

-I-

DEFINITION OF AGGRESSION BY THE USSR IN THE UN: 1950-1952

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution on the definition of aggression

Original text : Russian

4 November 1950: fifth session

5 January 1952: sixth session

14 November 1952: seventh session

The General Assembly,

Considering it necessary, in the interests of general security and to facilitate agreement on the maximum reductions of armaments, to define the concept of aggression as accurately as possible, so as to forestall any pretext which might be used to justify it,

Recognizing that all States have equal rights to independence, security and the defence of their territory,

Inspired by the desire, in the interests of general peace, to guarantee all nations the right freely to develop by such means as are appropriate to them and at the rate which they consider to be necessary, and for that purpose to provide the fullest possible protection for their security, their independence and the integrity of their territory, and also for their right to defend themselves against aggression or invasion from without, but only within the limits of their own countries, and

Considering it necessary to formulate essential directives for such international organs as may be called upon to determine which party is guilty of attack,

Declares:

1. That in an international conflict that State shall be declared the attacker which first commits one of the following acts:

- (a) Declaration of war against another State;
- (b) Invasion by its armed forces, even without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (c) Bombardment by its land, sea or air forces of the territory of another State or the carrying out of a deliberate attack on the ships or aircraft of the latter;

- (d) The landing or leading of its land, sea or air forces inside the boundaries of another State without the permission of the government of the latter, or the violation of the conditions of such permission, particularly as regards the length of their stay or the extent of the area in which they may stay;
- (e) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;

2. Attacks such as those referred to in paragraph 1 may not be justified by any arguments of a political, strategic or economic nature, or by the desire to exploit natural riches in the territory of the State attacked or to derive any other kind of advantages or privileges, or by reference to the amount of capital invested in the State attacked or to any other particular interests in its territory, or by the affirmation that the State attacked lacks the distinguishing marks of statehood;

In particular, the following may not be used as justifications for attack:

A. The internal position of any State, as, for example:

- (a) The backwardness of any nation politically, economically or culturally;
- (b) Alleged shortcomings of its administration;
- (c) Any danger which may threaten the life or property of aliens;
- (d) Any revolutionary or counter-revolutionary movement, civil war, disorders or strikes;
- (e) The establishment or maintenance in any State of any political, economic or social system;

B. Any acts, legislation or orders of any State, as for example:

- (a) The violation of international treaties;
- (b) The violation of rights and interests in the sphere of trade, concessions or any other kind of economic activity acquired by another State or its citizens;
- (c) The rupture of diplomatic or economic relations;
- (d) Measures in connexion with an economic or financial boycott;
- (e) Repudiation of debts;
- (f) Prohibition or restriction of immigration or modification of the status of foreigners;
- (g) The violation of privileges granted to the official representatives of another State;
- (h) Refusal to allow the passage of armed forces proceeding to the territory of a third State;
- (i) Measures of a religious or anti-religious nature;
- (j) Frontier incidents.

3. In the event of the mobilization or concentration by another State of considerable armed forces near its frontier, the State which is threatened by such action shall have the right of recourse to diplomatic or other means of securing a peaceful settlement of international disputes. It may also in the meantime adopt requisite measures of a military nature similar to those described above, without, however, crossing the frontier.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Communication from the permanent delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations

New York, 8 April 1952

The delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations ... has the honour to state that **the views of the Government of the USSR on the question of defining aggression were expressed by the delegation of the USSR to the sixth session of the General Assembly, (Bolt.bm)** which delegation submitted concrete proposals on the subject.

-II-

DEFINITION OF "AGGRESSOR" AT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS CONFERENCE FOR THE REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF ARMAMENTS ON THE 6TH FEBRUARY 1933

On the 6th of February 1933 the then Foreign Commissar of the Soviet Union, Litvinov submitted to the League of Nations Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments the following definition of "Aggressor":

Considering that, in the interest of general security and in order to facilitate the attainment of an agreement for the maximum reduction of armaments, it is necessary, with the utmost precision, to define aggression, in order to remove any possibility of its justification; Recognising the principle of equal right of all States to independence, security and self-defence;

Animated by the desire of ensuring to each nation, in the interest of general peace, the right of free development according to its own choice and at the rate that suits it best, and of safeguarding the security, independence and complete territorial inviolability of each State and its right to self-defence against attack or invasion from outside but only within its own frontiers; and

Anxious to provide the necessary guidance to the international organs which may be called upon to define the aggressor:

Declares:

1. The aggressor in an international conflict shall be considered that State which is the first to take any of the following actions:

(a) Declaration of war against another State;

(b) The invasion by its armed forces of the territory of another State without declaration of war;

(c) Bombarding the territory of another State by its land, naval or air forces or knowingly attacking the naval or air forces of another State;

(d) The landing in, or introduction within the frontiers of, another State of land, naval or air forces without the permission of the Government of such a State, or the infringement of the conditions of such permission particularly as regards the duration of sojourn or extension of area;

(e) The establishment of a naval blockade of the coast or ports of another State.

2. No considerations whatsoever of a political, strategical or economic nature, including the desire to exploit natural riches or to obtain any sort of advantages or privileges on the territory of another State, no references to considerable capital investments or other special interests in a given State, or to the alleged absence of certain attributes of State organisation in the case of a given country, shall be accepted as justification of aggression as defined in Clause 1.

in particular, justification for attack cannot be based upon:

A. The internal situation in a given State, as, for instance:

(a) Political, economic or cultural backwardness of a given country;

(b) Alleged maladministration;

(c) Possible danger to life or property of foreign residents;

(d) Revolutionary or counter-revolutionary movements, civil war, disorders or strikes;

(e) The establishment or maintenance in any State of any political, economic or social order.

B. Any acts, laws or regulations of a given State, as for instance:

(a) The infringement of international agreements;

(b) The infringement of the commercial, concessional or other economic rights or interests of a given State or its citizens;

(c) The rupture of diplomatic or economic relations;

(d) Economic or financial boycott;

(e) Repudiation of debts;

(f) Non-admission or limitation of immigration, or restriction of rights or privileges of foreign residents;

(g) The infringement of the privileges of official representatives of other States;

(h) The refusal to allow armed forces transit to the territory of a third State;

(i) Religious or anti-religious measures;

(k) Frontier incidents.

3. In the case of the mobilisation or concentration of armed forces to a considerable extent in the vicinity of the frontiers, the State which such activities threaten may have recourse to diplomatic or other means for the peaceful solution of international

controversies. it may at the same time take steps of a military nature, analogous to those described above, without, however, crossing the frontier."

DEFINITION OF AGGRESSION BY THE USSR IN THE UN: 1950-1952

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Fifth Session, Annexes, Agenda Item 72. Doc. A/C.1/608

[USSR Draft Definition of Aggression,](#)

1950

DOCUMENT A/C.1/608

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics : draft resolution on the definition of aggression

[Original text : Russian]

[4 November 1950]

The General Assembly,

Considering it necessary, in the interests of general security and to facilitate agreement on the maximum reductions of armaments, to define the concept of aggression as accurately as possible, so as to forestall any pretext which might be used to justify it,

Recognizing that all States have equal rights to independence, security and the defence of their territory,

Inspired by the desire, in the interests of general peace, to guarantee all nations the right freely to develop by such means as are appropriate to them and at the rate which they consider to be necessary, and for that purpose to provide the fullest possible protection for their security, their independence and the integrity of their territory, and also for their right to defend themselves against aggression or invasion from without, but only within the limits of their own countries, and

Considering it necessary to formulate essential directives for such international organs as may be called upon to determine which party is guilty of attack,

Declares:

1. That in an international conflict that State shall be declared the attacker which first commits one of the following acts:

- (a) Declaration of war against another State;
- (b) Invasion by its armed forces, even without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (c) Bombardment by its land, sea or air forces of the territory of another State or the

carrying out of a deliberate attack on the ships or aircraft of the latter;

(d) The landing or leading of its land, sea or air forces inside the boundaries of another State without the permission of the government of the latter, or the violation of the conditions of such permission, particularly as regards the length of their stay or the extent of the area in which they may stay;

(e) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;

2. Attacks such as those referred to in paragraph 1 may not be justified by any arguments of a political, strategic or economic nature, or by the desire to exploit natural riches in the territory of the State attacked or to derive any other kind of advantages or privileges, or by reference to the amount of capital invested in the State attacked or to any other particular interests in its territory, or by the affirmation that the State attacked lacks the distinguishing marks of statehood;

In particular, the following may not be used as justifications for attack:

A. The internal position of any State, as, for example:

(a) The backwardness of any nation politically, economically or culturally;

(b) Alleged shortcomings of its administration;

(c) Any danger which may threaten the life or property of aliens;

(d) Any revolutionary or counter-revolutionary movement, civil war, disorders or strikes;

(e) The establishment or maintenance in any State of any political, economic or social system;

B. Any acts, legislation or orders of any State, as for example :

(a) The violation of international treaties;

(b) The violation of rights and interests in the sphere of trade, concessions or any other kind of economic activity acquired by another State or its citizens;

(c) The rupture of diplomatic or economic relations;

(d) Measures in connexion with an economic or financial boycott;

(e) Repudiation of debts;

(f) Prohibition or restriction of immigration or modification of the status of foreigners;

(g) The violation of privileges granted to the official representatives of another State;

(h) Refusal to allow the passage of armed forces proceeding to the territory of a third State;

(i) Measures of a religious or anti-religious nature;

(j) Frontier incidents.

3. In the event of the mobilization or concentration by another State of considerable armed forces near its frontier, the State which is threatened by such action shall have the right of recourse to diplomatic or other means of securing a peaceful settlement of international disputes. It may also in the meantime adopt requisite measures of a military nature similar to those described above, without, however, crossing the frontier.

Sixth Session,

[Annexes, Agenda Item 49. Report of the Sixth Committee,](#)

A/2087,

29 Jan., 1952

DOCUMENT A/C.6/L.208

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution

[Original text : Russian]

[5 January 1952]

The General Assembly,

Considering it necessary to formulate directives for such international organs as may be called upon to determine which party is guilty of aggression,

Declares:

1. That in an international conflict that State shall be declared the attacker which first commits one of the following acts :

- (a) Declaration of war against another State;
- (b) Invasion by its armed forces, even without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (c) Bombardment by its land, sea or air forces of the territory of another State or the carrying out of a deliberate attack on the ships or aircraft of the latter;
- (d) The landing or leading of its land, sea or air forces inside the boundaries of another State without the permission of the government of the latter, or the violation of the conditions of such permission, particularly as regards the length of their stay or the extent of the area in which they may stay;
- (e) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;
- (f) Support of armed bands organized in its own territory which invade the territory of another State, or refusal, on being requested by the invaded State, to take in its own territory any action within its power to deny such bands any aid or protection;

2. Attacks such as those referred to in paragraph 1 may not be justified by any arguments of a political, strategic or economic nature, or by the desire to exploit natural riches in the territory of the State attacked or to derive any other kind of advantages or privileges, or by reference to the amount of capital invested in the State attacked or to any other particular interests in its territory, or by the affirmation that the State attacked lacks the distinguishing marks of statehood:

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- (c) Any danger which may threaten the life or property of aliens;
- (d) Any revolutionary or counter-revolutionary movement, civil war, disorders or strikes;
- (e) The establishment or maintenance in any State of any political, economic or social system;

B. Any acts, legislation or orders of any State, as for example:

- (a) The violation of international treaties;
- (b) The violation of rights and interests in the sphere of trade, concessions or any other kind of economic activity acquired by another State or its citizens;
- (c) The rupture of diplomatic or economic relations;
- (d) Measures in connexion with an economic or financial boycott;
- (e) Repudiation of debts;
- (f) Prohibition or restriction of immigration or modification of the status of foreigners;
- (g) The violation of privileges granted to the official representatives of another State;
- (h) Refusal to allow the passage of armed forces proceeding to the territory of a third State;
- (i) Measures of a religious or anti-religious nature;
- (j) Frontier incidents.

3. In the event of the mobilization or concentration by another State of considerable armed forces near its frontier, the State which is threatened by such action shall have the right of recourse to diplomatic or other means of securing a peaceful settlement of international disputes. It may also in the meantime adopt requisite measures of a military nature similar to those described above, without, however, crossing the frontier.

-III-

Seventh Session,

[Annexes, Agenda Item 54,](#)

1952

[Comments by Governments](#)

12. UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Communication from the permanent delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations

New York, 8 April 1952

The delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations ... has the honour to state that the views of the Government of the USSR on the question of defining aggression were expressed by the delegation of the USSR to the sixth session of the General Assembly, which delegation submitted concrete proposals on the subject.

.....

DOCUMENT A/C.6/L.264

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution

[Original text: Russian]

[14 November 1952]

The General Assembly,

Considering it necessary to formulate directives for such international organs as may be called upon to determine which party is guilty of aggression,

Declares:

1. That in an international conflict that State shall be declared the attacker which first commits one of the following acts:

- (a) Declaration of war against another State;
- (b) Invasion by its armed forces, even without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
- (c) Bombardment by its land, sea or air forces of the territory of another State or the carrying out of a deliberate attack on the ships or aircraft of the latter;
- (d) The landing or leading of its land, sea or air forces inside the boundaries of another State without the permission of the government of the latter, or the violation of the conditions of such permission, particularly as regards the length of their stay or the extent of the area in which they may stay;
- (e) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;
- (f) Support of armed bands organized in its own territory which invade the territory of another State, or refusal, on being requested by the invaded State, to take in its own territory any action within its power to deny such bands any aid or protection;

2. Attacks such as those referred to in paragraph 1 may not be justified by any arguments of a political, strategic or economic nature, or by the desire to exploit natural riches in the territory of the State attacked or to derive any other kind of advantages or privileges, or by reference to the amount of capital invested in the State attacked or to any other particular interests in its territory, or by the affirmation that the State attacked lacks the distinguishing marks of statehood.

In particular; the following may not be used as justifications for attack:

A. The internal position of any State, as for example:

- (a) The backwardness of any nation politically, economically or culturally;
- (b) Alleged shortcomings of its administration;

- (c) Any danger which may threaten the life or property of aliens;
- (d) Any revolutionary or counter-revolutionary movement, civil war, disorders or strikes;
- (e) The establishment or maintenance in any State of any political, economic or social system;

B. Any acts, legislation or orders of any State, as for example:

- (a) The violation of international treaties;
- (b) The violation of rights and interests in the sphere of trade, concessions or any other kind of economic activity acquired by another State or its citizens ;
- (c) The rupture of, diplomatic or economic relations;
- (d) Measures in connexion with an economic or financial boycott;
- (e) Repudiation of debts;
- (f) Prohibition or restriction of immigration or modification of the status of foreigners;
- (g) The violation of privileges granted to the official representatives of another State;
- (h) Refusal to allow the passage of armed forces proceeding to the territory of a third State;
- (i) Measures of a religious or anti-religious nature;
- (j) Frontier incidents.

3. In the event of the mobilization or concentration by another State of considerable armed forces near its frontier, the State which is threatened by such action shall have the right of recourse to diplomatic or other means of securing a peaceful settlement of international disputes. It may also in the meantime adopt requisite measures of a military nature similar to those described above, without, however, crossing the frontier.

Source: *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventh Session, Annexes, Agenda Item 54: Question of defining aggression: report of the Secretary-General, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution, Doc. A/C.6/L.264, Nov. 14, 1952, pp. 81-82.*