



FINAL ACT

OF THE

SECOND MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS

SIGNED IN THE CITY OF LA HABANA

THE THIRTIETH DAY OF JULY, ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND FORTY



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ACT OF HABANA CONCERNING THE PROVISIONAL ADMINISTRATION
OF EUROPEAN COLONIES AND POSSESSIONS IN THE AMERICAS

WHEREAS:

1. The status of regions in this continent belonging to European powers is a subject of deep concern to all of the Governments of the American Republics;

2. As a result of the present European war there may be attempts at conquest, which has been repudiated in the international relations of the American Republics, thus placing in danger the essence and pattern of the institutions of America;

3. The doctrine of inter-American solidarity agreed upon at the meetings at Lima and at Panama requires the adoption of a policy of vigilance and defense so that systems or regimes in conflict with their institutions shall not upset the peaceful life of the American Republics, the normal functioning of their institutions, or the rule of law and order;

4. The course of military events in Europe and the changes resulting from them may create the grave danger that European territorial possessions in America may be converted into strategic centers of aggression against nations of the American Continent;

The Second Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics,

DECLARES:

That when islands or regions in the Americas now under the possession of non-American nations are in danger of becoming the subject of barter of territory or change of sovereignty, the American nations, taking into account the imperative need of



continental security and the desires of the inhabitants of the said islands or regions, may set up a regime of provisional administration under the following conditions:

(a) That as soon as the reasons requiring this measure shall cease to exist, and in the event that it would not be prejudicial to the safety of the American Republics, such territories shall, in accordance with the principle reaffirmed by this declaration that peoples of this continent have the right freely to determine their own destinies, be organized as autonomous states if it shall appear that they are able to constitute and maintain themselves in such condition, or be restored to their previous status, whichever of these alternatives shall appear the more practicable and just;

(b) That the regions to which this declaration refers shall be placed temporarily under the provisional administration of the American Republics and this administration shall be exercised with the two-fold purpose of contributing to the security and defense of the Continent, and to the economic, political and social progress of such regions and,

RESOLVES:

To create an emergency committee, composed of one representative of each of the American Republics, which committee shall be deemed constituted as soon as two-thirds of its members shall have been appointed. Such appointments shall be made by the American Republics as soon as possible.

The committee shall meet on the request of any signatory of this resolution.



If it becomes necessary as an imperative emergency measure before the coming into effect of the convention approved by this Consultative Meeting, to apply its provisions in order to safeguard the peace of the continent, taking into account also the desires of the inhabitants of any of the abovementioned regions, the committee shall assume the administration of the region attacked or threatened, acting in accordance with the provisions of the said convention. As soon as the convention comes into effect, the authority and functions exercised by the committee shall be transferred to the Inter-American Commission for Territorial Administration.

Should the need for emergency action be so urgent that action by the committee cannot be awaited, any of the American Republics, individually or jointly with others, shall have the right to act in the manner which its own defense or that of the continent requires. Should this situation arise, the American Republic or Republics taking action shall place the matter before the committee immediately, in order that it may consider the action taken and adopt appropriate measures.

None of the provisions contained in the present Act refers to territories or possessions which are the subject of dispute or claims between European powers and one or more of the Republics of the Americas.