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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE  
TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

Letter dated 11 October 1974 from the Permanent Representative of  
the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the  
United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have been asked by the Premier of Belize to transmit to you, on behalf of his Government, the following message addressed to you concerning the statement made by the distinguished Minister for External Relations of Guatemala at the 2245th plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 26 September 1974, in which reference was made to Belize.

"The Government of Belize learns with dismay that the Foreign Minister of Guatemala, speaking in the General Assembly on 26 September 1974 quoted Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) to justify the denial by his country of the United Nations principle of self-determination to the people of Belize.

"This Government emphatically denies that Belize is or has ever been an integral part of the Republic of Guatemala and holds that no question of the disruption of national unity or territorial integrity arises or can arise in respect of the claim made by Guatemala to Belizean territory. Guatemala claims territory that is not, and never has been, theirs and over which the Belizean people claim the right to self-determination. This right is denied to the people of Belize only because of the threat that Guatemala continuously makes of her determination to forcibly incorporate Belize as part of Guatemala.

"On behalf of his Government, the Foreign Minister, we learn, attempted to argue that the Guatemalan expansionist claim to Belize can be reconciled with the aspirations of the people. Such a statement is merely a covert restatement of Guatemala's threat of incorporation. The declared aspirations of the Belizean people is for the right to self-determination, for the right to become a free sovereign and independent nation, for the right freely to become a member of the United Nations. Belizean sovereignty is not for negotiation. All such claims to sovereignty over Belizean territory are obnoxious to the aspirations of the Belizean people.

"We wish to inform you, Mr. President, that the Belizean people go to free and democratic elections on 30 October next. Even during this period, the people of Belize are united against the threat of Guatemalan absorption and reject Guatemala's unfounded claim. The People's United Party, the party in government, is preparing the Belizean people to assume the responsibilities of independence. The manifesto upon which the people will be called upon to vote is entitled 'The Manifesto for the Independent Belize'.

"The Belizean Government repeats its message of last year to the United Nations (A/9466) that the peace-loving people of Belize wish only to live in peace with their neighbours and to exercise their fundamental right to self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter. We would be obliged, Mr. President, if the members of the General Assembly could receive this message from the Government of Belize."

I should be grateful if you would have this message circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 23.

(Signed) Ivor RICHARD

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