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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF A SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM IN THE
AGENDA OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

ONE DAY OF WAR FOR PEACE

Letter dated 24 September 1968 from the representatives of Cambodia, Gabon
and Madagascar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to our letter dated 22 August 1968 (A/7183), we have the honour
to send you herewith an explanatory memorandum on the question entitled "One
day of war for peace".

(Signed) HUOT SAMBATH (Cambodia)
Marcel SANDOUNGOUT (Gabon)
Blaise RABETAFIKA (Madagascar)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. At its eighth session the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 724 A (VIII) concerning an undertaking by Member countries to devote a portion of the savings made possible by disarmament to the development and reconstruction of the under-developed countries.
2. In this connexion, mention should be made of General Assembly resolutions 1378 (XIV), 1516 (XV) and 1837 (XVII). In the latter resolution entitled "Declaration on the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament", the General Assembly recognized that "diversion to peaceful uses of the resources now in military use can be accomplished in a manner which will benefit all countries and will lead to the improvement of economic and social conditions throughout the world". This declaration implied that all States should first reach agreement on general and complete disarmament and at least begin to put it into effect.
3. The development of the situation in recent years indicates that the disarmament which the United Nations and all the peoples of the world desire is still, and will doubtless remain for a long time, an empty wish. We note sadly that arsenals of nuclear and conventional weapons continue to grow and are swallowing up vast resources. In 1966 (according to a rough estimate) these resources amounted to \$US150,000 million as against \$US120,000 million in 1962, or in other words they amounted to 10 per cent of the gross national product of the developed countries. This arms race constitutes a growing danger for the maintenance of world peace.
4. The Governments of Cambodia, Gabon and Madagascar, like other Governments which consider peace to be one of the highest and most urgent aspirations of the world, believe that it is desirable and possible, in the interests of relaxing tension and establishing a lasting world peace, to slow down the rate of increase of military expenditure with a view to general and complete disarmament.
5. The resources released by this process would without any doubt serve the interests of all countries and would lead to an improvement of economic and social conditions throughout the world. We share the sentiment that it would be desirable if a fair portion of these resources was devoted to international aid in all its forms on a parallel with the national utilization of such resources.

6. We draw the attention of all Member States to the urgent need to resolve the grave problems which beset many hundreds of millions of men. These problems concern, in particular, on the one hand, the struggle against infectious and endemic diseases, hunger and illiteracy, and, on the other hand, economic advancement.

7. It is essential that the United Nations should be concerned over the fate of any human being who does not have a minimum standard of living or who is suffering from diseases which disappeared from the developed countries more than a century ago. We wish to pay tribute, of course, to international efforts on behalf of the most needy countries and peoples, but it must be admitted that the means have never been sufficient for their needs. It is generally admitted, moreover, that the gap between prosperous countries and poor countries is not one of the minor threats to stability and peace and that the efforts of the international community towards economic and social advancement are among the best guarantees for the maintenance of peace.

8. Consequently, we should like to propose that this session of the General Assembly should launch an appeal to the effect that one day's allocation to military expenditure under the annual budget should be devoted to easing the suffering of mankind.

9. Such a contribution would make it possible to accomplish a considerable amount of work which would do honour to our Organization and which would emphasize the interdependence between peace and development. We leave it to the Assembly to determine, within the framework of international co-operation, the form in which this solidarity fund would be administered and distributed.
