



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

UN LIBRARY

A/44/348
28 June 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

JUL 3 1989

~~UN/SA COLLECTION~~

Forty-fourth session
Items 101 and 107 of the preliminary list*

ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

Letter dated 27 June 1989 from the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit herewith the text of a letter dated 26 June 1989 from His Excellency Mr. Petar Mladenov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, addressed to you (see annex). I also enclose herewith documents A/43/320, A/44/271 and Corr.1, A/44/300, A/44/327, A/44/336 and A/44/342, previously circulated as documents of the General Assembly.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 101 and 107 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Alexander STRESOV
First Deputy Minister
for Foreign Affairs
Permanent Representative of the
People's Republic of Bulgaria to
the United Nations

* A/44/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Letter dated 26 June 1989 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of
Bulgaria addressed to the Secretary-General

For several years now the Government of the Republic of Turkey has been conducting an intensive and ill-intentioned propaganda campaign against the People's Republic of Bulgaria. Recently, Turkey has brought this campaign to an absurdity in total variance with the positive tendencies being established in international life.

A new expression of this policy is the letter of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Mesut Yilmaz, dated 16 June 1989 and distributed as General Assembly document A/44/330 and Corr.1. The letter reiterates the groundless accusations against the People's Republic of Bulgaria in the spirit of the familiar ideas of pan-Turkism.

My country has once again become the target of the unjustified aspirations of Turkey to present itself as a protector of a non-existent minority in Bulgaria and to identify Bulgarian Muslims with a part of the Turkish nation. It is hardly necessary to elaborate on the history of the issue, as the Bulgarian Government has repeatedly made its position known to the international community. It has also been expressed in a number of United Nations documents. I only wish to emphasize that my country is not the sole target of such aspirations. Turkey officially claims as Turks 150 million Muslims, most of whom live in neighbouring countries.

The objectives of such claims are evident - to divert the attention of the world organization from Turkey's conduct on the international scene, from its disregard for international norms, which are expressed in the continuing unlawful occupation of part of the territory of a United Nations Member State, the sovereign Republic of Cyprus; in its systematic failure to comply with resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly, of the Council of Europe and other international organizations; and in its gross and large-scale violations of the rights of its own citizens.

The letter of the distinguished Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey is full of contradictions. On the one hand, Bulgaria is being accused of preventing Bulgarian Muslims from travelling to Turkey and of detaining them in "concentration camps", and, on the other - of their mass "deportations" or "expulsions", of depriving them of their property, etc. All of these allegations are totally devoid of any foundation.

The truth is that the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria guarantees equal rights to all its citizens. Recently, the Bulgarian National Assembly adopted a number of new acts which are in full compliance with the international instruments on civil and political rights and the agreements reached by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. They facilitate and liberalize the régime of travel outside Bulgaria by eliminating all restrictions to leave the country for either temporary or permanent stay abroad. Under these acts,

the number of Bulgarian nationals travelling abroad has considerably increased. The Bulgarian authorities neither "deport" nor "expel" anybody. Those travelling to Turkey are doing so on their own free will and under no compulsion whatsoever.

The democratic changes in Bulgarian legislation have, strangely enough, provoked a new wave of anti-Bulgarian charges on the part of Turkey. The wording used by the Turkish side is, to say the least, astonishing, having in mind that the policy of the Bulgarian Government is in full conformity with article 12 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and principle 20 of the Vienna Concluding Document concerning the right of people to free movement.

The fact that many Bulgarian citizens have availed themselves of this right has created economic and financial problems for my country. Massive amounts of money have been drawn from the banks, and a labour shortage is felt in some branches of the economy. Under these circumstances, it could hardly be claimed in all seriousness that my Government is subjecting itself to economic hardships by driving its citizens out of the country. Bulgaria aims at strictly adhering to its international commitments due to which the Government finds it impossible, despite all difficulties, to limit the right of its citizens freely to leave the country and to return to it.

No less absurd are the allegations that the Bulgarian authorities are depriving those leaving for Turkey of their property. The fact is that Bulgarian legislation guarantees the property of the citizens regardless of whether they live in Bulgaria or abroad. In accordance with this legislation, all real estate, savings, social security and other property of those leaving the country are preserved and their owners have every right to dispose of this property either personally or through authorized persons.

All these accusations against my country were repeatedly refuted in the past few weeks by the President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Todor Zhivkov, by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Georgi Atanasov, and by myself. The statements on the above occasion were distributed as official United Nations documents and are enclosed herewith.

We are, however, greatly concerned about the fate of our fellow-countrymen going to Turkey. The Turkish side, in order to discredit Bulgaria, is exploiting ruthlessly the plight of thousands of people, thus creating a great human tragedy. We receive information that the Turkish authorities are placing them in camps, that they are restricting their freedom of movement, that they are taking away their passports, thus depriving them of their rights as Bulgarian citizens. The aim is to present them to the international community as refugees. Ideas are brought forward on their settlement in the regions of Turkey inhabited by Kurds and in the occupied part of Cyprus, which will further exacerbate a problem as delicate and complicated as the Cyprus one.

Meanwhile, we have irrefutable evidence of the direct involvement of Turkish authorities and officials in the instigation of extremist elements to organize terrorist acts and riots in Bulgaria, which have led to tragic losses of human

life in the past few years. To qualify such acts of violence as "peaceful demonstrations", as Mr. Yilmaz does, is bewildering.

I wish to state that the Bulgarian Government regrets the loss of life on the part both of civilians and of officers of the public order forces. I further wish to inform you that, at present, an inquiry into the activities of the participants in the riots and of the security services is under way. The results on every particular case will be made public.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria is in favour of a policy of dialogue and co-operation with all States. This applies especially to the Balkan countries, with which we wish to live in good-neighbourliness and friendship. Bulgaria cannot be accused of aggravating its relations with Turkey. The considerable efforts of the Bulgarian Government made possible the signing at Belgrade of the Bulgarian-Turkish Protocol on 23 February 1988 (A/43/320, annex). We believe that this Protocol constitutes a sound basis for discussions and for the settlement of existing controversial problems between the two countries. Unfortunately, only a few months later, the Turkish side declared the Protocol as "still-born".

Regardless of the complications created for the People's Republic of Bulgaria by the Turkish Government, we are willing to maintain good-neighbourly, humane and civilized relations with Turkey and to continue working on the implementation of the Protocol. It has been stated by the President of the State Council, Todor Zhivkov, and by other Bulgarian leaders, that Bulgaria is willing to discuss with Turkey all problems that actually exist, without pre-conditions being set, in compliance with the generally acknowledged principles and norms of international law.

Please allow me to kindly request that the present letter and its annexes* are submitted to the President of the Security Council so that he could also become acquainted with the facts stated in it and with Bulgaria's position, as well as with its desire to normalize its relations with the Republic of Turkey.

* Previously circulated as documents A/43/320, A/44/271 and Corr.1, A/44/300, A/44/327, A/44/336 and A/44/342.