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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL
AGENDA OF THE FORTY-FIRST SESSION

ZONE OF PEACE AND CO-OPERATION OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

Letter dated 29 May 1986 from the Minister for External Relations
of Brazil to the Secretary-General

At the opening of the fortieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, on 23 September 1985, President José Sarney stated;

Brazil will make every effort within its power to ensure that the South Atlantic is preserved as an area of peace, shielded from the arms race, the presence of nuclear arms and any form of confrontation originating in other regions.

The South Atlantic is a region with an identity of its own. The developing countries of the area - from Latin America and Africa - share similar problems and interests regarding economic development, social welfare and peace. Many of them rely heavily on the ocean for the very subsistence of their populations. These countries have a vital concern and a special responsibility to promote a climate conducive to understanding and co-operation among all those in the area.

The abhorrent situation prevailing in South Africa and Namibia and the threats posed to global and regional peace and security by the apartheid régime are a cause of grave concern.

The international community, furthermore, has been witnessing recurrent trends of naval military build-up, quantitative as well as qualitative, with the consequent geographic proliferation of nuclear weapons without regard for the right of non-nuclear countries to live in peace and security.

The independence of Namibia and the elimination of the racist régime of apartheid are essential conditions to ensure peace and security in the South Atlantic. It is likewise fundamental to exclude from the area tensions and confrontations extraneous to it..

In this connection, the declaration of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation is a logical follow-up for other outstanding initiatives such as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America, and the Organization of African Unity's Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

The establishment of a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic would significantly contribute to the promotion of universal peace, based on equal rights and justice for all, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

In view of the significant interest in the issue shown by many countries of the region of the South Atlantic, the Brazilian Government considers that the time has come for the United Nations, fulfilling its responsibilities under the Charter, to examine the issue of the South Atlantic, with the aim of keeping the region free from tensions derived from interests alien to the developing countries on both coastlines and to ensure that this ocean will serve only the purpose of peaceful co-operation and increasing solidarity among the peoples of the region.

I therefore request Your Excellency, in accordance with rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to include in the provisional agenda of the forty-first session of the General Assembly an item entitled: "Zone of peace and co-operation of the South Atlantic".

I also request that this letter be considered the explanatory memorandum required by rule 20 of the rules of procedure and that it be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Roberto DE ABREU SODRE
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of the Federative Republic
of Brazil