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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
APR 23 1936  
FIVE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Co-ordination/Committee of XVIII/22.

Geneva, April 9th, 1936.

DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY.

Co-ordination of Measures under Article 16 of the Covenant.

COMMITTEE OF XVIII.

Reply from the President of the Mexican Delegation to the  
letter of the President of the Co-ordination Committee dated  
April 2nd, 1936.

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M. Estrada Cajigal, Permanent Delegate of Mexico to the League of Nations, has forwarded me your note dated April 2nd, in which you inform the members of the Committee of Eighteen that you consider that, since the Committee of Thirteen is taking steps with a view to conciliation between Abyssinia and Italy, it is expedient to await the outcome of that Committee's action before summoning a further meeting of the Committee of Eighteen, of which Mexico is a member.

I have received instructions from my Government on the subject of your note, and under those instructions I must begin by informing you that Mexico understood that, when peace negotiations were suggested in March, the intention was that they should not have the effect of paralysing, or even delaying, the progress of the operations and decisions tending towards the application of sanctions against the country declared to be the aggressor. Furthermore, when the suggestion of conciliation was accepted, it was borne in mind that it must achieve its objects within a brief period - indeed, almost immediately - so that a time-limit of forty-eight hours was at first contemplated for the two countries to give their reply, together with a suspension of hostilities while the negotiations were following their natural course.

In these circumstances, and bearing in mind, as it is bound to do, the de facto situation at the present moment in the armed struggle in Abyssinia, the time that has passed since the appeal to conciliation was made, and the prospective future course, from the standpoint of time, of the peace negotiations, my Government feels obliged to state, in all loyalty to the League of Nations and with a full realisation of the extent of the principles and undertakings it has accepted, that it does not desire to share the responsibility in the eyes of history for measures which, however seemingly justified on concrete grounds, may, in practice, nullify the application of the sanctions that have been decreed, thereby weakening the fabric of collective security which it is being sought to establish with the object of organising international life on firm foundations.

P.T.O.

W.L.M. King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1933-1939  
(M.G. 26, 4, volume 165, pages C117603-C118550)

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