law, been hampered by new aggressive forces, both within the United Nations and outside, which seek to undermine legally constituted Governments. In this regard, each Member State has the bounden duty towards its peoples and the entire international community to maintain law and order within its boundaries. Only in this way are States able to promote the welfare of all their citizens and, at the same time, co-operate fruitfully at the international level.

9. It is all the more regrettable, therefore, that the United Nations, particularly some of its subsidiary bodies, should openly exhort Member States and also various intergovernmental organizations associated with the United Nations to provide comfort and assistance to terrorists. Terrorism is a form of piracy and its exponents obey no law, not even the laws of those who shelter them. Terrorist activities are directed indiscriminately at members of all population groups and the victims are usually those who can least protect themselves, including women and children. We are already witnessing the havoc wrought by hijacking on international civil aviation. If these parallel tendencies are to be allowed to proceed unchecked, the future bodes ill for all Members of the Organization.

SWEDEN

Original: English
9 September 1970

The Swedish Government welcomes the fact that the question of the strengthening of international security has been brought up for systematic discussion in the United Nations. It is important and necessary to review periodically how the United Nations fulfils its fundamental purpose to strengthen international security and to study the means by which its capacity in this respect can be enhanced. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Organization provides a particularly appropriate time for such a review. It is also imperative that, in the years ahead, Member States continue to give their serious consideration, in the different bodies of the United Nations, to the vital questions involved.

The Charter of the United Nations in its present form contains those principles which, if strictly observed by the Member States, will guarantee international peace and security. The twenty-fifth anniversary should be taken as an opportunity for Member States to strengthen, through a serious rededication to the principles of the Charter, their obligations to the world community, thereby strengthening, as well, the commitment of world opinion to the fundamental values inherent in those principles. The work to refine and interpret those principles, which has been in progress for a long time, is also of great significance. Particularly gratifying in this context are the results achieved by the Special Committee on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States. This marks an important advance in the evolution and codification of the basic principles governing the relations between nations. It is hoped that those principles will be incorporated in the solemn declaration to be adopted at the Assembly's commemorative session. This declaration should take the form of a firm and forceful rededication to the principles of the United Nations.

The great Powers, in their capacity as permanent members of the Security Council, have a special responsibility for the safeguarding of international security. This is a responsibility that those Powers should constantly be aware

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of. At the same time, any tendency towards domination by super-Powers must be avoided. Efforts aiming at a "democratization" of international relations must be strengthened through the United Nations. In this context, consideration should be given to the fact that the increasing number of independent States in the world calls for increased efforts within the United Nations to ease international friction. The Swedish Government shares the view expressed by many other Governments that regional efforts are of considerable importance for the strengthening of international security. Such efforts should be encouraged in accordance with the relevant principles of the Charter. Regional authority cannot, however, be allowed to override or conflict with the universal competence of the United Nations, and tendencies in that direction should be countered.

The capacity of the United Nations as an instrument for international security is largely dependent on the extent to which the Organization can engage the people of the world in its work. A primary goal must be to achieve universality in the membership of the Organization. An essential step that remains in this regard is the admittance of the People's Republic of China as a Member.

In regard to the activities of the United Nations in certain fields which are of a fundamental importance for international peace and security, the Swedish Government would like to offer the following observations:

(a) The disarmament efforts should be intensified. The trend towards ever-increasing armaments must be checked. The strategic arms limitation talks, to be resumed in Helsinki later this year, constitute the first bilateral discussion between the super-Powers about their fundamental security problems. The negotiations represent a great step forward and they underline the particular responsibility which rests upon the super-Powers in this respect. The whole membership of the United Nations has a right to expect that those efforts be brought to a positive conclusion. The work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament must be energetically continued and developed. The Disarmament Decade must not remain an empty phrase.

(b) The efforts to counter racism and colonialism in southern Africa are of the utmost importance to that continent and - in a broader context - to the possibilities of creating a basis for sound relations between the races on this globe.

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(c) The effort to reduce the existing differences in social and economic conditions in all spheres of life, as well between various groups of countries as within the countries themselves, represents one of the most important factors in the safeguarding of international security. The Second United Nations Development Decade, therefore, is a fundamental challenge to the whole world organization.

(d) The human environment, in its broadest sense, must be dealt with as a problem fully equal in importance to the most serious problems. The qualitative aspects of economic growth must be accorded the highest priority. This is true, in the first place, with regard to social and human welfare in general and also to the perspectives of a sound economic development, especially in the developing countries. The problems of safeguarding our environment do, in fact, amount to problems of human survival.

(e) The United Nations activities in the field of human rights have a prominent role to play in the context of the strengthening of international security. Oppression in all its forms - national, social, racial or religious - can no longer be viewed as a matter falling under the exclusive sovereignty of the individual State. Solidarity across the frontiers has, for public opinion everywhere, become a categorical imperative. The views of the Swedish Government on possible ways and means of strengthening international efforts to defend human rights through the United Nations are set out in an annex to this memorandum.

The possibilities of strengthening international security are essentially dependent upon the extent to which Member States are prepared to make use of the United Nations and adhere to its principles. This should not obscure the fact that there may be ways to increase, through institutional reforms in various fields, the capabilities of the United Nations to serve as an instrument for peace:

(a) The capacity of the United Nations to undertake peace-keeping operations should be developed with the full support of all Member States.

(b) The various methods for pacific settlement of disputes, which are indicated in Chapter VI of the Charter, should be fully developed and utilized.

(c) The consensus decision of the Security Council to hold periodic meetings with special representation is welcomed, and all efforts should be

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exerted to make this an effective instrument for dealing with the problems of international security. The idea put forward by the Government of Brazil of establishing ad hoc committees under the Security Council for the pacific settlement of disputes is greeted with interest and should be analysed further.

(d) The International Court of Justice should be strengthened in such a way that more use can be made of its services than has been the case so far.

(e) Important initiatives for the strengthening of international security can, of course, be taken outside the framework of the United Nations. The proposal for a European security conference is one example. In carrying out such initiatives Member States should ensure that such efforts and the results arrived at will always be in strict accordance with the principles and the activities of the United Nations.

The General Assembly has decided that the main purpose of the twenty-fifth anniversary should be to make it an occasion for a constructive reassessment of the relevance of the United Nations in today's world. It is hoped that the solemn declaration to be adopted by the Assembly at its commemorative session will be the result of frank and wide-ranging discussion among Member States on the problems of international security. Only through such discussion will it be possible to arrive at a realistic consensus on how the Organization should best fill the role that it is called to play today and also on what improvements should be made to increase its effectiveness in solving the manifold problems of tomorrow's world.

ANNEX

Efforts to strengthen international security should necessarily include continued and increased efforts to promote the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Charter establishes the promotion of human rights as one of the purposes of the United Nations, and those rights were reaffirmed and elaborated in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly in 1948. The Declaration has had a great importance throughout the world, but it does not contain binding obligations assumed by States in order to assure its implementation within the States by the States themselves and it does, a fortiori, not contain provisions on an inter-state implementation machinery. In no convention in this field adopted by the United Nations is there, in fact, a truly effective machinery for the protection of the individual against the State. The Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights only provides for a reporting system, the Covenant on Political and Social Rights only contains optional provisions on inter-state disputes and, as an annex, an Optional Protocol on the rights of individual petition. In the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination the system is somewhat more strengthened as regards inter-state disputes, but States are still free not to recognize the right of individual petition. And furthermore, there is no organ that can pronounce an opinion with binding effect on allegations of violations of human rights within the field of the said international instruments. Without exaggeration it therefore can be maintained that the procedures and institutions so far set up are too timid to play any practical role.

The time seems due to take further steps forward. It is necessary to stress that human rights questions transcend the boundaries of nations and that the concept of the sovereignty of States should not be allowed to prevent progress in this field. Further, there is need for a final authority, a central United Nations institution such as a high commissioner or a court of human rights. There is also an urgent need to strengthen the powers of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, e.g. by giving it direct reporting access to the General Assembly and to expand the United Nations competence on human rights.

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Efforts to find a final solution to the question of implementation will be time-consuming. It would be an advantage to have different modes of implementation tested side by side over a period of time in order to help find the one most likely to command support.

There is also a need for examining the interrelationship between the law of human rights and the humanitarian laws such as the Red Cross conventions. A study of those two sets of laws could be based, inter alia, on the outcome of the item "Respect for human rights in armed conflicts".
