



General Assembly

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/44/645  
17 October 1989  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

Forty-fourth session  
Agenda items 73, 124, 126 and 146

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL  
PEACE AND SECURITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHARTER OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS

PROGRAMME PLANNING

ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY CO-ORDINATION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS WITH THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND  
THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE CHARTER OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS AND ON THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION

Letter dated 13 October 1989 from the Deputy Head of the  
Delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to  
the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly addressed  
to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the aide-mémoire entitled  
"The role of the United Nations and related international organizations in an  
interdependent world".

I request you to have the above-mentioned text distributed as an official  
document of the General Assembly under items 73, 124, 126 and 146.

(Signed) V. PETROVSKY  
Deputy Head of Delegation

ANNEX

Aide-mémoire on the role of the United Nations and related  
international organizations in an interdependent world

The changing nature of international relations, in keeping with the peaceful, post-confrontational period now dawning, and the new challenges facing the world community are helping to enhance the role of multilateral machinery in co-ordinating the actions of States and in fashioning a general strategy for solving global problems and settling contentious issues. Above all, the United Nations and related international organizations are assuming increasing importance.

The Soviet Union welcomes the growing tendency in favour of revitalizing the United Nations and transforming it into a genuine centre for harmonizing the actions of States, giving full rein to its peace-making potential and reviving its role and authority in world affairs. The Organization is overcoming the legacy of the cold war and is speeding up the transition from confrontation to realism and responsibility in the policies of States and to civilized intercourse.

The revitalization of the United Nations is inherently linked with the dialogue that has begun in the world body over a comprehensive approach to international security. Hence, the intensified theoretical discussion in the United Nations of ways and means of creating a secure world for everyone is accompanied by an increasing tendency to move the focus of United Nations activities to the detailed study of specific urgent issues on the agenda of the world community which need to be considered and solved on a multilateral basis. These range from the reversal of the arms race and the settlement of regional conflicts to the creation of conditions for reviving and guaranteeing the universal observance of fundamental individual rights and freedoms.

The efforts to enhance the role and authority of the United Nations and to make the process irreversible call for the collective will of all Member States and a the pooling of their individual efforts. There is a need to ensure that the growing aggregate potential of the Organization is in harmony with the practical steps taken by its Member States to define their own constructive attitude towards the United Nations and related international organizations.

It is important that the partners in the United Nations should have a clear, objective understanding of each other's intentions so that their aims and actions are predictable by all Member States and the Organization as a whole.

In this connection, the Soviet Union sees the need to state the main features of its overall position on the functioning of the international machinery for multilateral interaction, especially that of the United Nations and its related institutions. The aim of this aide-mémoire is to help to enhance a common understanding of key issues involving the co-operation of States within the United Nations and to create conditions for full realization of the potential for co-operation embodied in the United Nations Charter.

The Soviet Union anticipates that there will be a substantive international dialogue on practical means of implementing the ideas set forth in this aide-mémoire and hopes that they will be given due consideration in an atmosphere of constructive goodwill.

## I

The founding of the United Nations and the system of international organizations associated with it was the natural expression of the political will of States that had survived a world war to work together in creating conditions for stable, secure and predictable development that would preclude the very possibility of resorting to a policy of force and violating the rights and dignity of any human being. The Charter of the United Nations, in addition to the ideas embodied therein relating to universal human values and democratic, legal and moral standards, provides for flexible and effective machinery for harmonizing the interests of States, taking account of their pluralism and avoidance of the unilateral use of force. The unanimity of the permanent members of the Security Council had to be made the guiding principle for United Nations activities in the maintenance of international peace and security. Nevertheless, the confrontation that characterized the long period of the cold war paralysed the activities of the United Nations and transformed it essentially into a forum for polemical rhetoric.

The attitudes that emerged in those years basically assigned to international organizations the role of serving as a platform for propaganda. Attempts to revitalize the activities of the United Nations and to utilize it for practical purposes were made hesitantly, and, as a rule, were thwarted. This policy was followed rigidly for a long time, even though favourable trends in international relations had begun to emerge at the end of the 1960s and there was a growing desire for international integration which would genuinely facilitate a revival of interest in the United Nations and the machinery associated with it. Nevertheless, the importance and potential of these organizations as instruments of international co-operation were greatly undervalued and underutilized.

The revitalizing processes of democratization, demilitarization and humanization of international relations which emerged in the second half of the 1980s brought to the fore the pressing issue of reappraising the role and place of international organizations.

The new thinking and the recognition of the realities of an integrated and interdependent world, together with the consequent far-reaching transformation of the Soviet Union's foreign policy, made it possible to re-evaluate the significance of and prospects for the activities of the United Nations and other machinery for co-operation among States. The views of the USSR concerning the conceptual basis for and practical ways of revitalizing the United Nations are set forth in the article by M. S. Gorbachev entitled "Reality and safeguards for a secure world" of 17 September 1987 and in his address to the United Nations on 7 December 1988.

The strengthening of the role of the United Nations and related international organizations as instruments for restructuring international relations through a

universal consensus and based on the notions of humanism is conditional on a number of external factors.

The major driving force for reforming international organizations and international relations as a whole lies in democratization and glasnost, which provide each State with the right and unprecedented opportunities to participate fully in international relations, enhance its contribution to the development of an integral human civilization and reinforce its own quest by drawing on the experience of others.

More and more States are beginning to view their own national security as an integral part of international security. With the gradual reduction of the military factor in world political affairs, increasing importance is being attached to political means of solving international issues, utilizing the authority and capabilities of the United Nations, and there is growing awareness of the urgency of global problems calling for the concerted efforts of all members of the international community. The influence and capabilities of States in the world are beginning to be defined more and more by the level of their socio-economic, scientific and technical development, stability and degree of democracy of their political system and, flowing from that, the predictability of their foreign policy.

On the other hand, international organizations have now evolved into a far-flung system for the interaction of States whereby these have the possibility of strengthening their role in world political affairs and participating on an equitable basis in the international division of labour and technological exchange and the solution of global problems. International organizations are exchanging experience and are collectively elaborating progressive standards in virtually all spheres of human activity. They have in essence been transformed into an important factor in world political affairs with a substantial influence on the foreign and domestic policies of any individual country.

In the view of the USSR, full and equal participation in the activities of international organizations responds to the interest of the entire community of nations in strengthening international machinery for the peaceful solution of common problems in the military, political, economic, ecological and humanitarian fields, and also to the long-term national interests of each participant in international relations.

## II

The principal elements of the policies of States towards the United Nations and related international organizations might, in the view of the USSR, consist of the following:

- The conduct of a consistent policy of de-ideologization, with action to overcome the false politicization of the activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and to eliminate confrontation within them;

- The focusing of the attention of international organizations on the practical activities they carry out in accordance with their competence; increased professionalization of their activities; and the freeing of the United Nations from declamatory and fruitless polemics in the consideration of specific issues;

- The combining of unified political goals with the multiplicity of procedural and tactical decisions and the flexible search for forms of international interaction in each specific case; and consideration from the outset of the possible elements of a balance of interests when initiatives are put forward, with realistic appraisal of the prospects for and means of implementing them;

- A united approach to the decisions of international organizations so that they are taken into account and used in practical policies; strict compliance with decisions of a binding character; and enhancement of the moral and political force of instruments adopted on a consensual basis;

- Realization of the principle of universality, desirability of participation by all members of the world community in international organizations, and exclusion of any State from the work of the United Nations and other international organizations only in cases provided for in the United Nations Charter;

- Rationalization of the work of international organizations, elimination of duplication and overlapping, concentration on priority issues, and the achievement of effective management of international organizations as a whole; and action to avert the dispersion of funds and make optimal use of the material and financial resources available to the United Nations;

- Expansion of transparency and glasnost, and, with the help of international organizations, arrangements for the exchange and free circulation of information at many levels.

### III

In the view of the USSR, the United Nations and related international organizations ought to be tackling the following tasks in specific areas.

In the military-political field, it is important that the United Nations should work towards the confirmation internationally of the new model of security and the shift from the principles of over-armament to those of reasonable sufficiency.

An important task is the identification within the United Nations of aspects in the reversal of the arms race and the safeguarding of military security on which there is emerging an international consensus capable of expression in concrete agreements at the appropriate disarmament talks. Discussion of the whole body of disarmament issues in the United Nations should stimulate bilateral, regional and multilateral negotiation processes. It would be worthwhile to set in motion

multilateral machinery for dealing with a range of important problems relating to the creation of the necessary international conditions for the non-use, non-proliferation and abolition of nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction, the cessation of nuclear tests - enlisting the help of all States for this purpose - and the reduction and limitation of conventional armaments of world military spending, and of supplies of weapons. The United Nations should become a centre for openness and actively promote confidence-building measures, both globally and regionally, and a system for effective verification of compliance with multilateral disarmament agreements.

The United Nations has an important contribution to make in paving the way for the transition from an economy dominated by the arms race to a disarmament economy. Among the collection of disarmament issues under discussion at the United Nations, the retooling of military industry for peaceful applications deserves serious attention.

Given the proliferation of efforts to disentangle knotty regional conflicts with direct United Nations assistance, an attempt is needed to expand the capacity of the Organization to conduct peace-keeping operations, monitor situations and provide peace-making services in regions of conflict in accordance with its Charter.

The priority long-term goal is, with United Nations help, to make the principle that the use or threat of force to attain any kind of political, economic or other goal is inadmissible, together with unqualified respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts and other generally accepted standards of civilized international intercourse, a part of normal international practice.

In the field of economics, participation by States in international organizations opens the door to swifter integration of their economies into the world economy on equal and mutually advantageous terms, and their active involvement in a modern international division of labour, scientific and technological exchanges, trade and co-operation.

Drawing on the economic recommendations of international organizations, taking them into account in practical policies and applying them in the economy should make compatibility between national-level decisions on the operation of economic and political machinery and the generally accepted norms and standards easier to achieve, and afford an opportunity to apply world-wide experience and international expertise to basic development problems.

Such international organizations as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, which are required to react sensitively to changes in world economic relations, have accumulated extensive experience in their various key areas of world economic relations. The USSR favours close contacts with such institutions, with a view to its becoming part of them, and it is determined to work towards full membership of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The 1990 special session of the United Nations General Assembly on economic issues should be of great significance in the development of international economic relations: it may be able to consolidate the multilateral approach to decision-making in this area, formulate principles of international economic co-operation and negotiate political recommendations on means of consolidating it. The preparations for the session parallel the formulation of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade, which is intended to facilitate consensus on how the world economy should develop in interdependent conditions. The United Nations could make a major contribution to the universalization, on a constructive and de-ideologized basis, of the international dialogue on different ways of resolving the problem of indebtedness.

Environmental security is a matter of world-wide concern that has to be dealt with chiefly by means of multilateral collaboration - notably within the United Nations - a consistent, co-ordinated international approach, and long-term universal principles governing man's relationship to the natural world. Any agreements reached on such principles and on priority areas for collaborative conservation must ensure that the environment is conserved, used sensibly and restored for the benefit of all States. The USSR believes that the second United Nations conference on the environment and development should make an important contribution to the attainment of these goals, and is in favour of holding that conference at the highest level.

In the social and humanitarian sphere, it is essential to develop constructive dialogue with all groups of States in order to consolidate and give effect to generally accepted international standards on human rights and ways of dealing with social problems (including labour disputes and questions relating to young people, women, and the handicapped), and to spur the activities of the relevant international monitoring machinery, United Nations bodies and agencies (in particular the International Labour Organisation and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), and the most respected international rights organizations. It is important that these institutions should become steadily more practical in their handling of both global humanitarian problems and specific situations. In any event, their goal should be to establish, maintain and develop co-operation of a type that does not conflict with the norms of international law.

The USSR favours broad political agreement on all these issues, and political, physical and legal safeguards for the interests of the individual and society. The certainty needs to take root in the international community that dealing with humanitarian problems requires constructive international co-operation, which is incompatible with any form of insularity or fragmentation and possible only by means of the new political thinking and the acceptance of common human values.

The USSR has opted to keep its domestic legislation and practice in line with its international obligations, believing this to be indispensable to full partnership in the work of the international community to guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and build trust among the members of the world community. Co-operation over human rights should not be confined to mere compliance with current international standards, but should promote the continuing codification of human rights and freedoms.

Strengthening the international legal order and promoting the notion of the primacy of law is one of the most important of the tasks of the United Nations. The USSR assumes that States founded on the primacy of law will, self-evidently, be parties to the basic agreements negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, due allowance being made, of course, for the fact that being party to an agreement or not is the sovereign right of any State, and no automatic rule can apply.

The use of monitoring and executive machinery, operating under the specialized agencies, to guard against the circumvention of international legal obligations and promote greater openness and trust, deserves attention.

It would appear that the significance of the legal means for the peaceful settlement - mandatory and otherwise - of disputes for which provision has been made in the statutes of international organizations and in agreements adopted under their auspices, is likely to grow.

The views of the USSR on the role of international law have already been submitted in a memorandum entitled "On enhancing the role of international law" to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly (A/44/585).

A productive intermingling of the capabilities of the United Nations and regional international organizations is important in order to promote co-operation in all areas and establish links between various coalescent groupings.

Enhancing the role of the United Nations and related international organizations requires their function as built-in stabilizers of the global development process and their capacity for elucidating facts and gathering information in order to identify, neutralize and settle long-standing and impending disputes and avert threats to security in different areas to be expanded. Such an expansion of the functions of the United Nations and other multilateral forums should facilitate a shift from crisis to preventive diplomacy. The Soviet Union has submitted its views on this subject in an aide-mémoire entitled "Strengthening of the preventive functions of the United Nations" (A/44/602).

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The above views have already been adopted as the core of Soviet policy in relations with the United Nations and related international organizations. In practice, this policy, dictated by the new political thinking and the determination of the USSR to participate actively in the processes of international integration which are now in motion, is confirming its productiveness and constructive potential.

The Soviet Union does not regard its views as exhausting the full scope of this issue; it looks forward to a committed exchange of views with all States with the aim of strengthening multilateral co-operation and settling on joint approaches to the problem of making the machinery of co-operation more effective.

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