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ZONE OF PEACE AND CO-OPERATION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic" was included in the agenda of the forty-first session of the General Assembly at the request of Brazil (A/41/143 and Corr.1). At that session, the Assembly solemnly declared the Atlantic Ocean, in the region situated between Africa and South America, a "Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic" (resolution 41/11 of 27 October 1986).

2. At its forty-second session the General Assembly had before it the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic" (A/42/557 and Corr.1 and 2) and on 10 November 1987 it adopted resolution 42/16 under the same title. The operative part of the resolution reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"1. Commends the efforts undertaken by States of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic to promote peace and regional co-operation pursuant to resolution 41/11, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General;

"2. Urges the States of the region to continue their actions aiming at fulfilling the goals of the declaration of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic, in particular through the adoption and carrying out of concrete programmes to that end;

"3. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General;

"4. Calls upon all States to co-operate in the promotion of the objectives of the zone;

"5. Calls upon all States to refrain from any action inconsistent with the Charter and relevant resolutions of the United Nations and which may create or aggravate situations of tension and potential conflict in the region;

"6. Requests the relevant organizations, organs and bodies of the United Nations system to render all necessary assistance that the States of the region may seek in their joint endeavours to implement the declaration of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic;

"7. Further requests the Secretary-General to keep the implementation of resolution 41/11 under review and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its forty-third session, taking into account the views expressed by Member States as well as information from other sources;

"8. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-third session the item entitled 'Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic'."

3. General Assembly resolution 42/16 was sponsored by Angola, Argentina, Benin, Brasil, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nepal, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uruguay and Zaire and was adopted by 122 votes to 1, with 8 abstentions. Subsequently, delegations of three more States advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.

4. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General, on 11 March 1988, addressed a note verbale to the Governments of the Member States of the United Nations, requesting their views on the question of the declaration of a zone of peace and co-operation.

5. As at 25 July 1988, nine Governments had replied to the Secretary-General's note verbale. By the same date, two acknowledgements had also been submitted to the Secretary-General. Replies and notifications that may be received subsequently will be published as addenda to the present report.

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

ARGENTINA

[Original: Spanish]

[6 June 1988]

1. The Government of the Argentine Republic reiterates its adherence to the principles and objectives of the declaration of a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic (resolution 41/11), convinced that they will contribute effectively to the strengthening of peace and co-operation among the countries of the region.

2. It should be noted that after the adoption of resolution 42/16, and notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 5, thereof, the United Kingdom conducted military manoeuvres in the South Atlantic in the area of the Malvinas Islands from 7 to 31 March 1988.

3. These manoeuvres and the progressive militarization of the archipelago are a source of tension in the region and a danger to regional peace and security. This situation was recognized in resolution 494 adopted 1 March 1988 by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, entitled: "Deep concern over the decision by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to undertake military exercises in the Malvinas Islands and the hope that that decision will be reconsidered", which was very broadly supported by the countries of the Americas. Similar ideas were put forward at the third regular meeting of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Political Action - Group of Eight - held in February 1988.

4. In the United Nations Security Council, too, when the question of British manoeuvres was considered on 17 March 1988, at the request of Argentina, the

principles and provisions contained in General Assembly resolution 41/11 and reiterated in resolution 42/16 were recalled by many States in their statements.

5. This decision by the United Kingdom and other actions reported previously to the Secretary-General, such as the illegal "protective" zone set up in 1982, are not only a breach of the commitment it undertook in voting for these resolutions, but also potential sources of tension and conflict in the region.

6. The Argentine Government wishes to reiterate the importance of all States in and outside the region, particularly the militarily significant States, making a commitment to the promotion of peace and security in the zone.

7. At the same time, it wishes to emphasise the need for prompt and total elimination of the military presence of States from other regions in the South Atlantic.

8. In the same vein, it believes that the ban on the introduction of nuclear weapons into the region should be fully implemented and that the entry of other weapons of mass destruction must be avoided.

9. In support of understanding and co-operation among countries of the region, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Public Worship of the Argentine Republic made official visits to African countries, and the Argentine Government also concluded bilateral agreements with African countries on economic, cultural, scientific and technological co-operation.

10. Within this framework, Argentina is pursuing a broad process of integration and co-operation with the Governments of Uruguay and Brazil which is in keeping with the objectives of peace and co-operation embodied in resolution 41/11. As part of this process, various protocols in the economic field have been signed, providing an appropriate legal framework for the development of co-operation among the three countries.

11. For the conservation of its living resources, Argentina, as a littoral State, has adopted a responsible fishing policy which includes agreements with third States, the provision of information to the appropriate bodies and supervision of its exclusive economic zone in order to avoid the plundering of its abundant fish stocks and ensure the rational exploitation of its resources.

12. The Argentine Government recalls that both the continued illegal occupation of Namibia and the inadmissible policy of apartheid in South Africa in no way contribute to the strengthening of the zone of peace and co-operation. On the contrary, they constitute a permanent threat to peace and the full enjoyment of human rights in the region. Likewise, it urges compliance with and the full implementation of all United Nations resolutions pertaining to colonialism, racism and apartheid.

13. The Argentine Republic believes that full compliance with the principles and goals of the declaration will facilitate the development of ties of friendship and will promote commercial, cultural and technical relations for the benefit of the whole region.

BAHAMAS

[Original: English]

[19 May 1988]

1. That peace is indivisible is realized more and more as all nations apply the constraints and regulations that reduce tensions, eliminate the potential for conflicts and strengthen international peace and security. The establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic should therefore be seen as a major step towards guaranteeing peace and security in that region.
2. The Bahamas, as a developing country, sees peace as a pre-condition for development and is therefore committed to supporting any project dedicated to world peace.
3. The goals of the declaration of the Atlantic Ocean, in the region between Africa and South America, a zone of peace and co-operation, directly address some of the priority national concerns of the Bahamas. For example, the zone in question is bounded by South Africa, whose apartheid policy is one of the major contributors to conflict and instability in that region. Also, the zone is primarily a maritime one, and, as an archipelagic nation, the Bahamas places great emphasis on the preservation and protection of ocean space and its use for peaceful purposes.
4. The establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic, in the final analysis must be viewed by all who are genuinely committed to international peace and security as a significant confidence-building measure.

BRAZIL

[Original: English]

[26 August 1988]

1. The Brazilian Government believes that the results of the first meeting of States of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic, held at Rio de Janeiro from 25 to 29 July 1988, as reflected in the Final Document (A/43/512, annex), which was adopted by consensus, constitute an important step towards the full implementation of the objectives of resolution 41/11.
2. The views of the Brazilian Government on the matter were also expressed in the following statement, made by Mr. Roberto de Abreu Sodré, Minister of External Relations, at the opening session of the Rio de Janeiro meeting:

Brazil is deeply aware of being an Atlantic country. I even say that we could not define ourselves as a nation without due regard to the sea. It was the sea that propitiated this indissoluble mix of people and cultures that made us Brazilians. This same sea draws our ideals and aspirations closer to that of our Atlantic neighbours, from Latin America and Africa, an outlook matured by our common struggle for dignity, peace, justice and development.

The convergence of attitudes and perspectives that led to the proclamation of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation is the inspiration for our present meeting. Its constructive purposes are entirely consistent with the spirit of our nations and the orientation of our international behaviour.

The interests of the South Atlantic countries are not merely compatible, they coincide to a large extent. Our historical affinities, our bonds of friendship, our solidarity and the common elements of our stance in the international arena are the foundation on which we can develop a new kind of relationship for the benefit of all.

As our region takes on its own identity, these affinities and these convergent interests should guide the consideration and formulation of joint initiatives. The zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic should be perceived as it really is and intends to be, and not as a reflection of the conception that other parts of the world may have of it. It should be seen as an undertaking to create egalitarian, intraregional understanding, geared to the objective - upheld by the unanimity of our countries and the overwhelming majority of the international community - of co-operation to promote peace and security in our region and the development of our peoples.

This meeting is part of a historical process begun many years ago. It is both innovative in character and a logical and consequential step forward in the endeavours being made, on both sides of the ocean, to achieve an atmosphere of peace that will enable the countries of the region to concentrate their resources on activities that will improve the well-being of their populations.

As early as the 1960s, Africans and Latin Americans took pioneer initiatives aimed at banning the introduction of nuclear weapons in their respective regions. The 1964 Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa by the Organization of African Unity and the 1967 Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America are outstanding examples of our people's vocation for peace.

I recall these measures here - and the process of promoting closer ties, political solidarity and economic and technical co-operation between the countries of the South Atlantic - so as to underscore the fact that we have for a long time been building the road that led in 1986 to the approval, by the United Nations General Assembly, of our joint proposal that the South Atlantic be declared a zone of peace and co-operation.

This initiative is a milestone in the history of international relations. It symbolizes our countries' determination to assume in a mature manner their increasingly relevant role in the international arena. Together with other significant undertakings in different areas of the southern hemisphere, it clearly reveals the resolve of developing countries to accept their share of responsibility for preserving peace and reducing tensions in their regions for stimulating mutually beneficial co-operation.

Our efforts to preserve the South Atlantic - the most unarmed of all oceans - from conflicts and tensions that are foreign to it, including those resulting from the oscillations of North-North relations, have a permanent and visible relevance. These efforts are related to the quest for a more democratic, more equitable standard of international relationship, based not on confrontation, nor on the resort to political, military and economic power, but rather on dialogue and good understanding, on strict adherence to the basic norms of international relations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and on respect for the natural diversity of points of view and for the different dynamics of national and regional evolution.

The objectives of peace and co-operation being pursued in the South Atlantic will not be fully attained until Namibia, a South Atlantic territory that lies just across the ocean, has achieved independence; until the system of apartheid that continues to oppress the majority of the South African population has been dismantled; until the countries in our region cease to suffer aggressions and violations of their territorial integrity; and the anachronistic manifestations of colonialism have entirely ceased.

The countries of the South Atlantic here represented all strive to bring about just, negotiated solutions to issues and conflicts that persist in the region, on both the African and South American sides, solutions that uphold the essential principles of international law and the relevant decisions of the United Nations. We feel we have the right to expect that the international community and especially the parties involved will take due account of the united appeal of our countries and will contribute effectively to the prompt solution of these problems.

The remaining sources of tensions in the region will not prevent us from following the road that leads to progressively closer ties between our countries. We have already come a long way down this road; enough to demonstrate with positive, concrete examples the fruitfulness of our co-operation and the clear advantage of expanding it even further.

The actions of African and Latin American regional co-operation agencies, the subregional programmes being implemented by Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil, by the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference and by the Economic Community of West African States, among others, the multiple links of bilateral co-operation and political understanding are all clear signs of the paths we can and shall follow. The existing web of relations is bound to become stronger and to extend to new forms of joint endeavour, in the task of making the most of our potential and of pooling our creativity in the search for the common good.

The present meeting is a good opportunity for us to consider the best means of improving our material and intellectual exchange. Among different areas of co-operation that should be identified, special attention should be given to finding ways of improving our knowledge about our ocean, of making it a factor of proximity and development, of assuming the conservation of marine resources and the protection of the marine environment for the benefit of our peoples.

In this respect, we should certainly examine the best means of integrating our endeavours with those of the various international agencies that are active in these fields. We can count on their collaboration and support in the terms of the resolution adopted last year by the United Nations General Assembly.

I believe I express the feeling of all those present in stating that, by making us fully aware that we belong to the South Atlantic region, this meeting is a reaffirmation of the ties, commitments and co-operation arrangements that each of our countries, in South America and Africa, has already established with the nations of our two continents. Indeed, it gives a broader, more mature dimension to the relations between Africa and Latin America.

This initiative is by no means exclusive in nature. It is no coincidence that the Declaration of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic was and is almost unanimously supported by the international community.

If there are any exclusive elements in our joint initiative, they are readily identifiable for, yes, we do wish to exclude the hateful régime of apartheid, the illegal occupation of Namibia, the sources of tension in the South Atlantic region, nuclear and mass-destruction weapons, foreign military presence and the extension into the region of exogenous rivalries.

In reaffirming the special responsibility of our countries with regard to the South Atlantic, we appeal to all countries in other regions of the world to contribute in a positive manner so that an atmosphere free from threats and tensions may prosper in our region and thus enable us to allocate our limited resources to the goals of economic and social development.

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

[Original: Russian]

[2 June 1988]

1. At the forty-second session of the General Assembly, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic supported resolution 42/16 entitled "Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic", which bears witness to the aspiration of Governments throughout the region to build their relations on the basis of constructive interaction and the strengthening of multilateral machinery for the elimination of the threat of war.

2. The establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic an important element in shaping a comprehensive system of international peace and security - can be ensured on the basis of a combined approach envisaging the adoption of appropriate measures in the military, political, economic and social fields.

3. In this respect, the provision of safeguards for the security of maritime communications, the conduct of practical actions to limit the naval military arms race, the elaboration of measures to promote confidence and non-use of force on the seas, the elimination of foreign military bases and the reduction of foreign military presence in that region are of great importance. Of special significance in this connection is the General Assembly's appeal to States to refrain from placing nuclear weapons and other kinds of weapons of mass destruction in the area, and compliance of States by respecting the obligations they have assumed in the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

4. The signing by the leaders of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America of a treaty abolishing two classes of missiles, thereby opening up for mankind the path to real nuclear disarmament and the prospect of sharp reductions in strategic arsenals, is an example of a practical step towards the elimination of the nuclear threat.

5. Normalisation of the situation in southern Africa, elimination of the criminal policy and practice of apartheid, implementation of the international community's call for the granting of independence to the people of Namibia and guaranteed cessation of South Africa's efforts to use nuclear energy for non-constructive purposes, which constitutes a serious threat to both regional and international security, must be a sine qua non for the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic.

6. The Byelorussian SSR shares the concern of the States of the South Atlantic in connection with the, as yet, unresolved problem of the Falkland Islands/Malvinas. A solution to this problem must be achieved on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and with possible assistance from the good offices of the Secretary-General.

7. The issues of how to guarantee economic security and eliminate economic crises and the external debt problem are important for the States of the South Atlantic region. Efforts to develop mutually beneficial economic, scientific and technical co-operation within the zone, particularly through joint exploitation of the ocean resources, are very important in this connection.

8. In response to the General Assembly's appeal, contained in paragraph 5 of resolution 42/16, the Byelorussian SSR will continue to be guided in all its activities in the international arena by peace-loving principles consistent with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, focusing its attention on the elimination of nuclear danger and the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

[Original: French]

[18 May 1988]

As indicated by its votes in favour of resolutions 41/11 and 42/16 entitled "Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic", the Central African Republic is of the view that these resolutions must be strictly implemented by the entire international community if the South Atlantic is to be a genuine zone of peace and co-operation. The Central African Republic remains prepared to collaborate in any way in order to promote the objectives of the zone and will support all similar draft resolutions.

EL SALVADOR

[Original: Spanish]

[21 March 1988]

On this matter, we wish to inform you that the contents of your note and annex have been transmitted to the Salvadorian Ministry for Foreign Affairs for consideration and appropriate action.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

[Original: English]

[10 May 1988]

1. The German Democratic Republic supports the declaration of a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic adopted in resolution 41/11. The declaration constitutes a major step towards achieving the important goal of ensuring peace and security at both the regional and global level.

2. The establishment of the zone is a logical continuation of such significant initiatives as the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. Its significance goes far beyond the regional framework of the South Atlantic and the adjacent continents. As a maritime user of the South Atlantic, the German Democratic Republic strongly supports the call on all States, as contained in resolution 42/16, to refrain from any action inconsistent with the Charter and relevant resolutions of the United Nations and which may create or aggravate situations of tension and conflict in the region.

3. The third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament should give due encouragement to efforts towards materializing a zone of peace in the South Atlantic. The German Democratic Republic would like to see the report of the Secretary-General to the forty-third session of the United

Nations General Assembly on the agenda item "Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic" give a representative survey on the situation with regard to the implementation of the declaration, on the chief obstacles encountered in the process and on the positions as communicated by States on the subject.

4. The German Democratic Republic regards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace in the various regions of the world as major elements of a comprehensive system of international peace and security. Together with the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic it suggested the creation of nuclear-weapon-free and chemical-weapon-free zones in Central Europe, which would enhance security not only in Europe but also in the world at large.

5. An international meeting for nuclear-weapon-free zones will be held at Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, in June 1988. The meeting will offer an opportunity for a broad exchange of views on regional approaches on behalf of the safeguarding of peace and the adoption of disarmament measures in order to promote the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons. Hence, the experience gained in efforts for shaping the zone of peace in the South Atlantic will provide the meeting with useful impulses and ideas.

MEXICO

[Original: Spanish]

[15 June 1988]

1. The Government of Mexico reiterates its support for the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic, in the conviction that such a zone will contribute to the preservation of regional peace and security and that it will be instrumental in promoting co-operation among the nations in the area and their development.

2. Mexico attaches special importance to paragraph 3, in which the States of other geographic regions are urged scrupulously to respect the region of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation, especially through the reduction and eventual elimination of their military presence there, the non-introduction of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction and the non-extension into the region of rivalries and conflicts that are foreign to it.

3. In order to strengthen the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic, all States situated in it must undertake to seek peaceful solutions, through negotiations, to the conflicts between them or with other States outside the region, within the framework of the rules governing international coexistence. States outside the region must also make and scrupulously fulfil the same commitment with regard to their disputes with countries in the zone.

4. In the opinion of the Government of Mexico, the elimination of the inhuman régime of apartheid, the attainment of self-determination and independence by the people of Namibia and the cessation of all acts of aggression against the peoples of southern Africa continue to be essential to the full establishment of the zone of peace and co-operation.

PHILIPPINES

[Original: English]

[29 June 1988]

1. The support of the Philippine Government for the establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic is a manifestation of its support for the establishment of zones of peace in various regions of the world in so far as they contribute towards the strengthening of the security of States within such zones and, hence, to international peace and security.

2. The South Atlantic should be insulated from major Power rivalries and transformed into a nuclear-free zone to prevent the escalation of tensions in the regions, such as the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) dispute between the United Kingdom and Argentina and the continued illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa in defiance of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), and avoid potential sources of super-Power conflicts.

3. The concept is similar to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)-sponsored "Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN)", for which the Philippines is also seeking international support.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

[Original: Russian]

[31 May 1988]

1. The USSR has consistently advocated the establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world, in the belief that they play an important role in reducing the threat of nuclear war and help lay the foundations for a comprehensive system of international security that will ensure lasting peace and mutually advantageous co-operation throughout the world.

2. Guided by this general policy, the Soviet Union supports efforts to turn the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean into zones of peace and to establish nuclear-free zones in Northern Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, Africa and other regions. The USSR was the first nuclear Power to sign, and subsequently ratify, Protocols 2 and 3 to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty.

3. The proposal to create a zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic also meets with full understanding and support in the USSR. It testifies to the aspiration of the States of this vast region to base their security on broad, equal and democratic co-operation. The Soviet Union endorses the comprehensive approach to guaranteeing security taken in this initiative, an approach which reflects the integrity and interdependence of today's world.

4. The signing of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and

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Shorter-Range Missiles and the agreements on a political settlement in Afghanistan made it very clear that with political will any of the problems of strengthening international security, including the most complex ones, are capable of mutually acceptable solution.

5. The USSR therefore feels that steps must be taken to foster in the South Atlantic the positive developments that are gaining ground in the international arena. The Soviet Union, for its part, is ready to take practical steps to help achieve this goal. It confirms its readiness to discuss with the United States of America and the other major naval Powers, as well as the States of the South Atlantic, the question of appropriate measures in response to the General Assembly's call for a reduction of military presence in the region and the non-introduction of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction there. Practical steps to provide reliable guarantees for the security of naval communications in the South Atlantic would also be very important.

6. An indispensable condition for lasting peace and security in this region is a halt to all acts of aggression and subversion against the States of the area, the complete eradication of apartheid and the achievement of self-determination and independence by the people of Namibia, the elimination from the South Atlantic of foreign military bases, the accession of the Republic of South Africa to the non-proliferation Treaty and the placing of all its nuclear activity under IAEA supervision.

7. In the Soviet view, a special role in solving all these problems devolves upon the United Nations, which has the necessary capability to provide practical help in transforming the South Atlantic into a zone of peace and co-operation.

III. OTHER SOURCES

Final Document of the first meeting of States of the zone
of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic, issued
at Rio de Janeiro on 29 July 1988

1. The first meeting of the States of the zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic was held from 25 to 29 July 1988 with the participation of 22 States.

2. The text of the final document was circulated as an official document of the General Assembly (A/43/512, annex).
