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OBSERVER STATUS OF NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS RECOGNIZED BY THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY AND/OR BY THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

Report of the Secretary-General

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II. REPLIES FROM GOVERNMENTS

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

[Original: Russian]

[23 August 1988]

1. The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has often expressed support for the principle of the self-determination of peoples, the implementation of which is one of the corner-stones of a comprehensive system of international security. The participation in the work of international organizations of national liberation movements expressing the interests of nations struggling for their independence unquestionably advances the implementation of this principle.
2. The Byelorussian SSR is a party to the Vienna Convention on the Representation of States in Their Relations with International Organizations, of a Universal Character of 1975. Its position on the matter of granting observer status to national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity and/or the League of Arab States has been set forth in documents A/37/326, A/39/437 and A/41/534.
3. The successful implementation of the relevant decisions of the General Assembly, in particular resolution 41/71, in which the Assembly urged States to consider the question of ratifying, or acceding to, the Convention and to accord to the delegations of the national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity and/or by the League of Arab States and accorded observer status by international organizations - that is, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) - the facilities, privileges and immunities necessary for the performance of their functions in accordance with the provisions of the 1975 Vienna Convention, could help defuse conflicts in the Middle East and in southern Africa.
4. A just and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem is unthinkable without the full participation on the international arena of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.
5. In this connection, the measures taken by the United States Administration to impose a ban on the activities of the Permanent Observer Mission of the PLO to the United Nations gave grounds for concern. They constitute a breach of United States obligations under the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, of 1947, and fail to take into account the relevant recommendations of the General Assembly.
6. The world community must firmly support the struggle of the Namibian people, whose legitimate representative is the South West Africa People's Organization. The problem of Namibia can and must be solved by political means in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

7. In the view of the Byelorussian SSR, a positive attitude of all States to the question of the need to grant observer status to national liberation movements recognized by OAU and/or the League of Arab States will help consolidate in international practice the principle of unconditional respect for the sovereign equality of large and small nations and non-interference in any form in the internal affairs of States and peoples.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

[Original: Russian]

[26 August 1988]

1. The Soviet Union has repeatedly expounded its position in the United Nations on the granting by States which are hosts to international organizations or conferences of observer status to national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity and/or the League of Arab States.
2. In addition to the replies previously transmitted, it offers the following observations.
3. The experience of international organizations and conferences in recent times supports the argument that the involvement of national liberation movements in such organizations and conferences is an important means of supporting peoples fighting for national liberation. At the same time, national liberation movements can take full advantage of and contribute usefully to international organizations and conferences only if they are granted observer status and the attendant privileges and immunities to the extent called for in the 1975 Vienna Convention on the Representation of States in Their Relations with International Organizations of a Universal Character. The USSR was one of the first to ratify that Convention, which it does apply when international gatherings take place on its territory.
4. General Assembly resolution 41/71 contains an appeal to States which are hosts to international organizations or conferences to consider the question of ratifying or acceding to the aforesaid Convention. Unfortunately, however, few host States have yet responded to the General Assembly's urging. This ipso facto delays action to respond to another appeal by the General Assembly: that delegations of the national liberation movements recognized by OAU and/or the League of Arab States - specifically, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) - should be accorded observer status and the facilities, privileges and immunities necessary for the performance of their functions in accordance with that Convention.
5. The United States Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1988-89, which became effective on 21 March 1988, raises serious concerns in this respect; it sought to prohibit any office or establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization, including the permanent PLO Observer Mission to the United Nations, from operating in the United States. Such action by the United States is at odds with the 1947 Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of

America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, under which the United States is required to grant the PLO Observer Mission the status of a mission to the United Nations.

6. It must be hoped that the United States will heed the recommendations of the General Assembly and the International Court of Justice.

7. The Soviet Union considers it essential that the General Assembly should again urge States which are hosts to international organizations or conferences to consider, as a matter of importance and urgency, the question of ratifying or acceding to the 1975 Vienna Convention, and to grant the delegations of national liberation movements recognized by OAU and/or the League of Arab States observer status and the facilities, privileges and immunities necessary for the performance of their functions in accordance with that Convention.
