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CUBA CALLS ON UNCTAD TO CONDEMN UNITED STATES

MILITARY ACTIONS IN NORTH VIET-NAM

United States Asks President to Rule Proposal  
as Inadmissible; President to Consider Motion

(The following was received from a United Nations Information Officer attending the Conference in Santiago.)

At the meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Santiago on Monday, 15 May, Cuba introduced a draft resolution which would have the Conference condemn the "unlawful measures" ordered by the United States Government "to blockade the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and interrupt the development of its external trade by damaging its lands and sea communications".

The draft, introduced by Carlos Lechuga Hevia (Cuba), would have the Conference demand the "immediate cessation of the mining and blocking of ports, the bombardment and machine-gunning of land routes, and any other measures ordered by the United States Government" which impede the normal development of the external trade of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam.

Bernard Zagorin (United States), objecting to the proposal being placed before the Conference, formally requested the President to rule, under rule 46 of the Conference's rules of procedure, that it "is inadmissible for consideration by this Conference because it is outside the competence and scope of work of UNCTAD".

The President, Clodomiro Almeyda (Chile), said that a procedural question had been raised under rule 46 which he would consider.

The Conference then resumed discussion of the agenda item on review of recent developments and long-term trends in world trade and development, hearing statements by the representatives of Madagascar, Italy, Israel, Colombia, Chile and India. The representative of the European Economic Community (EEC) also spoke.

(more)

The Cuban draft resolution was submitted in connexion with the subtopic on steps to achieve a greater measure of agreement on principles governing international trade relations and trade policies conducive to development. The other three subtopics of the agenda item under discussion were: implementation of UNCTAD's recommendations; impact of regional economic groupings of the developed countries on international trade; and trade and economic aspects of disarmament.

#### Discussion Resumed

The first speaker on Monday morning, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Madagascar, JACQUES RABEMANJARA, said that the ever widening gap between the well-being of the developing countries and that of the rich nations was due to the selfish attitude of the latter; it had not been possible to achieve any improvement in the situation because of a lack of political will on the part of the developed nations.

Turning to the work of the Conference, he said the experts would have been able to achieve results more speedily if the politicians and the Ministers had clearly defined their objectives. The poor and the rich nations had each taken their own separate paths. The poor had continued to make "high demands", while the rich had insisted on measures to keep down expenses and to be concerned with problems of special interest to them alone.

The need for a dialogue, he said, could not be over-estimated. This dialogue must continue not only in UNCTAD, but also in other international organizations. For this reason, his country welcomed the setting up of the "Club of 20", including the developing countries, to carry out negotiations regarding monetary reform.

UNCTAD might not have executive powers, he pointed out, but it was the legislative authority for the world on trade and development. Its recommendations and decisions must be binding.

#### Cuban Draft Resolution

The PRESIDENT said that, before calling on the next speaker on the list, he would give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. LECHUGA (Cuba), introducing the draft, said that the preambular paragraphs would have the Conference state that the action taken by the United States armed forces in North Viet-Nam "flagrantly violates the third of the general principles adopted by the first session of UNCTAD governing international trade relations, which establishes that every country has the sovereign right freely to trade with other countries".

The preamble would state that the measures adopted by the United States "infringe the commonly accepted principle of freedom of navigation incorporated in the 1958 Geneva Conventions of the Law of the Sea".

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The draft, he went on, would have the Conference:

-- Condemn the unlawful measures ordered by the Government of the United States to blockade the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and interrupt the development of its external trade by damaging its land and sea communications;

-- Demand the immediate cessation of the mining and blocking of ports, the bombardment and machine-gunning of land routes, and any other measure ordered by the United States which impedes the normal development of the external trade of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam.

Mr. Lechuga stated that it was the sovereign right of every nation to trade freely. The exercise of such a right was a requisite for the creation of a just structure of world trade. Thus when, in addition to the other barriers which at present hampered international trade, there was a flagrant use of power by one State against another in violation of the principles of international law, it was only logical that the Conference condemn such a "monstrous deed", and call for its cessation, he said.

Mr. Lechuga went on to say that the "North American imperialists" controlled the machinery of the Conference when questions relating to their policies were involved. His delegation was therefore concerned that many delegations might bend to pressures exercised by "the North American imperialists" and not vote for the draft resolution. Nonetheless, it had decided to submit its proposal.

He said that the United States action increased tension in the world and constituted a threat to peace. It also represented "an insolent challenge" to the socialist countries, to other countries, to world public opinion, and to a "significant section of North American opinion which is being violently repressed".

Mr. Lechuga said that the Conference could not "turn its head away" from the events in Viet-Nam and discuss matters such as a more rational distribution of labour and freer access to markets, when a developed country which was participating in the Conference was employing all its power against a developing country with a view to liquidating its independence.

Referring to the "high sacrifice", which he said that the people of Viet-Nam were making in the cause of freedom, Mr. Lechuga stated that nothing would prevent them from winning their struggle for independence. The world was tired of the "haughtiness of the United States". The people of Cuba, who were continuing their struggle against "Yankee imperialism", appreciated the heroic defence of the Vietnamese, he added.

BERNARD ZAGORIN (United States) said that the representative of Cuba had again entered the political arena, and had most inappropriately attempted to introduce controversial issues into the proceedings of the Conference.

(more)

The United States delegation, he continued, agreed with other delegations which had, on earlier occasions, stated that political issues should not be allowed to interfere with the work of the Conference.

The manner, content and purpose of the statement by the delegate of Cuba were out of place. "I object not only to what he has said; I strongly object also to his proposal being put before UNCTAD", Mr. Zagorin said.

The United States representative formally requested the President to rule, under rule 46 of the rules of procedure, that the Cuban draft resolution "is inadmissible for consideration by this Conference because it is outside the competence and scope of the work of UNCTAD".

Mr. Zagorin stated that the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, in a letter dated 8 May 1972 addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and circulated as a Security Council document, had explained the measures taken by the United States Government, in conjunction with the forces of the Republic of Viet-Nam, in responding to the new armed attack launched by North Viet-Nam against South Viet-Nam.

Mr. Zagorin said he would not elaborate on this issue, because UNCTAD was not the proper place to discuss it.

The President, Mr. AIMEYDA (Chile), said that a procedural question had been raised under rule 46 which he would consider.

He would now call on the next speaker in the continued discussion on the item before the Conference.

#### Other Views

The representative of the EEC, MATTIA VITTORIO DI MARTINO, stated that the Community had been created in order to ensure an ever closer union of the European people and a constant improvement of their living conditions. But, right from the start, one of the top objectives had been the gradual removal of restrictions to international trade, he said.

He recalled that the Community's trade with other industrialized market-economy countries had tripled since 1958. Since that year, imports from the socialist countries of Eastern Europe had increased almost four-fold, and he expressed surprise at the fact that, in their statements, the representative of the Soviet Union "simply ignored this unchallengeable fact".

As for imports from the "third world", they had increased from \$6,000 million in 1958 to \$16,000 million in 1970. Those results, he said, compared favourably with the ones achieved by other countries or groups of countries, even in the sector of agricultural products.

He declared that the Community was willing to examine the case of the developing countries which had participated to a lesser degree in the expansion of exports to the EEC, and he recalled that the Community had been in the forefront of the advocates of the Generalized System of Preferences. The Community's agricultural policy, he said, aimed at social as well as economic objectives, and the problem was to extend abroad, through international commodity agreements and easier access to markets, the stability achieved within the EEC.

Turning to the draft resolution on the impact of regional economic groupings introduced last Saturday, he stated that the Community could not accept that specific claims be formulated against individual members of the Community on points which had no direct relation with the process of their integration; nor could it accept that quasi-judicial procedures be set up which would entitle the developing countries at any time to call Governments of countries members of economic groupings before a sort of tribunal within UNCTAD.

R. MARRAS (Italy) said that, without the EEC, progress in the developing countries would have been slower. The fact that the developed countries made faster progress should not be a matter of concern.

He noted that Italy, in its trade balance with the developing countries, had a deficit of \$1,200 million. Mr. Marras also made the point that the Community was "a great centre of co-ordination". Without it, he said, the decisions concerning the implementation of the Generalized System of Preferences would not have been carried out so quickly.

E. HARAN (Israel) said that the President of Mexico deserved the gratitude of the Conference for proposing the drawing up of a charter on the economic duties and rights of States. In view of its importance, Israel would have preferred that the Conference itself discuss in detail the text of the proposed charter, rather than entrust the matter to a working group as proposed in the draft.

It was the hope of his delegation, he stated, that the working group would be given the fullest opportunity to acquaint itself with the views of all the members of UNCTAD and to take into consideration all the various positions and opinions. It was also its hope that the working group would not be restricted, in its task, to the documents and principles mentioned in the draft resolution, but would turn to other sources in its efforts.

A. ALVAREZ (Colombia) observed that the procedure that morning had been somewhat confusing, because it had broken the continuity of debate.

He then addressed himself to the draft resolution proposing the preparation of a charter on the economic duties and rights of States, which he warmly supported. He said that the Colombian delegation on many occasions had favoured new juridical documents which would bring fresh ideas to institutions that had become slightly obsolete.

HERNAN SANTA CRUZ (Chile) asked the President whether it would not be possible to take an immediate decision on this draft resolution, which had not been opposed by any speaker, or at least to take action on it soon.

The PRESIDENT said he would consult with delegations with a view to moving forward.

H. IAL (India) said that trade within the Western European grouping had increased much faster than the Community's trade with the outside world.

The developing countries of South and South-East Asia, which did not have any special arrangements with the Community, had fared particularly badly, he said. Their trade with the Common Market had declined from 3 per cent in 1960 to a mere 1.6 per cent in 1970. Also, with the European Free Trade Association, he said, the largest decline during the 1960s was in the case of South and South-East Asia, whose share had declined from 5.2 per cent to as little as 2.6 per cent.

Mr. Lal said that the developing countries' experience with the third economic grouping, the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), had been much happier. Their share in the total imports of the COMECON countries had increased from 19.7 per cent in 1960 to 26.7 per cent in 1970.

The representative of India said that, following Britain's entry into the Common Market, it would be necessary to examine the problem of compensating for the Commonwealth preferences now being enjoyed by India. He pointed out that GATT recognized that the promotion of customs unions did not automatically extinguish the preferences which a country entering the union had been granting to third countries.

Mr. Lal mentioned a number of criteria which, he said, should be observed by regional economic groupings in order not to have any adverse effects on the economies of the developing countries.