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Letter dated 27 September 1984 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of
the Permanent Mission of Togo to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the Peace Message adopted by the National Seminar on Peace and Disarmament, held at Lomé, Togo, from 6 to 9 August 1984.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of the Lomé Peace Message to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 22, 46, 47, 51, 52, 55 to 61, 65, 68 and 69.

(Signed) Koffi ADJOYI

ANNEX

Lomé Peace Message

The National Seminar on Peace and Disarmament, jointly organized by the Togolese People's Rally and the Eyadema Foundation and held at Lomé from 6 to 9 August 1984, issues the following message:

It may seem surprising at first glance that a developing country, faced with urgent problems of socio-economic development, should organize a national seminar on peace and disarmament.

The Seminar is in keeping with the immense peace efforts ceaselessly made by the President and founder of the Togolese People's Rally, President of the Republic, His Excellency General Gnassingbé Eyadema, since his accession to power. It is also a response to the world campaign launched in 1982 by the United Nations General Assembly to alert international public opinion to the dangers of the arms race and to mobilize it in support of disarmament. The Seminar, moreover, coincides with the commemoration of the thirty-ninth anniversary of the use of the first atomic weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The arms race is not a new phenomenon. The threat of total and effective destruction of mankind and universal civilization is becoming increasingly real, however, owing to the existence of nuclear weapons and the efforts of the great Powers to develop more sophisticated forms of such weapons.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the problems of disarmament are no longer the prerogative of the nuclear-weapon countries or the industrialized countries alone, but concern also the entire international community.

Nuclear weapons, in their current state of development, are capable of destroying their victims immediately and indiscriminately, totally and universally. In the event of a nuclear holocaust, there would be no hope for either individuals or nations to survive. No country will be spared. The annihilation of human civilization is a certainty.

Reassuring statements to the effect that the balance of terror is a guarantee for preserving international peace and security are no longer valid. Indeed, with the continued advance of technology, this "balance" is constantly being upset and turns out to be nothing but an illusion. And the anguish goes on, because mankind has no protection against human or technological failings. The risks of an unintentional nuclear war are real.

The doctrine of nuclear deterrence, based on the capacity for mutual destruction, represents a grave danger in itself because it implies the continued possession of nuclear weapons, encourages their proliferation and makes their control increasingly difficult, if not impossible. It is therefore not an exaggeration to assert that this doctrine bears the seeds of its own destruction. In short, the security of the nuclear-weapon States can hardly be safeguarded on the basis of the arms race.

Nuclear tests encourage the nuclear arms race, cause disturbances in the living conditions, and may help to destroy the ecosystem.

There is a close link between disarmament and the economic and social development of nations. The two phenomena are competing for resources.

The resources of our planet are not unlimited. The unrestrained arms race entails increasingly extravagant outlays, which seem destined to grow still more in the years to come. All countries, particularly those whose economies are more vulnerable, are suffering the direct or indirect harmful economic effects of this arms race.

The resources consumed by military expenditures might otherwise have been used to meet the basic needs of millions of persons and thus could have contributed to the socio-economic development of the world.

It is distressing, unjust, scandalous and shocking to see that hundreds of billions of dollars are swallowed up each year in the manufacture and development of weapons, while two thirds of the world population is languishing in abject poverty and want.

Africa is in dire, social and economic straits. In these critical circumstances, it is urgent to eliminate from our continent all activities which encourage the arms race. Accordingly, attention should be drawn to the threat posed to African States by the policy of apartheid and aggression of the racist régime of South Africa.

This is why the nuclear Powers which help South Africa to arm itself with nuclear weapons must stop doing so, in accordance with the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted in 1964 by the Organization of African Unity. For their part, African States and African public opinion should further mobilize to safeguard the African continent against all nuclear armament.

Disarmament is a pressing task which must be given the highest priority. It is important, therefore, for every individual and every nation to become aware of the peril to which mankind is being exposed and of the urgent need to display the political will to seek acceptable solutions.

International public opinion is tired of the lofty resolutions adopted at international conferences which remain unfulfilled. It is time to use this public opinion in favour of disarmament.

The road to disarmament is long and difficult, but it is the only way available to mankind to ensure its own survival. The leaders of all countries must become aware of the need to find another security system which is not based on recourse to force.

Only a system of international security based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and on the other universally recognized legal instruments, can provide a viable, firm and acceptable basis for the international community.

Accordingly, emphasis must be placed on the need to strengthen and support the United Nations, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations in their efforts towards peace and disarmament.

The Seminar recommends:

- The establishment at Lomé of a regional institute for research on peace and disarmament to promote research on peace and intensify the disarmament information campaign at the African continental level.
- The holding in Togo, early in 1985, the fortieth anniversary of the birth of the United Nations, of a regional seminar on peace and disarmament, bringing together the Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States, with the assistance of the United Nations.

The Seminar urgently appeals to the super-Powers not to allow their ideological differences to take precedence over the real problems of peace and economic and social development.

It calls upon the countries belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement to strengthen their ties and to continue to work tirelessly for peace and disarmament.

Done at Lomé on 9 August 1984
The Seminar
