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LETTER DATED 11 FEBRUARY 1966 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to refer to the resolution adopted by the Council of the Organization of American States on 2 February 1966, which was transmitted to you by the Secretary-General and, in response to the latter's request, reproduced in United Nations document S/7133.

In view of the fact that the Government of Mexico was obliged to abstain in the vote on the aforesaid resolution, although it included several references to the Declaration on non-intervention contained in resolution 2131 (XX), which was adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 1965 and is fully and unreservedly supported by the Mexican Government in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I have the honour to request you to have circulated likewise, as a United Nations document, the present communication and the two annexes hereto which make clear the Mexican Government's position on the matter at issue: (1) Statement by the representative of Mexico in the Council of the Organization of American States on 28 January 1966; (2) Explanation of vote by the same representative in the Council on 2 February 1966.

(Signed) Francisco CUEVAS CANCINO
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of Mexico to the United Nations

Annex 1

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR RAFAEL DE LA COLINA, REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO
IN THE COUNCIL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, AT THE MEETING
HELD ON 28 JANUARY 1966

"Mexico's traditional and unchanging position on non-intervention is well known to all the members of OAS. I will mention only the last occasion on which it was stated - at the Tenth Meeting of Consultation - when my country reaffirmed that there is no other principle, in its view, which is more vital, because it is founded directly on the equality of all States before the law and constitutes the corner-stone of international law."

These were the words used by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Mr. Antonio Carrillo Flores, at the Second Extraordinary Inter-American Conference, held at Rio de Janeiro, to emphasize Mexico's resolute adherence to this guiding rule of Mexican foreign policy.

During the twentieth session of the General Assembly, when the item "The inadmissibility of intervention in the domestic affairs of States and the protection of their independence and sovereignty" was under discussion in the First Committee, the Head of the Mexican delegation, Mr. Alfonso García Robles, spoke as follows: "In one way or another, throughout our turbulent history, all our statesmen have expressed the idea that the principle of non-intervention is, for us Mexicans, a product of our history, of unhappy or tragic experiences from which we have finally emerged to continue on our way, defending, more in deeds than in words, the principle of non-intervention."

Later, when explaining his vote, he said: "Hence my delegation considers it one of the signal privileges that it has enjoyed, during its twenty years of active participation in the debates of our Organization, to have had the opportunity - as one of the three Latin American members of the small informal negotiating group of the First Committee - of making its modest contribution to the preparation of the text which the General Assembly has just adopted by one of the most impressive votes it has ever cast."

In the solemn Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 1965 by 109 votes to none, with 1 abstention, we read the following two preambular paragraphs:

"Considering that armed intervention is synonymous with aggression, and as such is contrary to the basic principles on which peaceful international co-operation between States should be built," and then

"Considering further that direct intervention, subversion and all forms of indirect intervention are contrary to these principles and, consequently, constitute a violation of the Charter of the United Nations."

Subsequently, the operative part of the same instrument begins with the following two paragraphs (already quoted by the distinguished representative of our sister Republic of Peru), which we must regard as fundamental to this matter:

"1. No State has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. Consequently, armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements, are condemned.

"2. No State may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights or to secure from it advantages of any kind. Also, no State shall organize, assist, foment, finance, incite or tolerate subversive, terrorist or armed activities directed towards the violent overthrow of the régime of another State, or interfere in civil strife in another State."

In the light of the foregoing, I wish to state for the record, as representative of Mexico, that I condemn any acts which constitute a violation of these precepts. Inasmuch as governmental officials or delegates have openly participated in the deliberations and decisions of the so-called Tricontinental Solidarity Conference of Peoples, our condemnation will be even stronger.

Let me add that I do not consider it appropriate at this juncture to go beyond the protest which we have registered unanimously against the seditious propaganda and threats of intervention that have emerged from that Conference.

In this connexion I shall quote another passage from the statement made by our Minister for Foreign Affairs at Rio de Janeiro:

"We are not and cannot be unaware of the fact that it is the urgent duty of every country to protect its institutions; but we also believe that it is the privilege of every State to determine, in accordance with its laws - the expression of its people's will - the ways in which this protection is to be provided. This is the best way of guaranteeing that the defence of the noblest of all causes - the safeguarding of national dignity and sovereignty - is not left to those who have lost faith in democracy.

"This was the principle on which all of our countries agreed unanimously at Bogotá in 1948, when they adopted resolution 32, entitled 'Preservation and Defence of Democracy in the Americas'. All of our Governments agreed to adopt, within their respective territories and in accordance with the constitutional provisions of each State, the necessary measures to suppress and prevent activities directed, assisted or instigated by foreign Governments, organizations or individuals, which are designed to subvert by violence the institutions of the said Republics, to foment disorder in their internal political life, or to interfere by pressure or subversive propaganda or in any other manner with the free and sovereign right of their peoples to govern themselves in accordance with democratic aspirations.

.....

"We do indeed recognize that international solidarity has gradually created new institutions which we have forged into world-wide or regional instruments. We have never doubted, therefore, that the principle of non-intervention is compatible with collective action exceptionally and specifically provided for in treaties. But only with such action. What we cannot agree to is that, without the formality of a treaty which is subject to a strict negotiating and control procedure in all our countries, international bodies should arrogate to themselves powers which our peoples have not granted to them."

To the extent that the powers and functions assigned to the Council of the Organization so permit, and vigorously abiding by our respective constitutional provisions, we may indeed redouble our vigilance against intrigue from outside, but we must endeavour at the same time to satisfy the aspirations of our peoples, which brook no delay.

Indeed, while we must jealously guard our institutions and our tranquillity from the threat of subversive action from abroad, let us never forget that these institutions and this tranquillity can be secure only to the extent that our peoples as a whole - and especially the majorities, in our rural and urban areas, whose level of living is still painfully low - receive the benefits of a policy aimed at social improvement and carried out in conformity with the principles and rules on which we agreed in the Charter of Punta del Este and more recently in the Economic and Social Charter of Rio de Janeiro.

In a solemn statement to the Congress of my country, on 1 September 1965, President Díaz Ordaz said:

"To improve the lot of the few to the detriment of the many is to move backwards... When we affirmed our nationhood, our people chose the path of democracy for the fulfilment of its great destiny, understanding 'democracy' in the sense of article 3 of our Constitution not only as a legal structure and a political system but also as a whole way of life, based on steady economic, social and cultural improvement, with the broadest possible range of liberties and with the aim of achieving social justice."

.....

Mr. President,

The paths of social justice and the ways of achieving it must be sought by each country in the exercise of its sovereignty and in accordance with its nature and its history; but in this time of changes, anxieties and hopes, I repeat, we must remember that it is only by dint of constant and vigorous effort for the achievement of justice that we can ensure that democracy and freedom will survive and be firmly rooted and impregnable in our hemisphere.

Annex 2

EXPLANATION OF VOTE

In my statement made on 28 January 1966 before this Council, after quoting the first two paragraphs of resolution 2131 (XX) of the United Nations General Assembly, I said the following:

"In the light of the foregoing, I wish to state for the record, as the representative of Mexico, that I condemn any acts which constitute a violation of these precepts. Inasmuch as governmental officials or delegates have openly participated in the deliberations and decisions of the so-called Tri-continental Solidarity Conference of Peoples, our condemnation will be even stronger.

"Let me add that I do not consider it appropriate at this juncture to go beyond the protest which we have registered unanimously against the seditious propaganda and threats of intervention that have emerged from that Conference."

And I added:

"To the extent that the powers and functions assigned to the Council of the Organization so permit, and vigorously abiding by our respective constitutional provisions, we may indeed redouble our vigilance against intrigue from outside, but we must endeavour at the same time to satisfy the aspirations of our peoples which brook no delay."

As the President of this Council is aware, I have endeavoured to find a text which, while approximating the wording adopted as closely as possible, would nevertheless reflect the position of my Ministry as regards the competence of the Council to issue a political pronouncement of this significance.

With due respect for the opinions of the distinguished representatives assembled here, which differ from mine in the matter of the Council's competence, I am offering this explanation chiefly to reaffirm that our views coincide on the fundamental point, namely, the categorical condemnation of any acts which constitute a violation of the guiding rules inherent in the principle of non-intervention.

