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GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Confidence-building measures

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

PORTUGAL

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I. Considerations of a general nature

1. Measures aimed at creating confidence between States have arisen as a factor in international relations only recently, as result of efforts to improve the quality of relations between States. These measures can be defined as being all actions aimed at eliminating or diminishing the surprise effect, misunderstanding or tension in international relations, inherent in certain acts or events that have already occurred or that shall take place in the territory of any State or in areas not subject to national jurisdiction, but under the responsibility of a certain Government. Among these acts, those of a military nature are most important, for they are the most prone to cause tension and lack of confidence in international relations.

2. Those measures must promote an increase of confidence in relations between States, so that such acts can be avoided. Such measures thus will contribute positively towards the reinforcement of international security, helping to create favourable conditions for the development and consolidation of co-operation among States. We think that those measures must be very practical in order to achieve that purpose.

3. The negotiations leading to the adoption of measures aimed at creating confidence can be conducted on bilateral and multilateral levels. It would be particularly useful to consider those measures on a regional basis, for the specific situations of the States concerned would be better understood if their regional context were appropriately defined.

4. The measures destined to create confidence must be strictly subordinated to the principle that there is to be no decrease in the countries' security; they should never allow an increased vulnerability of the signatory States to eventual external attack, nor should they be used, in any case, by a State in order to achieve an improved political or military position in relation to another.

II. Examples of measures destined to the creation of confidence among States

A. Previous notification of the most significant military movements

5. This notification shall include not only the announcement of movements, but also other information which would enable other States to understand that only peaceful military exercises are taking place. Among the elements which shall

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be integrated in the previous notification, we suggest the date and area on which they will take place, how long they will last, the number of participants and type of armaments used. The notification shall be issued with reasonable antecedence to prevent a surprise effect; we suggest a period of three weeks before the beginning of the exercises.

6. The qualifying expression "most significant" must be defined by the interested parties in the course of the negotiations of the measures, so as to take into consideration the specific conditions and requirements of the affected region.

B. Previous notification of military movements

7. This information shall be sent, especially to the neighbouring States of the one where those movements occur, in order to avoid their being considered as a threat to its sovereignty. The interested States can agree upon a communication being issued only when those movements take place at a certain distance from the frontiers of the neighbouring countries and when they exceed a certain level. Interested States have to define what is to be the level of participants requiring such notification, as well as the period of its anticipated announcement; we suggest a period of three weeks.

C. The invitations sent by one State, in whose territory the military exercises take place, to other States to send their military observers

8. The presence of military observers, if they are given the opportunity to appreciate the movements, may contribute to a greater understanding of their character as peace-time military activities, as well as to the dissipation of eventual fears. Thus, the presence of military observers will be a positive factor in the efforts of States to maintain international relations in a climate of peace and confidence.

D. Exchange of military delegations

9. The interchange of military delegations may also contribute to the improvement of détente in international relations, as it permits an exchange of opinions between the military on diverse matters, including the reasons for apprehension in relations between the countries concerned.

E. Exchange of visits of naval and air units

10. This interchange may contribute to the creation of a climate of confidence among States and to the strengthening of ties between the involved countries, especially if the mass media were to co-operate in the accomplishment of this purpose.

F. Establishment of direct communication between the capitals

11. Examples of this type of communication are the so-called "hot lines", which already exist between some capitals. The installation of these communications reduces the probability of unwanted interference, such as damage to and saturation of commercial lines and obstruction or delay of contacts exactly when the delicacy of the situation requires brevity and efficiency of the communication system. The existence of these communications is of special importance to the regions more subject to tensions in their international relations and to the countries which dispose of a more significant military potential.

G. Disclosure of military budgets

12. Military costs indicate the level of the military potential of each State. Their disclosure can contribute towards the creation of confidence as it allows the other States the possibility of judging the former.

13. The disclosure, among States of a certain region, of the respective military budgets, past and present, as well as the budgets projected for the future, covering a previously defined time-frame, would be very useful in the formulation of that judgement. However, it becomes necessary to find a method acceptable to all States to make possible and effective the comparison of the various budgets. We suppose that the study by the United Nations to create an instrument destined to realize that necessity can be profitably used on a regional level.

III. Experience acquired in matters concerning the measures destined to the creation of confidence among States

14. Portugal is a signatory to the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and therefore its experience in matters concerning measures destined to create confidence among States is related to the practice of those which are proclaimed therein.

15. Thus, military observers have been sent to observe military movements taking place in other States that signed the Final Act; visits of military delegations have been arranged. The results which have been achieved by the practical application of measures destined to create confidence were positive, but modest; they have contributed to a reinforcement of "détente" in Europe and, in the same way, to a consolidation of international peace.