

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/9745-Cor.1
11 November 1974
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

Twenty-ninth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA
OF THE TWENTY-NINTH SESSION

IMPLEMENTATION BY STATES OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE VIENNA CONVENTION
ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS OF 1961 AND MEASURES TO INCREASE THE NUMBER
OF PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

Letter dated 11 November 1974 from the Permanent Representative of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 entered into force 10 years ago this year. It may be said that this most important document of contemporary international law has stood the test of time: during this period 110 States of the world became parties to the 1961 Vienna Convention. ^{1/}

As the Convention itself notes, its purpose is to "contribute to the development of friendly relations among nations, irrespective of their differing constitutional and social systems". Defining the role of a diplomatic mission in a foreign State, the Convention stresses that one of the most important functions of such a mission consists "in promoting friendly relations between the sending State and the receiving State, and developing their economic, cultural and scientific relations". The Convention thus contains provisions aimed at achieving such important purposes of the United Nations set forth in its Charter as the development of friendly relations and co-operation among nations and the strengthening of peace and international security.

In this connexion, one cannot but feel concern at the violations, often flagrant, of the Vienna Convention by individual States which are parties to it and which bear the unconditional responsibility to observe all of its provisions. It is all the more regrettable that these violations of the generally recognized rules of international law are taking place in circumstances when a change in favour of the relaxation of international tension has become discernible throughout the world.

^{1/} United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 500 (1964), No. 7310, p. 95.

Nor can those cases be tolerated where certain States, which are not formally parties to the Vienna Convention, allow actions on the part of diplomatic missions of other countries which are incompatible with the practice of maintaining diplomatic relations and generally accepted rules of diplomatic law. Certain States thus use the fact that they are not parties to the Vienna Convention as a cover for unfriendly acts directed against foreign diplomatic missions which seriously hinder their activities.

All this, in the view of the Soviet delegation, makes it imperative that the General Assembly should keep under review the question of ensuring the widest possible adherence of States to the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and its observance and that the attention of the international public should be drawn to this important problem. Accordingly, the Soviet delegation proposes the inclusion in the agenda of the twenty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly of the following item as an important and urgent matter: "Implementation by States of the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and measures to increase the number of parties to the Convention".

I would request you, Mr. Secretary-General, to consider this letter as an explanatory memorandum pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the United Nations General Assembly and to circulate it as an official document of the General Assembly.

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Deputy Minister for
Foreign Affairs of the USSR,
Permanent Representative of
the USSR to the United Nations