



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERALA/50/671
24 October 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Agenda item 37

ZONE OF PEACE AND COOPERATION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	2
II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS	3
A. Argentina	3
B. Brazil	4
C. Malawi	5
D. South Africa	5
E. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	6
III. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM	7
A. Department of Public Information	7
B. Economic Commission for Europe	8
C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	8
D. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	9
E. World Meteorological Organization	9

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 49/26 of 2 December 1994 on a zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic in which, inter alia, it took note of the report of the Secretary-General. 1/ It welcomed with satisfaction the holding of the third meeting of the States members of the zone, held at Brasilia on 21 and 22 September 1994, and took note of the Final Declaration, the Declaration on the Denuclearization of the South Atlantic, the Declaration on the Marine Environment, the Declaration on Business Cooperation in the South Atlantic and the decision on the establishment of the Permanent Committee of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, adopted at the meeting. 2/

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly affirmed the importance of the South Atlantic to global maritime and commercial transactions and its determination to preserve the region for all activities protected by customary international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. 3/

3. The General Assembly called upon all States to cooperate in the promotion of the objectives established in the declaration of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and to refrain from any action inconsistent with those objectives and with the Charter and relevant resolutions of the United Nations, particularly action which might create or aggravate situations of tension and potential conflict in the region. It also requested the relevant organizations, organs and bodies of the United Nations system to render appropriate assistance which States of the zone might seek in their joint efforts to implement the objectives of the zone. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to keep the implementation of resolution 41/11 of 27 October 1986 and subsequent resolutions on the matter under review and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, taking into account, inter alia, the views expressed by Member States.

4. Pursuant to the above resolution, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale on 4 May 1995 to the Governments of the States Members of the United Nations, requesting their views on the implementation of the declaration on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. On the same day, letters were also dispatched to the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations requesting them to convey their contributions for the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General by 1 August 1995.

5. As of 11 October 1995, five Governments had replied to the Secretary-General. Those replies are reproduced in section II of the present report. Any further replies and notifications that may be received at a later date will be published as addenda to the present report.

6. By the same date, communications had been received from five of the organizations and United Nations bodies addressed, and are set out in section III of the present report.

/...

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

A. Argentina

[Original: Spanish]

[1 August 1995]

1. The Argentine Republic once again affirms its full support for the principles and purposes of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic declared in General Assembly resolution 41/11 of 27 October 1986.

2. In this connection, it wishes to underline the special importance which the promotion of democracy and political pluralism and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms have for the strengthening of the zone, without which a truly effective zone of peace would be very difficult to envisage.

3. The commitment of the Argentine Republic to the consolidation of a lasting peace in the region has been tangibly demonstrated by its participation in the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), even at the cost of loss of life.

4. As regards the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and international cooperation, the Argentine Republic believes it is important to strengthen and promote the development of international law relating to the physical protection of nuclear materials.

5. As the Foreign Minister of Argentina stated at the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in April-May 1995:

The transport of materials such as plutonium or highly enriched uranium raised major questions regarding contamination, which require the closest possible attention of the international community.

The recent transit of radioactive waste through the waters of the South Atlantic has placed Argentina in a difficult situation because of the clear ecological risks it may face, given the particular characteristics inherent in navigation in the southern seas. We believe that the international community should go on record in favour of the efforts being made to strengthen existing instruments in the area of physical protection of nuclear materials and management of radioactive waste, in order to make those instruments truly useful in the event of an ecological emergency.

6. The Argentine Government has repeatedly expressed its concern about the protection of the environment of the south-west Atlantic, in particular about the dangers caused by the passage of ships transporting highly radioactive substances.

7. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea confers on coastal States the authority to exercise jurisdiction in their exclusive economic zone, inter alia, for the protection and preservation of the marine environment, and

/...

they thus have the power to enact and enforce norms aimed at avoiding contamination of their waters. Argentina has exercised and will continue to exercise that authority in accordance with international law.

8. Argentina acts responsibly in all matters relating to the protection and preservation of resources. However, without international cooperation, Argentina's efforts to preserve and protect the environment in the south-west Atlantic could prove to be insufficient.

9. While the Argentine Republic respects freedom of navigation as governed by international instruments, it believes that such freedom should be regulated in the case of ships transporting highly radioactive substances. The Government is determined to call upon the relevant international organizations to enforce and strengthen international rules and standards for preventing, reducing and controlling contamination, and to develop rules regulating the passage of ships transporting highly radioactive substances, to ensure, in particular, that the packing of such substances meets the requirements of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) concerning safety in packing.

10. Finally, the Argentine Republic wishes once again to state that the colonial situation of the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands persists in the South Atlantic, affecting its territorial integrity. The increasing normalization of relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the ongoing cooperation efforts and the expressly manifest will to regain sovereignty by peaceful means and in accordance with the principles of international law, of which the Secretary-General and the United Nations General Assembly have been informed, in addition to the constitutional commitment to respect the way of life of the inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands, have not achieved a solution to the sovereignty dispute, which is greatly desired in the South Atlantic region.

B. Brazil

[Original: English]

[14 August 1995]

1. The Government of Brazil reiterates its commitment to the purposes and objectives of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic (ZPCSA), as expressed in resolution 41/11, in subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly and in the decisions and declarations adopted by its Member States.

2. Brazil hosted the third meeting of the States members of the ZPCSA, held at Brasilia on 21 and 22 September 1994. The Final Declaration of that meeting, Declarations on the Denuclearization of the South Atlantic, on the Marine Environment and on Business Cooperation, and a decision on the inter-sessional follow-up mechanism have been circulated in a document submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. 4/

/...

3. Recent developments in the context of the South Atlantic, such as the integration of a democratic South Africa in the ZPCSA and progress in subregional integration agreements, offer new opportunities for enhancing the links among countries sharing the African and South American coasts of the South Atlantic. Further joint efforts are to be expected in order to address challenges in areas such as the easing of tension, preservation of the environment, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and cooperation for development, and in multilateral issues.

4. The Government of Brazil looks forward to participating in the next meetings of the member States of the zone and welcomes the offers made by the Governments of South Africa, Argentina and Benin to host future meetings.

C. Malawi

[Original: English]

[9 August 1995]

The Government of Malawi is committed to the promotion of international peace and security, and questions of peace and security are central to its domestic and foreign policies. The Government therefore endorses the objectives of the resolution. In addition, it supports measures which are aimed at the conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources.

D. South Africa

[Original: English]

[11 October 1995]

1. South Africa welcomes the objectives of General Assembly resolution 49/26 of 2 December 1994. Bringing the countries of the South Atlantic rim together in closer understanding and cooperation and by bridging a military-free and nuclear-free ocean to increase political, economic and cultural links between eastern South America and West African countries, can be warmly subscribed to.

2. In this regard the South African Government wishes to underline recent developments in relations between South Africa and the States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, which developments have contributed not only to a lessening of tension in the South Atlantic but also to prospects for increasingly close economic and other contacts.

3. It is clear that the emergence of a democratic non-racial Government of National Unity in South Africa, preceded by the independence of Namibia and the reintegration of Walvis Bay into that territory, has not only afforded South Africa the advantage of becoming the twenty-fourth member State of the zone, but also provided a more propitious environment for furthering the objectives of the zone.

/...

4. The Government of South Africa remains committed to the principles and objectives of the Declaration of the third meeting of the States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, held in Brazil on 21 and 22 September 1994, and reaffirms its belief in the zone as a veritable instrument for promoting international peace and security as well as development cooperation.

5. As a mark of its commitment, South Africa will be hosting the fourth ministerial meeting of the zone in Cape Town, South Africa, early in 1996.

6. South Africa recognizes the intraregional opportunities for the expansion of trade, investment, cultural, tourism, sporting and other links and wishes to cooperate in these fields in a positive and constructive manner.

7. The zone provides a very important opportunity and framework for promoting the common interests and aspirations of those African and South American States which share the South Atlantic. Such an instrument could also provide impetus and substance to South-South dialogue and cooperation in general.

8. Global developments that have brought an end to the cold war and realigned balances of power, particularly also in the South Atlantic, afford member States a safer environment in which to pursue more relevant and substantive economic, social, environmental and other regional issues, and as a grouping vis-à-vis the rest of the world.

9. These new opportunities should be sought and vigorously pursued. As it will be chairing the next meeting, South Africa will hope to make a meaningful input in this regard.

10. It remains necessary, at the same time, not to become complacent about the many problems that do beset the region and individual Member States. Poverty and deprivation, human rights and asymmetrical development that would benefit all, and not just some, must continue to receive earnest attention. The region is capable of looking to itself for solutions and the necessary political will must be found to establish that beyond dispute.

E. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[Original: English]

[9 August 1995]

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland welcomes the objectives of General Assembly resolution 49/26 of 2 December 1994, which are to promote peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic. In this regard, the British Government wishes to draw the Secretary-General's attention to developments in Anglo-Argentine relations which have contributed to the lessening of tension in the south-west Atlantic. In particular, cooperation continues in the forum of the South Atlantic Fisheries Commission (contributing to the conservation of stocks), and in the field of military confidence-building measures under the Interim Reciprocal Information and Consultation System.

/...

Discussions continue to try to find areas for cooperation over oil exploration around the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), and to enable the removal of land mines left on the Islands following the conflict of 1982.

III. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND
BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. Department of Public Information

1. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 49/26 was highlighted by the Department's daily news programmes for broadcasting organizations, including the Radio Bulletin Board, and received emphasis in its press release service on 2 December 1994. United Nations information centres and services, particularly those located in the region, publicized the action taken by the General Assembly through their newsletters.

2. From the beginning of December 1994 to the end of June 1995, questions relating to the purposes and objectives of the zone, with particular emphasis on the interrelationship of peace, security and sustainable development, have been the subject of 612 radio magazine and documentary programmes produced altogether in 11 languages and distributed to about 800 broadcasting organizations. During the same period, 506 press releases in English and French on issues pertaining to the resolution, including press coverage of the World Summit for Social Development and of meetings of intergovernmental bodies at Headquarters, have been produced and distributed. A great number of those press releases, as well as relevant background notes, have been transmitted by electronic mail and by pouch to United Nations offices around the world, and through publicly accessible databases and networks such as the Internet.

3. Through newsletters, group briefings, adaptation of information materials produced at Headquarters and other forms of dissemination of information, all United Nations information centres have drawn attention to the efforts of the international community with regard to the establishment of a zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and its objectives. These activities related to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action 5/ adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993 to promote human rights, the progress towards the full entry into force of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), 6/ the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, 7/ the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its importance to the South Atlantic, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, 8/ and the activities of the Organization on achieving a lasting peace and on rendering humanitarian assistance to Angola and Liberia. Within the region addressed by the resolution, special efforts with regard to the objectives of the resolution have been undertaken by the information service in Santiago and the information centres in Accra, Buenos Aires, Dakar, Lagos, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Washington and Windhoek.

4. Nine productions of the United Nations Television series "UN in Action" for broadcasting by over 100 television stations, and six productions of its programme "World Chronicle" for broadcasting by television stations in North

/...

America, have been directed to issues with relevance to the resolution. Issues before the World Summit for Social Development were the theme of a 30-minute programme which was aired by major television organizations.

B. Economic Commission for Europe

1. Although the major part of the zone falls outside the geographical scope of the region of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Commission is offering its cooperation, if needed, in the field of the environment, in which it has developed a number of environmental conventions that could serve as a model for other regional groupings.

2. ECE would like to draw particular attention to the Secretary-General's note to the Economic and Social Council 9/ on a Europe-Africa permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar and corresponding Council resolution 1993/60 of 30 July 1993. A similar note has been prepared for the forthcoming session of the Council, outlining the work done on the bridge or tunnel options during the period 1993-1994. ECE has been following this issue since 1982.

C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

1. The activities of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) focused on implementing the recommendations of the meetings of experts on the law of the sea of the States members of the zone, in the framework of the results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

2. Since there have been no further meetings of its kind since 1991, the ECLAC contribution to the goals of General Assembly resolutions on the subject has been essentially through the transmission of pertinent documentation of its activities in relevant areas such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Convention on Biological Diversity 10/ and the Basel Convention on the Control of the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, 1989. 11/ ECLAC has been sending these documents to Headquarters for submission to the Coordinator of the zone.

3. ECLAC believes that stronger cooperation on environmental affairs in the zone is essential and would like to be informed about technical forums to be convened in the future, as well as about other possible existing channels for information exchange with the newly established Permanent Committee on the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic. Two specific areas deserve inclusion in cooperation efforts between experts of States members of the zone. The first is the need for cooperation between Africa and Latin America in the control of the illegal traffic of hazardous products and wastes and, in this connection, in the fostering of closer links between the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa, 12/ and the Latin American and Caribbean arrangements. The establishment of regional centres for training and transfer of technology in the field could be another interesting area of cooperation. The second area relates to the need for the preparation of

/...

guidelines on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity. ECLAC convened a meeting in October 1994 to analyse some aspects referring to coastal management in marine and coastal areas of high biodiversity in the Atlantic.

D. United Nations Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization

1. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) are working in the South Atlantic through the regional subsidiary body of IOC for the central eastern Atlantic (IOCEA), through Integrated Management of Coastal Systems (COMAR) in Africa and South America, through a subregional programme for the upper south-west Atlantic of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, and through the initiation of a programme for the Benguela Current system, including Namibia and South Africa, and possibly other partners in Africa.

2. In this context, South-South cooperation is encouraged. Several activities are carried out jointly with the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. IOC has proposed a training centre in West Africa as part of the United Nations/United Nations Development Programme Train-Sea-Coast Programme.

E. World Meteorological Organization

1. Three countries bounding the South Atlantic (Argentina, Brazil and South Africa) accepted international responsibility, under the new WMO marine Broadcast Systems for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System of IMO, for the broadcast of meteorological forecasts and warning, via satellite, in support of maritime safety, to specified zones in the South Atlantic. These broadcast services are now operational. The same three countries also accepted provisional responsibility for providing meteorological support services, under the WMO Marine Pollution Emergency Response Support System (MPRESS), for the same zones, for operations in response to marine pollution emergencies on the high seas. Formal trials of the MPRESS are now under way.

2. Following a joint initiative of the WMO/IOC Data Buoy Cooperation Panel and WMO/IOC/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), a cooperative international South Atlantic Buoy Programme (ISABP) was formally established in October 1994. The programme groups 12 institutions from six countries with interests in the South Atlantic (Argentina, Brazil, Germany, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America), with the objective of maintaining operationally an agreed network of drifting buoys in the South Atlantic, measuring various meteorological and surface oceanographic variables, in support of major programmes of WMO such as the World Weather Watch (WWW) and those implemented jointly with IOC, such as GCOS, the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP). All data from these buoys are distributed globally through the Global Telecommunication System

/...

(GTS) of WMO. Technical coordination for ISABP is provided by the South African Weather Bureau.

3. Under the IOC/WMO Integrated Global Ocean Services System (IGOSS), the Argentine navy maintains a specialized oceanographic centre for the collection, processing, archival and delivery, as required, of sub-surface oceanographic data (primarily temperature and salinity) for the South Atlantic.

Notes

- 1/ A/49/524.
- 2/ A/49/467, annexes I-V.
- 3/ Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.
- 4/ A/49/467.
- 5/ A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
- 6/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 634, No. 9068.
- 7/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth Session, Annexes, agenda item 105, document A/5975.
- 8/ See Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), resolution 1, annex I.
- 9/ E/1993/80.
- 10/ See United Nations Environment Programme, Convention on Biological Diversity (Environmental Law and Institutions Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.
- 11/ International Legal Material, vol. 28, p. 687.
- 12/ Ibid., vol. 30, 1991 and vol. 31, 1992.
