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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. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Pressure of work forced Mr. Ismail Fahmy, head of the Egyptian delegation and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, to stay in Cairo, and he has asked me to deliver this statement on his behalf.

2. I have the pleasure to address this Assembly at its thirty-first session under the presidency of Mr. Amerasinghe. His unanimous election as President of this session signifies international regard for the great Asian continent and for Sri Lanka, a country with which we have close friendship. It is also an expression of the recognition and esteem in which he is held. The close ties of friendship and co-operation between our two countries and the pioneering role played by Mrs. Bandaranaike in leading her country and in contributing to efforts to render the non-aligned movement successful make it an added pleasure to congratulate him.

3. I should like also to express our esteem to Mr. Gaston Thorn, the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, who presided over the thirtieth session of the General Assembly.

4. I should like, too, to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to Mr. Kurt Waldheim, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his continuous and commendable efforts in carrying out the many and important responsibilities placed on his shoulders. Mr. Waldheim's record of activity and achievement, as well as the statements delivered by him in numerous forums, the latest of which were the African summit conference¹ and the non-aligned

Conference,² reflect clearly the dynamism of the Secretary-General and his full commitment to our Organization's aims and its endeavours to build a new world—a world of justice, prosperity and peace. In commending his efforts, Egypt supports his re-election to a second term of office.

5. In the name of Egypt, I congratulate and welcome the Republic of Seychelles. We are confident that independent Seychelles will be a new asset, serving the cause of peace and justice in the world. While the admission of Seychelles to the United Nations may be said to mark a new step towards the universality of the Organization, we earnestly hope that this universality will be completed very soon by the admission of Angola, unified Viet Nam, Namibia, the free State of Palestine and Zimbabwe.

6. Before proceeding with the rest of my statement, I should like, on behalf of the People and Government of Egypt, to pay a tribute to the memory of Chairman Mao Tsetung, a great leader. The people and Government of Egypt have shared whole-heartedly the grief of the great Chinese people over the regrettable loss of Chairman Mao, who left his mark on the history of his country as he led it to progress. His constructive action for a better future for humanity and the establishment of a just peace in the world will always be remembered.

7. The world today is one of constant movement and change. The phenomenon of international détente symbolizes the change which has taken place in relations between the super-Powers, but the third-world countries and all peace-loving peoples are still striving resolutely to build a new world—a world which rejects all forms of domination, coercion, exploitation and discrimination.

8. The kind of world they hope to build is one in which a new international economic order can be realized, bringing about economic well-being for all, social justice for all and a just peace for all—a world, as the Secretary-General explained in the introduction to his report to this session on the work of the Organization [A/31/1/Add.1], which respects the resolutions of the United Nations and international law—in short, a world that is governed by the principles and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations.

9. The countries of the third world have defined their attitude towards the phenomenon of détente on more than one occasion, most recently at the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries. The Non-Aligned States welcomed the progress so far

¹ Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held at Port Louis, Mauritius, from 2 to 5 July 1976.

² Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo from 16 to 19 August 1976.

achieved in the relaxation of tension between the great Powers, but they emphasized that détente was still limited both in scope and geographical extent.

10. When President Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat addressed the thirtieth session of the General Assembly on 29 October 1975, he had this to say:

"We in Egypt are for détente and welcome it, if it takes into account the interests of small States, their national destinies and the aspirations of their peoples. Détente cannot be what it means unless it is an interaction, from the bottom to the top."³

11. The third-world countries have demonstrated their clear understanding of the importance of international détente between the two super-Powers and the developed countries have to demonstrate an understanding of the aspirations of the third world to see a new international community. The two super-Powers and the developed countries have to put their weight behind the causes of right and justice in the world, politically, economically and socially.

12. We live on one planet, sharing one and the same destiny—either peace for all or destruction for all. This is the real meaning which the peoples of the United Nations had in mind when they established our international Organization. This is the significance of our meeting here each year: to emphasize and reaffirm our commitment to the principles and goals of the Charter of the United Nations and to review the positive and negative aspects of our activities for the purpose of adopting stands and resolutions that would ensure solutions to problems faced by our international community.

13. We have to bear in mind our great responsibility toward millions of people throughout the world, and maintain their confidence in our Organization's ability to realize their aspirations to live in conditions of just and durable peace. The extent to which we discharge this responsibility will determine the extent of change and movement in our international community—a change that will take place either through peaceful and balanced means, or through violence.

14. Many of the international problems which confront us are pressing and complicated. While some of these problems can wait, there are others which are more explosive and urgent. Procrastination in solving such problems would be tantamount to inviting a powder-keg to explode, thus threatening the peace and security of the world and the very existence of the United Nations, particularly as such problems affect the very principles and foundations on which the United Nations was established.

15. We cannot ask peoples in the last quarter of the twentieth century to be patient while their sovereignty is violated, while their territory is occupied, or while they are prevented from exercising their right to self-determination. We cannot ask peoples to accept the humiliation of

apartheid and racial discrimination in all its forms, particularly since these peoples have given the international community several opportunities to redress the injustices inflicted upon them without avail. Serious action has to be undertaken by us now before it is too late.

16. I have in mind the struggle of the Arab peoples and of the peoples of our African continent as an example of the struggle and sacrifices of many peoples in other parts of the world. The events in El-Khalil and Jerusalem in our Arab soil and the events in Soweto, South Africa, confirm anew the danger of thinking that our duty here ends with the adoption of resolutions supporting right and justice, without using all the means at the disposal of the United Nations and the international community for this purpose.

17. We all have the responsibility for consolidating by action the resolutions adopted by the United Nations and of taking steps to implement them, otherwise the law of the jungle and the rule of force would supersede the rule of the Charter and the rule of law.

18. It is our responsibility to continue the pressure on the forces that do not comply with the will of the international community until they do so.

19. The suppressed peoples of the world call on the United Nations to act for the peaceful solution of their problems before they are compelled to resort to other means approved by the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations.

20. At the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions, the General Assembly adopted a number of historical resolutions emphasizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the necessity of enabling them to exercise these rights. Thus we find resolution 3236 (XXIX) stipulating that these rights include the right to self-determination without external interference and the right to national independence and sovereignty.

21. In its resolution 3376 (XXX) the General Assembly established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to recommend a programme of implementation designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise the rights recognized in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX). I should like to commend the members of the Committee and its Chairman, Mr. Fall of Senegal, who have shouldered their responsibility with integrity and courage within the mandate given by our august Assembly.

22. In fact the General Assembly by virtue of its various stands, the latest of which was the adoption of the two aforementioned resolutions, has confirmed the words which you heard here from President El-Sadat when he declared before the thirtieth session of the General Assembly:

"We . . . consider the cause of the Palestinian people to be the cause of every free people seeking peace, calling for justice and accepting the rule of law as arbiter between good and evil, right and wrong."⁴

³ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2388th meeting.

⁴ *Ibid.*

23. The participation of the Palestinian people, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], in the work of the United Nations and the acknowledgement of the principle of its participation in all efforts designed to achieve a just peace in the Middle East, has enabled this great people to continue its efforts, within the framework of international legitimacy, to secure and exercise the rights of which they have been illegally and unjustly deprived for more than 30 years. The Palestinian people, represented by the PLO, has demonstrated a sense of full responsibility in shouldering its share of the quest for a just peace based on respect for its legitimate rights and its right to establish an independent State on the West Bank and in Gaza.

24. As Mr. Fahmy stated before your Assembly at its twenty-ninth session:

"By virtue of their long history of dealing with situations and facing reality objectively without evasiveness, the Palestinian people are qualified to assume this task."⁵

He also said in the same statement that the Palestinian people

"realize that the glorious War of 6 October has opened up new horizons for the Arabs and has for the first time afforded an opportunity to reach a just and permanent peace in the area that would make it possible for its people to devote their attention to development and to the task of economic and social transformation which is needed to make their future secure".⁵

25. Hence Egypt's firm position has been, and continues to be, one of support for and consolidation of the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Egypt calls upon the international community to take effective steps to support the Organization and enable the Palestinian people to recover its rights.

26. The report of the Committee [A/31/35] is before you. It is a matter of regret that the Security Council has been unable to adopt the Committee's recommendations on account of the use of the veto by a permanent member. It is our duty to shoulder our responsibility in accordance with the Charter and to do so with the utmost courage.

27. The recommendations put forward in the Committee's report reflect not only a clear and precise adherence to the General Assembly's resolution which established the Committee, but also a realistic and moderate attitude with a view to enabling the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self-determination within the framework of the United Nations resolutions.

28. My country's delegation supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee, taking into account the statement of the representative of the PLO before the said Committee on 9 March 1976.⁶

29. We urge you to adopt an effective and positive stand in support of the Palestinian people's struggle to exercise its right to self-determination.

30. Egypt re-emphasizes its confidence in the ability of the Palestinian people to carry on their struggle under the leadership of the PLO. We again stress the necessity of the participation of the PLO on an equal footing with the other parties concerned in any efforts aimed at achieving a just and durable peace in the Middle East, including the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East.

31. Israel must be made to understand that there will be no peace in the Middle East unless the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are recognized and unless the occupied Arab territories are returned. Israel is deluding itself if it believes that time is in its favour and that it can convince some people that the Palestinians do not exist or that it is capable of containing or eliminating them. The events in El-Khalil and the West Bank, the innocent Palestinians' blood shed at the hands of the Israeli occupation forces, affirm to the people of the world the unflinching stand of the Palestinian people and their determination to return to their homeland, to enjoy independence and national sovereignty in Palestine. Recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people is one of the principal touchstones to test Israel's seriousness when it claims that it desires to exist in peace among its neighbours.

32. Egypt has been quite receptive to all serious attempts to seek a just and durable peace in the Middle East, for peace to us, as President El-Sadat declared before you at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, is "a strategic objective" and "a genuine commitment."

33. From this rostrum President El-Sadat called for the reconvening of the Geneva Conference, with the participation of the parties concerned, to deal with the Middle East problem in all its aspects and with the purpose of arriving at a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

34. In his reply to the Secretary-General's initiative of 1 April 1976, Mr. Fahmy referred to Egypt's positive attitude towards this initiative. The reply was communicated by the Secretary-General to all the parties concerned, including the representatives of the PLO. Allow me, Mr. President, to read out to the General Assembly some paragraphs from this reply:

"I take note of your intention to pursue the matter of resuming actively the negotiating process in the coming week. I concur with your view that this should be done at this stage through your contacts with the representatives of the parties at United Nations Headquarters.

"In this connexion, I note with appreciation your sending of the aforementioned note to the representative of the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people. This constitutes a constructive step towards the implementation of General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX), which provides for the participation of the PLO in all efforts and deliberations on the Middle East as well as for the undertaking of steps to secure the invitation of the

⁵Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2250th meeting.

⁶ See document A/AC.183/2.

PLO to participate in the work of the United Nations Peace Conference on the Middle East."

This is in accordance with the initiative taken by President El-Sadat in his statement of 29 October 1975 before the General Assembly.

35. Mr. Fahmy also added in his reply to the Secretary-General the following:

"Our position, in so far as the negotiating process is concerned, remains the same as reiterated by me to Mr. Guyer in the talks we had during his visit to Cairo on 1 March 1976, namely, that the reconvening of the United Nations Peace Conference on the Middle East is the only valid course of action which would guarantee the continuation and the preservation of the United Nations role to which we are strongly attached.

"I therefore appreciate the early resumption of consultations on the specific question of reconvening the United Nations Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, namely, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, the PLO, Israel, as well as the Soviet Union and the United States.

"The ultimate goal of such contacts as well as the ensuing process would be the achievement of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East which would lead to a just and durable peace based on the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and self-determination. This necessitates the full implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions that provide for the total withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967, and the restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people."

This is Egypt's stand, as communicated by Mr. Fahmy to the Secretary-General in April 1976.

36. Contrary to this stand, Israel has proved through its actions that it does not desire peace, that it is incapable of assuming the responsibilities it entails, that it remains Israel the aggressor in quest of expansion at the expense of the neighbouring Arab States and the Palestinian people. How can we otherwise interpret its persistence in establishing settlements in occupied Arab territories, including Sinai—more than 60 of them? How can we interpret its insistence on the annexation and judaization of Jerusalem? All these actions are in violation of the resolutions unanimously adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly, and even Israel's friends consider them obstacles to peace, as demonstrated during the recent Security Council deliberations. But Israel does not even heed its friends. It insists on creating a new *fait accompli* even without legitimate grounds to justify itself before the international community. Israel is determined to change the features of the occupied territories demographically and materially and to plunder their heritage and wealth, blatantly ignoring United Nations resolutions, values and all international conventions, foremost among which is the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

37. From this rostrum we clearly and resolutely declare that Israel is held responsible for whatever changes it introduces in the occupied territories and that Egypt will demand just compensation for all the changes and acts of exploitation Israel has carried out therein. Egypt calls on all States not to participate in or be a party in any form whatsoever to Israel's attempts to exploit the natural wealth and resources of the occupied territories.

38. The continuation of the present situation in the area constitutes a danger to world peace, for the Arab peoples and States do not accept the continued Israeli occupation and the denial of the national rights of the Palestinian people. The world is at a race with time: either a just peace or total war of liberation to recover the rights provided for in the Charter and supported by the majority in the General Assembly.

39. Israel commits the biggest folly in thinking that its manoeuvres and evasiveness will give it time to impose on the Arab world and on the international community an expansionist *fait accompli*. It would be better for it, in the interest of peace in the world, to face the realities in the aftermath of the glorious war of 6 October.

40. The international community realizes the seriousness of the explosive situation in the Middle East and its impact on world peace and security. It realizes that we are seeking peace, provided that it is just. We have given the international community opportunities to participate in the quest for peace and its realization. We welcomed and continue to welcome the role of the two super-Powers at the Geneva Conference; we welcomed the participation of Europe and the non-aligned States in the quest for a just peace. While this has been our attitude, Israel remains intransigent, resisting all efforts designed to ensure the return of all the Arab territories occupied since 1967 and the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. This intransigence has led all peace-loving peoples to condemn the Israeli stand; the resolutions of the United Nations are a testimony to this. And so are those of other international forums, the latest of which was the Fifth Conference of non-aligned Countries, which condemned the continued Israeli aggression against Arab territories and the violation of the Palestinian people's rights.

41. Prior to this, the African summit conference convened in Mauritius had declared its full solidarity with the Arab peoples and the Palestinian people in their struggle to regain the occupied Arab territory and to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self-determination. In the light of this, you will perhaps agree with me that it has become imperative that the international community should get things moving immediately and that Member States of the world Organization have an obligation to press for a just solution and to foil, with all firmness, any procrastinating manoeuvres.

42. I want to reiterate here clearly Egypt's firm stand that there can be no peace in the Middle East without Israel's full withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories and without the Palestinian people's recovery of its legitimate rights, including its right to establish an independent Palestinian State.

43. Our Arab nation is bleeding in Lebanon and President El-Sadat was the first to warn against the dangers of the continuation of this state of affairs. Before the situation deteriorated, he advised all parties to adopt a "hands off Lebanon" approach. I should like here to state Egypt's position on this question, which may be summarized in the following four points: first, the necessity of enforcing a cease-fire and of safeguarding Lebanon's sovereignty, independence, unity and Arabism; secondly, the necessity of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, at the same time the encouragement of all sincere and constructive initiatives conducive to putting an end to the bloodshed; thirdly, the imperative need maintained in the context of the general Arab commitment to the Palestinian people, their cause and the PLO; fourthly, support for the specific steps taken by the League of Arab States to deal with the Lebanese crisis, including its dispatch of Arab security forces to Lebanon and its continuing endeavours at conciliation envisaging a speedy settlement to the crisis.

44. From this rostrum, Egypt conveys its admiration to all the struggling peoples of the world and reaffirms its solidarity with those peoples, foremost among whom are the peoples of South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Palestine and our Arab people everywhere.

45. Men, women and children in Soweto and throughout South Africa valorously faced the guns and brutality of the *apartheid* regime, rejecting vigorously the continuation of the criminal policy pursued by the racist minority Government, which denies them their rights as human beings, as owners of the land and as masters of their own destiny. Where it should have grasped the significance of the independence of Angola and Mozambique and the expulsion of its own delegation from the twenty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the racist minority Government of South Africa persisted in its *apartheid* practices and in terrorizing unarmed civilians. However, the bloody events in Soweto last August herald the inevitable defeat of the arrogant white ruling minority in Pretoria which will not last. This same white minority Government of South Africa, refusing to recognize and to implement the numerous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council on Namibia, has continued to occupy Namibia illegally since 1966. It has gone even further by using Namibia as a bridge-head for continued aggression against the neighbouring peaceful State of Zambia and other front-line States in southern Africa.

46. History has proved this: ultimate victory belongs to the people. Thus, the people of South Africa will triumph, the people of Namibia represented by the national movement, the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO], will triumph, and the people of Zimbabwe will triumph.

47. Our role here is to bring this inevitable victory nearer for the sake of world peace. Our role here is to assure the peoples of southern Africa that we stand by them in word and deed. Our role is to reinforce the front-line States in southern Africa: Zambia, Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Our role is to frustrate the theatrical manoeuvres of the white minority Government of South Africa designed to perpetuate its occupation of Namibia through dealing with elements that do not

represent the people of Namibia. Our role is to ensure that the United Nations and the parties concerned, particularly the Government of the United Kingdom, will discharge their full responsibilities so that the people of Zimbabwe will be able to exercise their right to self-determination. We should also tighten the international isolation of the South African régime and of the white racist minority régime in Zimbabwe until they comply with United Nations resolutions and the will of the international community.

48. Peace and security in the Middle East and the Mediterranean region call for a just and speedy settlement of the Cyprus issue too, a settlement that would preserve for the non-aligned State of Cyprus its territorial integrity and independence, a settlement that would put an end to the suffering and the sacrifices of tens of thousands of Cypriots rendered homeless as a result of a war that imposed limitless tragedies on the fraternal people of Cyprus. We believe in the ability of the two communities, the Greek and the Turkish, to arrive at a formula that would ensure for Cyprus its independence and sovereignty. We do hope that the United Nations and you personally, Mr. President, will continue to work for the realization of a speedy, just and durable settlement of the situation in Cyprus without foreign intervention.

49. Our Arab nation, in the great awakening after the October war, continues its international action on the basis of the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter in unison and in co-operation with all peace-loving peoples, with the non-aligned peoples and States, with the peoples of Africa, with the peoples of Asia, with the peoples and States of the Islamic Conference, and with those friendly peoples and Governments of Europe who have demonstrated an increased understanding of Arab rights and a desire to co-operate with them within the framework of the principles of the United Nations Charter.

50. Egypt took pride in participating in the Fifth Conference of non-aligned countries held in Colombo. We are convinced that the continued activity of the non-aligned States, a broadened membership of States adopting this policy and the success of the non-aligned movement's mission would consolidate the efforts of the United Nations to build a better international community.

51. Egypt was one of the pioneer States in the non-aligned movement and it still refuses to be a sphere of influence for anyone. We in Egypt support the causes of right and justice and national liberation causes everywhere. To cite an example, I refer to our continuous endeavours in backing the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, our support of the great Vietnamese people and our support of the just demands of the Korean people for unification and self-determination without foreign intervention, together with the necessity of the withdrawal of foreign forces from its territory.

52. Egypt, which believes in the United Nations Charter, calls on all States to co-operate closely to ensure complete respect for our international Organization and strict compliance with its resolutions. It will continue to undertake with full commitment its pioneering and responsible role in the non-aligned movement, within the framework of the Organization of African Unity [OAU], the League of

Arab States, the Islamic Conference and the United Nations, co-operating with all peace-loving peoples of the world.

53. I should like to pay a tribute here to the great Chinese people and its friendly Government for their backing and co-operation, particularly during those times when that was essential and vital.

54. In this same spirit we welcome all friendly European States which desire to co-operate with us on the basis of equality and mutual co-operation, hoping the Arab-European dialogue would realize its goals.

55. It does not stand to reason that the world should still be beset with problems of poverty, hunger and disease in an age when man has ventured into space, reached the moon and landed craft on Mars on voyages that have cost the advanced countries billions of dollars. While science and technology have forged ahead beyond imagination, it has become clear that the vicious circle of backwardness is related to the present inequitable structure of the economic relations between the developed and developing countries and that the continued existence of the economic international *status quo* can only mean a further widening of the gap between the industrialized and the third-world countries. These are facts brought to focus by the midterm review and appraisal of the Second United Nations Development Decade. Hence the concern of the non-aligned States and the developing States in calling for the establishment of the new international economic order. They believe that their backwardness or their progress affects not only themselves, but also, in the same measure and in the same direction, the industrially advanced countries; this is a reflection of the reality of international interdependence in our world today. The consequences and results of this are also related to the stability and prosperity of the world in its entirety.

56. The resolutions and the measures adopted by the Conference on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries,⁷ the resolutions and the measures it has adopted towards the implementation of the programme of economic co-operation among them perhaps reflects clearly the determination of the third world to affirm the principle of collective self-reliance and to translate it into reality. It is this principle that the Colombo Conference has defined as supplementing, and not supplanting, international interdependence. Its objective is a more comprehensive and extensive co-operation to achieve the common goal of establishing the new international economic order that would ensure an appropriate standard of prosperity and human dignity for all mankind.

57. There is no doubt that the developing countries and peoples facing special situations which hamper their active engagement in the development process—such as being subjected to foreign aggression or to foreign occupation, racial oppression or discrimination, or colonial domination, whether in the Middle East or Africa or elsewhere—merit special assistance from the United Nations and the international community. This is besides their right to full

compensation for the damages inflicted on them—a right that was reaffirmed anew by the Fifth Conference of non-aligned countries in Colombo and the recent conference of developing countries in Mexico. In this connexion, I wish to commend the role of the United Nations Development Programme and other institutions, as well as that of friendly States, in contributing to the reconstruction programmes in the Suez Canal region.

58. I should also like to underline the decisions of the two Conferences regarding the necessity of increasing assistance to the national liberation movements, to the newly independent countries and to those heroic African States whose economies have been adversely affected as a result of the joint struggle waged against the racial régimes in Zimbabwe, Namibia and Azania.

59. Furthermore, it is necessary to implement the resolutions of the Colombo Conference [*A/31/197, annex IV*], the ministerial conference of the developing countries at Manila,⁸ and their recent conference at Mexico City regarding the adoption of effective measures by developed countries for the provision of debt relief to developing countries, including debt cancellation in specific cases as defined by these resolutions.

60. The resolutions of the sixth special session of the General Assembly concerning the establishment of the new international economic order [*resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)*], and of the other specialized international conferences convened in this context to deal with problems relating to population, food, industrial development and human settlement have not resulted in any tangible progress in the implementation of this order. We became optimistic as we witnessed the serious dialogue initiated in the seventh special session and expected this dialogue to proceed to the phase of actual and constructive implementation when resumed at the Conference of International Economic Co-operation in Paris and at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [*UNCTAD*], as well as at other international meetings. It is therefore with deep regret and bitterness that we find that those expectations have not materialized, despite the aggravation and urgency of the problems of the developing nations and despite the increasingly universal acceptance of the principles and objectives of the new international economic order.

61. I should like to draw attention to the attempt at nuclear blackmail in the Middle East region and the danger which this entails. I refer here to reports emanating from Israel, and carried by some sections of the mass media in various parts of the world, about Israel's possession of nuclear weapons. What is uppermost in our minds is to prevent the introduction of nuclear weapons into the area and their proliferation in order to ward off the danger of nuclear war. It was with this end in view that Egypt joined Iran in an initiative at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly⁹ resulting in a resolution calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle

⁸ Third Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77, held at Manila from 26 January to 7 February 1976.

⁹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda items 24, 27-31, 34, 35, 100, 101, 103 and 107, documents A/9693 and Add.1-3.

⁷ Held at Mexico City from 13 to 21 September 1976. See document A/C.2/31/7.

East as an effective measure to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the area. That initiative met with unanimous and universal support.

62. It is pertinent here to ask, Why does Israel continuously and persistently refuse to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII) annex*] and to accept an international safeguard system? This refusal is one more proof of Israel's lack of seriousness when it speaks of peace. Undoubtedly the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East signifies support of efforts aiming at the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, leading eventually to general and complete disarmament. It also implies a concern for world peace and security, considering the explosive situation in the area as a result of the Middle East question.

63. Egypt has signed the non-proliferation Treaty and maintains its declared stand of ratifying it once Israel accedes to it.

64. We in Egypt have contributed positively and effectively to the efforts undertaken by our international Organization in the field of disarmament. We are aware, too, that co-operation of the nuclear Powers with the United Nations is essential for the success and fruition of United Nations efforts in this field. We call on the nuclear Powers to be responsive to the United Nations efforts and to co-operate fully with it, particularly in the following matters: the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament; the promotion of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the prohibition of the production and use of incendiary weapons and weapons of mass destruction; nuclear disarmament and the achievement of general and complete disarmament.

65. In this connexion I would like to express Egypt's support of Sri Lanka's position concerning the importance and the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace [*resolution 2832 (XXVI)*].

66. Egypt will continue to support every international effort intended to achieve tangible progress in the field of disarmament on the basis of universal participation. Hence Egypt, as a non-aligned State, attaches great importance to the convening of a special session on disarmament. It will exert every effort to render this a fruitful session—one that would ensure the continuation and intensification of universal efforts towards a world of general and complete disarmament.

67. Co-operation in solving international problems should cover the right of States to exercise their sovereignty over their natural resources. Egypt has played a constructive role in the negotiations on an international treaty regulating the exploration and exploitation of sea-bed resources and the setting up of a legal order that would ensure that all States would share on an equitable basis in this wealth that belongs to mankind as a whole, thus avoiding international competition. It is our earnest belief that this would be the right path to consolidating global peace and security.

68. Egypt has actively worked with the Arab and African groups, and in full solidarity with the developing States of the Group of 77, to ensure the establishment of a legal

order that would ensure a just distribution of these riches, and that would safeguard the sovereignty of the coastal States over their territorial waters, their jurisdiction over their exclusive economic zones, and their interests in the continental shelf. Recognition of such rights does not necessarily mean any curtailment of scientific research or interference with the better utilization of the deep sea-bed.

69. Egypt has undertaken initiatives within the Arab group during the fifth session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea towards arriving at a formula reconciling various views and realizing all goals.

70. Egypt emphasizes that it is essential that all representatives of national liberation movements recognized by the United Nations should participate as observers in the General Assembly of the international authority that would be entrusted with regulating the exploitation of water resources and that the peoples not as yet independent should share in the revenues from this exploitation.

71. The peoples of the world aspire to a life founded on human compassion, with ethical values and the rule of law as its mainstay. Consequently we have to continue working persistently towards building the world of the Charter, for the United Nations was established to stay, and both Governments and peoples need it.

72. Allow me to recall the words with which President El-Sadat concluded his address before you at the thirtieth session:

"The world expects a lot from you at this historic, important juncture. The peoples have rising expectations of peace and prosperity at a time when the most severe challenges are multiplying and when problems are growing in complexity in an unprecedented manner. I am confident that, with our sincere and unswerving belief in a better future for humanity and our determination to work together for the attainment of our common goals, together we shall pass the test of peace and progress, thus paving the way towards a brighter era where future generations can enjoy comfort, security and hope."¹⁰

Mr. Amerasinghe (Sri Lanka) took the Chair.

*Address by Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam,
Prime Minister of Mauritius*

73. The PRESIDENT: This morning the Assembly will hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Mauritius. I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Dr. the Right Honourable Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and in inviting him to address the General Assembly.

74. Sir Seewoosagur RAMGOOLAM (Mauritius): Mr. President, may I first of all congratulate you on your unanimous election as President of this session of the General Assembly. Your long service at the United Nations will receive even greater support in its efforts to solve the many political and economic problems that seem to escape immediate attention. I wish to assure you of the fullest co-operation of the delegation of Mauritius in the discharge of your responsibilities.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2388th meeting.

75. I should also like to convey to your predecessor, Mr. Gaston Thorn, our deepest appreciation for his valuable contribution to the thirtieth session of the General Assembly.

76. May I also pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, whose dedication to the service of this Organization, to its objectives and its goals, continues to evoke our respect and admiration.

77. At this crucial hour in the history of the world in general and of Africa in particular, may I begin with an appeal to all men of goodwill who believe that peace can only be achieved by common understanding and mutual comprehension and by a sense of justice. Wherever injustice exists, wherever democracy is being trampled upon, wherever disease, ignorance, and poverty prevail, wherever there is usurpation of the people's legitimate rights, wherever there is unlawful occupation of one's lands by force, let us awake to our responsibilities and strain our energies towards finding solutions based on equality and natural justice in accordance with the ideals of the Charter of the United Nations.

78. After 31 years of continuous and serious difficulties, the United Nations justifies, by its achievements, its indispensability. The mere fact that all the independent nations of the world adhere to its principles clearly indicates the trust that we all have in this august body. Why, then, should any permanent member of the Security Council cast a negative vote and use it to block the admission of independent and free nations like Angola and Viet Nam to our Organization? May I appeal in particular to the United States of America to show its wisdom and realism and renounce the use of this negative vote? Indeed, the abuse of the right to cast a negative vote on the part of permanent members of the Security Council is one of the frustrating features of an otherwise ideal Charter. Neither Africa, with its 48 States, nor Latin America enjoys such a privilege; nor are they sure they want it. There is no reason why five States should in 1976 still enjoy the special privileges of another age and thus place the rest of the world at an unacceptable disadvantage. So we honestly believe that the appropriate Articles of the Charter should be reappraised realistically, bearing in mind that the United Nations today comprises almost 150 Member States, whereas at the time of the Charter's adoption it comprised only 50.

79. Since our last session, there have been striking developments all over the world. Firstly, we had a summit conference of OAU in June this year in Mauritius, where it was decided to intensify the struggle against the remaining colonial régimes in Africa and against racialism. We also subsequently had the Conference of the non-aligned countries in Colombo, where a larger number of peace-loving countries fully supported the OAU's demand for the early termination of colonialism in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa in fulfilment of the heritage of every nation and of its right to independence and national sovereignty. Apart from reaffirming that there can be no compromise with colonialism and racialism, I do not wish to dwell greatly on these issues just now, when momentous consultations and negotiations are taking place with a view to finding peaceful and early solutions to the problems in

these countries. While we fully support the national liberation movements in their valiant efforts to achieve freedom from oppression and foreign rule—and will continue to do so till their objectives are achieved—at the same time, we would welcome any moves for peaceful solutions, provided that they carry with them the assurance of the earliest achievement of liberation for the struggling peoples of Africa and, therefore, the immediate cessation of their hardships. In my capacity as Chairman of OAU, I fully endorse the initiatives taken by the five African Presidents mandated by OAU and will be happy to give any further support and assistance that my country may be called upon to render in this connexion. As much as we welcome the mission of Mr. Kissinger to southern Africa, we must point out that there should be no confusion in anybody's mind regarding our collective stand on Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.

80. As regards Namibia, much remains to be done, and done quickly. First, a date for its independence—I mean real independence, not a mockery of it—must be accepted. I suggest that date should not be further delayed.

81. Second, the United Nations should convene within four weeks a constitutional conference comprising only three parties; namely, the United Nations itself, South Africa and SWAPO, the true and authentic representative of the Namibian people.

82. Third, all political detainees and prisoners should be released at least three weeks before the date of the constitutional conference.

83. Fourth, all South African forces should be withdrawn as soon as the conference starts and they should be replaced by a United Nations peace-keeping force until such time as the Namibian army and police take over.

84. It is not too late for the Vorster régime to face the stark realities of life. As the outgoing President of this Assembly rightly pointed out, Mr. Vorster, and Mr. Vorster alone, would carry the sole responsibility before history if bloodshed and human carnage occurred in this part of the world, as all events tend to show. We of OAU are determined, and have resolved unanimously, that, should all efforts to find a peaceful solution to these problems fail, we would ensure that recourse to armed struggle is not only pursued but intensified with the help of our friends and the progressive nations of the world.

85. Let me also here make it clear that OAU cannot and will not accept the devious concept of separate homelands and will not give recognition to the bogus independence of the Transkei and "bantustans", which will only perpetuate the inhuman policy of *apartheid*.

86. I sincerely hope that countries like France will ensure that the decolonization process in Africa will not suffer any impediment and that the just and legitimate aspirations of the people of the Comoros, of the French territory of the Afars and the Issas and of others will soon be fulfilled.

87. Since this Assembly met last, there has been a stalemate in regard to the problems of the Middle East and in regard to the finding of a solution fulfilling the legitimate

rights of the Palestinian people. It is heart-rending to find that the global pulls of politics have halted developments towards peace in that area, and I therefore greatly welcome the recent signs of a reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East to make further progress on the problems of that area. It is indeed a sad commentary on the state of affairs in this world that, while new nations are becoming independent, almost the entire population of a country should be compelled to stay in camps outside their homelands.

88. There can be only one solution, involving the strict adherence of Israel to the Charter of the United Nations, withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and the restoration to the Arab people of Palestine of their legitimate right to the creation of a separate Palestinian State, as provided for and endorsed by the United Nations in the partition agreement of 1947 [*resolution 181 (II)*].

89. Lebanon, which was until recently a peaceful and beautiful country, is today in a state of ruin, politically and economically. In spite of all the efforts deployed so far, peace does not seem to be in sight. I believe the United Nations, through the Secretary-General, could make a positive contribution to the solution of a conflict which we can only hope is temporary, but success can only be achieved as long as the sad current situation in Lebanon is not exploited for narrow national purposes.

90. I also trust that the problem of Cyprus will lead not to a partition of the country but to a reunification of its people for the creation of a prosperous and economically viable State, in which the rights of each and every citizen are safeguarded.

91. There is one more problem, the problem of disarmament, regarding which there has been, unfortunately, little progress. As I said at the last session,¹¹ I would emphasize that to make détente an irreversible process it should extend to all geographical areas and at the same time that it should include disarmament measures. I then suggested that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should be called upon to submit concrete proposals and recommendations in regard to a more positive role for the United Nations in the field of disarmament, and I once again stress the necessity, as a matter of priority, for the revitalization of the United Nations in this field. Immediate steps in this field seem to be imperative if not for expanding détente and the creation of larger areas of peace, leading towards the elimination of all sources of war and conflict, at least because of the compulsions of the alarming world-wide sales and gifts of arms, combined with competition in the acquisition and refinement of categories of weapons. In my opinion, a United Nations subsidiary organization deeply committed to the early establishment of disarmament could also function as a monitor or watchdog to speed up the half-hearted efforts of the big Power blocs towards mutual reduction of arms.

92. One of the most pressing problems of the moment is, no doubt, the need for early solutions to the economic problems faced by the world as a whole and by the

developing countries especially. Economic forces are not the monopoly of either the developed nations or the developing nations, but the forces generated in the economically advanced and industrial nations have a concomitant—and, in general, an adverse—effect on the developing nations. The repeated attempts of developing nations have been frustrated, although goodwill has been shown jointly or individually by several advanced countries. The recent Conference of the non-aligned countries in Colombo came up with a number of suggestions based on the Nairobi meeting of UNCTAD, and I do hope that realism will play its due role in finding early solutions so that the world as a whole can develop in harmony and fruitful co-operation.

93. In the same context, I may note that, in December next, OAU is holding a conference at ministerial level in Kinshasa to study ways and means of consolidating our economies and how we, in Africa, through our interdependence, can create prosperity for the continent as a whole. Commerce and trade, industry and technology will be among our main preoccupations, and I hope that the ministers who are striving so hard will reach the right conclusions and lay the foundation for the creation of a united and prosperous Africa.

94. It is also unfortunate and sad that, after 10 years of deliberation, no equitable and fair solution has yet been found as regards the share of every nation in the exploitation of the wealth of the sea. We can only hope that better counsel will prevail at the next session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, where a just, fair and equitable solution can at last be found.

95. We have already before us the resolutions of the United Nations as well as of the recent non-aligned Conference concerning the early realization of the preservation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. This is a vital issue for my country, which has to depend for its trade and sustenance on the fact that the Indian Ocean is an ocean of peace and not a gradually militarized ocean which would lead to conflict. The other countries of the Indian Ocean as well as the littoral countries are equally concerned, and I hope, Mr. President, that with your active role as President of this Assembly and the great interest you have already taken in regard to this problem from its very beginning, your efforts in this field will be crowned with early success. It is because of these mutual military rivalries between power blocs, extending far beyond their own legitimate spheres of military necessities, that I proposed at the last session a fundamental approach, namely, the conclusion of an international treaty barring the use of force in international relations. I do hope that, however impractical it may appear to those with almost superhuman military power, this humble proposal will receive the attention of the vast majority of this Assembly, who are obviously similarly placed as ourselves and would not like to become involved in any conflict to their own interests.

96. I cannot refer at this forum, as I should like to do, to all the excellent work which is being done, despite great difficulties, by the specialized agencies of the United Nations. We of the third world wish to record our appreciation of the devotion and selflessness of all the men and women who serve in them.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 2366th meeting.

97. I should once again like to reaffirm the complete faith and belief of the Government and the people of Mauritius in the lofty principles on which the United Nations is based, and I express the hope that at this session our deliberations will be guided by wisdom in the solution of the many urgent problems that face mankind as a whole.

98. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, and on my own behalf, I thank His Excellency Dr. the Right Honourable Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius and the current Chairman of OAU, for the important address we have just heard from him.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.