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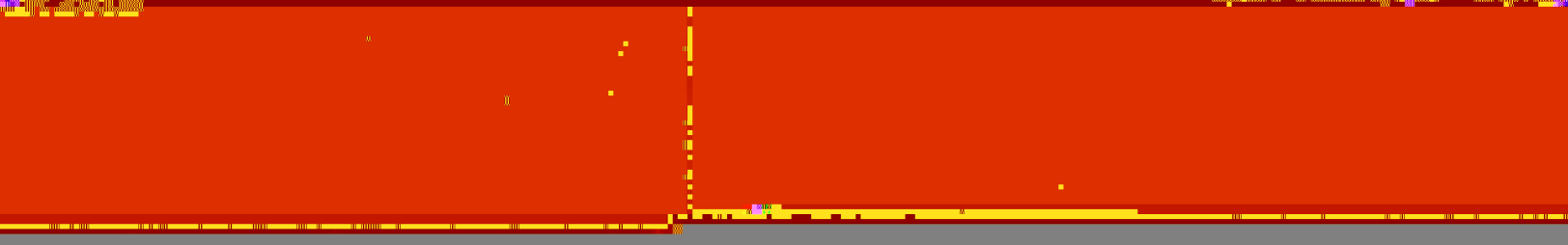
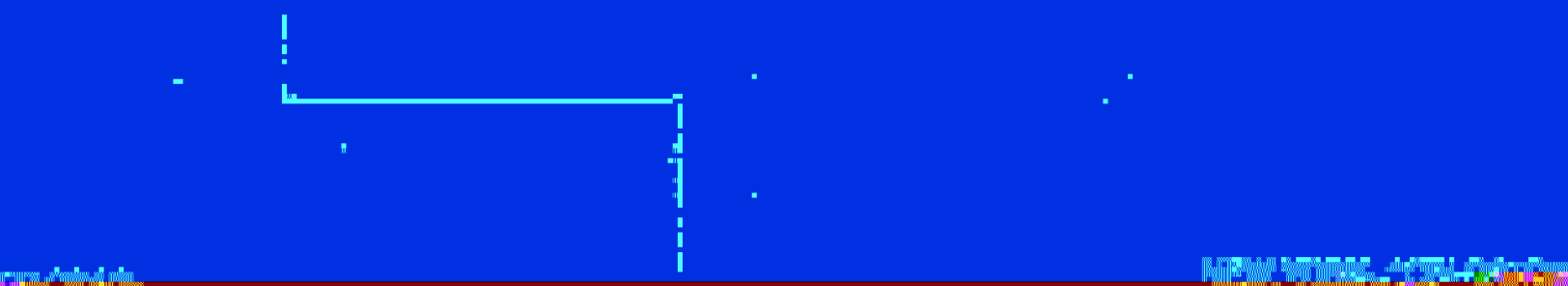
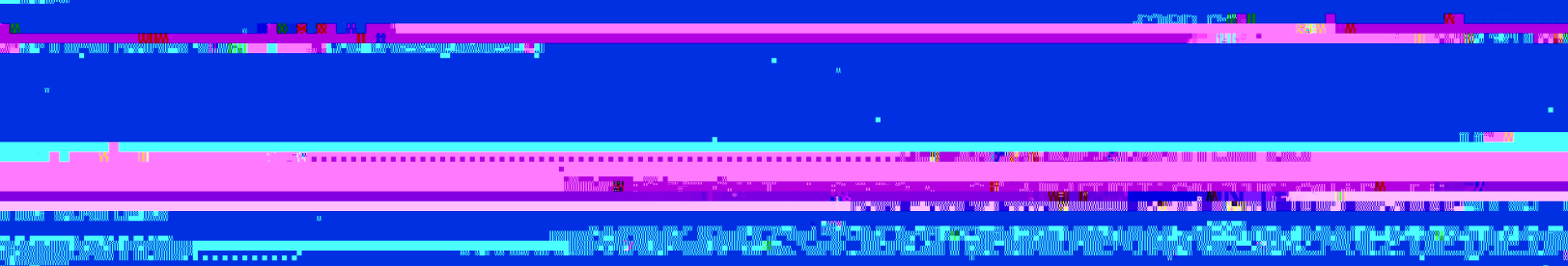
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Mr. Chair,

The Gambia has the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group. The African Group associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I would like to thank the Chair of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, as well as members of the Bureau, for the comprehensive report (A/73/33) presented on the work of the Special Committee before this committee, this morning.

Mr. Chair,

The African Group attaches great importance to the work of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization. Allow

me to begin by reiterating what the African Group has been saying over the years that the

Charter Committee has the potential to play an exceedingly important role in this Organization. However, the Committee has not lived up to its full potential mainly because of our method of work and our tendency to allow ideological battles to prevent us from performing our function which is legal analysis.

Mr. Chair,

We welcome with great appreciation the Charter Committee's consideration of the item entitled "Pacific settlement of disputes" during the general exchanges of views held at its 287th and 288th meeting of 20th February, and during the 2nd meeting of the Working Group of the Whole on 22nd

February this year. As such, it has been decided to undertake an annual thematic debate under the agenda item relating to "Peaceful settlement of disputes" so to discuss ways and means to