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DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS
BETWEEN STATES

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

CONTENTS

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Yugoslavia	2

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

YUGOSLAVIA

[Original: English]

[22 October 1985]

1. The Government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia continues to hold the views expressed in its reply to the Secretary-General of the United Nations of 24 August 1981 (document A/36/376) relating to the issue of "Development and strengthening of good-neighbourliness between States". The action within the United Nations in this field may contribute to the development of good-neighbourly relations and co-operation, as well as to the solution of problems existing between States in general and between neighbouring countries in particular.
2. The reply mentioned states, inter alia, that the strengthening of co-operation between neighbours is most closely connected with universal international co-operation and democratization of international relations, which excludes the creation of the zones of influence, domination and subjugation. The development of international relations in the past has left numerous problems of different character - national, economic, cultural etc. - so that confidence building between neighbours and the conduct of permanent negotiations would lead to a faster solution of such problems.
3. The Government of the SFR of Yugoslavia has always attached special attention to the promotion of good-neighbourly relations and to the development of all-round co-operation with all neighbouring countries in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. These positions are an expression of the policy of active and peaceful co-existence to which the SFR of Yugoslavia, as a non-aligned country, has substantially and lastingly committed itself in its foreign policy. These positions are clearly stated in the Constitution of the SFR of Yugoslavia as well as in the Constitutions of the socialist republics and socialist autonomous provinces. In conformity with that policy, comprehensive relations with the majority of neighbouring countries have been developed in the fields of trans-boundary co-operation, trade, payments, industrial co-operation, traffic, hydro-industry, tourism, abolition of visas and reducing customs formalities to a minimum, as well as in the field of consular relations in general. This was enhanced by an intensive political dialogue between the leaders of the neighbouring Balkan countries, both at bilateral and regional levels.
4. National minorities have a special significance for the development of good-neighbourly relations, better mutual understanding and co-operation. Full equality and the opportunity for comprehensive development of their national identities should therefore be a generally accepted practice in those parts of the neighbouring countries where national and other minorities live. The orientation of Yugoslavia to the policy of "open borders" and the abolition of various limitations, for example, the abolition of visas, opens up the road to a free exchange of people and goods. Yugoslav borders are considered to be the most open

in the world. Such an orientation on Yugoslavia's part is in conformity with the provisions of the final document of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe adopted 10 years ago at Helsinki.

5. Promotion of good-neighbourliness should constitute an essential element and one of the basic goals of the foreign policy of any country. This implies rejection of the policy of hegemony and domination in relations with neighbours, respect for their social, political and economic systems and independent foreign policies, strict adherence to the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs and the pursuit of a policy of peaceful and active co-existence whose ultimate goal is the democratization of international relations in general. This political component of good-neighbourliness, in the view of the Government of the SFR of Yugoslavia, must be taken into account in the formulation of legal principles and rules in this field and in the elaboration of a relevant international document.

6. The Government of the SFR of Yugoslavia considers that good-neighbourly relations, in addition to obvious political content, have a legal aspect, that is, that they constitute an international legal category and an institute of international law. The institute of good-neighbourliness is created by the very geographic closeness between two States and, legally speaking, implies all the norms that regulate specific relations between neighbouring States.

7. On this occasion the Government of the SFR of Yugoslavia would like to point to the need to define precisely the material and legal content of the concept of good-neighbourliness, that is, to establish the framework for further activity in this field. The current action conducted within the United Nations aimed at formulating a document that would establish the content of good-neighbourliness could, at this stage, proceed from a list of principles and rules that could later constitute the basis for the elaboration of a relevant international document. In any case, such a group of principles should be based on and proceed from the Charter of the United Nations. During the elaboration of the document principles and norms of particular importance and typical for good-neighbourly relations between States would be included and elaborated in it. Another important international document that should be included in the elaboration of the document is the final act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe held at Helsinki in 1975. The third field of sources would be all the arrangements concluded between neighbouring countries, which reflect the special character of international co-operation between neighbouring countries. Based on the combination of principles, norms and elements from these three groups of international legal documents, special features characterizing the relations between States separated by a common border could be established and specific rules and principles that apply in such cases could be determined.

8. Within the course of these preliminary considerations aimed at establishing the content of the principle of good-neighbourliness, the Government of the SFR of Yugoslavia is of the view that the principles and elements that apply to relations between all States, particularly those that are of specific character and that appear only in relations between neighbours, should be borne in mind. This includes above all principles such as respect for the sovereign equality of States;

refraining from the threat and use of force; the inadmissibility of interference in the internal affairs of States; the peaceful settlement of disputes; promotion and protection of the rights of minorities, etc.

9. The Government of the SFR of Yugoslavia supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General submitted at the thirty-seventh session regarding the reactions of States related to the issue of good-neighbourliness (document A/37/476, sect. VIII). Of particular importance for further work in this field is the recommendation that the Secretariat should make a study of the treaties and agreements in the field of good-neighbourliness concluded so far by States (see para. 66 (g)).

10. As regards the form of the future document, the Government of the SFR of Yugoslavia considers that at this stage it is not necessary to insist on its form, but rather to concentrate on determining the content of such a document and on the elaboration of a relevant list of principles and norms. The form of the document could be decided by the General Assembly at a later stage.
