General Assembly

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Agenda item 65

STRENGTHENING OF SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Analysis based on replies of Governments

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. By resolution 36/102 of 19 December 1981, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, considered that further efforts were necessary for the transformation of the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and co-operation on the basis of principles the Assembly enumerated; called upon all Governments to submit their views on the question of the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region; and requested the Secretary-General to submit the report on this question to the Assembly at its thirty-seventh session.

2. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General, on 1 February 1982, addressed a note verbale to the Member States of the United Nations inviting their views on the question of the strengthening of security and co-operation in the region of the Mediterranean. As at 10 December 1982, replies containing such views had been received from 21 countries. The Secretary-General incorporated those views in his report to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/355 and Add.1-5).

3. In its resolution 37/118 of 16 December 1982, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, considered that the security of the Mediterranean and the security of the adjacent regions were interdependent and that further efforts were necessary for the creation of conditions of security and fruitful co-operation in all fields for all countries and peoples of the Mediterranean; called upon all Governments that had not done so to submit their views on this question before the thirty-eighth session of the Assembly; and requested the Secretary-General to submit, on the basis of all replies received, an analytical report on the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean to the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. The Assembly further decided to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-eighth session an item entitled "Strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region".

4. The present report is submitted in accordance with paragraph 16 of resolution 37/118 and is based on replies received from 27 Governments, including those submitted pursuant to paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 36/102 (see annex).

II. STRENGTHENING OF SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

A. Importance of the subject

5. A large number of States underlined the importance of the subject of strengthening of peace, security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region. They viewed the Mediterranean as a vital area of strategic significance, connecting two oceans, three continents and serving as a crossroad of major civilizations. Many States noted that deeper and wider crises characterized the region, and these were capable of leading to serious threats not only to the region but also to the world as a whole. Given this potential threat to world peace and stability, it was therefore necessary and urgent to turn the Mediterranean into a zone of peace,
security and co-operation. In the short-term, efforts should be taken to reduce tension in the area. The long-term objectives would include co-operation among States in the area in various fields, the resolution of outstanding disputes and conflicts in the area and the reduction and eventual withdrawal of foreign forces from the area.

B. Concept of a zone of peace and co-operation in the Mediterranean

6. Some States, referring to the concept of a zone of peace and co-operation in the Mediterranean region and noting the absence of a clear definition of the concept, stressed the necessity of further clarification, including the definition of its scope and the determination of its geographical limits, and those of the adjacent areas. On the other hand, the political nature of the concept was pointed out and it was stated that the absence of a precise definition of the term should not constitute an impediment to the promotion of regional initiatives in the Mediterranean region.

C. General support for the goal of strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean

7. A large number of States declared their support for the objective of the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean in their replies. They viewed the promotion of peace, security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region as a significant contribution to world peace, security and co-operation and expressed their readiness to contribute to the discussions on the subject. They suggested that efforts should be intensified with a view to turning the Mediterranean region into a zone of peace and co-operation and referred to possible support from the international community. They also expressed support to the initiatives and recommendations adopted in the area of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region in various forums, including in particular the United Nations, the meetings of Non-Aligned Countries, and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

D. General views for the attainment of the objective of strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region

8. A large majority of States made reference to the relationship existing between the goal and achievement of strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region and the necessity of the consistent application, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and its resolutions, of the following principles: sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, security, non-violation of international frontiers, non-use of force, the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force, peaceful settlement of disputes and just and viable solutions of the existing problems and crises, the withdrawal of foreign forces of occupation, respect for sovereignty over natural resources and the right of peoples under colonial or foreign domination to self-determination and independence. They referred to existing disputes and conflicts and stressed the necessity for solutions to local disputes.
9. In their replies, several States also referred to the link between security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region and security and co-operation in Europe, as reflected in the Helsinki Act. They observed that countries participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe had formulated principles governing their relations in respect of peace and co-operation in Europe and their relations with Mediterranean States not participating in the Conference. They further noted that any conference on confidence-building and security applicable to Europe would equally benefit the Mediterranean region. They stated that the continuation of détente in Europe on the basis of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe would positively influence the process of strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region.

10. Other general measures likely to contribute to the promotion of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean reflected in the replies forwarded to the Secretary-General include bilateral, regional and global efforts to that end; support for the neutral status achieved by Malta; political dialogue and co-operation between States, including the Mediterranean States; commitment of States outside the region to respect the status of the zone; the relaxation of east-west relations; and the transformation of the Balkan peninsula into a nuclear-weapons-free zone.

E. Specific measures suggested towards the achievement of the goal of strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region

1. Institutional measures

11. A number of States proposed in their replies the use of committees and conferences as channels for the realization of the objective of strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region. Thus, they suggested the holding of meetings of expert groups on security and co-operation in the Mediterranean, the establishment of a specific body or committee to undertake work under the United Nations auspices towards the convocation of an international conference on the Mediterranean, which would outline further ways and means for the promotion of peace in the region. In addition, a large number of States called for further involvement of the United Nations in the transformation of the region of the Mediterranean into a zone of peace, security and co-operation, but no specific guidelines were recommended to this end. There was also a suggestion that non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean hold a meeting on security and co-operation in the Mediterranean. Few States declared that Mediterranean countries should themselves initiate and implement concrete measures of co-operation which would be supported by the international community.

2. Measures in the political, security and military areas

12. In their replies, several States suggested specific political, security and military measures designed to contribute to strengthening security and co-operation
in the Mediterranean region. In the opinion of some States, the resolution of outstanding conflicts and disputes in the area constituted one such measure. They expressed the view that the Middle East crisis contributed to tension in the region. In particular, some States expressed the opinion that the resolution of the Palestinian problem was an essential condition for transforming the Mediterranean into a zone of peace. They stated that a just solution to this question must be based on the principles of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. They also felt that a solution to the question of Cyprus, which would safeguard the right of the two communities therein and ensure unity and territorial integrity, independence, withdrawal of foreign forces and non-alignment of the country would enhance efforts to transform the Mediterranean region into a zone of peace and security. Likewise, they considered that the achievement of stability on the island would defuse a focal point of tension in the Eastern Mediterranean.

13. Among the measures suggested by some States aimed at the strengthening of security and co-operation were the following: the extension of confidence-building measures in the military field to the Mediterranean; co-ordinated reduction of armed forces in the region; withdrawal from the region of the Mediterranean of all ships carrying nuclear weapons; non-deployment of nuclear weapons in the territory of non-nuclear-weapon States of the Mediterranean; assumption by nuclear-weapon States of the obligation not to use nuclear weapons against States which have renounced the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territories; withdrawal of foreign fleets and military bases; and non-adherence to military pacts and treaties.

3. Economic and technical measures towards the attainment of the goal

14. Several States indicated in their replies that co-operation in the economic field among Mediterranean States would reinforce the prospects for strengthening security, peace and co-operation in the area. In particular, they referred to the possibility of co-operation in the technical, scientific, cultural, environmental and sports fields.

III. CONCLUSION

15. In the general view of the States from which replies have been received, the strengthening of security and co-operation among the States of the Mediterranean would significantly contribute to the enhancement of the overall stability and political relations in the world. The transformation of the Mediterranean region into a zone of peace, security and co-operation would have a beneficial impact on world peace and stability as a whole, and would bring about a climate of peace and security for the benefit of all countries.
ANNEX

Replies from Member States

Algeria  10 August 1982  A/37/355/Add.1
Argentina  7 December 1982  A/37/355/Add.4
Bulgaria  10 December 1982  A/37/355/Add.5
Central African Republic  19 August 1982  A/37/355/Add.1
Cuba  29 September 1982  A/37/355/Add.2
France  9 September 1982  A/37/355/Add.1
German Democratic Republic  1 July 1982  A/37/355
Greece  27 September 1982  A/37/355/Add.2
Indonesia  6 June 1983  A/38/291
Italy  14 September 1982  A/37/355/Add.1
Jordan  20 April 1983  A/38/291
Kenya  11 August 1983  A/38/291/Add.1
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya  23 August 1982  A/37/355
Malta  21 May 1982  A/37/355
Mauritius  8 July 1982  A/37/355
Mexico  5 March 1982  A/37/355
Morocco  6 August 1982  A/37/355/Add.1
Oman  24 March 1982  A/37/355
Poland  1 July 1983  A/38/291
Spain  29 June 1983  A/38/291
Syrian Arab Republic  18 May 1983  A/38/291
Uganda  17 August 1982  A/37/355
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic  14 October 1982  A/37/355/Add.2
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  8 October 1982  A/37/355/Add.2
Yemen  18 August 1982  A/37/355/Add.1
Yugoslavia  28 June 1982  A/37/355