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

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Türkmen (Turkey),  
Vice-President, took the Chair.*

**AGENDA ITEM 9**

**General debate (*continued*)**

1. Mr. MUZAWAR (Comoros) (*interpretation from French*): It will be exactly one year on 12 November next since this Assembly, almost unanimously, admitted the Comoros to membership in the United Nations.

2. These 11 months have enabled us to appreciate both the stature of the institution and the value of the men who bear responsibility in the Organization. For this reason, I should like to express to Mr. Amerasinghe the satisfaction of my delegation at seeing him presiding over this session of the Assembly. In a world where covetousness and unfulfilled ambitions hold sway, how can we fail to appreciate highly the judicious choice that has been made by our Assembly? For this forum, where the most authoritative voices of our planet speak out, needs to be imbued with the wisdom and philosophy that characterize the peoples of the Asian subcontinent, which the President represents so well. Mr. Amerasinghe may rely on the co-operation of my delegation to ensure that the work of this thirty-first session of the General Assembly will be crowned with success.

3. With the death of Chairman Mao Tsetung a great figure of contemporary history has passed away. The Comoros associates itself closely with the well-deserved tribute paid by our Organization to the man who placed the whole of his life at the service of those who fight for freedom and dignity.

4. Much has often been said about the non-viability of micro-States, including the Comoros. My delegation wishes to express its sincere and warm congratulations to the Government and people of Seychelles, which was admitted to membership in our Organization on 21 September and with which we maintain the best possible relations. On this

occasion, I should like to convince Member States that the elements which define a nation are not the same as those which characterize an economic Power and, still less, those which characterize a military Power. First of all, every people has a right to existence and freedom; every people has a right to dignity and respect; and every people has a right freely to choose its political and economic destiny.

5. The wisdom and efficiency, like the grandeur of a people, can no longer be measured by taking into account only its reserve of nuclear power megatons or the number of its military victories. Henceforth we must establish a new criterion: that of proven respect for the principles of our Charter.

6. By establishing a hierarchy and entrusting roles to one and to another, we are in the process of converting our Organization into an instrument at the service of the most powerful; hence we are in the process of betraying the commitments undertaken at San Francisco to which we all subscribed.

7. By virtue of those commitments and to expedite the process that should lead to the universality of our Organization, the Comoros unreservedly supports the admission to our Organization of the brave peoples of Angola and Viet Nam.

8. The anguish that besets the whole of mankind, like the uncertainties surrounding the future of peoples, finds its sole source in the egocentricity of States in a universe where the interdependence of nations is a reality that can no longer be denied.

9. My delegation wishes the greatest success to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly and nurtures the hope that in the course of the current session wisdom will prevail and international peace and security will triumph throughout the world.

10. It is in this spirit of peace, security and progress which governs all our decisions that I shall now go on to speak of the problems which torment mankind.

11. Today we could have witnessed a happy ending to the process of decolonization as advocated by our Organization. But at a time when the nationalist forces in southern Africa have unleashed a valiant offensive, unique of its kind, to obtain the right to self-determination and independence, the champions of colonialism and all the forces of evil have rallied to place themselves at the service of Vorster.

12. The sale of nuclear power plants, and the delivery of weapons to South Africa have no other meaning for Africa

than the will to strengthen the military potential of the Fascist régime of Vorster and consequently to encourage it to commit massacres and to hinder the progress of the struggle for liberation.

13. What happened in Soweto and in other places in South Africa is a clear-cut crime that we should all condemn with our last breath.

14. Vorster intends to grant so-called independence to the Transkei. The main object of that farce is to undermine the national unity of the Azanian people and must be strongly rejected. We must embark resolutely upon the course of the total isolation of the minority régimes in southern Africa.

15. With respect to Namibia, we note that in flouting all the resolutions adopted by the international community, South Africa continues to occupy that Territory and persists in applying there its laws and practices of repression, the basis of which is the policy of *apartheid*. Confronted by this denial of the fundamental principles of human rights, our Organization cannot look on as powerless spectators of the drama of the Namibian people. The policy of "bantustanization", which is a defiance of the sacred principles of our Charter, seeks only to violate the national unity and territorial integrity of Namibia.

16. The Comorian State, faithful to the principles which govern States, is particularly attached to the principle of respect for the political unity and inviolability of the frontiers of States and cannot at this point do more than address an appeal to all Members of this Organization to put an end to those deliberate acts of violation of our Charter.

17. South Africa must return power to the Namibians. In order to do so propitious conditions for true independence must be created. The Comorian State subscribes unreservedly to the idea of convening, under the aegis of the United Nations, a constitutional conference with the participation of the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO] as the legitimate representative of the Namibian people.

18. My country believes that prior to the convening of that conference the following must be done: all discriminatory laws and measures must be abrogated; all political prisoners must be released; all Namibians at present in exile for political reasons should be allowed to return to their country without risk to themselves; the conference entrusted with the creation and legalization of "bantustan homelands" must be dissolved; and all South African military troops must be withdrawn from Namibian territory. The Comorian State considers that those minimal conditions, once fulfilled, are the only ones capable, on the one hand, of proving the sincerity of South Africa, and, on the other hand, of instituting the necessary political climate for the success of the conference.

19. With regard to Zimbabwe, since the declaration of the independence of Southern Rhodesia in 1965 by the white settlers living in that Territory, we must note with sorrow that certain countries, among them the most powerful, continue to maintain the best possible relations with the racist régime of Salisbury, providing it thus with the means

of resisting the assault of the Zimbabwe nationalists. It is worthy of note that despite that active complicity, the resolution of the freedom fighters and of the aroused masses is stronger than ever and we are convinced that their victory is close.

20. By reason precisely of the pressure of the struggle and the opening of new avenues of confrontation throughout the country, and thanks to international opinion, which is increasingly in favour of the cause of liberation, the shameful régime of Ian Smith has had to face up to the exodus of the whites and the slowing down of immigration, which renders even more fragile the already precarious position of the white minority in Zimbabwe.

21. We must reaffirm the inalienable right of the people of Zimbabwe to self-determination and independence as well as the legitimacy of the struggle that they are waging to obtain the enjoyment of that right. This whole process can be achieved only in so far as a transitional black majority government has full and complete responsibility for the management of the country's affairs.

22. We sincerely hope that the constitutional conference convened by Great Britain, the administering Power of Rhodesia, will comply with the legitimate wishes and aspirations of the African peoples, and in particular of the people of Zimbabwe.

23. My Government follows with interest the actions undertaken by the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Kissinger, in southern Africa, the objective of which is to create the conditions for a peaceful settlement of the problems arising in that region.

24. With respect to Djibouti, it would appear that the process of independence has already been triggered. It is up to us now to demand here of the administering Power that it expedite the process, and we must warn it against its well-known methods of seeking to divide the people and to violate the integrity of the Territory as it did in the Comoros.

25. The world is concerned today with the serious situation which prevails in Korea, a situation which places the region in a state of crisis which could lead to a confrontation. We must encourage the efforts made by the two Koreas towards the peaceful reunification of their country.

26. In the Middle East, the situation has remained the same since the last session: Israel persists in its obstinacy, in its intransigent attitude and in its resistance to any peace initiative, thus showing the international community its expansionist aims.

27. Any solution to the Middle East problem necessarily involves the withdrawal by Israel from the occupied territories and recognition, on the one hand, of the national rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the principles set forth in our Charter, and, on the other hand, the right to existence of all the peoples in the Middle East in territories with secure and guaranteed boundaries.

28. With respect to Cyprus, we must apply General Assembly resolution 3395 (XXX) and above all seek to

ensure respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of that country.

29. The progress of détente, we must acknowledge, is still very limited both in its scope and in its geographic extension: the danger that the great Powers might plunge mankind into a nuclear holocaust has not completely disappeared. In fact, the agreements which they conclude among themselves and which permit those industrialized countries to establish profitable economic relations merely redirect the areas of conflict towards the third world. For those Powers détente very often is no more than confrontation through third countries or peoples, in which the poorest bear the burden of the war.

30. While none of the great Powers has a coast on the Indian Ocean, their presence in that ocean becomes more and more preoccupying each day. That ocean, which we want to preserve as a zone of peace, runs the risk of becoming tomorrow the battleground for those hegemonies which dispute control in Africa, the Near East and Asia.

31. In the displacement of the areas of conflict far from the industrial zones of the developed countries and close to the areas producing primary commodities, we believe that we, the developing countries, bear a great responsibility. It is only through lack of cohesion among ourselves and trust in each other that this threatening evolution is possible. That is why the Comorian State is in favour of the convening of a conference of all the coastal countries on the Indian Ocean for the purpose of harmonizing their action in order that all the conditions can be established to allow for the implementation of resolution 2832 (XXVI) in the spirit that the international community has wished to give it.

32. Let us now turn to the Comoros. It is a burning subject which has strongly attracted international opinion, especially in the third world. I should not like at this stage to open a debate on the question included as item 125 of our agenda, which will be debated in plenary meetings. I therefore reserve the right to provide more information and to express the view of my Government on this question.

33. For the time being I shall confine myself to outlining the spirit and the framework in which the French Government and the Comorian Government entered into the process of bringing the Comoros to independence and the reasons why, as can be seen, having started with a dialogue we ended up in a confrontation.

34. The French Constitution states: "The French Republic, faithful to its traditions, abides by the rules of international law." Now, international law includes the United Nations Charter, which France has agreed to abide by and to which the Comorian State is fully pledged as a State Member of the Organization.

35. With regard to the rules and the laws of the French Government and Parliament, all laws, and public administration regulations, starting with the decree of 9 September 1889—and here I shall cite but a few: the law of 9 May 1946, the law of 17 April 1952, the decree of 22 July 1957, the law of 22 December 1961 and the law of 3 January 1968—have confirmed the political unity and the

territorial integrity of the Comoros, composed of the islands of Anjouan, Mayotte, Mohéli and Grande Comore.

36. Turning to what the highest authorities of the French State have said on the subject, I would remind representatives of the solemn public statement of the President of the French Republic, Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, of 24 October 1974 that: "The Comoros are a single unit, they have always been a single unit, and it is natural that their fate should be a common fate . . ."

37. How, then, on such a clear and precise legal basis and with such solemn commitments have we arrived at the situation that regrettably confronts us today in which negotiations with the French Government have been broken off.

38. The readiness of the French Government to engage in a dialogue and to seek a solution to this problem keeps on being dangled in front of us. As for the desire for dialogue, I should like the international community to attribute it to the people and the Government of the Comoros, for in 1973, during the first discussions in Paris on the accession of the Comoros to independence; in June 1974, when it became a matter of determining the modalities for the organization of the referendum which took place the same year; and, finally, in October 1975, when the Comorian Government, three months after independence, itself requested and sought to renew the dialogue, the Comorian side always committed itself with firm determination to seek out ways and means susceptible of promoting a rapid solution of the problem of the Comorian island of Mayotte, a solution which must necessarily respect the principles of our Charter and fully meet the legitimate aspirations of the Comorian people.

39. I should like to state before this Assembly that any time the opportunity is given us we shall give proof of this desire for dialogue which for my Government has become a doctrine and a method of action. Political problems, whether bilateral or of international scope, can be resolved through dialogue, and we are convinced that, by resort to this method in frankness and sincerity, many, if not all, of the problems facing the world could be resolved.

40. We intend to defend the legitimate cause of the Comorian people with firmness and determination. We are ready to defend it everywhere—in New York as in Paris, in Colombo as at Libreville. In May 1976, my country took part in the work of the Franco-African Conference which was held in Paris<sup>1</sup> at the invitation of the President of the Republic of Senegal, Léopold Sédar Senghor. That is additional proof that the Comorian people is in favour of any initiative whose result would be the reinstatement of Mayotte within the Comorian entity.

41. What do we observe from the other side? France, after having signed the joint declaration on the accession to independence of the Comoros on 15 June 1973, after having, pursuant to a law of its own Parliament, organized

<sup>1</sup> Conference of Heads of State and Government and Ministerial Delegations of Benin, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, France, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritius, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Upper Volta and Zaire, held at Paris on 10 and 11 May 1976.

the referendum on self-determination of 22 December 1974—the result favouring independence is known to all—after 130 years of colonization during which at no time was the legality of the Comorian entity questioned, after all the discussions and the statements to which I have just referred, whose only purpose is to seek a just solution and to safeguard the political unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros—France, I say has not come up with any other approach than that of occupying the Comorian island of Mayotte on 6 July 1975 in defiance of international morality, the principles of our Charter and the value of its alliances in Africa and its friendships throughout the Moslem world.

42. France is applying to the Comoros a strategy that has three aims: first, it wishes to consolidate its position in Mayotte, that is, first of all the establishment, starting on 6 July 1975, of a strong, inflexible and omnipresent administration in the island, which is completely out of reach of the control of the Comorian central authorities; secondly, it wishes to legalize this situation by organizing in Mayotte a series of referendums whose purpose is to justify the occupation of the island; and, thirdly, it wishes to bring about, by the intensive behind-the-scenes propaganda of its diplomatic representatives abroad, the isolation of the Comoros and to deprive the Comorian cause of endorsement and support, thus rendering it a lost cause from the outset.

43. It seems to us that it is our duty to indicate to the Assembly that, for the consolidation of the independence of the Comoros, which it admitted as a Member of the United Nations on 12 November last, it is absolutely necessary for international solidarity to play a full role.

44. I should like here to pay a sincere tribute to Mr. Kurt Waldheim, who ever since he has assumed the heavy responsibilities of Secretary-General has ceaselessly been striving to bring about the essential objectives of our Charter, namely, peace, security and progress throughout the world.

45. The Mayotte affair constitutes a precedent fraught with consequences for the stability and the security of the independent African countries of the region and for the integrity of the young nations which, faced by numerous socio-economic problems, run the risk of being divided by outside forces. We note with sorrow that this is the first time that an independent State, which has been recognized by the international community, has been subjected to a process of recolonization. Faced with this crisis, the Comorian people is equally aware of the importance of what is at stake and of the scope of the struggle which it has to wage. It was in this context that on 14 November 1975 the Comorian Head of State our brother Ali Soilih, declared:

"We shall assume our responsibilities; we shall assume them because we shall never confuse friendship with humiliation, because nature has given the Comorian certain qualities—simplicity, a sense of honour endurance and resistance to privation—and because, in any event, our cause is just. Our struggle is a worthy one and we are convinced that the Comorian people will emerge from this test united, strong and mature."

46. Our cohesion, our determination, respect for the fundamental principles of our Organization will together ensure total and complete success to the lofty and historic mission which has been entrusted to us.

47. Mr. AL ZAWAWI (Oman) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The developing countries are fortunate to have such men as Mr. Amerasinghe. His election to the presidency of the General Assembly's thirty-first session is indeed a wise choice, demonstrating the Assembly's appreciation of the efforts personally exerted by him and by his country for the promotion of international co-operation and accord and the codification of international relations. His participation over many years in the activities of this Organization and in international conferences, the most recent being the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, his chairmanship of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea since its inception, and his recognized diplomatic sagacity, soundness of judgement and ability to bring about acceptable formulations are a guarantee that the work of this session will be brought to the successful conclusion hoped for and anticipated by us all. For all those reasons my delegation extends to Mr. Amerasinghe sincere and heartfelt congratulations, wishing him every success.

48. Nor can I let this occasion pass without expressing my delegation's appreciation to the last President of the General Assembly, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Luxembourg, Mr. Gaston Thorn, who so ably conducted the meetings of the thirtieth session.

49. The United Nations—with a sphere of activities vast and diverse beyond imagination, with enormous capabilities and a wealth of human and technical resources, facing as it does difficulties and crises that sometimes imperil not only the United Nations but the world itself, bringing it to the edge of a dangerous precipice—requires an able man at the helm to steer it out of crises and to exploit all its potential for the preservation of international peace and security. The United Nations could not have found a better Secretary-General than Mr. Kurt Waldheim, who, in the most exemplary fashion, has exerted prodigious efforts in his discharge of this immense international responsibility.

50. My delegation takes pleasure in commending the efforts of Mr. Waldheim and in declaring that his re-election as Secretary-General of this Organization will be instrumental in developing our Organization to serve the interests of world peace and security. My delegation fully supports his re-election to another term, confirming its confidence in his administration of this Organization.

51. This year my delegation is pleased to extend congratulations to the Government and people of Seychelles on their admission to membership of our Organization. The Sultanate of Oman looks forward to that day in the near future when all the countries of the world will be independent, sovereign and represented here, taking part in laying the foundation for global justice, welfare and equality.

52. Despite the success of our Organization in solving certain international problems resulting from colonialism, armed invasion and the forcible occupation of the territory

of independent States, there still remain important problems which pose a threat to world peace and security, problems that demand our urgent attention.

53. Numerous resolutions have been adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly concerning the problem of the Middle East. These resolutions remain to be implemented. For the failure to achieve progress towards a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East has created a state of instability and tension that dominates the region and threatens peace and security not only in that area, but also throughout the world. It is incumbent upon the international community to exercise its legitimate powers by all peaceful means, including the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East as soon as possible, with the participation of all parties concerned, without exception, in order to reach a peaceful settlement of the problem. That, and that alone, is the course that will ensure a relaxation of tension in the region, the course that will promote world peace and security.

54. The Sultanate of Oman, as I have already stated, endorses peaceful coexistence among all nations, irrespective of their system of government, so long as the people of each country have chosen a system that suits their public interest. Unfortunately, however, some major Powers still attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations, using for that end other States over which they have some influence or which subscribe to the same ideology. The object of these agent States is to provoke disturbances, stage coups d'états, encourage subversive elements or incite fratricidal murders, in order to gain approval and win generous rewards from their powerful client States.

55. The sums being wasted to foment such disturbances and dissension are enormous. And at the very time when the financial resources of developing nations are so sorely needed to raise the peoples' standard of living, needed to avert the famine already afflicting some of them, needed to promote economic development, welfare and security in the world framework, these nations find themselves deprived of those resources, which are diverted to the defence of their independence, existence and population against infiltrators and saboteurs.

56. In that connexion I regret that the Foreign Minister of Aden made a speech before the Assembly that was marked by interference in our internal affairs and export of subversive elements to our country. We will not stoop to the level of vituperation and so will not take the trouble to reply, for the people of our region, indeed the people of the whole world, know the kind of Government that is established in Aden and know how it works; they also know the kind of Government established in Oman and its achievements.

57. The Sultanate of Oman, out of its faith in the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs and in pursuance of a policy of good-neighbourly relations, has never interfered and never will interfere in the affairs of any other State, in particular the affairs of its neighbours in the Gulf region. On the contrary, my Government always extends the hand of assistance to our neighbours, not excluding even that neighbour which intervenes in our internal affairs, in the hope that all such States will desist

from intervention and live in peace with their neighbours on the basis of mutual respect for the sovereignty of each of them.

58. My delegation calls upon those countries which attempt to intervene in the affairs of neighbouring countries, and thereby drain their own resources and deprive their own people of much-needed care and well-being, to desist from such intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, whether they be neighbours or not. We call upon those countries to turn their attention to the welfare and development of their own peoples, to endeavour to provide the basis for a decent life for their citizens.

59. My delegation affirms that the Sultanate of Oman, which extends the hand of co-operation to others, is able to defend its integrity and its people against any meddling in its internal affairs by any country. The Sultanate of Oman is further determined to pursue all avenues of co-operation to promote the well-being of all countries in the Gulf area in the context of economic development and world peace.

60. My delegation has a profound faith in full co-operation among developing countries in general. If those developing countries that are neighbours in a given region of the world could join forces to defend their economic, political and defence interests and their security, it would be possible to create zones of peace far removed from the rivalries of the major Powers. It would, further, be possible to achieve inter-zonal co-operation.

61. The creation of such zones would not be extremely difficult, given the *sine qua non* of common interests among the countries of the region, which requires that every country in the zone would be considering its neighbours' interests along with its own, and those interests would provide the sound foundation for good relations.

62. It is well known that the developing countries are not similar in every respect. There are varying degrees of development among those nations, and many fields of development are fully open to close and constructive co-operation among them free of any motivation of selfish gain. The areas of co-operation would be determined by the capabilities and resources available to some and needed by others. If the creation of such co-operation could be achieved by methods consistent with the resources and capabilities of each member, the foundation would be laid for the mobilization of the political will to create such zones of peace, with equality among countries of the zones. Undoubtedly the desire for co-operation would prompt the development of a complex of relations and co-operation in various economic, cultural, social, technological and scientific fields.

63. We believe in this pattern of international co-operation, which would lead to the creation of regional zones, and we declare here our willingness to extend a hand to all countries in our region in order to achieve development and security for our peoples and to preserve our independence against any foreign intervention. It has been demonstrated beyond doubt that a policy of military pacts is doomed to failure and that regional co-operation among neighbouring countries, backed by the political will to

achieve economic, social and cultural development, is the corner-stone for the establishment of groupings whose goal is the attainment of interdependence among members of the region in the interest of regional and international peace and security.

64. Today's world necessitates the creation of such groups among nations bound together by a common destiny. No country, however strong or self-sufficient it may be, can live isolated from the rest of the world, and the security and peace of major Powers actually depend on the security and integrity of the smaller nations. International security is an integral, indivisible whole. With this in mind, we also believe in and support the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a zone of permanent peace [*resolution 2832 (XXVI)*].

65. In the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization the Secretary-General [*A/31/1/Add.1*], substantiating his statement with figures, has reminded us that a situation prevails which constitutes a massive drain on resources. I refer to the expenditure on armaments, which every year amounts to almost \$300 billion. Allocations for the arms race since the Second World War have exceeded \$6,000 billion, which is almost equal to the gross national product of all the countries of the world for the year 1976.

66. This regrettable fact prompts us to ponder the pernicious danger that threatens the human race and its existence. Disarmament, like other international problems, is not an isolated phenomenon. Rather, it is fundamentally linked with international peace and security. There is no doubt that dispelling the fear and uncertainty among States and guaranteeing their safety from aggression, attack, occupation, colonialism and intervention in their internal affairs would significantly contribute to the attainment of the final goal of complete and general disarmament. Then, those staggering sums which are wasted in the arms race could be directed to the development and welfare of the international community.

67. International economic relations require our special and increasing attention since the issue of development is also organically connected with international peace and security. We should not view development in the abstract or in isolation from international politics. Developing countries do not regard the question of development as a lifeless mathematical equation but view it in terms of their portion of daily bread.

68. The Economic Declaration of the non-aligned countries adopted by the Colombo Conference in August 1976 [*A/31/197, annex II*] has confirmed this fact. That Declaration also stresses the practical means to achieve development in the world. On the basis of the principle of international interdependence, the burdens of development postulate effective participation by the developed countries and the developing countries. The developing countries are themselves fully aware that they, too, have responsibilities and obligations in the advancement of their economies. Both sides of the scale should be equally weighted, and burdens should be measured against capacities and resources.

69. We now have a heap of international documents which voice the conscience of the world and whose provisions deserve to be put into effect and to be respected since they are the result of long and exhausting studies and negotia-

tions. I am referring to the proceedings of the United Nations General Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions and at other, regular, sessions, as well as to documents emanating from other international conferences. In particular I am referring to the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [*resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)*] and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [*resolution 3281 (XXIX)*]. All those international documents urge consideration of the patterns of existing international economic relations whether in the field of international trade, of international monetary structure, of the flow of capital and investment, of the transfer of technology or of world food or in the organizational arrangements in those fields.

70. My delegation appeals to developed countries to do their duty in the cause of international development—not by making grants or donations but, rather by entering into a commitment to their partners in the international community for their common good and for the elimination of a serious danger that threatens world peace and security.

71. My delegation is fully convinced that the developing countries, on their own side, must spare no effort to play their part, whether this calls for self-reliance, co-operation among themselves, or reaching an understanding with the developed world to achieve their goals on the road to development.

72. Proceeding from the principle of international co-operation, in which we all believe, especially co-operation in promoting international trade, shipping and the exploitation of the mineral resources of the seabed, the Sultanate of Oman has effectively participated in the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, the fifth session of which, it was hoped, would reach an international agreement taking into account the interests of all nations and provide a practical and useful régime of the sea.

73. Oman has effectively contributed to all the previous sessions of the Conference. It has submitted working papers in which it outlined its position on navigation in an attempt to reach acceptable and just solutions. This manifests our direct concern with questions of navigation, especially in the straits used for international navigation, as the Sultanate of Oman is a developing strait and coastal State. It is interested, in the first instance, in the protection of its security and sovereignty over its territories so that it may carry out its role of protecting and ensuring the regularity of international navigation in the interest of development and the promotion of world trade. In this, we are ready to co-operate with all countries in order to attain a bright and better future for an ideal international community.

74. Although the Conference has not yet achieved reconciliation of the conflicting interests or overcome the doubts and fears of certain countries, or mitigated the excessive concern of others for their own interests, we sincerely hope that the Conference will, at its next session in May 1977, reach solutions to these conflicting positions and adopt the international convention awaited by all of us in the common interest of mankind.

75. Having reviewed my country's point of view on various international problems, my delegation holds that we

cannot solve our political, economic and human issues except with sincere efforts to realize the objectives stipulated by the Charter of our Organization. This cannot be done with words or speeches, but with positive and serious action, through co-operation in the assessment of our problems in a realistic and practical manner. In this way, we will be able to attain the common good which will be beneficial to all parties concerned and to the world at large.

76. Let us then replace international confrontation with international co-operation in our discussions of the problems before us in our work this year. Let us reconcile our own interests with the general interest of the international community in order to realize the aspirations of people everywhere, who expect our Organization to do much towards the achievement of development and international peace and security.

77. Ever since His Majesty Sultan Qabus assumed the leadership of the Sultanate of Oman, the Sultanate has been working with dedication to the principles I have just mentioned to achieve development for its people and other peoples of the world, on the basis of regional and international understanding and co-operation.

78. Oman will effectively exert all its efforts, and direct all its capacities and its full potential, to attaining the fundamental objectives of our Organization, objectives in which Oman has the profoundest faith, for the establishment of an ideal international community in which prosperity, security and peace shall prevail everywhere.

79. Mr. WODAJO (Ethiopia): The election of Ambassador Amerasinghe to the presidency of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly is symbolic in many ways. In addition to being a fitting recognition of his personal qualities as a diplomat who has attained the stature of a statesman, coming as it does after the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held recently in his beautiful country, his election is a tribute to Sri Lanka's contribution to the cause of the United Nations and heralds the new role non-aligned countries are determined to play in international affairs.

80. To the outgoing President of the Assembly who, despite his responsibility as head of his country's Government, devoted much of his time and effort to the work of the United Nations, I extend the gratitude of my delegation.

81. The job of the Secretary-General is not only, as it is often described, an impossible one, but very often may be a thankless task as well. The nature of the office limits what a Secretary-General can say to set the record straight or even to defend himself when unfairly attacked. Courageously and resolutely, Mr. Kurt Waldheim has used the mandate and the authority of his office in defence of the principles of the United Nations Charter. The present Secretary-General will always be remembered for his forthright and forceful stand on the issues of colonialism and racism in southern Africa when it counted most.

82. We welcome Seychelles to membership in the United Nations and are looking forward to working very closely with its delegation.

83. The death of Chairman Mao has deprived revolutionary peoples everywhere of a great teacher and leader. My Government has expressed to the Government and people of China at the highest level the sense of loss and grief the Ethiopian people feels. On behalf of my delegation, I reiterate those sentiments.

84. The increase of the membership of the United Nations from 51 States to 145 reflects the transformation the world Organization has undergone in the last 30 years. Although this change is readily recognized by all, its full implications are not fully appreciated. Most of the problems in international life today can be traced to the failure of the international community to recognize and accommodate the changes that have taken place since the Second World War. The prospect of peace and orderly international life will also depend on the capacity of the international community as embodied by the United Nations to respond in timely fashion to much-needed change in the future.

85. When the United Nations was founded 30 years ago, virtually all of Africa and Asia was under colonial domination. Socialism, although firmly established by then in one country, was very much a force of the future. The co-operation among the big Powers which the prosecution of the war against fascism required was counted upon to provide the basis for a new collective security founded upon big-Power unanimity in the Security Council.

86. No sooner had the war against fascism ended than the peoples of Asia and Africa rose up against the colonial order. The old contradictions between socialism and capitalism, muted temporarily during the war period, reappeared and, with them, the hope for international security predicated on big-Power unanimity receded.

87. For the greater part of the post-war period, the United Nations became the arena for a trial of strength rather than a forum for a constructive accommodation of the inevitable changes that followed. Rendered ineffective by the failure to recognize for the United Nations a central role in international affairs, most of the revolutionary changes that took place in the world not only bypassed the Organization but, propelled by historical forces, proceeded despite the United Nations.

88. For almost two decades the United Nations remained a spectator when the great anti-colonial struggle unfolded. In Indonesia, South-East Asia and North Africa, the United Nations could not avert bloodshed before the peoples of those regions won their independence. In other areas, the United Nations played little more than a marginal role in their decolonization.

89. Although a nuclear holocaust and big-Power confrontation may have been averted in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, hostilities have occurred all too often to cast doubt on the efficacy of the United Nations as a guardian of the peace. Hardly any significant agreement has been achieved involving a reduction of existing stocks of armaments. All the lamentations about disarmament have only resulted in limited agreements on arms control and have not placed any significant constraint on the frightful accumulation of conventional and thermonuclear weapons, or on their increasing sophistication.

90. For a long time, discussions in the United Nations on international co-operation for economic development have focused on the symptoms rather than on the underlying causes. Almost no attention has been given, until very recently, to the need to restructure the international economic order and to redistribute equitably the world's economic surpluses.

91. All in all, the record of the United Nations performance shows, in the main, a great many lost opportunities. The immediate future will therefore depend on what the international community can do to utilize for constructive ends the remaining opportunities before time runs out on it. Over the long haul, however, the balance hangs on the capacity of the world community to perceive the requirements for change and on its flexibility for accommodation.

92. As we enter the fourth decade of the United Nations, we should recognize that even while we are calling for a new world order based on new patterns of relationships, the fact remains that the Powers that be have not accepted for what they are the changes that have taken place. There is need, therefore, to show where there is a refusal to accept change, for a world that has closed its eyes to an accommodation of the changes that have occurred despite the United Nations cannot now be expected to bring about the far-reaching restructuring of international relationships that a more secure and prosperous world requires.

93. Where does this impasse lie?

94. First and foremost, there seems to be less than full appreciation of the fact that, with the independence of several Asian and African colonial Territories and their admission to the United Nations, the alignment and the equation of forces in international relations have changed. The majority of the present membership of the United Nations is made up today of countries which had attained independence in the last 15 years. Likewise, the number of Member States with a socialist system has increased. Some of the older Members have themselves undergone internal metamorphosis and are today either under revolutionary or nationalistic leaderships which reflect and articulate the will of their people.

95. The outcome of all these transformations has been to push to the foreground the problems which the third-world countries face, particularly in their relations with the established order—colonialism; the strengthening of independence and sovereignty, especially over the use and disposition of natural resources; the struggle for a new order based on mutual respect for sovereignty and restraint from interference; and a call for new terms of trade and economic relationships. On all these problems, the newly independent countries are articulating demands which confront deeply entrenched vested interests and old ways of doing things.

96. In the United Nations, the resistance to accept these new forces is reflected in the contemptuous disregard by the Powers that be of resolutions of the General Assembly adopted with the overwhelming support of the membership as the *diktat* of an irresponsible and mechanical majority.

97. In the same manner as those emerging forces have been excluded from the management of the economic and

financial affairs of an increasingly interdependent world in which the decision of a few rich and powerful countries has immediate, and often times deleterious, consequences on the well-being of the great majority, the notion has been advanced that voting in the General Assembly of the United Nations should be based on some weighted system reflecting the economic and military power of each Member State. Only then, it is suggested, the tyranny of the majority can be broken. Only then, it is said, can there be an orderly management of world affairs. Nothing is said, of course, of the mechanical majorities of yesteryears which trumpeted as the genuine expressions of the will of the peoples of the world, nor of the fact that what is being prescribed now is the legitimization of the tyranny of the minority.

98. Not content with the monopoly of power which they enjoy, the surrogates of the established order are being more than myopic in suggesting that, in order to cope with the demands of the new forces, their own power in the General Assembly should be further enhanced. The present international security system, which has placed arbitrary power in the hands of a few countries, has prevented the resources of the international community from being employed in favour of the liberation of colonial peoples, to combat racism and to liquidate the consequences of aggression. Instead, it has been used mainly to preserve the *status quo*.

99. Denying financial contributions to programmes of the United Nations supported by the great majority of Members is yet another leverage they exert to frustrate the will of the majority.

100. A concrete manifestation of the resistance to change is the actions of certain permanent members in increasingly resorting in the Security Council to the use of the veto to block forceful action when peace is breached or threatened. As a result of the exercise of the veto, the United Nations is held in complete immobility in the face of threats to peace and aggression in southern Africa and the Middle East. Nations of the world have so lost confidence in the security provided by the United Nations that they are now relying more and more on the acquisition of weapons of war.

101. Even more contemptuous is the use of the veto to deprive the peoples of Angola and Viet Nam of their right to membership in the United Nations. Despite the wrath of one permanent member the rest of the world has not only welcomed but rejoiced in their independence as a development that would strengthen the struggle against colonialism and imperialism everywhere. The peoples of Angola and Viet Nam have an inalienable right to their rightful places in the United Nations. They have strengthened that right by the indomitable struggle they have waged and by the price they have paid dearly in blood, sweat and toil.

102. We have now reached an impasse where the United Nations has become a platform for a sterile confrontation rather than a medium for innovative accommodation. The minority, however powerful it may be, should take due account of the will of the majority. There cannot be an orderly accommodation of change, nor can we realize our hopes for a more secure and prosperous world, if the powerful few regard the voice of the peoples of the world as expressed in General Assembly resolutions as irresponsible cries that can be ignored with impunity.

103. The choice is clear: that the international community either move with the United Nations now in the search for practical and just solutions to the problems of liberation, peace and development, while there is still time and a residue of goodwill, or be bypassed by the swift currents of events as an irrelevant symbol of stillborn hope.

104. The United Nations does not seem to have very much time—by all prognoses some three years at the most—to seize whatever is left of the abundant opportunities that have been frittered away to solve the problems of southern Africa and the Middle East and to initiate a process towards disarmament and the establishment of a new international order. If we go at the present pace, there will not be very much time. If, on the other hand, we move with deliberate speed and with a keen perception of the alternatives, not only shall we be able to arrest the dissipation of these last remaining opportunities but we may even succeed in turning them back towards fertile ground where they will germinate, send deep roots and multiply.

105. That is why today we should have a very clear understanding of the inevitable march of forces and events and should adopt a realistic agenda and a time-frame. And it is against this background that my delegation would like to plead for a sense of urgency in all those sensitive matters where the prospect of total liberation and peace hang in the balance.

106. First, there is southern Africa. Did it require the slaughter by the brutal police of the *apartheid* régime of over 500 helpless schoolchildren, the maiming of several hundred and the imprisonment of thousands of black people for the world to begin to realize that an explosive situation was developing? Did the Sharpeville massacre of 1959 not foretell what was to come?

107. The records of the United Nations are full of the death cries of the people of South Africa. The records also amply show the warnings of African countries and others that the whole situation was evolving towards a dramatic confrontation which could only end in a terrible racial war, the consequences of which would not be confined within the borders of South Africa.

108. What has the United Nations done despite the warnings? With ritual regularity, the General Assembly and its Committees have been issuing edicts expressing their disapproval—now elevated to abhorrence—of the system of *apartheid* as being incompatible with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

109. In the meantime, however, things have been left to go on as they always have. Despite repeated calls for the adoption of sanctions, South Africa's trade with the great industrial Powers of the West has been assisted to flourish. South Africa has been allowed to purchase highly sophisticated weapons of war, which has made its forces, at least on paper, the most powerful in Africa. It has obtained the collaboration of Israel in the development of certain weapon systems. France sells to it nuclear reactors which, whatever the safeguards, whatever the promise sought or received, will enhance South Africa's capability to develop its own nuclear weapons.

110. Emboldened, and encouraged in some instances, by its major economic partners, South Africa is pursuing, in the name of self-determination, the creation of bantustans which would give artificially created black ghettos the appearance of independence, with flags and national anthems and the other symbols of independence, while every precaution will be taken to make these bantustans an integral part of the South African economy by developing them as dependent and defenceless reservoirs of cheap labour.

111. Despite the termination of whatever legal pretence it might have had for administering Namibia on behalf of the international community, South Africa has continued to deny the people their right to self-determination and independence and has frustrated all attempts by the United Nations to assume interim responsibility in order to complete arrangements for the transfer to the people of the powers of government. For over 30 years, since the very first session of the General Assembly, when its request to incorporate Namibia into its territory was rejected, South Africa has engaged in one manoeuvre after another, in one dilatory tactic after another, often shifting grounds. First, South Africa claimed sovereignty over Namibia by virtue of the right of military conquest. When this position became untenable, South Africa claimed a special right to administer Namibia under the Mandate of the League of Nations, despite the demise of that organization. The International Court of Justice rejected this contention and insisted that South Africa should be fully accountable to the United Nations for its administration of Namibia.<sup>2</sup>

112. When South Africa refused to recognize its obligation to be accountable to the international community, the United Nations terminated its Mandate, called for the immediate independence of Namibia within its present frontiers and assumed direct responsibility to arrange for the exercise of self-determination.

113. Now that South Africa is confronted with the immediate spectre of a liberation struggle waged by SWAPO—which would undoubtedly have the effect of galvanizing the revolutionary struggle in its own territory—as a last-ditch manoeuvre to buy time and to stem the inevitable march of independence, it is making preparations to arrange for a bogus exercise of self-determination. The latest response that South Africa has given to the demand of the Security Council to comply, by 31 August of this year, with all General Assembly and Security Council resolutions to terminate its illegal occupation of Namibia, accept United Nations responsibility and hand over the powers of government to the authentic representatives of the people, in the form of a declaration of a so-called constitutional conference, is but an exercise in evasion.

114. As in the past, South Africa is now counting on the disposition of the United Nations to give it one more chance to show its good faith by giving the appearance that this latest manoeuvre represents an honest attempt to meet the requirements of United Nations resolutions. The fact of

<sup>2</sup> *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970), Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 1971, p. 16.*

the matter is, however, that by excluding from the so-called constitutional conference SWAPO, which, through revolutionary struggle, has gained the right to speak and act on behalf of the people of Namibia, South Africa has revealed its true intentions. By leaving in ambiguity the question of Namibia's accession to independence with its present territorial integrity intact, South Africa is giving adequate notice that it wishes to continue to implement its policy of "bantustanization". Even more indicative of South Africa's true design is the fact that at the same time it is talking about constitutional conference it is extending to Namibia the application of its *apartheid* laws, it is increasingly militarizing the Territory and is developing it as a base of operation against the independence and sovereignty of Zambia and Angola.

115. Zimbabwe stands today as a monument to the complete failure of the will and gross negligence by the United Nations of all responsibility. A small group of white racist settlers, numbering some 250,000, has been allowed to successfully usurp the responsibility of the United Kingdom to advance the people to independence, to deny to the indigenous inhabitants of Zimbabwe their right to independence, and to defy and frustrate all attempts by the United Nations, including the imposition of mandatory sanctions, to end the rebellion.

116. Once again, the hand and design of South Africa are visible. South Africa considers Zimbabwe the outer perimeter of its defence and has sent its troops there to bolster the Rhodesian rebel authorities in their brutal attempt to crush the liberation struggle. Even more significant is the fact that, by providing its territory as a corridor of evasion, South Africa, with the co-operation and complicity of others, has successfully frustrated United Nations sanctions.

117. The picture in southern Africa is now clear. The racist and colonialist forces are strongly anchored in the *apartheid* régime of South Africa. From that racist bastion they are endeavouring to buy insurance that would protect them against the advance of independence. They want to achieve this by showing aggressive prowess, as evidenced by their brazen attacks on Angola, Zambia and Mozambique, and combining that posture with the appearance of a disposition to negotiate. They also seem to be looking towards their traditional partners for help to bail them out by salvaging the core of the colonialist interest through a commitment to defend the *apartheid* system.

118. The questions that inevitably arise are, What are the envisaged negotiations about? What price are the Africans asked to pay?

119. It should be clear that there cannot be any negotiations in any constitutional conference of any format except for transferring the powers of government to the authentic representatives of the people. That much should be clear and more. No arrangement designed to protect entrenched colonial interests, ostensibly claimed under the label of minority rights, can be acceptable. The independence of the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia will have to be unconditional and unencumbered.

120. In the case of Zimbabwe, where an interim transitional arrangement might be necessary, that will have to be

as brief as possible with a very clear definition of what the transition is supposed to achieve. Most important, however, is that even the transitional arrangement will have to be based on majority rule. South Africa has no right to administer Namibia, and it cannot now be asked to be the prime mover for a peaceful solution. Any constitutional conference, any negotiating process for independence will have to be under the aegis of the United Nations, with SWAPO acting as the principal, authentic representative of the people.

121. In any negotiating effort for the independence of Namibia and Zimbabwe, including the one initiated by the Secretary of State of the United States, Dr. Henry Kissinger, the impression should be avoided that South Africa is allowed to use the independence of those two countries as bargaining chips to obtain Africa's acquiescence in its *apartheid* system. Even less, South Africa should not be made to feel that it is indeed buying insurance. Let there be no mistake: the struggle against *apartheid* will continue. With the independence of Zimbabwe and Namibia the struggle will, instead of abating, intensify. The international community should not be deluded into believing that the independence of those two countries will usher in a period of tranquillity, brotherhood and peace. The international community should therefore brace itself for the prospect of an intensified struggle, and everything should be done now, while there is time, to avoid a tragic racial conflagration.

122. The key to avoiding a racial blood-bath is South Africa. As long as 4 million whites continue to deprive 16 million Africans and other non-whites of equality, justice and a role in the government of their country and attempt to herd them into racial ghettos, there cannot be tranquillity, there cannot be peace in southern Africa. That is the inevitable outcome and the world has to be prepared for it.

123. That is why today no plan can hope to advance the prospect of a peaceful solution to the fast-developing racial confrontation unless it also includes the readiness of the international community to impose sanctions against South Africa. There should be tangible proof that the major trading partners of South Africa will move towards sanctions with the rest of the international community. Short of that, they will have to realize that the continuation of their present policies will countenance and strengthen the grip of the *apartheid* system.

124. South Africa will have to be made aware that, until it removes the *apartheid* system, it will face economic and political sanctions vigorously enforced by the United Nations.

125. In Namibia and with regard to the struggle against *apartheid*, the moment of truth has come: either we move with determination in the direction of mandatory sanctions or, through inaction, increase the chances for a racial blood bath. As I have suggested, we do not have much time. We should be wiser before we are overtaken by developments.

126. I wish briefly to refer to other colonial problems. The Comoros has been dismembered on the way to independence. Its independence cannot be considered complete, nor France's mission to decolonize those islands fulfilled, unless Mayotte is united in independence with the Comoros.

127. Ethiopia sincerely hopes that the dispute that has arisen between friendly African countries regarding the exercise of self-determination by the people of Western Sahara will be resolved by all the parties concerned. Certain standards will have to be met in the exercise of self-determination when a people under colonial domination advances to independence. With the overriding interest and right of the Saharan people to self-determination taking precedence over other considerations, and in the interest of peace in that region of Africa, every effort should be made to see that the exercise of self-determination will meet the requirements of recognized standards.

128. French colonialism in Djibouti is a spent force without much will to linger on. The only way it can stay on in one guise or another is by taking advantage of circumstances that outside forces may create for it. African countries should, therefore, continue their vigilance and should make sure that the call they have especially made to the two neighbouring countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia, at the last summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity [OAU],<sup>3</sup> held recently in Mauritius, should be completely adhered to and implemented. That call consists of a request that Ethiopia and Somalia should renounce any and all territorial claims to Djibouti and that they give an undertaking to respect the independence and territorial integrity of Djibouti after its accession to independence.

129. Ethiopia, on its part, has made an unequivocal declaration at the highest possible level and reaffirmed several times that it does not have any territorial claim to the whole or any part of Djibouti.

130. As a further demonstration of its good faith and as a contribution to the acceleration of the independence of the Territory, and in the interest of peace and stability in the region, Ethiopia submitted at the last African summit meeting a declaration to be jointly subscribed to by Ethiopia and Somalia that would commit the two countries to renounce any territorial claim they may have and to respect the independence and the territorial integrity of an independent Djibouti.

131. The only response from the other neighbour of Djibouti to the call of OAU was to say, without ever renouncing its territorial claim, that it is prepared to accept the exercise of self-determination and the liberation of the Territory. Such a declaration from that neighbouring State is in keeping with its often repeated policy because it considers Djibouti as being already part of its national territory which is now "under foreign occupation".

132. Somalia has rejected the declaration we proposed to be signed under the authority of OAU on the flimsy ground that a solemn pledge by the two neighbouring States to respect the territorial integrity of an independent Djibouti would impose a limitation on the sovereignty of the new State, and would also create a right for the two States which they might use to intervene in Djibouti's internal affairs. Nothing could be further from the objective our

declaration seeks to achieve than this interpretation. Indeed, instead of creating a right, our declaration, on the contrary, pre-empted any and all claims to rights in Djibouti, such as a territorial right, which might be used as a pretext for intervention. The analogy with the Cyprus case, often used by Somalia, in addition to being inaccurate, is deliberately advanced to mislead and to confuse the issue.

133. OAU has asked France to make immediate arrangements to transfer the powers of government to the people. OAU has also called for a conference of all political parties and groups as well as of liberation movements to be held in Accra, Ghana, under its auspices, with a view to creating a transitional government of national unity to complete the final preparation which would pave the way for the independence of the Territory. There is now in the Territory only a coalition government of two political groups. The base of the transitional government has to be expanded in accordance with the demands of OAU.

134. We hope that this thirty-first session of the General Assembly will discuss the independence of Djibouti and will strengthen the actions recommended by OAU by giving them its support.

135. The Middle East is one of those problem areas where, the longer we wait, the more intractable a peaceful solution becomes. After so many missed opportunities, time now seems to have imposed a limit on a peaceful solution. Although we may disagree on the time-frame, there is no doubt that it is not one that can allow us indulgently to proceed at the present pace.

136. The requirements for a peaceful solution are known and have often been repeated here and in other international forums. Israel must withdraw from all Arab territories that it has occupied since June 1967. Israel must recognize the right of the Palestinian people to a national homeland. The Palestinian Liberation Organization must take part in all negotiations for peaceful settlements.

137. Once those requirements are accepted, talks and negotiations in one format or another can proceed with a view to implementing the principles of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

138. Unless some visible progress is made soon towards peace, the opportunities that have led to agreements on the disengagement of forces will be lost irretrievably.

139. I said earlier that a world that refuses to accommodate changes that have taken place will be hard put to bring about those far-reaching transformations in the relations of States, especially between the rich and the poor, the exploited and the exploiter, the weak and the powerful. Thus, the urgency to solve some of the outstanding problems, in addition to ensuring international peace and security, is directly linked with the effort to create a more secure and prosperous world.

140. There are three major areas of international concern which call for a profound change of attitude, accommodation of interests and a determination to avoid conflicts by anticipating the potential sources of such conflicts and removing them, while there is time. These are disarmament,

<sup>3</sup> Thirteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held at Port Louis, Mauritius, from 2 to 6 July 1976.

the law of the sea and the creation of a new economic order.

141. The nations of the world are now spending over \$300 billion for armaments. Almost 70 per cent of this huge sum is accounted for by the investment of a few countries. Arms sales have also grown enormously, increasing from about \$6 billion five years ago to about \$30 billion in 1975.

142. As a result of the spread of nuclear technology, the number of countries which may be considered as having nuclear weapons capability has now increased to 35.

143. Some notable achievements in the arms control field were made in the 1960s. These modest achievements for a moment had even led to some optimism that the momentum of the arms race might be arrested in the 1970s. But this optimism has now been replaced by a foreboding pessimism as a result of lack of progress in the last few years.

144. In the second half of the Disarmament Decade, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) has almost nothing to report by way of progress in disarmament negotiations. And this has happened despite the fact that the General Assembly has repeatedly requested CCD to give highest priority to a host of disarmament measures, including, for example, the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban agreement and the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons as well as new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

145. My delegation feels that there is need to inject a sense of urgency in disarmament talks and to generate some momentum. A special session of the General Assembly devoted to the consideration of all the outstanding problems of disarmament, as recommended by the recent non-aligned summit meeting,<sup>4</sup> might achieve this purpose.

146. The oceans and the seas cover more than two-thirds of our planet. Even when we find it difficult to establish the rule of law to govern the relations of States on the inhabited part of the globe, we have to think of how to regulate State interests and inter-State relations over and beneath the wide expanses of water, which modern technology has brought within reach of utilization for man's benefit.

147. The attempt to create a régime of law on the utilization of the resources of the sea and the sea-bed is one of the most challenging tasks ever undertaken by the United Nations. It is challenging because it is one of the rare moments in history when the nations of the world have seen well in advance that their collective interests would be better served if they placed limits on their rights and behaviour and if they planned and worked together for the utilization of the resources of the sea and the sea-bed for the benefit of all.

148. This endeavour to create an acceptable régime for the sea is in a race against the disposition of each State, especially where the possibility and the technology exist, to

stake out unilateral claims which, unless arrested, would narrow the margin for co-operation.

149. There is thus need to put the lid of moratorium on unilateral claims and to accelerate progress towards agreement.

150. The prevailing patterns of relationships, especially between third-world countries and the developed and industrialized countries of the West, are characterized by basic inequalities. Some aspects of these relationships are in some measure a carry-over of colonial ties, while others are affected by attitudes which accept those relations as normal and, on the whole, as mutually beneficial.

151. Relations between the "haves" and the "have-nots" have long suffered from outlooks that tended to rationalize the preservation of vested interests and historically accumulated advantages. In the name of free trade, the developing countries were asked to abandon policies which would help them assert control over their natural resources as well as assure them a more equitable revenue from their exports, while at the same time the industrialized countries denied to the exports of the developing countries unencumbered access to their markets. It was claimed that international trade would expand with proportionate benefits accruing to all the nations of the world if they were to maximize the production of those commodities for which they may have unique advantages. However, this argument conveniently ignored the fact that, for historical reasons, the balance of advantages, particularly in the field of industrialization, was lop-sidedly in favour of the developed countries.

152. Similarly, discussion of development problems in and outside the United Nations was constrained by limited vision. Most of the talks focused on resource transfers from the developed to the developing countries. Until very recently little or nothing was heard about the need to do away with built-in inequalities in international economic relationships, with economic advantages preserved through monopolistic practices, exclusive access to technology and, in some instances, to the resources and markets of developing countries.

153. In order to show how these built-in inequities distort the distribution of world economic surpluses, let us take the case of international trade, the mainstay of the present order.

154. Excluding oil exports, about 12 major primary commodities account for about 80 per cent of the total export earnings of the developing countries. The final consumers pay over \$200 billion for these commodities and their products, while the primary producers—the developing countries—obtain only about \$30 billion, the middlemen taking the difference. Another example is that out of \$102 billion of international reserves created during the period 1970-1974, the developing countries received \$3.7 billion or less than 4 per cent.

155. We cannot today realistically speak about economic development and, even less hope to find just and equitable solutions to the ills of under-development, unless the problem is seen in the context of the need to build new structures of economic relationships. As long as there is no change in these basic structures, all our development efforts

<sup>4</sup> See document A/31/197, annex IV, resolution 12.

will not only remain palliatives but they could also become self-defeating.

156. What is required at this juncture of history is a new economic and social order which recognizes the changes that have taken place in the post-war years as well as the need for further change. The liberation from colonialism of a large number of peoples has cut the Gordian knot of dependency relationships, but these yet remain to be replaced by relationships based on sovereign equality, mutual benefit and a shared sense of mutual responsibility for development and the management of the world's economic and financial affairs. In short, this new economic order should be predicated on the recognition of the increasing interdependence of the international community. This interdependence has created a chain of cause-and-effect relationships in what nations do or fail to do. While no one country is immune from the consequences of the actions of others, the poor and the disadvantaged inevitably suffer most. The solutions of the major economic problems today require the concerted and the converging action of all.

157. The development of the third-world countries is a central problem. International trade has to be restructured to bring to developing countries their due share of the benefit. Not only should they be enabled to have unencumbered access to the markets of the industrialized countries but also their export earnings should be protected from seasonal fluctuations and these should be held at reasonable levels of parity with the prices of industrial products.

158. The historical disadvantages are such that better terms of trade alone would not be enough. Aid has to become a vital component of a new international development strategy. In order to play such a role, aid has to be conceived not as charity but as an investment which would redound to the benefit of all. Aid has to be more concessionary and, especially with regard to the least developed and disadvantaged, it should be made available mostly as grants. Donor countries should also alleviate the heavy burden of debt-servicing borne by the developing countries. Any agreement to that end should be considered as additional aid rather than a cancellation of contractual obligations. Some organic link should also be established between development financing and the creation of new international liquidity.

159. I should like to conclude my statement by offering some observations on the achievements of the recent non-aligned Conference held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. First of all, the impact of the results of that Conference should not be lost on the United Nations. The views expressed by them represent the hopes and the aspirations of over 2 billion people who are represented in the United Nations by 82 sovereign States.

160. At Colombo the non-aligned countries defined a new role for their policies. That role is to help bring about new structures of peace and prosperity through dialogue and accommodation. They also gave notice that the non-alignment policy they wish to pursue is not one of acceptance of the present *status quo* but one that seeks change in favour of the liberation of peoples, the assertion of sovereignty over natural resources, the liquidation of the consequences of aggression and the pursuit of just and

equitable policies for the solution of specific regional and international problems.

161. Central to their aspirations is the creation of a new economic order within which they would play an appropriate role to ensure the interest of their people on the basis of equality, mutual benefits and recognition of common responsibility for the well-being of an increasingly inter-dependent world.

162. In particular, Ethiopia subscribes to the views of the non-aligned movement on a number of specific problems, such as the question of Cyprus, the problem of the Korean peninsula and others regarding Latin America.

163. My country shares the course charted by the non-aligned movement. The new Ethiopia believes in a dynamic non-alignment which is committed to change. Ethiopia believes that at a time when third-world countries are calling for radical changes in the international order, each one of us has the responsibility of carrying out internally those changes that would make our demands at the international level credible.

164. The PRESIDENT: The representative of France wishes to speak in exercise of his right of reply. Members will recall that the General Assembly at its 4th plenary meeting decided that statements in exercise of the right of reply should be limited to 10 minutes.

165. Mr. LECOMPT (France) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of France has asked to be allowed to speak in order to make a clarification in regard to the statement made this afternoon by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Comoros.

166. My delegation has already had a opportunity, here and elsewhere, to state its position clearly on this question. It will do so very briefly once again now.

167. The island of Mayotte is an integral part of the French Republic because of the freely expressed will of its people. The people of Mayotte, the Mahorais, have confirmed their choice by a large majority and in complete freedom during several consultations. That is a fact which everyone should take into account. France does not have the kind of ambitious designs on Mayotte that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Comoros alleged it had. It simply feels obliged to take into consideration the wishes of a population which it is not seeking to recolonize and to which it intends to propose a provisional status of an evolving nature.

168. For its part, the French Government has absolutely no intention to back away from dialogue or to impose any kind of ostracism at all on the State of the Comoros. It remains prepared to seek agreement on the basis of existing circumstances, which it has not lost hope of overcoming so that reconciliation may be achieved.

169. Nothing is immutable. My delegation wishes again to provide assurance to that effect. We hope that our language will be understood by everyone. We shall adhere to this proposition on Monday next, when the problem in question will again be discussed here.

*The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.*