

UNITED NATIONS

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LETTER DATED 12 DECEMBER 1950 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL TRANSMITTING
THE TEXT OF A RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY ENTITLED "DEVELOPMENT OF A 20-YEAR
PROGRAMME FOR ACHIEVING PEACE THROUGH
THE UNITED NATIONS

I have the honour to transmit, for the information of the Security Council, the text of the enclosed resolution (A/1539) entitled "Development of a 20-year programme for achieving peace through the United Nations", adopted by the General Assembly at its 312th plenary meeting on 20 November 1950. This resolution requests the appropriate organs of the United Nations to give consideration to those portions of the Secretary-General's memorandum on this subject, with which they are particularly concerned; and to inform the General Assembly, at its sixth session, through the Secretary-General, of any progress achieved through such consideration.

I also enclose the text of the memorandum (A/1304) referred to in the resolution, and wish to draw attention, in particular, to points 1 to 5, concerning (a) inauguration of periodic meetings of the Security Council, attended by Foreign Ministers, or Heads of other members of Governments, as provided by the United Nations Charter and the rules of procedure; together with further developments and use of other United Nations machinery for negotiation, mediation and conciliation of international disputes; (b) a new attempt to make progress toward establishing an international control system for atomic energy that will be effective in preventing its use for war and promoting its use for peaceful purposes, (c) a new approach to the problem of bringing the armaments race under control, not only in the field of atomic weapons, but in other weapons of mass destruction and in conventional armaments; (d) a renewal of serious efforts to reach agreement on the armed forces to be made available under the Charter to the Security Council for the enforcement of its decisions; and (e) acceptance and application of the principle that is wise and right to proceed as rapidly as possible toward universality of membership.

(Signed) TRYGVE LIE
Secretary-General

/I. DEVELOPMENT
S/1948

I.

DEVELOPMENT OF A 20-YEAR PROGRAMME FOR ACHIEVING
PEACE THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS*

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its
312th plenary meeting on 20 November 1950.

(adopted without reference to a Committee (A/1514))

The General Assembly,

Having considered the "Memorandum of points for consideration in the development of a 20-year programme for achieving peace through the United Nations" submitted by the Secretary-General (A/1304),

Noting that progress has been made by the present session of the General Assembly with regard to certain of the points contained in the memorandum of the Secretary-General,

Reaffirming its constant desire that all the resources of the United Nations Charter be utilized for the development of friendly relations between nations and the achievement of universal peace,

1. Commends the Secretary-General for his initiative in preparing his memorandum and presenting it to the General Assembly;
2. Requests the appropriate organs of the United Nations to give consideration to those portions of the memorandum of the Secretary-General with which they are particularly concerned;
3. Requests these organs to inform the General Assembly at its sixth session, through the Secretary-General, of any progress achieved through such consideration.

II.

DEVELOPMENT OF A 20-YEAR PROGRAMME FOR ACHIEVING
PEACE THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS*

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to communicate to the General Assembly a copy of the letter which he addressed to the Members of the United Nations on 6 June 1950, together with a memorandum entitled "Memorandum of points for consideration in the development of a 20-year programme for achieving peace through the United Nations". The Secretary-General is communicating this letter and memorandum to the General Assembly in connexion with item 61 of the provisional agenda of the fifth regular session of the Assembly which was distributed on 21 July 1950.

Lake Success, 6 June 1950

The deterioration of relations between leading Members of the United Nations has created a situation of most serious concern for the United Nations and the future peace of the world. In my capacity as Secretary-General, I have felt it my duty to suggest means by which the principles of the Charter and the resources of the United Nations could be employed to moderate the present conflict and to enable a fresh start to be made towards eventual peaceful solutions of outstanding problems.

To this end, I have drawn up a "Memorandum of points for consideration in the development of a 20-year programme for achieving peace through the United Nations", a copy of which is annexed hereto.

I have personally handed this memorandum to the President of the United States of America, Mr. Harry S. Truman, on 20 April, to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr. Clement Attlee, on 28 April, to the Prime Minister of France, Mr. Georges Bidault, on 3 May, and to the Prime Minister of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Generalissimo Joseph Stalin, on 15 May. I had an opportunity to discuss the points of this memorandum with the foregoing Heads of Governments and with other leaders of their Governments, including the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mr. Dean Acheson, the Foreign Secretary of the

* A/1304

United Kingdom, Mr. Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Minister of France, Mr. Robert Schuman, the Vice-Premier of the USSR, Mr. Viacheslav Molotov, and the Foreign Minister of the USSR, Mr. Andrei Vishinsky.

While it would not be appropriate for me to state the views of any of the Governments on the points of the memorandum, I can say that I have drawn from my conversations a firm conviction that the United Nations remains a primary factor in the foreign policy of each of these Governments and that the reopening of genuine negotiations on certain of the outstanding issues may be possible.

It is evident that no significant progress can be made while the Members of the United Nations remain sharply divided on the question of the representation of one of the permanent members of the Security Council - the Republic of China. It is necessary that this question be settled.

Under point 2 of the annexed memorandum, I have made a number of suggestions for resumption of negotiations on the problems of atomic energy. Another suggestion was made in the appeal circulated on 20 April 1950 by the International Committee of the Red Cross to the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions for the Protection of Victims of War, to do everything in their power to reach agreements on the prohibition of the atomic bomb and "blind" weapons generally.

In connexion with point 7, the conversations of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe, Mr. Gunnar Myrdal, with various European Governments have emphasized the necessity for further efforts to liberate international trade from the restrictions and discriminatory practices which now hamper the free flow of goods.

Further in connexion with point 7, I call your attention to the statement unanimously adopted in Paris on 4 May 1950 by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (composed of the Secretary-General) and the administrative heads of the following specialized agencies: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization, World Health Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, International Refugee Organization, International Telecommunication Union, International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union, Interim Commission of the International Trade Organization.

The statement reads:

"The present division of the world and the increasingly serious conflicts of policy among the Great Powers have gravely impaired the prospects for world peace and for raising the standards of living of the peoples of the world. It is of particular concern to the administrative heads of the organizations that these conditions threaten the very basis of their work. The United Nations and the specialized agencies are founded upon the principles that lasting world problems - like disease, hunger, ignorance and poverty, which recognize no frontier - can never be overcome unless all the nations join in universal efforts to these ends. We affirm the validity of this principle of universality. The United Nations system makes ample room for diversity within a universal framework. We believe it would be a disaster if efforts to realize the principle of universality in practice were to be abandoned now. We believe that the greatest efforts should, on the contrary, be directed towards achieving in fact true universality in the membership and programmes of the United Nations and of those of the specialized agencies which are founded on that principle. We also believe that it is necessary for all the Governments to renew their efforts to conciliate and negotiate the political differences that divide them and obstruct economic and social advancement. Specifically, we believe that it is essential to the future of both the United Nations and the specialized agencies that the present political deadlock in the United Nations be resolved at the earliest possible moment. The peace and well-being of all peoples demand from their Governments a great and sustained new effort by the nations of the world to achieve a constructive and durable peace."

I have the honour to request the earnest attention of your Government to the annexed memorandum. I have in contemplation the possibility of its formal submission to the Security Council at an appropriate time, and I reserve the right to place it on the provisional agenda of the forthcoming regular session of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Trygve LIE
Secretary-General

/MEMORANDUM OF

MEMORANDUM OF POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A
TWENTY-YEAR PROGRAMME FOR ACHIEVING PEACE THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS

As Secretary-General, it is my firm belief that a new and great effort must be attempted to end the so-called 'cold war' and to set the world once more on a road that will offer greater hope of lasting peace.

The atmosphere of deepening international mistrust can be dissipated and the threat of the universal disaster of another war averted by employing to the full the resources for conciliation and constructive peace-building present in the United Nations Charter. The employment of these resources can secure eventual peace if we accept, believe and act upon the possibility of peaceful co-existence among all the Great Powers and the different economic and political systems they represent, and if the Great Powers evidence a readiness to undertake genuine negotiation - not in a spirit of appeasement - but with enlightened self-interest and common sense on all sides.

Measures for collective self-defence and regional remedies of other kinds are at best interim measures, and cannot alone bring any reliable security from the prospect of war. The one common undertaking and universal instrument of the great majority of the human race is the United Nations. A patient, constructive long-term use of its potentialities can bring a real and secure peace to the world. I am certain that such an effort will have the active interest and support of the smaller Member States, who have much to contribute in the conciliation of Big-Power differences and in the development of constructive and mutually advantageous political and economic co-operation.

I therefore venture to suggest certain points for consideration in the formulation of a twenty-year United Nations Peace Programme. Certain of these points call for urgent action. Others are of a long-range nature, requiring continued effort over the next twenty years. I shall not discuss the problems of the peace settlements for Austria, Germany and Japan, - because the founders of the United Nations indicated that the peace settlements should be made separately from the United Nations. But I believe that the progress of a United Nations Peace Programme such as is here suggested will help to bring these settlements far closer to attainment.

1. Inauguration of periodic meetings of the Security Council, attended by Foreign Ministers, or Heads or other members of Governments, as provided by the United Nations Charter and the rules of procedure; together with further developments and use of other United Nations machinery for negotiation, mediation and conciliation of international disputes

The periodic meetings of the Security Council provided for in Article 28 of the Charter have never been held. Such periodic meetings should be held semi-annually, beginning with one in 1950. In my opinion, they should be used for a general review at a high level of outstanding issues in the United Nations, particularly those that divide the Great Powers. They should not be expected to produce great decisions every time; they should be used for consultation - much of it in private - for efforts to gain ground toward agreement on questions at issue, to clear up misunderstandings, to prepare for new initiatives that may improve the chances for definitive agreement at later meetings. They should be held away from Headquarters as a general rule, in Geneva, the capitals of the permanent members and in other regions of the world.

Further development of the resources of the United Nations for mediation and conciliation should be undertaken, including re-establishment of the regular practice of private consultations by the representatives of the five Great Powers on limitations on the use of the veto power in the pacific settlement procedures of the Security Council.

2. A new attempt to make progress toward establishing an international control system for atomic energy that will be effective in preventing its use for war and promoting its use for peaceful purposes

We cannot hope for any quick or easy solution of this most difficult problem of atomic energy control. The only way to find out what is possible is to resume negotiation in line with the directive of the General Assembly last fall "to explore all possible avenues and examine all concrete suggestions with a view to determining whether they might lead to an agreement". Various suggestions for finding a basis for a fresh approach have been put forward. One possibility would be for the Security Council to instruct the Secretary-General to call a conference of scientists whose discussions might provide a reservoir of new ideas on the control of weapons of mass destruction and the promotion of peaceful uses of atomic energy that could thereafter be explored in the United Nations Atomic /Energy Commission.

Energy Commission. It may be that an interim agreement could be worked out that would at least be some improvement on the present situation of an unlimited atomic arms race; even though it did not afford full security. There are other possibilities for providing the basis for a new start; every possibility should be explored.

3. A new approach to the problem of bringing the armaments race under control, not only in the field of atomic weapons, but in other weapons of mass destruction and in conventional armaments

Here is another area where it is necessary to re-activate negotiation and to make new efforts at finding some area of common ground. It must be recognized that up to now there has been virtually a complete failure here and that the immediate prospects seem poor indeed. Clearly disarmament requires an atmosphere of confidence in which political disputes are brought nearer to solution. But it is also true that any progress at all toward agreement on the regulation of armaments of any kind would help to reduce cold war tensions and thus assist in the adjustment of political disputes. Negotiation on this problem should not be deferred until the other great political problems are solved, but should go hand-in-hand with any effort to reach political settlements.

4. A renewal of serious efforts to reach agreement on the armed forces to be made available under the Charter to the Security Council for the enforcement of its decisions

A new approach should be made toward resolving existing differences on the size, location and composition of the forces to be pledged to the Security Council under Article 43 of the Charter. Basic political difficulties which may delay a final solution should not be permitted to stand in the way of some sort of an interim accord for a small force sufficient to prevent or stop localized outbreaks threatening international peace. The mere existence of such a force would greatly enhance the ability of the Security Council to bring about peaceful settlements in most of the cases which are likely to come before it.

5. Acceptance and application of the principle that it is wise and right to proceed as rapidly as possible toward universality of membership

Fourteen nations are now awaiting admission to the United Nations. In the interests of the people of those countries and of the United Nations, I believe

/they should

they should all be admitted, as well as other countries which will attain their independence in the future. It should be made clear that Germany and Japan would also be admitted as soon as the peace treaties have been completed.

6. A sound and active programme of technical assistance for economic development and encouragement of broad scale capital investment, using all appropriate private, governmental and inter-governmental resources

A technical assistance programme is in its beginnings, assisted by the strong support of the President of the United States of America. Its fundamental purpose is to enable the people of the under-developed countries to raise their standard of living peacefully by specific and practicable measures. It should be a continuing and expanding programme for the next twenty years and beyond, carried forward with the co-operation of all Member Governments, largely through the United Nations and the specialized agencies, with mutual beneficial programmes planned and executed on a basis of equality rather than on a basis of charity. Through this means the opportunities can be opened up for capital investment on a large and expanding scale. Here lies one of our best hopes for combating the dangers and costs of the cold war.

7. More vigorous use by all Member Governments of the specialized agencies of the United Nations to promote, in the words of the Charter, "higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress"

The great potentialities of the specialized agencies to participate in a long-range programme aimed at drastically reducing the economic and social causes of war, can be realized by more active support from all Governments, including the membership of the Soviet Union in some or all of the agencies to which it does not now belong. The expansion of world trade which is vital to any long-range effort for world betterment requires the early ratification of the Charter of the International Trade Organization.

8. Vigorous and continued development of the work of the United Nations for wider observance and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world

It is becoming evident that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly in 1948 without a dissenting vote, is destined to become one of the great documents of history. The United Nations is now engaged

/on a programme

on a programme that will extend over the next twenty years - and beyond - to secure the extension and wider observance of the political, economic and social rights there set down. Its success needs the active support of all Governments.

9. Use of the United Nations to promote, by peaceful means instead of by force, the advancement of dependent, colonial or semi-colonial peoples towards a place of equality in the world

The great changes which have been taking place since the end of the war among the peoples of Asia and Africa must be kept within peaceful bounds by using the universal framework of the United Nations. The old relationships will have to be replaced with new ones of equality and fraternity. The United Nations is the instrument capable of bringing such a transition to pass without violent upheavals and with the best prospect of bringing long-run economic and political benefits to all nations of the world.

10. Active and systematic use of all the powers of the Charter and all the machinery of the United Nations to speed up the development of international law towards an eventual enforceable world law for a universal world society

These three last points deal with programmes already under way to carry out important principles of the United Nations Charter. They respond to basic human desires and aspirations and co-ordinated efforts by all Governments to further these programmes are indispensable to the eventual peaceful stabilization of international relations. There are many specific steps which need to be taken - for example, under point 10, ratification of the Genocide Convention, greater use of the International Court of Justice, and systematic development and codification of international law. More important is that Governments should give high priority in their national policies to the continued support and development of these ideals which are at the foundation of all striving of the peoples for a better world.

What is here suggested is only an outline of preliminary proposals for a programme; much more development will be needed. It is self-evident that every step mentioned, every proposal made, will require careful and detailed, even laborious preparation, negotiation and administration. It is equally self-evident that the necessary measure of agreement will be hard to realize most of the time, and even impossible some of the time. Yet the world can never accept the thesis of despair - the thesis of irrevocable and irreconcilable conflict.
