

27/03/1962-15/08/1962
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Sessions (West & New Guinea) - Sec.-Gen. Statements, References in Press, Conferences, etc.

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Nov 01
1962

UPI-18

(NEW GUINEA)

LONDON--U.N. ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL THANT SAID TODAY THE INDONESIAN AND DUTCH GOVERNMENTS WOULD SEND DELEGATES TO THE UNITED STATES EARLY NEXT WEEK TO RESUME DISCUSSIONS FOR SETTLEMENT OF THE WEST NEW GUINEA DISPUTE.

"I AM VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THE TALKS," THANT TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE HERE. HE SAID THE DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE RESUMED UNDER HIS DEPUTY, AMERICAN DIPLOMAT ELLSWORTH BUNKER. IF AGREEMENT FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATION IS REACHED, HE SAID, THEY WOULD BE UNDER THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S AUSPICES.

THANT EXPLAINED THAT THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS RESULTED FROM HIS APPEAL TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO ACCEPT THE BUNKER PROPOSALS FOR SETTLING DIFFERENCES OVER WEST NEW GUINEA.

HE SAID THE INDONESIANS ACCEPTED THE BUNKER PROPOSALS "IN PRINCIPLE" WHILE THE DUTCH SAID THEY WERE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE ON THE BASIS OF THE PROPOSALS.

THANT SAID HE SAW "NO MATERIAL DIFFERENCES" IN THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. HE ADDED THAT INDONESIAN PRESIDENT SUKARNO ASKED FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION OF THE DUTCH POSITION AND THAT NOW THE NETHERLANDS GOVERNMENT ALSO FEELS IT CAN ACCEPT THE BUNKER PROPOSALS "IN PRINCIPLE."

THE SECRETARY GENERAL SAID: "THE LATEST INFORMATION IS THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE SENDING THEIR DELEGATES TO THE UNITED STATES EARLY NEXT WEEK FOR THE RESUMPTION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS."

7/7--TD929AED

His original appointment expired at the end of last year, but in response to my appeal he agreed to extend his tour of duty for another three months. I am releasing this morning my message to General Mac Eoin expressing my great appreciation for the distinguished service he has rendered to ONUC and to the United Nations.

General Mac Eoin will be succeeded as Commander of the Force by Lieutenant General Kibada Gebre, of Ethiopia. The services of General Gebre, who is Chief of Staff in Ethiopia, have generously been made available to ONUC by the Emperor.

Until General Gebre arrives in Leopoldville to take up his command, the Acting Commander will be the present Deputy Commander of the Force, Major General Yacob, who is, of course, stationed in Leopoldville.

May I also add a few words regarding my travel plans, which have aroused some speculation. I have accepted invitations from the Governments of Norway, Finland and the United Kingdom to visit their countries some time towards the end of June and the beginning of July.

The floor is now open. I would like to give the floor first of all to Mr. Pierre Huss, the President of the United Nations Correspondents Association.

Mr. HUSS: Mr. Secretary-General, would you tell us also the status of the negotiations on the New Guinea question, in view of the stalemate, or the impasse, in Washington.

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: As you all know, in the third week of December, I think it was, I sent out an immediate appeal to the President of the Republic of Indonesia and the Prime Minister of the Netherlands not to international precipitate any action which might develop into a situation that could threaten peace and security. And of course, in the course of the next few weeks, both the President of Indonesia and the Prime Minister of the Netherlands very kindly responded to my appeal, favourably, and they have instructed their Permanent Representatives in New York to keep in close contact with me, with a view to finding a peaceful solution of the whole problem. Since the middle of January, I have been in close consultation with the two representatives, in secret and in informal talks. About two weeks ago it was agreed that the discussions should be staged in two phases: the first phase would be secret and informal, and the second stage would be formal.

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Note No. 2548
27 March 1962

It was also agreed that for the first phase, in order to avoid publicity and in order to avoid unnecessary speculation, somebody outside the United Nations should offer his good offices. With my knowledge and consent, as you all know, these preliminary, informal talks took place outside New York in the presence of Mr. Ellsworth Bunker, who of course reported to me on the developments in these exploratory talks. Mr. Bunker reported to me that after three meetings, in his presence, the discussions were adjourned so that the Indonesian representative, Ambassador Malik, would be able to go back to Jakarta to seek fresh instructions on the substance of the negotiations. According to information available to me, I had the impression that Mr. Malik would be back in Washington towards the end of this week, so that negotiations would go on.

But the news dispatches of yesterday and today reported certain developments which I am not in a position to confirm or deny. But I very much hope that these negotiations will go on as originally scheduled. As I have just said, the first phase of the negotiations will be secret and informal, in the presence of a third party represented by Mr. Ellsworth Bunker. After the successful progress of these preliminary talks, the formal negotiations will take place here in my presence. This procedure has been agreed to by both parties concerned.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary-General, I have two questions relating to the bond issue. One is that, out of twenty-one subscribers so far, five are countries which are already in arrears on UNEF and Congo expenses. Do you or do you not feel that countries should first pay what they are in arrears with before they subscribe to bonds?

The second question is this. Latin American countries can be found among those in arrears both on regular and extra assessments, but not among those who have offered subscriptions to bonds. Could you change that situation?

(more)

West Bank

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: Regarding the first part of your question, so far the working arrangements in the Secretariat have been very satisfactory and the operation has been very smooth. Regarding the second part of your question, of course I do not know how to devise ways and means of averting the prospective disaster or catastrophe which you have in mind.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary-General, coming back to New Guinea, could you tell us if you have taken or are planning to take any initiative to bring the parties back to the table. Secondly, if this does not materialize, do you see other means to further a peaceful solution of this dispute?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. Bunker only yesterday reported to me that he had sent out an appeal to the President of the Republic of Indonesia to permit his representative, Ambassador Malik, to come back to Washington. Of course we have to await further developments and I am afraid that I cannot say anything beyond that.

QUESTION: You spoke, Sir, in terms of influence and used the word "power" a few moments ago. Brussels as the seat of the Common Market has become a center of world power and of influence and the Common Market itself is now a matter of great concern throughout the world. Do you have any comment on the possible role of the United Nations in dealing with this new seat of power and influence of the Common Market?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: First of all I am not so sure whether the headquarters of the Common Market is a seat of power in the world. I am not so sure about that. In the second place, of course the economic implications of the Common Market will be considered by the appropriate organs of the United Nations in the context of the Development Decade and I think I will be able to report to the seventeenth session of the General Assembly on these implications.

(more)

West Irian

QUESTION: Turning again to the West Irian issue, I should like to know if you are still optimistic with regard to a peaceful settlement and, secondly, whether you would like to comment on the latest news reports reaching here to the effect that the Dutch will send reinforcements to West Irian by sending the destroyers which are now visiting San Diego?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: With regard to the first part of your question, I am not pessimistic. With regard to the second part, it would, of course, be rather difficult for me to comment on the press reports.

QUESTION: On the question of New Guinea I should like to ask you whether, if armed activities should continue around New Guinea, you would consider sending out a United Nations observer to that region, and whether you consider a United Nations presence there as a useful deterrent to the threats to peace?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: I have given some thought to this, and I do not feel that it would be helpful if I were to reveal at this stage my line of thinking.

QUESTION: I do not wish to get too theoretical but, in connexion with your conclusion that the force of the United Nations was not battalions or other rather technical things, you said that it was, in the main, public opinion which cannot be ignored by any country. I am really curious as to your own feelings about or interpretations of certain spectacular times and events in which public opinion, as expressed in this building, has been ignored. How do you, as a diplomat, account for these events, and how do you feel about a recurrence of such events in the future?

(more)

Press Luncheon, 24 April 1962 -

West Irian

Note No. 2574
24 April 1962

QUESTION: What is Ellsworth Bunker doing to get the Dutch and the Indonesians together again to talk about their dispute over West New Guinea? What have they told him? How soon are they likely to meet again, and will they settle things?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: As you all know, the negotiations between the Netherlands and Indonesia went on outside the United Nations, informally and secretly, in the presence of Mr. Bunker, who represented me in these negotiations. The intention was that these informal and secret negotiations should proceed smoothly, without any chance of leaking out, and therefore Mr. Bunker organized these informal negotiations away from New York -- in a place near Washington, as you know. The negotiations were interrupted for various reasons. Among these reasons was the fact that some of the representatives had a limited mandate, and, since their mandate was restricted, they felt that they had to seek a fresh mandate.

While the negotiations were suspended, Mr. Bunker was in constant touch with me, and at some stage he came up with his own formula, calculated to break the impasse. He presented his formula to me. In my present position, of course, I should not identify myself with any formulation because of the risk involved: if I am associated with any formula, and if that particular formula happens to be unacceptable to one party or the other, then it might even damage the Office of the Secretary-General. I therefore advised Mr. Bunker not to solicit my reactions to his formula. I encouraged him to present his formula to the two governments, which he did. Of course, I am fully aware of the substance of his formula, and my intention was and is that, if Mr. Bunker's formula is acceptable to both parties, formal negotiations can take place on the basis of that formula in my presence in New York. So far, I have not received any official communication from either party regarding its reactions to Mr. Bunker's formula. All I have been hearing -- as you have been hearing -- has been only through the press. I understand that Mr. Bunker is vigorously pursuing his efforts, bending all his energies to getting the two parties together as soon as possible. For the moment, of course, I have no means of knowing when the negotiations will be resumed.

QUESTION: If the United Nations is asked to play a role during an interim period in supervising the administration of the territory, could the Secretary-General take the necessary steps for that purpose, or would such a step require the authorization of the General Assembly?

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The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: If Mr. Bunker's formula is accepted by both parties as a suitable basis for formal discussions, and if these formal discussions go through, then I shall have to request the convening of the General Assembly. Without the mandate of the General Assembly, I do not feel that the Secretary-General should assume full responsibility for the implementation of the agreement envisaged in this formula.

(more)

(The Acting Secretary-General)

Of course, in the subsequent exchange of letters between me and the Permanent Observer of the Federal Republic of Germany, I clarified my position. This transmission of a communication from that particular area does not in any way imply recognition, does not in any way imply any attitude on my part toward that particular territory. I acted as I did because of the importance of the subject matter and because of "the wording used in this particular resolution. The exchange of letters to which I have just referred was simply meant as a clarification of my position. I made this clear in my reply to the Permanent Observer of the Federal Republic of Germany.

While on this subject, I wish to say that, if I had received a communication from Peking in time on this subject, I would have acted in the same manner in which I did act.

Regarding the second question, relating to the projected high-altitude tests: On a previous occasion, I made known my position on the general subject of nuclear tests. On that occasion, I made it clear that I was in complete agreement with the General Assembly resolutions of the sixteenth session on the banning of nuclear tests. The projected nuclear and thermonuclear tests at high altitudes belong, of course, to a different category and, I feel, a more undesirable one. In the first place, these tests, when announced, were objected to very vigorously by many eminent scientists all over the world, and scientists with no axe to grind. Secondly, it is common knowledge that outer space is no country's territory. It is the common property of all countries. And I feel that these projected high-altitude tests are a manifestation of a very dangerous psychosis which is in evidence today.

QUESTION: Are you satisfied with the way things are shaping up with regard to the New Guinea conflict and the way the countries concerned are responding to your continuous appeals?

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The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: It is common knowledge that Mr. Ellsworth Bunker had been conducting private and informal discussions with the two parties concerned since the third week of March and when these discussions were suspended Mr. Bunker came to New York and discussed with me a formula which he proposed to present to the two Governments as a basis for further discussions. I was in complete agreement with the formula proposed by Mr. Bunker and I encouraged him to go ahead with his plans. Thus the Bunker proposals were presented to the two Governments in April. The Government of Indonesia promptly announced that it was ready to resume negotiations on the basis of the Bunker proposals. The Government of the Netherlands suggested a few modifications. Among these suggested modifications is the one pertaining to paragraph 4 of the Bunker proposals.

These suggestions of the Netherlands Government were transmitted to the Indonesian Government by Mr. Bunker and the Indonesian Government again agreed to resume negotiations on these revised proposals. While Mr. Bunker was awaiting a definitive reply from the Netherlands, we had news of hostilities in West New Guinea. At that time, of course, it will be remembered, I appealed to both Governments to resume negotiations on the basis of the Bunker proposals, and then the Netherlands Government agreed to resume negotiations on these proposals.

That is the position. There was some misunderstanding regarding my non-compliance with the request of the Netherlands Government to send observers to the area. It will be recalled that the Government of the Netherlands made similar requests to my predecessor, Mr. Dag Hammarskjold, on several occasions, and Mr. Dag Hammarskjold did not comply with these requests. I also did not comply with these requests because my paramount consideration at that time was, and at the present time is, to bring the two parties together at the conference table. If I had to decide to send observers to the area because of the changing situation and new developments, I could not send civilian observers. I would have to send military observers and I did not feel competent to send military observers to any area without the authorization of the Security Council.

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The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: Regarding your first question, we have been receiving reports that more mercenaries are coming into Katanga. Of course, it is difficult to substantiate these rumors, and we have no means of knowing the exact number of foreign mercenaries now in Katanga.

Regarding the second question, on Ruanda-Urundi, the report of the Commission will be officially made available to all delegations and the Press tomorrow, and, of course, it is for the General Assembly to decide on the future course of action on the basis of that recommendation. I do not think that the Security Council should be involved in this particular item.

QUESTION: With reference to the United Nations financing situation, and possibly with reference to your personal remark just a minute ago on your feelings with regard to the thirty-eighth floor, there has been a sharpening in international conflicts over the past few weeks. In Geneva there was a failure to come to agreement on banning war propaganda. In the Committee of Seventeen, at the end of its New York session, there were a few votes taken which went contrary, to, let us say, the spirit of moderation which had prevailed before. Do they herald an intensification of United Nations involvement in a situation like that and, if so, how do you feel about?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: I do not think it would be proper for me, in my position, to venture an assessment of the results of the Geneva discussions now going on. Of course, the failure of the adoption of a declaration on the banning of war propaganda is deplorable, but I still feel that there is a pretty good chance for this conference to achieve some substantial results in the field of the banning of nuclear tests. As you all know, on this particular question the views of the big Powers are pretty clear regarding inspection. My feeling is that if only technical and scientific discussions take place, to consider whether national instruments are adequate to verify nuclear weapon tests or not, that could help the progress of the discussions. Of course, it is common knowledge that, apart from underground tests and high-altitude tests, all tests in the atmosphere can be verified by national instruments. This fact is not contested by anybody. So I think the next step should be discussions on the technical and scientific aspects of this problem.

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QUESTION: You said that these high-altitude tests were a manifestation of a dangerous psychosis in evidence today. Could you explain that a little further?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: I hope my observations are pretty clear, and I do not think any clarification is necessary.

QUESTION: Do you think there will be a world trade conference this year?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: I am afraid I have no means of knowing whether there will be a trade conference this year or next year.

QUESTION: May I come back for a moment to New Guinea. You mentioned the question of paragraph 4 of the Bunker plan. What kind of guarantees could the United Nations give for an impartial plebiscite in New Guinea, and could it give such guarantees without a special mandate of the General Assembly?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: At this stage the United Nations is not involved yet. After the two parties come to an agreement on a formula, formal negotiations, as I indicated earlier, will take place in my presence at the United Nations, and when those formal negotiations are completed satisfactorily then I have to seek the decision of the General Assembly. Of course, I cannot implement any agreed formulation without the mandate of the General Assembly. I have a feeling that, if everything goes well, this item will be inscribed on the agenda of the seventeenth session, and the General Assembly should adopt a resolution to take note of these agreements and to give directives to the Secretary-General on how to implement these provisions.

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Note No. 2603
5 June 1962

(The Acting Secretary-General)

Regarding the stock market fluctuations, I must confess that I am completely ignorant of the operations of the stock market on Wall Street, and of course if the question is raised at the projected Press conference on the 14th, I am sure my competent colleagues in the Secretariat will be able to present the views of the Secretariat vis-à-vis the proposed Development Decade.

QUESTION: Sir, I wondered if it were accidental that you mentioned, in discussing communications from East Germany, that if you had received a communication from Peking in time, you would have included it. Does this mean that you have received communications from Peking on this topic of atomic armaments since that time in some manner?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: No, I did not receive any communication from Peking.

QUESTION: In connexion with what you said about the Bunker proposals, I understand you said that Indonesia immediately accepted them as a basis for negotiation. In the Press section the language was "accepted in principle". Was there some difference between the language we had in the Press section and the language you had, or do you consider both statements synonymous?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: I do not see any difference between the two wordings: "The Indonesian Government agreed to resume negotiations on the basis of the Bunker proposals" or "The Indonesian Government agreed to the Bunker proposals in principle". I do not see the difference between the two formulations.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary-General, in view of the current status of the United Nations resources, financial and otherwise, in the Congo and in other parts of the world, do you feel that the United Nations is in a position to take on new responsibilities in Africa and Asia that will require additional resources and money?

(more)

(The Acting Secretary-General)

Therefore, since my whole purpose was to bring the two parties together at a round-table conference in the presence of a third party and settle their differences peacefully, I had to reject the request of the Netherlands, as my predecessor had done on more than one occasion in the last one and a half years. Now I should think that the two parties would get together, in the presence of Mr. Bunker, to thrash out the formula in more detail. If this formula is acceptable to both, formal negotiations will take place, under my auspices and in my presence, in the United Nations. That is the arrangement.

QUESTION: I have two unrelated questions. The first question is the following: The coming session of the Assembly will certainly discuss matters which bring up the competence and the necessity for altering and improving the peacekeeping machinery of the United Nations. Do you have any thoughts or suggestions on what line such a discussion might take?

The second question has to do with the stock market fall in the United States and in other countries which may indeed -- and I am sorry to say this affect the Decade for Development and a lot of other things, and yet one of the subjects now being discussed is compensatory insurance for primary commodities, and the primary commodity market may suffer. Do you have any comments on that?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: On your first question, of course the resumed session will take up the question of Ruanda-Urundi, and perhaps the discussions might involve the future role of the United Nations regarding its peacekeeping operations. Of course the report of the Ruanda-Urundi Commission* is in your hands -- I believe it will be released tomorrow -- and it is for the General Assembly to decide. I have my own views on the subject and perhaps at the appropriate moment, if necessary, I shall have to intervene during the discussions in the General Assembly. But I do not think it will be proper on my part to make any public statement on this question now.

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* Doc.A/5126, embargoed for 6 p.m. (EDT) Wednesday, 6 June.

S/C Chess Conference, 5 June 1962

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(more)

Note No. 2603
5 June 1962
P. 13

5/6 Press Conference in London, 7 July 1962

West Asian

both with the Prime Minister and with the Foreign Secretary here in London. I propose to bring up the same issue in my discussions with other leaders of European countries during my projected trip to those countries.

QUESTION: There are two points arising from that answer. In the first place, were you encouraged by what the British told you on this financing program; and in the second place is there not some danger, in view of the facts you have given us, that the United Nations may depend too heavily on Western financial support for its operations?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: About my assessment of the results of my discussions with the British leaders, I am happy to say that I am encouraged about the future of UN peace-keeping operations. On the second question, I find it difficult to assert the thesis that the United Nations has to depend solely on Western support in the financial field. It may be of interest to you to know that several African and Asian countries have come forward with pledges in regard to the bond issues, countries like India, Burma, Tunisia, the United Arab Republic, Ethiopia, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia and Nigeria. They have come forward with pledges and there are very good indications that other countries will do so too. Of course, the size of the pledge is a different matter altogether. As you are all aware, these countries are underdeveloped, more or less, and if I may say so their financial situation is in many cases precarious, so their pledges can be considered as a very clear demonstration of their faith in the United Nations and of their confidence in the necessity -- the imperative necessity -- of having a world Organization to develop into a really effective instrument for international conciliation. Even as a gesture I think it is a very heartening development.

QUESTION: I wonder if you could tell us about the latest progress in your efforts with the Dutch and the Indonesians?

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The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: This is one problem about which we all should be very happy. Since December of last year I have been in touch with the Government of the Netherlands and the Government of Indonesia in the hope of settling their dispute by peaceful means. In response to my appeal both Governments nominated their permanent representatives in New York to contact me, separately of course, and I have been able to sound them out about their line of thinking and their operations. In March I deputed an American diplomat Mr. Elsworth Bunker, to get the two together in informal and secret talks. Mr. Bunker met them together and negotiations took place in a place close to Washington. Late in March the negotiations were interrupted for a variety of reasons and last month I appealed both to President Sukarno and to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands to resume negotiations on the basis of the Bunker proposals. As you all know, Mr. Bunker on my behalf presented his own proposals to the two Governments as a basis for discussion. The Government of Indonesia announced publicly that it accepted the Bunker proposals in principle. The Government of the Netherlands announced publicly that it was prepared to resume negotiations on the basis of the Bunker proposals. The two formulations seemed to be a little different, but my interpretation was that there was no material difference between the two attitudes. President Sukarno wanted me to clarify the Netherlands position. After contact with the Netherlands Government I was in a position to communicate the Netherlands attitude to the Government of Indonesia. The Netherlands Government also feels that it can accept the Bunker proposals in principle, so President Sukarno was satisfied with the public statement of the Netherlands Government and the latest information is that the two Governments are sending their delegates to the United States early next week for a resumption of the negotiations. The present arrangement is that the two delegations will resume their talks under the auspices of Mr. Bunker to consider the formula and if they come to an agreement on this, further negotiations will take place under my auspices in New York, where detailed discussions will be held. I am pretty optimistic about the outcome of these talks.

(more)

Sto Press Conference in Oslo, 11 July 1962

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Note No. 2624
23 July 1962

QUESTION: Sir, what are the latest developments in the New Guinea crisis? When do you expect secret negotiations to resume and what do you expect to come out of them?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: Regarding this question of West New Guinea, last December I appealed to both governments to try to settle their dispute by peaceful means. And since then I have been in contact with the two delegations separately and in March of this year I deputed an American diplomat, Mr. Ellsworth Bunker, to conduct negotiations on my behalf.

Late in March Mr. Bunker presented his own proposal as a formula for discussion. Now both governments have accepted the Bunker proposal in principle. And I have been assured by both governments that they would send their representatives to resume negotiations. Possibly the negotiations will be resumed this week. And after the formula has been agreed to, negotiations will shift to New York where under my auspices the two delegations will negotiate and if there is agreement -- and I am sure there will be an agreement -- the matter should be brought before the XVII Session of the General Assembly, just for the Assembly to take note of the agreement reached and to authorize me to implement the terms of the agreement.

UNITED NATIONS

Press Services
Office of Public Information
United Nations, N.Y.

(For use of information media -- not an official record)

Press Release SG/1280
31 July 1962

STATEMENT BY ACTING SECRETARY-GENERAL U THANT
REGARDING WEST NEW GUINEA

Acting Secretary-General U Thant is gratified that a preliminary agreement has been reached by the Indonesian and Netherlands representatives in regard to the modalities of the transfer of authority over West New Guinea.

The Secretary-General is optimistic about the final outcome of the official negotiations which will take place under his auspices about the middle of August.

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West New Guinea
S/G Press Conf.

QUESTION: Concerning this tentative new agreement between the Netherlands and Indonesia, do you have in mind any safeguards to ensure that the people of New Guinea will be more fortunate in expressing their views and exercising their right of self-determination than the people of Kashmir have been?

The Acting SECRETARY-GENERAL: Regarding the question of West New Guinea, the basic principle is that, whatever the two governments agree, will be agreeable to me. That is the basic principle, the basic purpose of my negotiations with the two governments. Of course, as you know, informal preliminary agreements were reached between the two governments' representatives last week under the auspices of Mr. Ellsworth Bunker who deputized for me in these informal negotiations. Of course Mr. Bunker was in constant contact with me throughout these negotiations. The two parties have come to a preliminary agreement on the modalities in the transfer of authority over West New Guinea and the implementation of the right of the Papuan people to self-determination.

The present arrangement is that these preliminary agreements have to be confirmed by the two governments, and then formal and official negotiations will take place under my auspices some time in the middle of August. As I stated a couple of days ago, I am optimistic about the final outcome of these negotiations and I also feel that it will be very desirable for the General Assembly to endorse such an agreement and also to authorize me to implement the provisions of that agreement, without any financial involvement to this Organization. The present arrangement is that the Netherlands and Indonesia will table a joint resolution during the first couple of days of the seventeenth session of the General Assembly, and it has also been agreed that I should appoint a special representative for the territory immediately after the adoption of that resolution.

UNITED NATIONS

Press Services
Office of Public Information
United Nations, N.Y.

(For use of information media -- not an official record)

Press Release SG/1291
15 August 1962

STATEMENT BY ACTING SECRETARY-GENERAL U THANT
AT CEREMONY FOR SIGNING OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA AND KINGDOM OF NETHERLANDS

On this eventful occasion, when the Agreement between the Republic of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands in regard to the future of West New Guinea (West Irian) is about to be signed, I would like first of all to congratulate the two governments on their willingness to settle this question by peaceful negotiation, and also on their spirit of "give and take" which has made possible the conclusion of this Agreement.

I am sure I am right in saying that, as a result, there will be not only an easing of tension in the area, but also an increased feeling of mutual trust and confidence between the two governments. It is a good augury that, with the signing of this Agreement, diplomatic relations are to be resumed between the two countries, and I am sure that their future relations will be marked by the friendliness, understanding and cordiality that have prevailed during these negotiations.

I would also like to take this opportunity to place on record, publicly, my gratitude to Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker who has acted on my behalf during the preliminary negotiations between the two governments and whose patience, integrity and diplomatic skill have contributed so greatly to the successful conclusion of this Agreement.

There are several unique features about this Agreement. One is that, if the General Assembly endorses it, the United Nations would have temporary executive authority (established by and under the jurisdiction of the Secretary-General) over a vast territory for the first time in its history. Another is that the entire expenses to be incurred under the terms of this Agreement are to be shared by the two governments and will not impose a burden on any of the other member governments. Considerable executive responsibilities are placed on the Secretary-General and Secretariat of the United Nations, some of which have necessarily to be undertaken,

(more)

in the interests of peace and security, in anticipation of the approval of the General Assembly. It will be my endeavor and that of my colleagues to fulfil these tasks to the best of our capacity.

If these responsibilities are to be discharged to the satisfaction of all concerned, I shall need the willing cooperation of both governments, especially during the period of transition. I hope that my task will be facilitated by the scrupulous adherence on the part of both governments to the letter and spirit of this Agreement. Without it my task would become immensely difficult, and I earnestly appeal to both governments to make their cooperation available to me in the fullest measure.

Before closing, I would like to congratulate once again the representatives of the two governments on the imminent signature of this historic agreement which, in line with the principles of the Charter, has settled peacefully a long-standing problem, with benefit to all concerned.

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