

that is Principles I, III and IV.

The first relevant clause, in Principle I, on sovereign equality and respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty, follows a reference to the right of each participating State to define and conduct as it wishes its relations with other States in accordance with international law and in the spirit of the Principles in the Final Act, and reads as follows:

They consider that their frontiers can be changed, in accordance with international law, by peaceful means and by agreement.

This should dispel any doubt that the signatories of the Final Act were recognizing as immutable any existing borders of any other Participating State. Indeed the present situation in Germany is evidence of this fact.

The second relevant provision is Principle III on the inviolability of frontiers, reading as follows:

The participating States regard as inviolable all one another's frontiers as well as the frontiers of all States in Europe and therefore they will refrain now and in the future from assaulting these frontiers.

Accordingly, they will also refrain from any demand for, or act of, seizure and usurpation of part or all of the territory of any participating State.

It can be noted that this provision is placed within the framework of the condemnation of aggression and can be compared to similar wording in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

In none of its statements or proposals on this question has the Government of Iceland condoned any act of aggression.

The third provision is Principle IV, on the territorial integrity of States, reading as follows:

The participating States will respect the territorial integrity of each of the participating States.

Accordingly, they will refrain from any action inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations against the territorial integrity, political independence or the unity of any participating

State, and in particular from any such action constituting a threat or use of force.

The participating states will likewise refrain from making each other's territory the object of military occupation or other direct or indirect measures of force in contravention of international law, or the object of acquisition by means of such measures or the threat of them. No such occupation or acquisition will be recognized as legal.

For the purposes of the consideration by the Government of Iceland of the status of Lithuania particular importance is attached to the prohibition of illegal occupation and acquisition of territory in the third paragraph of the Principle. In this connection the clause in Principle I referred to above is particularly relevant. Thus the analysis set out above on the effect of illegal occupation and annexation on the legal status of Lithuania applies also to the construction of Principle IV.

VI

The considerations set out above on Iceland's policy towards Lithuania is presented in order to explain why Iceland cannot accept the contentions put forward by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union that Iceland's policies are incompatible with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act. In this connection it should be emphasized that in many respects the present situation does not involve the assessment of present-day policies of the Soviet Union, or recent developments in the Soviet Union's constitutional structure, but rather of the residual legal effects of activities which took place over 50 years ago. The situation is one of the remaining elements of Europe's post-war legacy which has stubbornly resisted the forces of change which have been shaping a new order of Europe. Accordingly, in the relations between Iceland and the Soviet Union the position of the Baltic States and, specifically, Lithuania, must be regarded as unique, on the basis of the evaluation set out above on the historical and legal circumstances.

Iceland has consistently emphasized the need for a peaceful solution to the dispute between the Baltic States and the Soviet Union. Iceland has consequently, on many occasions, expressed the view that the dispute should be solved through negotiations. As a reflection of this policy, Iceland has agreed to act as a mediator in the relations between the Baltic States and the Soviet authorities.

Resolution of the Althing
of 12 March 1990 on congratulations
to the Lithuanian People on the occasion
of their declaration of independence.

The Althing resolves to congratulate the People of Lithuania on the occasion of the declaration of independence of Lithuania passed by the Lithuanian Parliament yesterday.

The Althing believes the self-determination of nations with democratically elected parliaments to be the basis for free relations and conducive to world peace.

The Althing therefore rejoices in the restoration of Lithuania's independence and looks forward to good co-operation with Lithuania's democratically elected representatives.

Resolution of the Althing
of 18 December 1990 on support for the
Baltic States' quest for independence.

The Althing reiterates its support for the quest for independence by the People of Lithuania and recalls that the Icelandic Government has since 1922 consistently recognized the independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as the Althing and the Government have confirmed. The Althing reaffirms its resolution of 12 March 1990 by which it declared that the right to self-determination of nations with democratically elected parliaments forms the basis of unhindered relations between nations and contributes to world peace. The Althing emphasizes the importance of a positive outcome of the special talks between the Baltic States and the Government of the Soviet Union as stated by the Prime Minister of Iceland at the Paris Summit 19 to 20 November 1990.

The Althing considers that until the Baltic States have gained full recognition of their independence conflicts in Europe have not been settled.

The Althing emphasizes the right to self-determination of the Baltic States and proclaims its support for all peaceful efforts to settle the dispute between the Baltic States and the Soviet Union. The Althing expresses its support for the Icelandic Government's offer to provide Reykjavik as a venue for discussions between the parties concerned and encourages the Government to seek a favourable solution to the Baltic States' quest for independence in international fora.

Resolution of the Althing
of 14 January 1991 condemning the acts of violence
of the Soviet forces in Lithuania.

The Althing resolves to strongly condemn the acts of violence perpetrated by Soviet forces against the Lithuanian nation and its democratically elected Government. The Althing appeals to authorities in the Soviet Union to cease immediately any use of military force in their relations with the Baltic States and to withdraw their forces at once. The actions of Soviet armed forces in the past few days are a breach of the basic principles of relations between States as set down in the mutual commitments of the Helsinki Final Act of the Participating States in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and in direct contravention of the Charter of Paris for a new Europe of November 1990.

The Althing is of the view that there is no satisfactory solution to the matters of the Baltic States other than their full and unconditional independence.

The Althing appeals to all nations and particularly to the States of the Western world to provide the Baltic States with the support needed for the reinstatement of their independence.

The Althing draws attention to the great hopes for lasting peace in Europe in light of developments in recent years and cautions against the serious consequences of suppressing the rights of nations to self-determination.

Resolution of the Althing
of 11 February 1991.

The Althing resolves to confirm that the recognition by the Government of Iceland in 1922 of the independence of the Republic of Lithuania is fully valid.

The Althing supports the Government's decision of 23 January 1991 to agree to the request of the democratically elected authorities in Lithuania to initiate talks concerning diplomatic relations.

The Althing calls upon the Government to bring this issue to a conclusion by establishing diplomatic relations with Lithuania as soon as possible.