

GENERAL
ASSEMBLYASSEMBLEE
GENERALEREQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS
IN THE AGENDA OF THE THIRD REGULAR SESSION, SUBMITTED BY
BOLIVIA AND AUSTRALIA⁽¹⁾

Telegram dated 9 April 1949 from the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria to the Secretary-General.

Note by the Secretary-General: The Secretary-General has the honour to communicate to the Members of the General Assembly for their information the text of a telegram dated 9 April 1949 which he has received from the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

Sofia, 9 April 1949.

The Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is deeply astonished to learn that the Governments of certain States have proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the present session of the United Nations an item concerning an alleged restriction of religious freedom in Bulgaria and in Hungary. The trial of the fifteen pastors in Bulgaria and of Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary have been used as a pretext for this proposal.

The Bulgarian Government protests most energetically against this proposal: on grounds of form, since this is a purely domestic matter and on grounds of principle, since this proposal is based on mendacious and biased information.

(1) Those who have made this proposal are taking advantage of the fact that the Security Council has not yet acted favourably upon Bulgaria's fully-justified application for membership of the United Nations. If it had done so, Bulgaria would have received all the rights and guarantees enjoyed by Members of the Organization, in defence of her national sovereignty and dignity against all calumnious accusations.

(2) The proposal concerns a matter exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian State - more particularly, a question of justice. The request for United Nations intervention in such a field is all the more strange since it concerns a State - the People's Republic of Bulgaria - in which justice is based upon the most modern principles in force in democratic states and, more particularly, guarantees the right of the accused to every means of defense.

(1) A/820 and A/821

(3) Religious freedom in Bulgaria is fully guaranteed to all sects. International public opinion knows not a single example of the restriction of the freedom of any sect in Bulgaria whatever constituting violation of religious liberty - certainly not that of Bulgarian Protestants, who number only about 15,000. The condemned pastors not only confessed the crimes of which they were guilty against their country, but also denounced and unmasked certain foreign circles and highly-placed persons who had incited them to become foreign agents. Certain quarters, in order to unleash a campaign of calumny against Bulgaria, have chosen as their pretext a trial which was held in the sight and knowledge of the entire world agents in the pay of a foreign Power. The confessions of the fifteen pastors were made publicly in the presence of the representatives of the International Press and accredited missions in Bulgaria. The confessions were so detailed and in such close agreement with the testimony of the majority of the witnesses that they could not leave the slightest doubt in the mind of any impartial observer.

In its protest against the proposal to submit to the General Assembly of the United Nations the question of the alleged violation of religious liberty in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Government voices the profound indignation which was evoked by the criminal activities of the fifteen pastors, above all among Bulgarian Protestants and honest pastors, and also among all Bulgarians whatever their religious opinions.

The proposal of certain delegates to submit to the United Nations the question of the alleged violation of religious liberty and other liberties in Bulgaria in relation to the execution of the clauses of the Peace Treaty is also inconsistent, since the Peace Treaty itself provides means to ensure the execution of its conditions.

The Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria firmly believes that the United Nations, towards which it feels respect, will not be influenced by proposals that have nothing to do with the preservation of world peace and international collaboration.

Vassil KOLAROFF,
Vice-President of the Council and
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria.

Note: The text of this cable was transcribed as received pending confirmation of obscure passages.
