



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/43/285
S/19739
5 April 1988
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: CHINESE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Forty-third session

Items 42, 72, 130 and 137 of the
preliminary list*

QUESTION OF PEACE, STABILITY AND
CO-OPERATION IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA
REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING
OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES
BETWEEN STATES
DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF
GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS BETWEEN STATES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-third year

Letter dated 5 April 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the statement issued on 5 April 1988 by the spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and the full text of the attached statement circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 42, 72, 130 and 137 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) DING Yuanhong
Acting Permanent Representative
of the People's Republic of China
to the United Nations

* A/43/50.

ANNEX

Statement issued on 5 April 1988 by the spokesman of the
Foreign Ministry of China

Since they provoked an armed conflict in Chinese Nansha (Spratly) Islands on 14 March, the Vietnamese authorities have been conducting deceptive and slanderous propaganda, accusing China of obstructing their so-called rescue operation, while stepping up their invasion and occupation of the Nansha Islands and atolls.

As was pointed out by China, the Chinese side exercised great restraint with regard to the Vietnamese naval attack on the Chinese personnel engaged in a normal survey and study on the Chiqua Reef, Nansha Islands, and made only a limited counter-attack in self-defence. On 16 March, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry approached the Chinese Embassy in Viet Nam about sending Vietnamese vessels flying Red Cross flags to the sea area where the incident was taking place for rescue operations. The Chinese side replied immediately, granting the Vietnamese request. The Chinese departments and units concerned have all along strictly honoured China's commitment and provided every facility for Viet Nam's rescue operation. There is no such thing as Chinese warships shelling and firing at the Vietnamese rescuing vessels. After the conflict, the Chinese side, in a humanitarian spirit, came to the rescue of the Vietnamese servicemen who had fallen into the water.

However, the Vietnamese side has continued to seize and occupy Chinese islands and atolls under the pretext of undertaking rescue operations. The Vietnamese authorities have put up Red Cross flags on all their naval vessels sent to the Guihan, Qiongjiao and other islands and reefs. Those Vietnamese vessels were sent there to carry out reconnaissance and keep watch on the Chinese islands and atolls as well as Chinese vessels in the above-mentioned sea areas. Up to date, Viet Nam has increased the number of its various types of vessels in those areas from a dozen or so before the clash to the current figure of 30 and more. Vietnamese military personnel are now stepping up their construction of military installations on the Daxian, Liumen, Wumie, Nanhua and Dongjiao islands and reefs that they invaded and occupied early this year, and they have invaded and occupied two more reefs, the Bolan and Mailuo reefs.

By taking the above-mentioned action in the name of rescue, the Vietnamese authorities have grossly violated the 1949 Geneva Convention that stipulates that rescuing vessels shall not be used for military purposes. Their action is a brazen infringement upon international law.

It should also be noted that the Vietnamese air force is reinforcing its military deployment in southern Viet Nam, frequently dispatching aircraft to intensify its reconnaissance and war preparations in the air space over China's Nansha Islands. The Vietnamese authorities have even made clamour, saying that they are fully prepared to take up battle at any time.

The Chinese side once again sternly warns the Vietnamese authorities that they must immediately stop their invasion and occupation in any form of China's Nansha Islands and atolls and withdraw from the Chinese islands and atolls under their illegal occupation. Should the Vietnamese authorities act wilfully and dare to make new military provocations, they must be responsible for all the consequences arising therefrom.
