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STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON GREAT POWER NEGOTIATIONS

I have been asked to comment on various suggestions for another Big Three Meeting and on other proposals for a renewal of negotiations on atomic energy and other issues outstanding among the Great Powers.

You know where I stand and where I have always stood on negotiation among the Great Powers. I am for it -- all the time and on all levels -- the top level, the middle level, and the lower level -- inside the United Nations and outside the United Nations. I think the world would be a lot better off today if there had been more real negotiation among the Great Powers during the last three years. Above everything else the United Nations stands for the negotiation and conciliation of differences. And I have tried to speak out always for this United Nations way of preventing war and building peace.

Most of you will recall that I did it at the time of the Berlin crisis, back in November 1948. Then Dr. Evatt, then President of the General Assembly, and I addressed an appeal to the Chiefs of Government of the United States, the USSR, the United Kingdom and France urging "the desirability of immediate conversations and of taking all other necessary steps toward the solution of the Berlin question." You will also recall that there were no conversations immediately, but there were some very fruitful conversations a few months later among the United Nations delegates of the Big Four right here in New York.

At the end of the Paris Assembly I said: "The United Nations is and will remain the most powerful existing force for peace and against war in the world today. The real desire of the peoples of the world -- the peoples of the Great Powers just as much as those of the little countries -- was best expressed at this Assembly in the resolution introduced by Mexico and unanimously adopted -- the Appeal to the Great Powers to Renew Their Efforts to Compose Their Differences and Establish a Lasting Peace."

In my Fourth Annual Report to the Members on the Work of the Organization last summer I declared my belief that the founders of the United Nations at San Francisco were right when "they rejected the idea of an irreconcilable conflict that could be settled only on the field of battle and proclaimed on the contrary the principle that all conflicts, no matter how fundamental, should and could be settled by peaceful means."

It was disappointing that during the fourth session of the General Assembly

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last fall we did not make any further progress toward reducing the tensions between the Great Powers, although we made a good deal of progress in other ways.

I did feel, as I said at the end of the fourth session, last December 10, that we had "moved forward to a point where the world has reason to hope for a step-by-step resumption of real negotiation between both sides. This, in itself, would be a substantial improvement over the situation that has prevailed over the past three years -- the mere reiteration of fixed positions -- instead of that flexibility and willingness to compromise in the common interest which are so essential to peaceful progress." And I concluded:

"As we enter the year 1950, and thus approach the half-way point in the 20th Century, the resolution of Mexico of 1948 continues to stand as the expression of the unanimous will of the Members of the United Nations. May the Governments of the Great Powers, with the help of the smaller Powers, make of the coming year a true turning point on the difficult road to a secure peace."

I have today great hope that this deeply felt desire of the peoples of the world will become reality.

The only people who can rightly judge the timing and form of negotiations and meetings are those who are responsible for conducting the foreign affairs of the countries concerned.

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