



**General Assembly**

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/42/348  
17 June 1987  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

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Forty-second session  
Items 131 and 140 of the preliminary list\*

PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN STATES

DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS  
BETWEEN STATES

Letter dated 17 June 1987 from the Permanent Representative of Bolivia  
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you the attached official communiqué issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship concerning the suspension of negotiations between the Governments of Chile and Bolivia to solve my country's lack of access to the sea (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly under items 131 and 140 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Jorge GUMUCIO GRANIER  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

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\* A/42/50.

ANNEX

Official communiqué

The Government of Bolivia wishes to denounce to international public opinion the bad faith of the current Chilean Government which, after agreeing to enter into negotiations on the problem of Bolivia's lack of access to the sea and having also agreed to a formal meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the two countries at which Bolivia presented a formal solution to the problem, has unexpectedly replied that that solution is unacceptable to Chile.

As the international community knows, talks between the Bolivian and Chilean Foreign Ministers, Mr. Guillermo Bedregal and Mr. Jaime del Valle, aimed at reaching an agreement on resolving Bolivia's land-locked situation were launched at New York in September 1986, during the forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly.

On that occasion, the two Ministers for Foreign Affairs agreed to set up a joint bilateral committee for rapprochement to try to settle a number of problems deriving from the fact that Bolivia has to use Chilean territory for transit purposes in conducting its foreign trade, and also to promote all kinds of relations between the two countries in order to create a climate of friendship between the Bolivian and Chilean peoples so that they could later embark on a second phase in which such substantive problems as Bolivia's access to the sea would be studied.

The bilateral committee completed its task and it was decided to formalize the study of substantive problems by holding a meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the two countries in the territory of a friendly country, at which Bolivia would present a specific proposal for a negotiated solution to its fundamental problem.

Thanks to the good offices of the Government of Uruguay, the aforementioned meeting of Foreign Ministers was held at Montevideo from 21 to 23 April last.

As stipulated, Bolivia presented a formal proposal contained in two memoranda, hoping thereby to put an end once and for all to the unjust land-locked situation it has suffered for over 100 years.

The Chilean Foreign Minister, Jaime del Valle, and the delegation that accompanied him to Montevideo received the Bolivian documents and, after analysing them, handed over a document in which they requested clarification and further details on the specific content of the Bolivian proposal.

The Bolivian delegation answered these questions in a third memorandum in which it replied to and elaborated on all the questions raised by Chile.

This appeared to satisfy the Chilean delegation headed by Foreign Minister del Valle, who said that his Government would give the Bolivian proposal serious consideration in a spirit of genuine American solidarity.

At the outcome of this first formal diplomatic negotiation between the two States, both Foreign Ministers issued a press communiqué which was widely disseminated in all the communication media.

On returning to his country, Foreign Minister del Valle made repeated statements and comments on the Bolivian proposal, describing it as "serious, realistic and practical".

Later, Mr. del Valle announced publicly that his Government had established a committee to review the question in depth and that he expected that Chile would give a reply before the end of the year.

While Bolivia and the international community, in particular members of the Organization of American States who had reiterated in resolutions adopted each year from 1979 onwards that Bolivia's maritime problem concerned not only Bolivia but the whole hemisphere, were expecting an honourable reply from Chile, the Chilean Government unexpectedly issued a clumsy and incoherent statement which effectively put an end to a diplomatic initiative launched under the best auspices of the American and world communities.

The Government of Bolivia wishes to point out that Chile's response, which took a far from customary and honorable form, simply demonstrates an unfathomable lack of respect for the most elementary rules of civilized coexistence and is revealing of an aberrant arrogance and a reactionary and exaggerated patriotism.

Faced with Chile's deplorable attitude, the Government of Bolivia not only wishes to denounce such conduct but also appeals to the international community to realize how difficult it is to achieve genuine brotherhood among peoples members of the United Nations as long as there are Governments like that of Chile which flout the dignity of other States.

La Paz, 11 June 1987

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