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MEASURES TO PREVENT INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM WHICH ENDANGERS OR TAKES INNOCENT HUMAN LIVES OR JEOPARDIZES FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND STUDY OF THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THOSE FORMS OF TERRORISM AND ACTS OF VIOLENCE WHICH LIE IN MISERY, FRUSTRATION, GRIEVANCE AND DESPAIR AND WHICH CAUSE SOME PEOPLE TO SACRIFICE HUMAN LIVES, INCLUDING THEIR OWN, IN AN ATTEMPT TO EFFECT RADICAL CHANGES:

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL;
- (b) CONVENING, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TO DEFINE TERRORISM AND TO DIFFERENTIATE IT FROM THE STRUGGLE OF PEOPLES FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION

Report of the Secretary-General

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AUSTRIA

[Original: English]

[19 September 1989]

1. The position of the Government of Austria on international terrorism has been firm and unequivocal as expressed on numerous occasions within and outside the United Nations. Austria is committed to the combat of international terrorism at the national, regional and global levels and encourages international co-operation to the widest possible extent in order to prevent acts of terrorism and, if such acts have in fact occurred, to bring the perpetrators to justice. It remains the firm conviction of Austria that acts of terrorism cannot, under any circumstances, be justified, whatever the goals might be the perpetrators claim to pursue.

2. Austria stresses its commitment to the various international instruments concluded with the aim of combating international terrorism and urges all States which have not yet done so to become Parties to these instruments. In this connection Austria recognizes that the lack of an agreed definition of what constitutes an act of terrorism might with some justification be considered a disadvantage from a juridical point of view. At the same time, however, Austria believes that the practical application of the international legal instruments referred to above has not been hampered by the fact that the international community has not agreed on a definition of the term "terrorism". In fact, these agreements have proven effective in practice and it is Austria's belief that further agreements on specific subjects relating to the combat of international terrorism should be elaborated as soon as possible.

3. Austria has serious doubts that an international conference convened with the aim of arriving at an agreed definition of terrorism could under the present circumstances be a meaningful exercise with some probability of success. If the circumstances should, however, change to an extent that agreement could be reached on the basis on which to hold such a conference and consensus on the elements of a definition of terrorism emerge, Austria would certainly be ready to reconsider its position in the light of such developments.

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