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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Agenda item 9:	
General debate (<i>continued</i>)	
Speech by Mr. Mogwe (Botswana)	513
Speech by Mr. Rakotomavo (Madagascar)	518
Speech by Mr. Pahr (Austria)	523
 Address by Mr. Henck A. E. Arron, Prime Minister and Minister for General and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Surinam	526

President: Mr. Hamilton Shirley AMERASINGHE
(Sri Lanka).

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Makkawi (Sudan),
Vice-President, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 9
General debate (*continued*)

1. Mr. MOGWE (Botswana): Mr. Amerasinghe's election comes at a time when the international community has begun to accept the idea that the struggle of man for his rights is nothing more than a fight for recognition of his dignity, his worth and his entitlement to a full life in its economic and political aspects. In congratulating him, therefore, on his unanimous election to the distinguished office of President of the General Assembly—a tribute to his country and a recognition of his wealth of diplomatic experience and international standing—we of the Botswana delegation exhort him to maintain the momentum of the new vision, so that the thirty-first year of the life of this Organization will be a logical development from its last two years, including both regular and special sessions.

2. May I also express our congratulations and thanks to the previous President, Mr. Gaston Thorn, the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, for his successful tenure of office and the part he played in the never-ending search for solutions to the intractable problems facing humanity, and to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, for his untiring efforts in promoting the role of the United Nations in international relations and the pursuit of liberty and human dignity.

3. It is appropriate at this point to express the sincere condolences of my delegation to the delegation of the People's Republic of China on the passing of its leader, philosopher and teacher. Mao Tsetung's qualities were such that they won respect and admiration from his great nation and from other nations as well. His memory will live long after us. May his soul rest in peace.

4. Resounding successes in the struggle against imperialism and colonialism in Africa, Indo-China and other parts of the world are a victory for the indestructibility of the spirit of man, determined to assert his faith in his larger freedom. Imprisonment and torture, incendiary bombs and napalm, shot-gun volleys and war planes—in fact, all the sophisticated weaponry in the arsenals of those sworn to resist change—succeed only in the destruction of the flesh but not the crushing of the soul and spirit of those bent on vindicating the justness of their cause. Little did our founders guess that, at this time in this century, the 51 Members in 1945 would have increased to 145.

5. In congratulating the new Member admitted at the thirty-first session—Seychelles—we equally congratulate those freedom-loving nations which continue to assist colonial peoples to achieve their universally cherished objective: their independence and freedom. It is our fervent belief that the new nation will bring with it constructive realism and contribute significantly to the ideals and objectives enshrined in the Charter of our Organization. But even as we rejoice in welcoming the new State to this Assembly, we feel concerned about those whose membership is thwarted and frustrated by super-Power ideological rivalry. I refer in this regard to the People's Republic of Angola and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. My delegation sees, in this act, gross interference in the internal affairs of small States, a denial of their right to self-determination and a travesty of the principle of universality of membership. Being a small State itself, Botswana can only plead, for what it is worth, that every effort should be made to ensure the immediate admission to the Organization of the States concerned.

6. Since the seventh special session, there has been a series of conferences preoccupied with the establishment of the new international economic order. I refer in this regard to the Fourth Conference of African Ministers of Trade held at Algiers in November last year; the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 in Manila in January and February 1976; the fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD], held in Nairobi last May; and the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Colombo last August—to name only a few. It is worthy of serious note that, at all these Conferences, developing countries made their full contribution to the international dialogue in the genuine search for lasting solutions to the ever-deteriorating world economic order.

7. Many of us in the developing world entertained great hopes for the outcome of the fourth session of UNCTAD. We had hoped that the principles enunciated at the sixth and seventh special sessions would be taken a step further.

You are aware, Mr. President, that the achievements of the month-long session fell far short of expectations and were cynically described as "UNCTAD labours and brings forth a mouse" by one publication.

8. This Organization has had the opportunity of addressing itself to the new international economic order at two special sessions. What had to be said has been said, and there will be no point in repeating it here. To sum up, I only wish to say: first, that developing countries are pressing for a change in the present international economic system, which is acknowledged by all, developing and developed countries alike, to be unjust and inequitable; secondly, that the said change should bring about an equitable transfer of resources, including the transfer of technology; and thirdly, that new institutional economic arrangements should be created and deliberately designed to be development-oriented. We commend to this Assembly the recommendations of the Fifth Conference of non-aligned countries [see A/31/197].

9. The struggle for freedom and self-determination in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and other parts of the world continues relentlessly and unabated. The dangers of political domination and oppression, and the denial to peoples of their human rights, spread far and wide. New political definitions are being coined to disguise aggression, and established international concepts are deliberately distorted to gain political advantage—annexation by force and possible extinction of the territories of Western Sahara and Timor, the encouraged secession of the island of Mayotte from the rest of the Comoro archipelago, expansionist designs in Belize and Djibouti, *apartheid* and racial discrimination resulting in enforced self-accommodation through degrading capitulation by Transkei are all, without exception, called self-determination.

10. Botswana is committed to the principle of the right of peoples to freedom and self-determination, and we find it difficult to accord any form of legitimacy to these arbitrary acts of political domination. Botswana is fully aware of the reality of the existence of power relationships. We accept the existence of different political and social philosophies, ideologies and systems. We believe that only on justice and the right of all peoples to genuine self-determination—and not on coercion or the destabilization of smaller nations aimed at changing their national policies or controlling their resources or even undermining their development efforts—should States Members of this Organization build their international political order. As a member of the non-aligned movement, Botswana welcomes the observation of those who advise that the competing ideologies of East and West should be confined to those centres of power, thus releasing the energies of developing countries for the consolidation of their independence, political stability and economic development.

11. It is now two years since Turkey landed troops in Cyprus, and since then there has been little or no progress towards a peaceful settlement that would preserve the unity, sovereignty and integrity of this country. The exodus of refugees over the so-called "Attila Line" and the entrenchment of foreign troops in this country, as well as the progressively hardening attitudes evident as the inter-communal negotiations proceed with little or no success, are a matter of serious concern to the United Nations.

12. In a country that could very well have provided an example of peace, security, tolerance and mutual understanding between different ethnic communities the "de-Hellenization programme" in the so-called Federated Turkish State of this island nation is direct interference in the internal affairs of Cyprus and a violation of its territorial integrity. Our fear is that as the prospects for the solution of the problem recede the situation of refugees will become even more desperate.

13. My country has consistently supported the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus as a free, independent and unitary State. Botswana does not accept that the existence of different ethnic groups in any given independent country provides a justifiable excuse for militarily powerful neighbouring countries of similar ethnic background to interfere in, and determine by force of arms, the future national ethnic character of that State.

14. The state of tension and insecurity of the peoples of the Middle East continues to occupy the attention of our Organization despite the interim accords on the disengagement of forces in the Sinai and Suez, and on the Golan Heights, which we welcomed last year. These agreements had given us reason to be hopeful for progress towards a just settlement. Our expectations have been disappointed. Israel continues to occupy Arab lands acquired by force and pays no regard to the resolutions of the United Nations. We call upon the Western Powers, in particular the United States, to bring its power to bear on Israel to withdraw from all occupied Arab lands. Botswana recognizes the right of all States in the Middle East to secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

15. My delegation has noted with interest the withdrawal of the question of Korea from the agenda of this session. Botswana, however, continues to call for the dissolution of the United Nations Command, the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea, dialogue, and the peaceful unification of the country. Advantage should be taken of the withdrawal of the Korean question from the agenda of the current session for the matter to be settled by the Korean people themselves without any extraneous external influences or pre-conditions.

16. The agenda of the thirty-first session of the United Nations is a long one covering varied subjects. If I should appear to have glossed over certain issues or even not mentioned some altogether, this should not be misinterpreted as being indicative of a lack of interest or that, in the view of my delegation, such issues qualify for a lower rating. The reason is that, speaking as late as we do and having had the advantage of listening to various speakers before us, we are satisfied that the essential subjects have been adequately discussed.

17. Botswana urges this Organization to continue to work for general disarmament and that the vaunted Helsinki agreement¹ and the cooling of tension in Europe should be extended to other parts of the world. Botswana fully supports the resolution of the non-aligned nations reiterating previous resolutions that the Indian Ocean should be a

¹ See Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975.

zone of peace and that the unhealthy rivalry between the super-Powers in this region should be seen as endangering peace and the security of all the littoral and hinterland States in the area [see A/31/197, annex IV, resolution 11].

18. Botswana as a land-locked and geographically disadvantaged State attaches much importance to the work of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. My delegation hopes that the United Nations will continue to play a leading and constructive role in the issue before it to ensure a successful outcome of the Conference, successful because it takes into account the interests of all nations, big and small.

19. My delegation believes that the continuing arms race is inconsistent with the international call for universal peace and security, for this can only be realized through general and complete disarmament. Nor is the arms race and the proliferation of nuclear armaments compatible with recent efforts to achieve a new international economic order. The channelling of huge economic resources towards the production and stockpiling of these sophisticated weapons undercuts international efforts aimed at the socio-economic development of developing nations where the infusion of aid is required to create reasonably acceptable conditions of living. Thus, while we recognize the obstacles and difficulties involved, we are sympathetic to the idea of the convening of a world disarmament conference for the promise and hope it holds for the future of mankind.

20. A scrutiny of the structures and mechanisms of the United Nations reveals areas that require re-examination. The seventh special session in 1975 laid the groundwork for the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. This was not an isolated development, but the recognition of the deficiencies of the present structures and the need for a review of some of the most important organs within the United Nations. Botswana supports such a review.

21. It is not necessary for my delegation to remind this Assembly that Botswana has common borders with minority-ruled Rhodesia, colonially subjugated Namibia and minority-ruled and racist South Africa. Botswana has variously been referred to as a front-line State or as an island of sanity in a turbulent sea of racial bigotry, racial hatred, white supremacy and black degradation, suppression of the legitimate aspirations of the indigenous populations and the denial of their human rights and self-determination, and *apartheid*, severally referred to as "separate development", "multiracialism", "multinationalism" or "plural societies". The history of the United Nations is almost synonymous with the repeated and sustained but unheeded, scorned and rejected warnings by the Organization of African Unity [OAU] and other peace-loving nations that racial relations and conditions in southern Africa constituted a threat to world peace and security. It had to take the downfall of the Portuguese Fascist régime and in particular the tragic events in Angola to awaken this Organization—particularly those Members who share a common history, ethnic heritage, imperialist associations, economic interests and security arrangements with the minority régimes—to the reality of the situation and to their responsibilities in upholding the Charter of the United Nations.

22. Free Africa's efforts in the decolonization of that continent have consistently been frustrated by the collaboration of the West with the enemies of freedom. Millions of Africans in southern Africa continue to wallow in the slough of human degradation and to squirm in the misery of conditions created by defenders of Western civilization. It is to southern Africa that I now wish to turn my attention.

23. On Friday 24 September the rebel Prime Minister Ian Smith issued a statement which, among other things, conceded the inevitability of change and therefore accepted the principle of majority rule, set the period leading to independence at two years, and accepted the creation of an interim government consisting of a council of State with parity of racial groups but with a white chairman. The said council would then set up a council of ministers with an African majority and an African Chief Minister, and white members responsible for the portfolios of law and order, and justice.

24. The Presidents of the front-line States—not the "so-called" but genuinely the front-line States of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia—meeting at Lusaka on Sunday, 26 September, while welcoming Smith's declaration generally, registered their reservations on certain proposals which, if accepted, would have had the effect of "legalizing colonialist and racist structures of power", called upon the United Kingdom to convene urgently outside Zimbabwe a conference to be attended by the "authentic and legitimate representatives of the people [of Zimbabwe]", and reaffirmed their commitment to the liberation of Zimbabwe and to the armed struggle. The conference to be called by the United Kingdom would have to address itself to: the structure and functions of the transitional government; its establishment; the modalities for convening a full constitutional conference to work out the independence constitution, and the establishment of the basis upon which peace and normalcy can be restored in the country.

25. The declaration by the front-line Presidents evoked various comments in southern Africa and abroad: "They agreed in advance and now have shown their total unreliability and irresponsibility", said P. K. Van der Byl, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the rebel régime; "If a peaceful solution in Rhodesia is to be found, the American and British Governments should clear up the confusion", said Vorster, Prime Minister of South Africa; "Certainly something has gone wrong with the Kissinger plan", said de Villiers Graaf, leader of the opposition United Party of South Africa.

26. On the credit side, both the United States Department of State and the United Kingdom Foreign Office recognize the qualified acceptance of the proposals by the African Presidents and appreciate the danger of negotiating directly with Smith in the absence of the authentic and legitimate representatives of the people of Zimbabwe.

27. The important question now being asked is why the front-line Presidents had not expressed their reservations before the acceptance by Ian Smith of what he referred to as the "package deal", or whether in fact the Presidents had agreed to the detailed terms of the Smith statement in

advance. The front-line Presidents did not know in advance the detailed terms of the statement issued by the rebel Prime Minister, nor did they make any commitment to accept them once they were known. To regard the stand taken by the front-line Presidents as a condemnation or rejection of the agreement negotiated by the United States Secretary of State is, at best, an untimely and mischievous agitation by those who oppose the liberation of Zimbabwe.

28. Self-determination is one of the basic principles in the African liberation struggle and African statesmen will not allow themselves to usurp the role of nationalist movements by negotiating detailed constitutional arrangements on their behalf. This, we implore even those who assist us, to refrain from doing.

29. Botswana welcomes what has come to be known as the Kissinger initiatives. In our view negotiations and the armed struggle are complementary strategies in the liberation effort. The armed struggle impels negotiations; meaningful negotiations showing practical progress result in the de-escalation of armed warfare. While therefore we appreciate the efforts deployed by the United States Secretary of State to prevail upon rebel Smith to declare his acceptance of the inevitability of change to majority rule, we should recognize the fact that, without the successes registered by the nationalist guerrilla cadres in the armed struggle, without the sacrifice, both human and material, and the sustained efforts of the front-line States to awaken the conscience of the nationalist movements to their collective responsibility in the liberation of their motherland, without the support and determination of OAU to liquidate the remaining pockets of colonialism from the African continent and, last but not least, without the assistance—material, financial and otherwise—of freedom-loving peoples, the Kissinger initiatives would probably not have achieved the success they have. To miss this point would be to misread the Rhodesia situation and the determination of the rebel régime to resist change.

30. We concede the desirability of unity among the nationalist movements of Zimbabwe. It would be wrong, however, to make such unity a pre-condition for the conference. Many free countries in Africa today negotiated their independence constitutions through multiparty delegations. What is vitally necessary is that the Zimbabwe nationalists should do everything in their power to lead their country to majority rule and independence in the shortest possible time.

31. In concluding this topic I wish to express my delegation's concern at the danger of introducing divisions among African States in order to strengthen hegemonism and spheres of influence. African countries are classified as hawks or doves, Communist or Western-oriented, progressives or reactionaries. For us in Botswana, the problem of liberation and independence is the problem of the reassertion of human rights and dignity. Therefore the form of government the Zimbabweans choose should be the result of the exercise of their unhindered right to self-determination, without pandering to any particular ideological interest. The stage for the immediate transition to majority rule is set and it is for the rebel Rhodesia régime to take advantage of it, failing which the armed struggle will certainly continue until a military victory is won.

32. The Government of South Africa continues to defy the United Nations resolutions on Namibia. The so-called Turnhalle constitutional talks, based on ethnic identities, are an extension of the "bantustan" apparatus to a Territory under the trusteeship of this Organization. The Security Council has proved impotent in asserting its right over its own Territory and has instead taken ineffectual measures, the result of which has merely been to keep the question alive.

33. The continued intransigence of rebel Smith in Zimbabwe can be blamed on the United Kingdom as the administering Power. Prime Minister Vorster and his Government are responsible for the inhumanity of *apartheid*, but the continued colonial status of Namibia and the degradation of its indigenous people is a blot on the integrity and effectiveness of the United Nations.

34. The time for maintaining symbolic interest in the Namibia question is past. The Western Powers should now accept and exercise their full responsibility in delivering Namibia to the people of that Territory, for it is they that have consistently stopped mandatory action being taken against South Africa and consequently undermined the authority of the United Nations Council for Namibia.

35. We welcome the steps now taken in this direction by the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Kissinger. We hope the South African Prime Minister, Mr. Vorster, finds it possible to negotiate with the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO] under the auspices of the United Nations and outside of Namibia. That would be a positive step towards the solution of the Namibia stalemate. To make the talks meaningful in the search for a genuine solution to the problem and in order to create a healthy atmosphere in the Territory at this crucial period in its history, it is imperative, in the view of my delegation, that the nationalist movements should not be denied the participation of their leaders now in prison.

36. Basic to all discussions and negotiations is the requirement that Namibia should emerge as a unitary State and attain its independence in the shortest possible period. The policy of "divide and weaken" which is applied by the South African Government to the African people in the subcontinent stands in direct contradiction to the South African national motto "*Ex unitate vires*", which applied to the whites. Nation-States are not created by whipping up racial and tribal differences or by exacerbating ethnic animosities.

37. From the foregoing it will have become clear that the Botswana delegation, while conceding that the Turnhalle constitutional talks have done some spade-work in examining options for the independence constitution of Namibia, considers that the greatest achievement of the talks has been to expose and highlight all the characteristic undesirable features of a government based on the will of the minority determined to perpetuate their privileged position under the guise of their protected minority rights. It is our fervent hope that the proposed Geneva conference will re-evaluate its objectives, which should be the granting of independence to a unitary State of Namibia and self-determination for its united people.

38. What we say is no academic or political theory, impractical to implement. States in southern Africa and even in this Assembly know only too well that Botswana is a non-racial State with strict adherence to the rule of law. There are minority groups who, numerically, are even smaller than those to be found in Namibia; there are different ethnic groups, yet nowhere in our independence constitution are there guarantees of the entrenchment of minority rights. One of our cardinal principles is unity, and it is in unity and complete equality that we celebrated our tenth anniversary of independence last month, and it is this unity—not disunity or federalism—that we consider to be a right of the people of Namibia.

39. The world has been shaken awake by recent events in South Africa. For those who have always conceived South Africa as a peaceful country where the African people—or the Bantu, as they are called there—are happy because, it is claimed, they have more hospitals, more schools, and higher incomes than anywhere else on the continent, it will have been a traumatic awakening, a rude shock. South Africa has always been depicted by its white rulers as the envy of the continent. They cite as proof of the better conditions the ingress of foreign Bantu labour—or, as the South African Deputy Secretary of Information put it in a United States television interview Saturday, the foreign Bantu “vote with their feet”.

40. The unrest? “No, there is no crisis”, the South African authorities retort. “The people have been put up to it by agitators, by Communists, by black power slogans. If the black people want majority rule, they can have it in their own ‘bantustans’ such as the Transkei, where the soils are among the most fertile in South Africa. If they want to share power with the white man, no. Violence shall be met with violence and no concessions will be made in an atmosphere of arson and looting by irresponsible elements.”

41. What I have just said expresses in a nutshell the deep-seated attitude of the South African Government on the continuing riots where more than 300 unarmed black people, most of them children, have been shot dead, many more injured and maimed, hundreds more arrested, and a number have sought refuge in homelessness. It shows callous indifference to human suffering, a determined refusal to admit the realities of the situation which they have themselves created in their religious adherence to the outmoded belief of their chosen role as a bastion of white civilization in Africa.

42. We must accept the fact that the unrest in South Africa today—in Soweto, Cape Town, Durban and elsewhere—is a reaction against the philosophy and practice of *apartheid*—*apartheid* which is essentially violence, violence against human rights, including the right to be born of any race, at any place and time, the right to home and security anywhere in the country, the right to education and professional training of one's choosing in keeping with one's natural ability, the right to ownership of property, movable and immovable, the right to sell one's labour to the best market, the right to live a free and full life as a citizen of South Africa—in short, the right to be a human being.

43. We must accept the fact that the unrest in South Africa is not just an inspired and transient effervescence of political excitement or temporary political emotionalism, but that it is a spontaneous yet concerted demonstration of the strong resentment by the youth of the country of the humiliating and dehumanizing conditions which they, their parents and grandparents, and generations before them, have endured without respite. It is a call to the conscience of South African whites to abandon their supremacist posture.

44. While we concede that South Africa is a great country, with trade and other relations with many countries represented here, and that it draws inspiration from its recognition by us all that it is a wealthy country and stands athwart vital trade routes to the East, we must accept the fact that the unrest in that country is a call to the conscience of the world community, particularly of the Western Powers, not to sacrifice the indigenous people of Africa on the altar of mercantile and mercenary interests and ideological hegemonism.

45. We noted with interest the recent shuttle diplomacy of Secretary of State Kissinger in southern Africa. I have already conceded Botswana's support for this initiative, although not for the details included in the declaration by rebel Ian Smith. We are, however, waiting with curiosity to know what initiatives the Secretary undertook in relation to South Africa itself. We in Africa have many times before now warned of the threat to international peace and security posed by the racist policies of South Africa and its Balkanization of the country into “bantustans”. We do not see the bogus independence of the Transkei or any other “bantustan” as a solution to the problem, nor indeed do we consider the attempted appeasement of Coloureds, by promising them better waiting-rooms and the inauguration of their Cabinet Council, as the answer to their plight. Botswana, in common with all countries which have suffered colonial situations, cherishes the principles of majority rule and self-determination for all peoples, the blacks, Coloureds, Indians and whites of South Africa included. The acceptance by any of these groups of ethnic, racial or religious Balkanization is a criminal betrayal of the entire population of South Africa.

46. Complete equality in the context of South Africa may seem a remote prospect, but so did it seem a distant dream to the Portuguese colonialists. It is our belief that, if Mr. Kissinger failed to tell Prime Minister Vorster that a Government elected by, and representative of, the people as a whole is what Africa and the world community want for South Africa, then his shuttle efforts in southern Africa will be preserved in the archives of American history under the label of one of William Shakespeare's classics, “Much Ado About Nothing”. Peripheral and cosmetic concessions are not what the people of South Africa want. They want to lead a full life as full citizens of their own country.

47. To conclude my statement, I wish to observe that, with all the fearful warnings and signs of events to come, it behoves the Government of South Africa to reorder its society in a democratic way and to spare posterity the misery, racial hatred, chaos and wanton loss of life which we have had the misfortune to witness in Indo-China and elsewhere. For the bell that has tolled for the Fascist

Portuguese régime and now tolls for Rhodesia and South-West Africa will toll for South Africa next.

48. Edward Gibbon saw history as a register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind. It is time South Africa stopped the crimes and follies of *apartheid* and spared the black people of that country further misfortune.

49. Mr. RAKOTOMAVO (Madagascar) (*interpretation from French*): It is an honour and a privilege for me to be able to speak for the first time before this Assembly.

50. In the name of the President, the Government and the people of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar, I should like to offer my fraternal greetings and my friendly congratulations to the heads of delegations which have come to take part in this thirty-first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, a gathering which is to debate the vital issues involved in the strengthening of peace in the world and the establishment of a new world economic order, which has already been the subject of numerous international meetings here in New York and at Manila, Nairobi, Colombo, Mexico City and Paris.

51. I wish particularly to take this opportunity to welcome the admission among us of the Republic of Seychelles, our neighbour in the Indian Ocean, which, I am sure, will make an important contribution to the work of our Organization.

52. Universal participation is virtually assured, and our delight would have been complete if the People's Republic of Angola and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, which we wish to congratulate upon its reunification, had not been the victims of ostracism by a super-Power which, for reasons having to do with arbitrary logic dictated by fleeting interests, has deliberately taken refuge in the concept—not so long ago decried—of selective universality and the improper and unilateral interpretation of the Charter.

53. My delegation would wish to renew to the Delegation of China the condolences expressed by the Malagasy Head of State on the occasion of the death of Chairman Mao Tsetung, the great leader of the Chinese Revolution. The passing away of this great man is felt in all countries, including our own, as a loss affecting those who have admired his work and his life, dedicated to the liberation of peoples and to the triumph of social progress over oppression and aggression.

54. The delegation of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar wishes to extend to Mr. Amerasinghe its most heartfelt congratulations on his unanimous election to the office of President of this thirty-first session of our Organization. It is certainly no accident that the Assembly has chosen Mr. Amerasinghe, whose outstanding qualities as a diplomat and statesman were frequently highlighted during the difficult negotiations held at the various meetings of the Fifth Conference of non-aligned countries which only recently concluded in Sri Lanka, his native country.

55. I should like to renew here our warmest congratulations to Madame Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike and to the Government and people of Sri Lanka on the warm

hospitality extended to all the delegations of non-aligned countries at Colombo, a welcome which certainly contributed to the success of the conference, some of the issues of which are to be submitted for our further consideration.

56. I should also like to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the delegation of Madagascar, our profound appreciation for the heavy responsibilities so brilliantly fulfilled by Mr. Gaston Thorn, President of the Council of Ministers of Luxembourg, Mr. Amerasinghe's eminent predecessor.

57. Finally, my delegation would wish to pay a tribute to the vigilant action of the Secretary-General, who, despite all manner of difficulties, has spared no effort to ensure that our Organization faithfully reflects our collective concerns and responds to the just aspirations of the third world.

58. We are here among independent countries, some of which were colonized and others not. All over the years, nationalism, which has been the mainspring in the struggle against colonialism in these formerly colonized countries, has expanded and has been enriched through multilateral diplomacy. The formerly colonized countries have become aware of their common problems and the highly justified challenge of any relationship of the imperialist kind is at present taking the form of the requirement for a new international order. In doing this, the countries concerned are not calling for anything less than the establishment of a new international community which should be genuinely democratic; where the rights of peoples and nations to freely determine their economic destinies would be recognized; where international peace and security would not be the simple results of the balance of terror brought about by a limited number of great and super-Powers constantly in quest of monopolies and hegemony, but would derive from a common awareness of the nuclear dangers threatening the survival of mankind as a whole; where the words *détente* and disarmament would not be limited concepts designed to safeguard the interests of a single region or a single group of countries, to legitimize the upkeep and the perfecting of a considerable military means, or to conceal the maintenance, and even the seeking, of zones of influence in regions so far spared the permanent confrontation of the great Powers; where imperialism and reaction would no longer be tolerated in all of their manifestations to subjugate, to divert and to subvert the struggles and the profound aspirations of peoples to freedom, justice, equality and national independence; where the peoples, freed from the threats of arbitrariness and from the conspiracies of the great Powers, would be able to devote more of their means to their own development than to their security; more energy to the promotion of their cultures than to the safeguarding of their sovereignty, and more effort to the work of national construction than to the defence of their territorial integrity.

59. Some have been misled into confusing the strengthening of the cohesion of the third world around these themes with a will at confrontation on our part and with our desire to crystallize some alleged opposition between the North and the South and between the rich and the poor. This is to misunderstand the very foundation of our action which seeks, above all, to promote the development between States of a mutually beneficial co-operation, which, while

recognizing interdependence, does not wish to accept it as a synonym for the immutability of the present structure of international relations.

60. The fifth Conference of non-aligned countries which recently met in Colombo, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, and the member countries of the Group of 77, at their two meetings at Manila and Mexico, came to convergent conclusions which indicate that the success of such a policy of international co-operation presupposes: first, the recognition of the specific nature of the authentic interests of the majority and, therefore, the abandonment of a policy oriented towards the defence of privileges and the *status quo*, which is profitable only to a minority of countries; secondly, the renunciation of the imperialist and capitalist practices of exploitation, domination, intimidation, interference in the domestic affairs of other States, of destabilization of Governments and of State terrorism, as practised by Israel at Entebbe and by South Africa in Zambia, among others; thirdly, the abandonment of arbitrary procedures and practices which have so far kept the majority away from the decision-making centres and have prevented it from realizing their peace initiatives, thereby placing the world in a state of permanent instability and insecurity; fourthly, the right of all countries to participate on an equal footing in the settlement of all world problems, in particular those relating to disarmament, to the strengthening of peace and of international security, and to development.

61. In this respect, the importance of the United Nations derives both from the lofty principles which it symbolizes, and from the fact that it remains a centre for study, reflection, negotiation and concerted action.

62. While recognizing its weaknesses and its inadequacies, we are pleased by the role played by the Organization, which was devised initially as a coalition of victors of the Second World War, and which has subsequently become the principal instrument in the structural changes that have taken place in the international community as a whole, sometimes in spite of the reluctance, if not the outright opposition, of some of its founding fathers.

63. The vitality of our Organization is reflected in the ever-increasing range of fields that it is dealing with and the constantly-growing priority it is according to the problems of particular interest to the countries of the third world.

64. We shall note, however, that as progress is being achieved in the elaboration and the refinement of the political and economic platforms of the third world, the Western countries tend to confine themselves to a virtually systematic role of opposition, and are developing procedures and practices aimed at frustrating the political will of the majority by requiring consensus on all points or by expressing reservations, whenever they do not actually cast negative votes. We also know that threats and intense political pressures are directed against certain specialized agencies which are playing a governing role in the development of the third world, even at the risk of precipitating a serious crisis of confidence in the whole of the United Nations system.

65. Similarly, the work of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of

the Role of the Organization, the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament, are indicative of the impatience of the countries of the third world before the survival within the system of influences acting against our legitimate claims.

66. The right of veto, which is not accompanied by any special political wisdom on the part of those holding it, is in our eyes an anachronism, if not a downright obstacle, to our desire for change. To display our participation, we demand that the right of veto, if it is to be maintained, should also be given to a member of the non-aligned countries.

67. The conditions for future progress are tied into the recognition by all of the fact that a distinction must be made between the principles of the Charter and the institutions it establishes which are subject to improvement as the result of the profound changes that have taken place in the composition of the international community.

68. This progress will also be linked to the recognition of the fact that the principles of the Charter will remain a dead letter without the political will to apply them.

69. This in particular applies to disarmament and security.

70. The idea proposed at the Colombo Conference to convene a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament is a major initiative this year in this field. This is a reaction to the feelings of powerlessness and frustration brought about by the standstill of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and the exclusive attitude towards the majority on the part of the super-Powers and the participants of the European disarmament conference.

71. This special session will serve its purpose if it can reaffirm the interest that the international community as a whole has in the achievement of general, complete and immediate disarmament, entailing the destruction of the stockpiles of nuclear weapons and of other weapons of mass destruction.

72. The resumption of the initiative by the majority within the United Nations, which must remain the appropriate context for negotiation and decision-making in the field of disarmament, must not be interpreted by the super-Powers as a threat to their interests, but rather as legitimate evidence of our concern in the face of dangers inherent in the existence of the large stocks of arms throughout the world, of the eminently unstable and precarious equilibrium of the groups of Powers holding these weapons, and of the great resources absorbed in the maintenance and the perfecting of these weapons, which should instead have been utilized for the welfare of mankind.

73. This resumed initiative is justified particularly in the face of the negligible results obtained through bilateral negotiation. Indeed, the second phase of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks [SALT] could not be concluded this year as anticipated. The agreement of 28 May 1976 between the United States of America and the USSR on the regulation

of peaceful underground nuclear tests is far too limited in its object and has not even been ratified by the parties concerned. The exchange of letters of 16 July 1976 between the French and Soviet Governments² is an illustration of the danger inherent in the unleashing of nuclear arms by error or by accident and it is regrettable that the Governments concerned should not have gone far enough to remove the deep causes of such errors or accidents. The action of the majority must be based upon these inadequacies and must tend towards the establishment of a structure of peace and security good for the community as a whole and not for some States only. The security of countries not possessing nuclear weapons must in particular be sought through the taking into consideration of concrete proposals advanced by members of the Group of 77 at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May 1975.

74. By reaffirming the importance of the denunciation of nuclear weapons by the majority of States, we denounce the continuation of the production of such weapons by countries which already possess them and we express our grave misgivings before the danger of proliferation of such weapons made evident by the co-operation given by France and Israel to South Africa in the form of equipment and technology strengthening the capacity of the latter in particular to produce atomic bombs. We reaffirm that countries exporting equipment and nuclear technology have the responsibility to develop machinery which would be a satisfactory guarantee against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and we ask that countries possessing nuclear weapons also subscribe to the solemn declaration mentioned in resolution 3472 B (XXX) which defines their principal obligations with respect to nuclear weapon-free zones and the States included therein. The full respect of the status of such zones constitutes, in our opinion, an effective measure to strengthen international security and that is why my Government has placed the establishment of a genuine peace zone in the Indian Ocean as the forefront of its foreign and defence policy.

75. We reaffirm the validity of the principles incorporated in the declaration making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace [resolution 2832 (XXVI)] whose goals are to safeguard the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States of the region and to eliminate from it the great Power rivalries and in particular to eliminate the military bases and nuclear weapons introduced within the context of these rivalries. We condemn the seeking of naval superiority and projections into the Indian Ocean of defence concepts of countries which are not part of the region because they are a source of tension which is both useless and dangerous. We cannot accept in this region a balance of forces other than a zero balance in a context where the question would not be stated in terms of the maintenance or the strengthening of the military presence of the Great Powers.

76. The Government of Madagascar takes note of the statement made in the course of this debate by a Power to

the effect that it was "prepared to seek, together with other Powers, measures aimed at reducing on a basis of reciprocity the military activities of non-coastal States in the Indian Ocean and in adjacent regions". The promise contained in this declaration can pave the way towards the preparation and convening of a conference to study the application of the declaration on the Indian Ocean. Indeed the convening of such a conference will be neither possible nor useful if the great Powers and the maritime users continue to refuse to co-operate with the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean.

Mr. Amerasinghe (Sri Lanka) took the Chair.

77. The events in southern Africa have caused us much concern. Indeed, the racist and minority régimes in Pretoria and Salisbury, in their blindness and stubbornness, may very well cause a widespread war in that area. We wish to make it quite clear that the African populations seeking liberation are not to be held responsible for the violence, the escalation of which we have witnessed with anxiety and impatience. We wish also to say that, in our opinion, there is no such thing as a problem of Namibia, a problem of Rhodesia, or a problem of South Africa. There is one single problem concerning the entire area and that is that the African majority must take power and the dignity of Africans must be restored. It would indeed be a serious misreading of African desires if one wished to settle the problem by trying to contain a given ideology or ensuring the future for a given minority, for that might legalize or perpetuate neo-colonial or imperialist structures. The problem of southern Africa cannot be solved by preventing an armed liberation struggle or eliminating sanctions decreed by the United Nations without first acceding to the claims of the majority, the legitimacy of which has been recognized. In the circumstances it is only natural that we should continue to give our political, material and military support to the liberation movements in Namibia, Zimbabwe and Azania which are the authentic representatives of the populations concerned.

78. In the context of the foregoing, we uphold the right of the Namibian people to independence with respect for its territorial integrity. We require the immediate elimination of the system of *apartheid* in South Africa and we oppose the policy of "bantustanization" which is the most extreme form of that policy. As regards Zimbabwe, we support the position of the Presidents of the front-line States who have rejected the interpretation put forward by Ian Smith of the Anglo-American plan, because that plan prejudices the decisions that the people of independent Zimbabwe should take in full sovereignty. This applies in particular to the presence of white ministers of the "rebel" minority régime in the transition government. It is our firm view that it is the duty of the United Kingdom, acting in concert with the genuine representatives of Zimbabwe, to lay the groundwork for that transition with a view to the country's speedy attainment of independence. In summary, in all these cases we call for the full implementation of the principle of self-determination and respect for human rights.

79. In the name of the same principle, we demand the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly in respect of East Timor and Western Sahara, which are victims of aggression and

² See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1976*, document S/12161.

occupation. We do not understand why the States that have decided to annex the territory of Western Sahara, in agreement with the former colonial Power, so much fear the implementation of this principle, which our Organization has defended in the past 20 years of decolonization. If the peoples concerned truly want their destiny to be associated with that of Morocco and Mauritania, then let them state their views freely and let us not be satisfied with the vote of an assembly of notables. Madagascar, as the first country to recognize the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, is convinced that that is the only solution that will bring peace to the area. At the present time that Republic is in danger of extinction by a Moroccan-Mauritanian invasion. We demand the immediate cessation of that invasion and we request that urgent humanitarian assistance be given to the Saharan people. It is also our firm hope that Djibouti will soon achieve independence and that France will take the necessary steps to create an atmosphere favourable to democratic procedures leading to the immediate and unconditional independence of the so-called "French" Somali coast.

80. The resolutions adopted on this subject at the last Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU make it perfectly clear that Africa will not accept any subterfuge that might delay the independence of Djibouti. We wish to appeal to all the political parties of the territory to find a common political platform before the referendum promised by France. That would ensure security and peace in the area and the unity and integrity of the Territory.

81. We emphasize this latter point because, in the case of the Comoros, the former colonial Power has used and is still using manoeuvres that are contrary to specific commitments and to the very principles of the Charter relating to the independence and sovereignty of Member States. How can one fail to recall here the various resolutions of the United Nations and OAU concerning respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the independent Republic of the Comoros? What right has a non-African Power to refuse to evacuate Mayotte, when 95 per cent of all the Comoros voted in favour of independence and the unity of the archipelago? The maintenance of a European Power in that island smacks of a policy of spheres of influence which we had thought was a thing of the past, and we demand the immediate withdrawal of France from the territory.

82. We remain concerned by the threat to international peace and security in the Middle East. Efforts to bring about a just and lasting settlement in the area have unfortunately remained ineffectual owing to the intransigence and obstruction of Israel.

83. We deplore in particular the fact that, after the bogus relinquishment of the "step by step" policy, no firm commitment has been entered into regarding the convening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East on the basis of respect for the principles that we have always upheld, among which is full participation by the genuine representative of the Palestinian people. We wish to reaffirm our support for the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, of which we are members. It is necessary that we should continue to give political and diplomatic

support of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and that we should oppose the policy of exclusion and annexation practised by the Zionist State. We find it intolerable that the Palestinian people should continue to be victims of a civil war imposed on them despite themselves, and that they should be blamed for the distressing situation in Lebanon, the deterioration of which has been encouraged by the reactionary forces of international zionism and its heedless allies.

84. The Democratic Republic of Madagascar, like many other countries, calls for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from South Korea, the dismantling of foreign military bases, and the removal of the so-called "United Nations Command". In a word, we call for the honest and immediate implementation of resolution 3390 B (XXX), adopted by the thirtieth session of the General Assembly. May I remind you in this connexion of the words of President Didier Ratsiraka at the opening of the international seminar on the ideas of Djoutché, which has just been held in Antananarivo:

"I wish also to express the very sincere hope that the Korean people, in the very near future, without any foreign interference, in full independence and in democratic respect for the single will of the majority of its sons, will finally rediscover the joy of reunification and the virtues of progress, justice and peace which that nation so ardently desires and to which it has an absolute right."

85. Having reviewed the primary sources of tension in the world, I cannot fail to mention the problem of Cyprus. Here the continuation of negotiations between the two communities on an equal footing remains the only possible solution, provided there is strict respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of that country.

86. There remains one continent, Latin America, which, it would seem, has been spared open conflict, but where imperialism and neo-colonialism have not abandoned their intentions to dominate and exploit. Nevertheless, the emergence may be noted there of a co-ordinated policy of independence and sovereignty, characterized by solidarity with the Government of Panama and by the lifting of the blockade imposed on Cuba. The increasingly positive role of Latin America in the non-aligned movement is a trend that we support.

87. As regards social problems, in view of their important place among the objectives of the United Nations Charter, and in view of the efforts deployed in this area in the past 30 years, the Democratic Republic of Madagascar is convinced that those problems remain among the major concerns of the political leaders of all countries, particularly of developing countries.

88. The challenges which confront us today are particularly acute, for the situation is constantly deteriorating, especially in regard to social factors that are an affront to human dignity. Reviewing the main events that have occurred this year in violation of various resolutions of the General Assembly, we note the following: the persistence of all forms of racial discrimination, particularly in South

Africa; measures of oppression, repression and aggression adopted recently by the South African régime, which may well cause widespread racial war in southern Africa, and threaten international peace and security; co-operation in a variety of forms between the Western Powers and the racist régime in South Africa, which continues despite our numerous protests; difficulties encountered by committees and working groups inquiring into the practices of torture and cruel and degrading treatment, showing the determination of certain countries to defy international opinion.

89. Although the various problems I have just mentioned have been the subject of a number of international conferences, and while it is true that the regional groups deserve credit for the work that has been done thus far, it must be concluded that the action adopted has been inadequate and ineffective. The resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council have been unavailing and their implementation remains determined by a mistaken interpretation of the concepts of responsibility and sovereignty.

90. The attention of the international community must once again be drawn to the gravity of the situation and to the harmful consequences of these social problems at the political and economic level. The importance of those problems cannot be underestimated. They constitute the two major challenges of the century—to combat underdevelopment and to safeguard international peace and security.

91. I shall not read all the economic provisions appearing in the United Nations Charter, but may I read this part of the Preamble: "We, the peoples of the United Nations, determined... to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom...". The cautious estimates established at the World Food Conference, held in Rome in November 1974, indicated that 500 million human beings were affected by famine and malnutrition. Forty per cent were children, of whom over 300 million suffered "serious physical retardation". The World Bank, for its part, says that 750 million men, women and children live in nearly absolute poverty, with a *per capita* income of less than \$50 a year.

92. This gloomy picture leads to an inevitable conclusion: the development crisis resides primarily in the poverty of the masses, whose needs, even the most elementary ones—food, health, shelter, education—are unfulfilled. They are victims of a system of exploitation linked to a power structure established primarily in the countries of the centre. The result is great national insecurity, heightened by the deterioration in the terms of trade and the growing gap between the industrialized countries and the disadvantaged countries, and by inappropriate trade structures stemming from the errors of the colonial past.

93. It is therefore essential to abolish the old structures to which the poor countries have been subjected. The Secretary-General of the United Nations rightly pointed out in one of his reports that the Governments of the world must in most cases be prepared to adopt radical policies to deal with the problems of mass poverty. In the same spirit, the international community, shocked by the continuation of the grave international economic imbalances, decided to lay the groundwork of a new international economic order.

94. The countries of the third world have an abiding faith in the legitimacy of their claims and have proposed that the fundamental principles underlying this new vision of international relations be set forth in international documents such as the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [resolution 3281 (XXIX)]. Moreover, in addition to regional and interregional action, and the action of associations of producers of raw materials, the peripheral countries did not hesitate to convene the seventh special session of the General Assembly in order to engage in a dialogue in an atmosphere of give and take and mutual accommodation. Since that session a year has passed, in the course of which that mood has regrettably not prevailed. The Group of 77 has therefore had to concentrate its efforts on collective autonomy, in the hope of being able to transcend the mere restatement of divergent views by the industrialized countries and the countries of the third world, and to fend off the danger that two separate worlds will no longer feel themselves bound by the obligations of interdependence.

95. It is indeed regrettable that the efforts of the international organizations, on which the developing countries had relied, should at times have failed. The Conference on International Economic Co-operation, which was the expression of a new concept of dialogue between the third-world countries and the industrialized market-economy countries, adopted no decisions commensurate with the questions on its agenda. Incidentally, how can the United Nations Industrial Development Organization [UNIDO] be regarded as the primary instrument of industrial development in the peripheral countries when the intergovernmental committee responsible for establishing its constituent act failed to recommend a decision along those lines? And how can one understand the attitude of the countries of the centre which, on the one hand, recognize the urgency of the problems of food and agriculture that prevail in the poor countries, and on the other hand are reluctant to contribute and adhere to the International Fund for Agricultural Development?

96. If the United Nations fails to inject new life into international co-operation, that means that the countries of the centre refuse in fact, their protests notwithstanding, to enter into a businesslike and meaningful dialogue with the peripheral countries.

97. Hence, the only solution that can yield fruit in the immediate future would be for the latter countries to rely on their own strength, through collective autonomy, the implementation of which would postulate the will to take action, the ability to formulate strategies and to define institutional or negotiating procedures, and finally the power to offer mutual concessions.

98. Such strategies should not be regarded as substitutes for real solutions, but as alternatives for breaking the present deadlock in negotiations with the industrialized countries. All the principles of the new international economic order, as well as certain programmes of action, remain valid, but strategies must be planned to carry them out.

99. At a time when the defence of privileges and of the *status quo* prevails over the general interest, when all kinds

of political expedients are used as pretexts to justify the maintenance of relations of inequality and the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of certain States, particularly in Africa, it is necessary to reaffirm the overriding importance of the principles and objectives of our Charter, and to render them fully meaningful through the strict observance of their provisions.

100. The role of our Organization must be reaffirmed, and it must be allowed to exercise its influence without obstruction in the conflicts which have a tendency to persist and which represent constant threats to international peace and security in the Middle East, in Korea, in southern Africa or in Latin America.

101. We must see to it that détente as proclaimed in one area is not used as a pretext to justify lack of action in the vital area of disarmament, and we enthusiastically support the idea of restoring this problem to its central position in United Nations concern.

102. In these areas, as in the economic and social areas, the majority wishes to be considered as active and responsible partners. That is a pre-condition for any form of progress, the foundation of any form of genuine international co-operation, and we have no doubt but that this need will be recognized before it imposes itself through its own momentum.

103. Mr. PAHR (Austria): Mr. President, in electing you President of this General Assembly our Organization could hardly have made a better choice: you represent an exceptional combination of experience and knowledge of the machinery of the United Nations with an outstanding ability for negotiation and conciliation. In you, we also greet the representative of a country with which Austria has always had close and friendly relations. In addition, Sri Lanka plays an active role in world politics manifested this year by being the host of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, in which Austria had the honour to participate as a guest. The Austrian delegation wishes you great success and assures you of its whole-hearted support.

104. I should like here to express thanks to your predecessor, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, Gaston Thorn, for the tact and great political insight with which he guided us through the often stormy days of the previous General Assembly.

105. As Foreign Minister of Austria I am particularly pleased to express to Secretary-General Waldheim the thanks and recognition of my country for the permanent effort he has made for our Organization and the community of nations. We extend to him our warmest good wishes for continuing success in carrying out his important and challenging tasks.

106. One of the first decisions of this General Assembly was to admit the Republic of Seychelles to membership in the United Nations. We welcome the representatives of the new Member State in our midst. Its presence is a further indication of the progressing process of decolonization of Africa and demonstrates how close our Organization has come to the goal of universality. A further contribution to that end will be the admission of those States which have

already stated their desire for membership as well as their readiness to accept the obligations under the Charter. Indeed, in the interest of achieving universality, our Organization must be open to all States, regardless of their political and social systems.

107. An assessment of the contribution made by our Organization in the past year to the maintenance of peace and security in the world results in self-criticism as well as some measure of satisfaction. We may conclude from such an analysis that the fundamental factors in world politics have remained unchanged.

108. In the past year the climate of world politics continued to be marked by the mutual desire of the United States and the Soviet Union to pursue their policy of détente. In Europe, efforts were intensified to realize the principles accepted by the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and to carry them into all areas of mutual relations.

109. Continuing success for the policy of détente in Europe will depend, however, on the willingness of all to implement unconditionally the decisions of the Helsinki Conference. These decisions do not concern Governments alone but have a direct bearing on daily life and human relations. In particular they can provide contributions to the solution of humanitarian problems.

110. The Federal Government of Austria is a firm advocate of the continuation of the policy of détente not only in Europe but throughout the world. Austria will make its own contribution to that end. In the European framework this applies in particular to the Belgrade conference scheduled for next year.

111. While certain new positive aspects can be noted in world politics, this General Assembly meets in an international atmosphere which still carries a considerable amount of problems and uncertainties. In fact, none of the major international crises has come closer to a solution: the impasse with regard both to the Middle East crisis and to the question of Cyprus remains unchanged. There was no success in the efforts to reach agreement on new arms control and on new disarmament measures.

112. However, in these days, signs of hope begin to appear for the solution of one of the major problems in the world, the situation in southern Africa. After the tragic incidents which began in the suburbs of Johannesburg and which dramatically underlined the seriousness of this situation, intensive diplomatic efforts were initiated a few weeks ago. These efforts have now brought a first tangible result. A conference on Rhodesia has been convened for 21 October and we sincerely hope that these developments will bring the people of Zimbabwe closer to the goal of majority government.

113. In Namibia any progress will depend on the inclusion of all parties, specifically SWAPO, in the negotiations. The United Nations should continue to undertake an important role. We appeal to the Government of South Africa to begin such negotiations for a peaceful and democratic settlement as soon as possible. My country would gladly make its neutral ground available to host the constitutional conference, should the parties so wish.

114. Despite hopeful developments in Rhodesia and Namibia there can be no illusions about the fact that the most serious problem in South Africa itself is still to be overcome. As long as political and civil rights continue to be denied to the vast majority in the country, as long as the inhuman and universally condemned policy of *apartheid* is not put to an end, peaceful coexistence between the peoples of southern Africa is impossible.

115. The international community is now near unanimity on the principles for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Its indispensable elements are: the principle of respect for, and recognition of, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all countries in the region and the right of all peoples and States to live within secure and recognized boundaries.

116. Peace in the Middle East is also inconceivable without recognition of the legitimate rights and interests of the Palestinian people. It is for this reason that participation of the Palestinian people in the negotiating process seems essential.

117. The Austrian people is deeply moved by the suffering of the people of Lebanon. The inability to stop civil war in Lebanon is a threat to the balance of a region whose stability is of relevance to the maintenance of world peace. I wish to express my sincere hope that by agreement among all the parties, peace and security will return to this part of the world and the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon be secured.

118. Events in the Mediterranean area have a direct bearing on the security and stability of the whole of Europe. For this reason Austria is concerned over the situation of Cyprus.

119. For many centuries Austria has maintained close and friendly relations with the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean. It is natural therefore that Austria has persistently sought to make her contribution to the solution of the crisis and expressed her firm support for the safeguarding of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus. At the talks in New York and in Vienna this year and last, the Secretary-General of our Organization has tried time and again, through his personal efforts, to bring the parties together and maintain the dialogue between them. These efforts by Secretary-General Waldheim deserve all our support.

120. Today the United Nations plays an important role in the maintenance of peace in the Middle East as well as on Cyprus. The peace-keeping forces operating under the United Nations flag are the most important element in this regard. However, United Nations troops can never be an adequate substitute for a political solution. May I say in this context in all frankness that the success of the peace-keeping forces depends on appropriate financing. Support for these operations should be expressed also in increased and more general contributions.

121. Permit me to express my personal thanks to all soldiers serving under the United Nations flag in the interest of peace wherever they may be in the world.

122. The amount of money spent on armament is increasing year by year. Nevertheless, the United Nations, in the 30 years of its existence, could not achieve much practical success in the field of disarmament.

123. We have always believed that the policy of *détente* will only have credibility if it also produces concrete results in the field of disarmament. We therefore note with some apprehension that the negotiations between the States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and those of the Warsaw Pact have so far not produced the expected results.

124. The complex nature of all disarmament and arms control measures, as well as the close connexion with the question of the security of States, leave no room for overly simplistic analyses. Accordingly, Austria has always attached special significance to the question of the balanced character of the limitation and ultimate reduction of the arsenals of the great Powers and thus has stressed the need for negotiations within a small framework.

125. But it also is the task of this Organization, as Secretary-General Waldheim stated in the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization, now more than ever before, to stimulate public concern over the arms race and to underline the urgent necessity for disarmament measures as well as their global character and to provide adequate momentum for further negotiations [see A/31/1/Add.1, sect. V]. We can therefore give our full support to the proposal for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament issues, as it was decided, at the initiative of Yugoslavia, by the non-aligned Conference in Colombo.

126. The feverish arms race is not the only threat to international security. In these past months a new wave of international terrorism has threatened the international community. Together with many other Members of this Assembly we concur in the view that our Organization should devote itself with greater intensity to the task of combating international terrorism. Apart from the attempt to grapple with this intricate and emotion-laden phenomenon as a whole, we must deal, as a matter of special urgency, with the most abominable manifestations of terrorism. The taking of hostages is indisputably one of the most horrifying crimes of our times. Austria will support unreservedly any initiative that helps to combat this international crime. Nevertheless, the United Nations should not overlook the problem of terrorism as a whole.

127. I think this is the place to affirm Austria's profound attachment to the principle of the universal application of the human rights and fundamental freedoms embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

128. A just and stable world can exist only if the dignity and worth of each individual are respected, and if social conditions are established which foster the greatest possible development of all mankind. But respect for human rights cannot be the distant goal of a better world in the future. We should not throw it overboard on the voyage to such a world for the sake of short-term fictitious gains. Morality and justice dictate that violations of human rights, wherever they occur, must be the subject of our concern and earnest efforts to eliminate them.

129. It was therefore with special satisfaction that Austria learned that a further step forward has been taken towards the world-wide application of human rights through the entry into force of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Optional Protocol and of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. We welcome in particular the Human Rights Committee recently set up under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Austria will give the Committee its full support in the performance of the noble tasks assigned to it.

130. We should not omit to draw the Committee's attention to the valuable preparatory work done in this respect in the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Austria hopes to ratify shortly both Covenants, which guarantee for the first time human rights in a universal legally binding instrument.

131. Despite all the hopes that these recent developments inspire in us, we should like to point out that it would be a mistake to regard as superseded the pragmatic measures taken in the United Nations with a view to promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms. Until adherence to the two Covenants is universal we must remain alive to the need for the earlier procedures to be retained. Austria is willing to play its part, be it by admitting and supporting refugees or by actively collaborating in the several United Nations bodies concerned with human rights.

132. From among the topics that warrant our special attention we must single out here racism and its most loathsome manifestation, *apartheid*. An exceptional contribution to their elimination is made by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, for it is striving, in an ongoing dialogue with Member States, to reduce every form of racial discrimination. My Government is particularly gratified that this Committee has accepted its invitation to hold its next session in Vienna.

133. Let us here give voice to the hope that the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, without being disturbed by any extraneous elements that might impede its success, will be able to reach its original goal. In this connexion I would like to express the wish that the Decade would also eliminate the roots of racial discrimination, which are to be found in the hearts of men. Special attention therefore should be given to education towards tolerance and towards the respect of the rights and interests of others. I may refer to article 7 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination [resolution 2106 (XX), annex] which provides for such education. I hope that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, whose General Conference will begin in a few days in Nairobi, will also consider this question which is of the utmost importance for the further development of mankind.

134. Austria supports all efforts to establish a convention on the protection of minorities, complementing the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination which would safeguard the existence of ethnic groups. Accordingly, Austria supports the proposal put forward by the Vice-President of the Federal Executive Council and

Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia, Milos Minić, before this Assembly [7th meeting].

135. Torture, one of the most barbarous violations of human rights, is still, despite all our endeavours, a world-wide phenomenon. The efforts to combat torture must therefore be continued and intensified.

136. The growing importance of the relationship between North and South is increasingly confronting the United Nations. The solution to these problems has become a major issue of international politics. In this context, a central role in the reordering of world economic relations is incumbent upon the United Nations. The Austrian Government has pledged to support every endeavour that leads to the building of a more just and stable international economic order.

137. In the present critical stage of the dialogue between developing and industrialized countries Austria strongly hopes that the spirit of mutual understanding, conciliation and co-operation, which manifested itself so clearly at the seventh special session of the General Assembly and which was continued at the fourth session of UNCTAD, will remain a decisive factor in our future negotiations on a new international economic order.

138. Today we are at a transitional stage in our endeavour to build a more just international economic system. On the one hand it is necessary to bring the recommendations and decisions adopted in recent years closer to realization; on the other hand we are called upon to devote ourselves with particular attention to the preparation of an even closer and more effective, but also more comprehensive and far-reaching, international co-operation for the forthcoming United Nations Third Development Decade.

139. The proper performance of these tasks in the spirit of the forthcoming third Development Decade will require not only an enhanced will for common action but also new forms of international economic co-operation. In this connexion I should like to draw particular attention to the proposal of the Austrian Federal Chancellor, Mr. Kreisky, concerning an accelerated development of the infrastructure of the countries of the third world. We will go into these considerations in greater detail in the appropriate Main Committee of the Assembly.

140. Since the beginning of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea in 1973 the Austrian delegation has consistently advocated that the future convention should embody principles of international co-operation, with recognition of the rights of all States to a share in the exploitation of the wealth of the seas. Austria is convinced that a new law of the sea can contribute substantially to the elimination of the economic gulf separating developing and developed countries, which, we regret to say, is growing steadily wider; and that the least developed countries should receive special consideration in this process.

141. It is therefore a source of great concern to us that the Conference on the Law of the Sea still has far to go before it turns the above-mentioned principles into realities and creates a just order for the world's oceans. After five

sessions we regret to have to note that the Conference has still not found a compromise formula for the rights and duties of coastal States on one hand, and of the geographically disadvantaged and land-locked countries on the other. It now appears vitally important that when we resume our efforts we should avoid a proliferation of unilateral measures that might cut back the ground for a global convention or lead to the emergence of a treatyless situation on the seas.

142. Permit me, once again, to touch upon the agreement reached by Austria and Italy six years ago, which is concerned with increasing the autonomy of the South Tyrol and lays down a time-table for that process. With regard to this issue, on which the General Assembly adopted resolutions 1497 (XV) and 1661 (XVI) I am happy to report that it has proved possible to make further progress, including progress in important areas. However, a number of measures have still to be put into effect. Austria welcomes the statement made recently by the Prime Minister of Italy, Mr. Giulio Andreotti, in this regard.

143. We expect that the efforts made with respect to this issue, which is being handled on both sides in a spirit of good-neighbourly co-operation, will soon produce further results.

144. In concluding, I would like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to another matter which is of importance to my country. I am referring to the optimal use of the Donaupark centre which is being built in Vienna for the United Nations and made available to the Organization rent-free. Its cost of approximately \$US 700 million will be borne by Austria. Work is proceeding as scheduled. It is expected that the entire complex (including office accommodations, an international conference centre and public facilities) will be completed in 1978.

145. It is obvious that the time has come for a definite decision by the United Nations concerning the optimal use of the premises available in addition to those reserved for the headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency and UNIDO. The General Assembly will have before it proposals which are being prepared by the Secretary-General in accordance with the request of the General Assembly at its thirtieth session. In the long term the optimal use of these facilities should produce remarkable financial and organizational benefits for the United Nations. I should like to express our hope that the General Assembly at its thirty-first session will take concrete decisions ensuring both a short-term and a long-term solution of this question.

146. Austria, traditional host of many international conferences, has moreover decided to construct, by 1982, a conference centre near the Donaupark complex. With regard to size and functional capacity it will meet all the requirements of world conferences and will, in addition, be available to the international organizations located in Vienna for their conferences.

147. At the end of my speech I should like to recall that it is now just 20 years ago that Austria first addressed the General Assembly as a full Member of the Organization.

Ever since that statement which was delivered by the late Austrian statesman Leopold Figl, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, my Government has every year presented its views on international affairs and outlined its policy before this august body.

148. I mention this because I wish to convey our feelings of gratitude and pride for having been able to join this Organization 20 years ago and for having been able to participate in its work and to strive for making it an even better instrument for the advancement of mankind. We have tried to do so with consistent resolve and we pledge the unflagging continuation of this policy.

Address by Mr. Henck A. E. Arron, Prime Minister and Minister for General and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Surinam

149. The PRESIDENT: This morning the Assembly will hear a statement by the Prime Minister for General and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Surinam. I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Henck A. E. Arron and in inviting him to address the General Assembly.

150. Mr. ARRON (Surinam): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to extend to you my warmest congratulations on your election to the high office of President of this General Assembly. Your election is a recognition of your qualifications and it also does honour to Sri Lanka, a nation which has always been in the first ranks of the developing world. In this connexion I would especially like to refer to your presidency of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, during which you demonstrated your outstanding talents in the field of modern multilateral diplomacy.

151. I am also pleased to express my deeply felt appreciation for the excellent guidance of Mr. Thorn, the Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, as President of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly. Mr. Gaston Thorn will always be remembered by the Government and people of my country, since Surinam was admitted to membership in the United Nations during his presidency of the General Assembly.

152. I also wish to transmit to the Secretary-General, Mr. Waldheim, the gratitude of my people for his tireless efforts to achieve peace and international co-operation in this troubled world.

153. We welcome with enthusiasm the admission of the Republic of Seychelles to our Organization. The admission of the Republic of Seychelles is yet another proof of the continuing process of decolonization and its entry into the Organization is a further step towards the goal of universality. My Government looks forward to fruitful co-operation between our two nations and extends its best wishes to the new Republic.

154. It has often been said that the United Nations has lost its original vigour and that the world Organization cannot achieve its principal goals as contained in its Charter: the achievement of international peace and security, the development of friendly relations among nations and the promotion of international co-operation.

155. In the opinion of those pessimists, international problems such as the arms race, the prohibition of nuclear arms, population growth, the problems of international economic relations, and others, could be dealt with better within the framework of closed international forums, limited in scope and membership. That rather gloomy view does not, however, take into account the growing interdependence of the nations of the world, whatever the ideological differences in their political systems. Furthermore, it does not pay a tribute to the fact that the United Nations has played an important and constructive role in various conflicts which threatened or are still menacing international peace and stability.

156. The United Nations, based on the principles of equality and universality, is in our opinion the most adequate instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security and for the solution of the complex problems of the world economy. Certain undeniable shortcomings are not inherent in the basic structure of the Organization, but are primarily the consequence of the refusal of some Member States to act in harmony with the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, and their refusal to implement the decisions of the organs of the Organization, thus undermining confidence in its effectiveness. We wish to state emphatically that we do not believe that the problems which keep haunting mankind—problems of war and peace and the safeguarding of the national sovereignty of smaller nations—can be solved through big-Power policy or through the establishment of military blocs. Despite all its shortcomings, we firmly believe that the United Nations offers the best safeguards for the maintenance of international peace and of the sovereignty of nations, particularly the small and medium-sized countries, and for the handling of international economic problems.

157. For the United Nations to function effectively, all independent States which subscribe to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be Members of our Organization. The principle of universality on which our Organization is based necessarily implies a politically pluralistic structure for our Organization: it implies an organization consisting of all independent nations, whatever their economic and political structure. For these reasons, we are in favour of the admission of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the two States of North and South Korea—pending their peaceful reunification under a single Government—and the Republic of Angola.

158. Although the threats to international peace have been somewhat diminished since the termination of the Viet Nam war and the adoption of the policy of détente, certain areas of the world continue to be a cause of grave concern. The conclusion of an agreement between Egypt and Israel for the disengagement of troops in the Sinai has avoided the outbreak of another military confrontation between the two nations. There can be no doubt, however, that the positive results of the Sinai Agreement should induce the parties concerned to direct their efforts towards reaching a peaceful solution of the Middle East problem as a whole. Piecemeal agreements, however gratifying they may be, carry the danger of intensifying frustrations which will eventually lead to further upheavals. This was clearly demonstrated by the violent confrontation between the

occupying Israeli forces and the inhabitants of the West Bank, and also by the outbreak of open warfare in Lebanon. The Government of the Republic of Surinam endorses: first, the principles of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), supplemented by Security Council resolution 338 (1973), and will support a solution based on a withdrawal of all Israeli troops from the territories occupied during the 1967 war; secondly, the security of the State of Israel, within secure frontiers negotiated by the parties concerned; and thirdly, a solution of this problem based on the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

159. With regard to Namibia, it is the view of the Republic of Surinam that the United Nations has an obligation to put an end to Namibia's illegal occupation by the Pretoria régime. The United Nations should provide the people of Namibia with the opportunity to determine their own future and it should prevent the Balkanization of Namibia into "bantustans". The Government of the Republic of Surinam fully endorses Security Council resolution 385 (1976), which declared that, for the people of Namibia to freely determine their own future, it is imperative that free elections under the supervision and control of the United Nations be held for the whole of Namibia as one political entity and that South Africa should urgently make a solemn declaration accepting the holding of these elections. The Government of the Republic of Surinam, however, rejects recent South African proposals for leading Namibia to independence by the end of 1978. These proposals are, in our view, the latest in a series of deceptive devices to circumvent the implementation of United Nations resolutions, since they do not mention the holding of free elections under the supervision of the United Nations. We are in complete agreement with the statement made by the Secretary-General on Namibia Day, 26 August, that the proposals of the South African Government do not constitute an adequate response to the needs of the situation in Namibia and that South Africa must abandon its unilateral approach and recognize that co-operation with the United Nations is indispensable to solve this matter to the satisfaction of the people of Namibia and the international community.

160. Recent disorders in South Africa are the logical and inevitable result of the oppressive and repugnant policy of *apartheid* on which the South African Government continues to base its political system, in defiance of universal condemnation. It is to be expected that these disorders will increase in the future, and so will their intensity. The South African Government and the illegal régime of Salisbury did not heed the wind of change blowing in the southern part of the African continent even after the collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire, and time is rapidly and inexorably running out for them. The Government of the Republic of Surinam will give full support to the oppressed peoples and their liberation movements in that region of the world, in their just and legitimate struggle.

161. Developments in southern Africa during the last few weeks seem to indicate that there is some movement in hitherto frozen positions, which could conceivably spell the beginning of the end of minority rule and racial oppression in the whole region. There is some hope that the oppressed majority will finally be able to reach their goal and attain

freedom and human dignity without having to sacrifice their lives in a protracted war of liberation. Long and bitter experience has, however, taught the suffering people and the international community that not much trust can be placed in the oppressive régimes in southern Africa. The situation, therefore, calls for the utmost watchfulness on the part of the United Nations against any manoeuvres which might frustrate the awakening hopes for a peaceful and genuine transfer of power. At the same time, the international community must throw all its weight behind those who are trying to advance the cause of freedom. The pressure on the two Governments in southern Africa must be kept up. My delegation considers the recent acceptance by the illegal régime in Rhodesia of majority rule as a possible first step towards a final solution and supports the call by the Presidents of the five front-line States to the United Kingdom to convene a constitutional conference outside Rhodesia. We sincerely hope that this conference, to the convening of which the United Kingdom has agreed, will result in the achievement of the goals for which many of the freedom fighters in that Territory have given their lives.

162. During the first half of the Second United Nations Development Decade, there have been serious shortcomings in achieving the goals, objectives and policy measures specified in the International Development Strategy as envisioned by General Assembly resolution 3517 (XXX). The hope that those measures would result in effective and concrete international economic arrangements, benefiting both the developed and developing countries and closing the gap between those nations, has not in the least been fulfilled.

163. In our opinion the results achieved up to now are only a first step towards the restructuring of existing inequitable international economic relations.

164. We are, however, seriously concerned about the fact that no concrete results were achieved at the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation, which has consequently led to a deadlock.

165. We do not want to dwell on all the underlying causes of this disappointing situation. We are of the opinion that the existing international social and economic injustices will ultimately result in a political confrontation: a confrontation which we do not want and which can only result in the destruction of international peace and security. The solution of long-ranging problems of international economic co-operation should be found in a constructive dialogue between both groups of nations.

166. In this context we particularly welcome the adoption of the Declaration of Abidjan³ at the meeting of the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-first session in the Ivory Coast. In the Declaration of Abidjan the Council declares its adherence to the principles of national independence, sovereignty and self-reliance and its faith in co-operation, dialogue and negotiations between developed and developing countries, based on a real political will to promote an equitable and just system of international economic relations in conformity with the principles of the

United Nations Charter. We strongly support this declaration and my Government will participate actively in all the activities leading to the implementation of its contents.

167. In a number of areas our Organization provided both an instrument for negotiations and a forum for the formulation of political guidelines. Despite fundamental conflicts of interest, developed and developing nations generally negotiated in a spirit of co-operation.

168. These negotiations led to the adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [resolution 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)] as well as the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States in 1974. The Government of the Republic of Surinam will base its future policy on these instruments which, if fully implemented, will give a most important impetus to terminate the inequity which characterizes the distribution of the wealth of the world.

169. It should be pointed out, however, that the reluctance shown by some developed countries to harmonize their national interests with the needs and just wishes of political instruments and the attainment of positive and concrete arrangements. We do hope that these nations will broaden their views and the future will give evidence of a less rigid position. Reconciliation is not a one-way street and can only be realized through concerted efforts by all parties concerned.

170. At the fourth session of UNCTAD, held in Nairobi this year, a programme to restructure global commodity trade in order to stabilize and increase earnings of developing countries, was launched. UNCTAD, *inter alia*, agreed on the establishment of a common fund for the financing of buffer stocks. The operation of buffer stocks, which could be held or sold if conditions so require, would help to end the fluctuations in commodity prices that have chronically plagued developing countries which depend on their commodity exports. My Government will actively participate in the negotiations relating to the establishment of this fund.

171. It would be a grave omission on my part if I did not express my country's appreciation for the assistance which we have received and continue to receive from the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]. We are aware of the fact that rapidly improved rates of programme delivery, combined with cost inflation and a shortfall in expected resources, confronted the programme with a severe liquidity problem and we are glad that the Governing Council of UNDP took major substantive decisions about the programme's liquidity problems.

172. My country supports the efforts of UNDP to promote the technical co-operation among developing countries. This should, in our opinion, not merely consist in the exchange of experts and equipment among the developing countries but should in addition seek to strengthen the technological capacity of those countries and their scientific and technical institutions.

173. This year a number of other important United Nations conferences on global issues have been convened. I

³ Economic and Social Council resolution 2009 (LXI).

am referring in particular to the Habitat Conference in Vancouver⁴ and the United Nations Conference on the Establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development.⁵ Furthermore, next year the United Nations Water Conference will take place in Argentina. These events are also within the purview of international economic co-operation and the work of these conferences proves the close and strong interdependence between social and economic development at both the international and national level.

174. May I say a few words about the recent session of the Conference on the Law of the Sea, the outcome of which is a matter of the gravest concern to my country.

175. We are of the opinion that a continuation of the existing impasse, which was created as a result of disagreements on crucial issues, can only play into the hand of the industrialized nations.

176. If compromises cannot be reached soon between developing countries and industrialized nations on the one hand and between developing nations among themselves on the other hand, this will irrevocably have the devastating effect of placing the industrialized nations in a position of utilizing their technology and capital to execute a unilateral policy of exploitation.

177. We, as developing countries, must prevent at all costs that the colonial policy of the industrialized nations with regard to the natural resources of the continents be repeated with respect to the resources of the seas.

178. Surinam remains prepared to participate actively in the search for a just solution and hopes that the international treaty on maritime law will be concluded within the foreseeable future. Some specific issues, such as the exclusive economic zone, are of eminent importance to my country.

179. In the absence of an international treaty soon to be agreed upon, Surinam will find itself compelled to confirm its right in this zone. In this connexion my Government wishes to state that serious damage has been caused to its fishing industry by the ships of several nations that, during the past years, have been plundering its fish resources in an indiscriminate way. It is clear that the Government of the Republic of Surinam will not tolerate this behaviour in the future and that it will protect its national interests regardless of the outcome of the negotiations on the establishment of an international treaty on maritime law.

180. It is almost one year ago that Surinam became independent after having been under colonial rule for many

ages. During the past year we made a start towards ending the isolated status in which we found ourselves as a former colony. We are now in the process of integrating ourselves into the region to which we belong, namely the Latin American continent and the Caribbean area.

181. Surinam has already established embassies in two countries that are very dear to us, Brazil and Venezuela. In addition, we have established diplomatic relations with various other countries in the region. Furthermore, Surinam has joined the Economic Commission for Latin America and soon hopes to apply for membership of the Organization of American States and the Latin American Economic System. As far as the use of nuclear arms is concerned, one of Surinam's first acts after its independence has been the signing of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco).

182. The integration into Latin America is the more fitting, since this year we will commemorate the fact that 150 years ago the Amphictyonic Congress of Panama was convened by the Liberator Simón Bolívar. The Liberator once stated that the new world should consist of free and independent States bound together by a system of mutual regulations which would govern their foreign relations. It is in the spirit of this declaration that we shall establish, maintain and intensify our relations with brother nations of the Latin American region.

183. In this respect the Government of the Republic of Surinam sincerely hopes that the negotiations between the Government of Panama and the Government of the United States will in the near future result in the conclusion of a new agreement between the two countries, safeguarding the just and sovereign rights of the people of Panama.

184. Besides our policy leading to integration of Surinam within the American continent the Government of the Republic of Surinam has also established relations with countries in other regions of the world.

185. Our membership in this world Organization implies that we actively participate in international affairs, thereby observing binding international regulations. It is on these foundations that we shall base our policy as a member of the international community and we give the assurance that we will, in doing so, conduct ourselves in conformity with the sacred principles of the United Nations Charter.

186. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, and on my own behalf, I thank the Prime Minister and Minister for General and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Surinam for the important address we have just heard from him.

⁴ Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held at Vancouver, 31 May to 11 June 1976.

⁵ Held at Rome from 10 to 13 June 1976.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.