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DECIMOSEXTA REUNION DEL CONSEJO DIRECTIVO  
Santiago, Chile, 14 a 15 de mayo de 1973

RENUNCIA DEL DIRECTOR GENERAL DEL INSTITUTO, CARTA DE ACEPTACION DEL  
SECRETARIO GENERAL Y DESIGNACION DE DIRECTOR GENERAL INTERINO

COPY

12 January 1973

My dear Mr. Secretary-General,

Nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since I was invited, at a moment when I had to exile myself from my country, to join the Organization that is now under your leadership. Looking back over these years I do not hesitate to say that this has been the most rewarding period of my life.

During these years many important new ideas have evolved in the field of economic and social development. It is my firm belief that, in this intellectual process as well as in its political expressions, the United Nations has played a role of paramount importance. Indeed these ideas on development, now so widely accepted, have mainly emerged from the political bodies of the United Nations and its Secretariat.

I remember that you had vividly underlined the pathbreaking role of the United Nations during the Third Session of UNCTAD. Insofar as the Secretariat is concerned, it is my deep conviction that it would not have played an important role in the formulation of new ideas without intellectual freedom. I fully understood the importance of this during the formative years of ECLA, and it was with this same spirit that I assumed my responsibilities in UNCTAD. I sincerely hope that the improvement in the world political situation will progressively eliminate the considerable obstacles that UNCTAD continues to encounter in its struggle to create a proper international environment for the acceleration of the rate of economic and social development of developing countries.

After leaving UNCTAD, I reassumed my responsibilities at the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning. Now however I feel that the time has come for me to retire by the end of this month.

Dr. Kurt Waldheim  
Secretary General  
United Nations Organization  
United Nations  
New York, New York 10017

The Institute, as you know Sir, in addition to its training functions, has very pragmatic objectives in assisting governments with their planning processes. If we have been able to achieve some results -- moderate results, I would say, in relation to the complexity of the tasks -- it has been largely because we have nurtured our practical action from accumulated knowledge arising out of previous research. I am afraid that, without this research, the future pragmatic activities of the Institute will suffer and become rather sterile. As Lord Keynes used to say, those who consider themselves an embodiment of practical wisdom are generally following outworn theories of long times past.

My dear colleague, Philippe de Seynes, whom I have long admired for his intellectual vigor, made a very meaningful remark a short while ago. He said that, when developing countries are searching for new ideas and new paths in this changing and complex world, research activities are needed more than ever. I fully share that point of view and hope that the Institute in Santiago, as well as ECLA, can continue to play an important role in the research activities of the United Nations Secretariat.

When I had the privilege of being cordially received by you, a few days after you had undertaken your new responsibilities as Secretary-General of the United Nations, you expressed to me the objectives that you wished to fulfill. I was very impressed and on leaving you I felt regretful about a certain unavoidable coincidence: your taking over your new functions with such an enlightened spirit, on the one hand, and my own pending departure for reasons of age on the other. I would have liked to identify with you and serve you in your activities.

Be that as it may, let me express to you with what hopes and good wishes I will follow your work. Great obstacles will continue to face you, but I am convinced that they will merely stimulate your determination to persevere and overcome them.

Accept Sir, once more, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Raúl Prebisch

COPY

24 January 1973

My dear Dr. Prebisch,

I was most touched by your kind letter of 12 January. It is by reading letters such as yours that one can obtain a keener appreciation of the important achievements of the United Nations in the vital area of development.

I certainly agree with you that the United Nations has played an important part in shaping and promoting a more enlightened norm of behaviour in the field of development among States and in bringing about the better realization of the interdependence of nations, be they poor or rich, large or small. I also share your conviction of the close correlation between the vitality of the United Nations' work in the economic and social field and the intellectual freedom which must be its source. It is quite obvious that this work by the United Nations over the past 25 years owes much to your vigorous and imaginative contribution. The achievements of ECLA, ILPES and UNCTAD are fitting testimonies of your work.

I share your disappointment that circumstances do not permit our continued association in its present form, but this feeling of disappointment is very much mitigated by the realization that both myself and Philippe de Seynes, who has on so many occasions drawn my attention to your important contributions, will continue to be able to benefit from your advice on a regular basis.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

Kurt Waldheim  
Secretary-General

Dr. Raúl Prebisch  
Joint ECLA/Institute Washington Office  
1801 K Street, N. W.  
Suite 1261  
Washington, D. C. 20006

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25 January 1973

Dear Mr. Iglesias,

I must inform you that the Director-General of the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning, Dr. Raúl Prebisch, has tendered his resignation and that in view of the reasons he has given, I have regretfully accepted it.

Pending the appointment of a new Director-General, for which purpose I intend to hold the consultation in line with ECLA resolution 220(AC.52), I should appreciate it if you would serve as Acting Director-General of the Institute. Your acceptance of these additional responsibilities will ensure the continuity of the work of the Institute as well as strengthen the co-operation between ECLA and the Institute.

Yours sincerely,

Kurt Waldheim  
Secretary-General

Mr. Enrique Iglesias  
Executive Secretary  
Economic Commission for Latin America  
Edificio Naciones Unidas  
Avenida Dag Hammarskjöld 3030  
VitaCura  
Santiago, Chile

COPY

25 January 1973

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you in your capacity as President of the Governing Council of the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning, that the Director-General of the Institute, Dr. Raúl Prebisch, has tendered his resignation. In view of the reasons that Dr. Prebisch has given, I have regretfully accepted his resignation effective 31 January 1973.

I shall inform you in due course of the name of the person that I intend to nominate as a successor to Dr. Prebisch in line with the provisions contained in resolution 220(AC.52) of the Economic Commission for Latin America, whereby the Institute came into being.

I have asked Mr. Enrique Iglesias, Executive Secretary of ECLA -- under the terms on which the Institute was established in 1962 -- to serve as Acting Director-General of the Institute. A copy of a letter that I have addressed to Mr. Iglesias is attached.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Kurt Waldheim  
Secretary-General

Mr. Leopoldo Solís  
Secretaría de la Presidencia  
Palacio Nacional, 4° piso  
México 1, D. F., México