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QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA

Letter dated 6 July 1989 from the Permanent Representative of France
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, in French and English, the press release issued by the President of the Preparatory Meeting of the XVth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting, which was held at Paris on 9 to 13 May 1989.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and the attached press release circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 70 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Pierre-Louis BLANC

* A/44/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Press release issued by the President of the Preparatory Meeting of the XVth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (9-13 May 1989)

The Preparatory Meeting of the XVth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting was held in Paris from 9 to 13 May 1989.

The participants at this meeting were the 22 consultative Parties and 16 of the 17 other States that are members of the Antarctic Treaty.

The main purpose of meeting was the preparation of the draft Agenda of the XVth Consultative Meeting to be held in Paris from 9 to 19 October 1989 and to decide on invitations to international organizations to attend the XVth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting.

Matters relating to the protection of the Antarctic environment were the focus of attention of the meeting. Among others, items for the next agenda were included on:

- Human impact on the Antarctic environment, including waste disposal;
- Effects of tourism;
- Protected areas;
- Marine pollution and maritime safety;
- The role of Antarctica in global change, including the ozone layer.

Particular emphasis was placed on an item setting forth an initiative to integrate new measures with existing ones to complete a comprehensive framework for the protection of the Antarctic environment.

Delegations took advantage of their attendance at the Meeting to receive a report on the actions taken to respond to a recent accident to a vessel in Antarctica (Bahia de Paraiso).

The report described the extensive co-operation among Parties to the Treaty to deal with the accident and mitigate its effect on the environment, including monitoring of any long-term impacts.

They also acknowledged the need to learn the lessons from this experience in building upon existing measures to protect the environment.

It was recognized that the initiative to be launched at the XVth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting would provide the necessary basis for reaching those objectives.
