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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE
AGENDA OF THE FORTY-THIRD SESSION

SHORT-TERM, MEDIUM-TERM AND LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS
OF NATURAL DISASTERS IN BANGLADESH

Note verbale dated 10 October 1988 from the Permanent
Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to request, in accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion of an item entitled "Short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions to the problems of natural disasters in Bangladesh".

An explanatory memorandum is enclosed herewith in accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure.

ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

1. Bangladesh has been subject to natural disasters caused by floods, cyclones and drought that have now become almost a perennial visitation. This year Bangladesh was overrun by an unprecedented flood, the worst in living memory. Coming in the wake of the disastrous cyclone of 1985 and the floods of 1987, the impact of the current disaster has been cumulative in its effect. The consequences of the disaster of 1988 are incalculable in terms of the colossal damage to crops, livestock, communications and the infrastructure and in terms of human misery caused to tens of millions of displaced people. These disasters have long since ceased to be viewed in the context of humanitarian relief. They have constituted an insurmountable burden on the economy and development plans of the country causing irrecoverable set-back in growth and necessitating impossible adjustment. The need for sustained development assistance over the long term to supplement immediate and medium-term relief and rehabilitation assistance is vital.

2. The Government and people of Bangladesh are making maximum effort in seeking to meet the situation. A comprehensive national programme has been undertaken not only to try and recuperate from the devastations caused, but also to anticipate solutions for the future with specific concentration on the three main aspects of such disasters: immediate relief and rehabilitation measures; medium-term measures for rehabilitation and reconstruction of the economy; and infrastructure and longer-term measures with special emphasis on disaster preparedness and preventive schemes. A key impetus is to find a permanent solution.

3. Clearly many of these catastrophes cannot be prevented now or in the immediate future in the absence of in-depth study of the many factors that cause them and of international assistance and investment over time to remedy them. There are too many aspects for any single country or even groups of countries to be able to deal with effectively. They need a global reach and outlook supplemented by regional co-operative efforts.

4. It is our hope that support and assistance of the international community will be forthcoming on all these integrated aspects.
