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### REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Letter dated 20 March 1985 from the Permanent Representative of  
the German Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed  
to the Secretary-General

This year, all forces committed to international peace and understanding, social progress and humanism will be observing the fortieth anniversary of the victory of the anti-Hitler coalition and of the liberation of peoples from Nazi rule.

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/114, that a diversity of activities are being undertaken in the German Democratic Republic to mark the anniversary as an event that is significant in regard to the past and present of human civilization.

Mindful of the historic importance of the victory gained by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and more than 50 other States in the anti-Hitler coalition and, in view of the topical conclusions to be drawn from it for the struggle to save mankind from the scourge of a nuclear conflagration, the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Council of State, the Council of Ministers and the National Council of the National Front of the German Democratic Republic have addressed a manifesto to the people of the German Democratic Republic and to the world public. The policy-making and executive bodies and the social forces in the socialist German State declare in that appeal that the legacy of the dead is a warning and an obligation to us. On behalf of the German Democratic Republic, the manifesto reaffirms that "the vow made by the fighters against fascism continues to guide us today in the struggle for peace and socialism".

\* A/40/50 and Corr.1.

The manifesto points to the fact that in the course of the fight against Nazi rule there emerged a broad-based alliance of peoples and States, of differing social and political circles, of resistance and liberation forces, which included also German anti-Fascists. When, on 8 May 1945, the Soviet Union and its allies had smashed the Fascist régime, the German Reich had perished in the flames of the Second World War. This judgement of history is irrevocable.

After the conclusion of the Second World War in Europe the historical lessons were drawn in the area of the German Democratic Republic so that never again would a war start from German soil. The Potsdam Agreement was implemented. The chance for an anti-Fascist, democratic new beginning was used. With the foundation of the German Democratic Republic in 1949, a German State emerged whose policy principles are peace and friendship among peoples. "We can say for certain," the manifesto states, "that the European peace order for which so much blood was shed in the struggle against nazism calls for the recognition, security and inviolability of the borders of all States on our continent."

The manifesto further underlines that "the main lesson to be drawn from the Second World War and the legacy of the anti-Fascist movement is more relevant than ever: to rally all forces in order to prevent a nuclear inferno. In the most dangerous situation that has emerged since the Second World War, in view of the imperialist onslaught on everything progressive, we declare: it is more vital than ever to do everything for peace."

The eighth of May 1985, which the United Nations declared the day of the fortieth anniversary of victory over nazism and fascism in the Second World War and the day of struggle against neo-Fascist manifestations, will be observed as a day of remembrance and as a national holiday in the German Democratic Republic. That anniversary will be significant in the social and political life of the people of the Republic. A wide range of activities and events will show that the memories of war and fascism are alive and that the lessons have been heeded.

In honour of the millions of victims and the liberation of peoples, a joint commemorative session will be held by the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Council of State, the Council of Ministers and the National Council of the National Front of the German Democratic Republic. Similar festive events will take place in all the counties of the Republic. Wreaths will be laid at the graves of the fallen heroes of the anti-Fascist struggle and at the Memorial to the Victims of Fascism and Militarism. At public rallies, citizens will be paying tribute to the millions of people from all parts of Europe who were murdered in the Fascist concentration camps of Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, Ravensbrueck and Marienberg.

The press and other media of the German Democratic Republic are giving daily coverage to the fortieth anniversary of liberation, with people from all walks of life relating what they experienced in the past and what they feel and think today. Scholars and scientists, in particular historians, and artists will address the public at conferences, manifestations and cultural events on this occasion. At schools and in other educational establishments, youths are learning about the history of the anti-Fascist struggle and its dearly paid lessons. A scientific

conference is planned to mark the fortieth anniversary of the Potsdam Conference of the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

Various activities have already taken place, such as commemorations of the liberation of the first townships and villages by the glorious Soviet Army on what is now the territory of the German Democratic Republic, peace rallies in the destroyed and rebuilt cities of Dresden and Magdeburg, and meetings between war veterans from the Soviet Union and the United States of America, German anti-Fascist resistance activists as well as other citizens of the German Democratic Republic.

I request you, Excellency, to have this letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 12 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Harry OTT  
Ambassador Extraordinary  
and Plenipotentiary  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

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