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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS
BETWEEN STATES

Letter dated 25 November 1988 from the Permanent Representative of
Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the decisions of the Third Extraordinary Session of the Council of the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME), held at Kuwait on 31 October and 1 November 1988.

I should appreciate it if you would circulate this letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 82, 84 and 136, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammad A. ABULHASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Decisions of the Third Extraordinary Session of the Council of the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment, held at Kuwait on 31 October and 1 November 1988

Introduction

Pursuant to the request of the State of Kuwait, and in accordance with article XVII (a) of the Kuwait Regional Convention of 1978, the Third Extraordinary Session of the ROPME Council was convened in Kuwait on 31 October and 1 November 1988. The objectives of the Extraordinary Session were to: (1) review the State of Kuwait's proposal on surveillance and clearance of war-related objects and wrecks representing a potential pollution threat to the marine environment; and (2) review the outline of an action plan for surveillance, ecological assessment and clearance of war-related objects and wrecks in the Sea Area.

Attendance

The Third Extraordinary Session was attended by representatives of the following Contracting States:

State of Bahrain
Islamic Republic of Iran
Republic of Iraq
State of Kuwait
Sultanate of Oman
State of Qatar
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
United Arab Emirates

The session was also attended by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Decisions of the Extraordinary Session

The Heads of Delegations, after careful examination of the recommendations of the Expert Committee, decided that:

- 4.8.1 The existing Executive Committee under the Chairmanship of H.E. the Acting Executive Secretary of ROPME should take all necessary action and form Expert Committees representing all member States to deal with

environmental problems and clearance of obstacles and other objects of war-related activities. The Executive Committee to take charge of supervising the survey and removal of obstacles and wrecks in the Sea Area, as well as the implementation of the Action Plan for restoration and enhancement of the marine environment under the umbrella of the Organization. The Executive Committee to prepare a preliminary action plan, including identification of the financial implications, to be distributed to the member States as a document for consideration and endorsement.

- 4.8.1.1 Survey the territorial sea and the international waters for all marine obstacles and objects representing a potential source of pollution to the marine environment. The survey to include location, size, cargo, ownership and nationality of sunken vessels, locations of mines and damaged structures.
- 4.8.1.2 Assess the environmental status of all parts of the Sea Area, especially where the military activities have taken place and causing a potential risk directly or indirectly, seeking the assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme and other specialized agencies in order to propose practicable methods to restore and enhance the marine environment.
- 4.8.1.3 Provide provisions for preparation of a detailed action plan for clearance of all obstacles and floating objects causing potential risk of pollution as well as those sunk in the international waters, through close co-operation among member States. Further assistance should be sought from regional and international organizations as well as from the international community, if required.
- 4.8.1.4 Identify through independent international agencies, the commercial interests involved in the sunken vessels, including the possible ROPME ownership of vessels, in view of the fact that the ownership and insurance interests in these vessels are not certain after the lapse of eight years.
- 4.8.1.5 Further investigate the legal and financial responsibilities of the entities identified to remove wrecks and debris from the sea-bed.

In order to achieve these objectives, the following measures are recommended to the Executive Committee:

- 4.8.2 To request all member States and call upon the international organizations and countries concerned with international navigation to provide the Executive Committee with information available on the sites of residuals of military operations, floating objects or sunken vessels soonest possible.

- 4.8.3 To request all member States to provide ROPME with available information and techniques for predicting the movements of the floating objects which might be current-drifted, including the use of trajectory models, remote sensing by aircrafts, vessels or satellites, and further request all member States to take necessary measures to facilitate the implementation of the action plan.
- 4.8.4 To submit to the Council within six months a report on the actions taken, calling for any further measures required to follow up the matter.
