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**President: Mr. Lazar MOJSOV (Yugoslavia).**

## AGENDA ITEM 9

### General debate (*continued*)

1. Mr. OULD MOUKNASS (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): We are gathered together once again to examine, in the light of the events which have occurred since the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, the progress achieved and the problems raised in all fields which are of concern to the international community and which constitute the field of activity of the United Nations. The subject is a vast one and, of course, complex in many respects. But, Mr. President, having elected you unanimously as President of the General Assembly, we are sure that we shall fulfil the great hopes aroused by our work and our deliberations.

2. Mr. President, aware as we are of the experience, the qualities of tact, flexibility and yet of firmness which you possess, and of the distinguished and positive role played by your country, Yugoslavia, in all areas, and the sense of responsibility that country possesses, we cannot but be gratified at the choice made by the thirty-second session of the General Assembly in electing you to conduct our proceedings. Mauritania, which maintains strong and many-faceted links with your country, particularly within the non-aligned movement, would like, through me, to convey to you its congratulations and assure you of its support in your difficult task.

3. Your predecessor, Mr. Amerasinghe of Sri Lanka, deserves our gratitude and our appreciation also for the remarkably competent and objective way in which he conducted our proceedings at the last session. As for our Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, there is no need for me to expatiate on the esteem in which we hold him for his efforts to make our Organization into a genuinely effective instrument for the service of peace, economic and social progress and stability in the world. He can be sure of the support of my country in his difficult but none the less noble and exalting task.

4. I cannot come to the substance of my statement without expressing also to the fraternal people of Djibouti and the people of Viet Nam our congratulations on their admission to the United Nations. The presence of the Republic of Djibouti among us today marks the end of an important chapter in Franco-African history. In putting an end to its presence in Djibouti, France accomplished an important task of decolonization which was without doubt difficult, but which in its conception and its manner of execution redounds to the credit of France and the French people. We are sure that relations between France and Africa, henceforth free of all notions of dependence, will greatly benefit from the work thus completed. Welcoming Viet Nam to our Organization is also a moral comfort and a definite encouragement to all peoples still groaning under the yoke of segregation and colonial domination.

5. I have just said that the subjects we consider here are vast and complex in certain of their aspects. The agenda of 128 items which we adopted well reflects their scope and importance, from both the political and the economic standpoint. It is, of course, most useful and indeed important to review all these points. However, as time is limited I shall devote the bulk of my statement to the situation in southern Africa, to that in the Middle East and also to disarmament and international economic relations.

6. As we form part of both the African and the Arab worlds, and because we belong to the non-aligned movement and the Group of 77, my country is perhaps more sensitive to the important problems I have just mentioned. We feel, none the less—and this is a matter of conviction to us in Mauritania—that the coming of a world of peace, equality and stability, as conceived in the Charter of our Organization, will remain a distant dream until a just and lasting solution is found for these different problems.

7. The situation in southern Africa indeed remains one of the sources of tension most dangerous for peace in Africa—all Africa—and, beyond Africa, for peace in the world. In this part of our continent we are facing not only classical colonialism but, what is more, a giant machine of repression known as *apartheid*, usurpation, racism and the pure and simple denial of the most elementary human rights.

8. The black population of South Africa, which represents more than 80 per cent of the whole population of the country, has been entirely stripped of its social, economic and political rights by a handful of South African whites solely because of a difference in colour. Furthermore, the authentic people of South Africa have been corralled into a small proportion of its national territory with hardly 15 per cent of the wealth of its own country. A blind system of

repression and unfair legislation has been established by the racist régime in Pretoria to put down all opposition and do away with the slightest attempt at resistance. Sharpeville and Soweto, where workers and hundreds of students protest against the racism of which their people is the victim, are fresh in our memories to remind us of the truly disgusting nature of the South African régime. More recently, the murder of Steven Biko, this wise and respected leader of South Africa, fills us with indignation and bitterness and once again shows that arbitrary detention, persecution and torture are the daily practice of the South African régime. The body of Steven Biko was certainly destroyed by this repressive machinery, but his spirit remains more alive than ever. Permit me to commemorate here the memory of Steven Biko, in the conviction that his sacrifice for freedom and the dignity of his people will do even more to mobilize the whole of Africa and rally it around the ideals which he set himself.

9. The racist and repressive policy of the Pretoria régime is not limited to South Africa; quite the contrary, it has been extended to the international Territory of Namibia and established as a system of government. In spite of the many relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council the Vorster régime has so far not changed its attitude of systematic refusal to free the Territory of Namibia in accordance with the aspirations of the Namibian people.

10. In this regard my country has followed with close interest the actions undertaken by the five Western Powers members of the Security Council. We are certainly pleased at all peaceful efforts to free the Territory of Namibia and, in particular, at this initiative of the five countries. But we should like to reaffirm that any solution which fails to take account of the necessary unity of the country and its people, of the representativeness of the South West Africa People's Organization, will be a solution doomed to failure. Unfortunately, we cannot fail to see that the Vorster régime continues to wish to create an artificial State in Namibia while seeking to pillage part of Namibian territory. The appointment by Vorster of a General Administrator of the Territory, and his claims to Walvis Bay, illustrate the extent to which the champions of *apartheid* are determined to flout Security Council resolution 385 (1976) and to defy the international community.

11. The Ian Smith régime, too, constitutes a unique case, where a handful of 300,000 white racists have unilaterally declared the independence of a country to which they do not belong, thus creating a situation flagrant not only in its illegitimacy but also in terms of the segregation and the domination of 6 million Africans, the authentic and rightful sons of Rhodesia. The people of Zimbabwe, on the strength of the support naturally accorded by Africa and conferred upon it by the international community, has risen, as indeed all those who wish to live in liberty or die in dignity rise. The stubbornness of the Rhodesian rebels is none the less such that 12 years afterwards the régime of Ian Smith, even though it certainly has its back more and more to the wall, is seeking to create the appearance of legitimacy by having recourse to all kinds of stratagems and, in particular, using certain dissidents of the liberation movements to the detriment of the Patriotic Front. Such a masquerade obviously can only mislead those who are not very well

conversant with the true nature of the Rhodesian régime and who are unaware of the determination of the people of Zimbabwe and the active solidarity which it now enjoys among all Members of our Organization.

12. Even those who have been and remain responsible and who for such a long time did not think it necessary to face up to this responsibility are today realizing the danger of the situation and seeking to end the Smith rebellion by trying to bring about majority Government.

13. The Anglo-American plan, which will be put into concrete terms by the appointment of a representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, well illustrates this new tendency and constitutes in itself an undeniable victory of the Rhodesian national forces. Coming several years too late, of course, the Anglo-American plan, as accepted by the Patriotic Front and approved by the African front-line countries, nevertheless does constitute a praiseworthy initiative for which both British and Americans should get credit. We in Mauritania should like to express the hope that we shall see this plan applied in all its parts as soon as possible in order to relieve the suffering of the people of Zimbabwe and to avoid further bloodshed.

14. *Apartheid* and its tentacles, which we can see in Rhodesia and Namibia, are an inadmissible challenge and insult to the international community at the very time when it is placing in the forefront of its preoccupations respect for human rights, at a time when it is more than ever aspiring to a world of concord, stability and justice. They also constitute a threat to peace in Africa and, beyond Africa, are liable to jeopardize international security. Several times now Zambia, Mozambique and Botswana have been attacked by the forces of Ian Smith and Vorster, thus constituting a threat to the stability of these countries and violating their sovereignty. Mauritania would like to express here its whole-hearted solidarity with fraternal African front-line peoples, whose support for just causes have exposed them at any moment to armed attack and sufferings of all kinds.

15. In this respect we are encouraged by the fact that we in Africa are not the only ones to understand the imminent danger inherent in this explosive situation in southern Africa. The international community has indeed not only shown us that it understands but has also displayed its solidarity in Maputo at the International Conferences in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia and in Lagos at the World Conference for Action against *Apartheid*. The success of those Conferences and the recommendations they adopted prove—if proof be needed—that we are facing an explosive situation in the southern part of our continent.

16. It is not the few peripheral quarrels that, unfortunately, exist here and there between African countries and will, of course, be solved within the framework of the African family, which should be allowed to divert our attention from this central concern which is for us domination and the segregation of our brothers in southern Africa.

17. I have spoken at some length about these problems of southern Africa to which my country is particularly

sensitive and which it considers, quite rightly in our view, as being of fundamental interest for the peace of the world. Unfortunately, there exists another problem just as lingering and just as much a matter of concern to my country because it affects it directly. This problem is that of the Middle East.

18. More than 30 years have elapsed since the United Nations, under various kinds of pressure, decided to create on Palestinian soil the Israeli entity, thus reducing the Arab people of Palestine to becoming wanderers and having to rely on international charity. Of course, the United Nations did recommend at that time the establishment of a Palestinian entity on another part of the same territory. That in itself reflects the injustice of such a decision. The Palestinian people was granted part of its own national territory, and another part of it was given to immigrants who for more than 2,000 years have had no ties with Palestine apart from religious ones, such as those of the adherents of any other religion. Gradually Israel, like a cancer, has come to occupy the whole of Palestine, has driven out the inhabitants, destroyed their homes, pillaged their goods and, finally, begun to encroach upon neighbouring Arab territories.

19. Since that time we have seen four wars in the area, each one revealing the implacable nature of the Israeli occupation and the danger that it represents for the whole Arab nation and the peace of the world. At the same time, the Tel Aviv authorities, who owe their existence to the United Nations, have displayed unpardonable insolence with regard to the United Nations and have gone as far as to describe its decisions as "immoral".

20. The various vicissitudes which have marked the development of the problem over the last 30 years are sufficiently familiar to this Organization, as are also, the considerable number of proposals made by Arab States with the aim of finding a just and lasting solution to the Middle East problem. But the sophisticated propaganda used by Israel, the complicity and support it has enjoyed in various Western countries, have for a long time camouflaged the facts, transforming the terrorist methods of Israel into actions taken for its salvation and making of the occupation of Arab States a necessity for its survival.

21. Most fortunately, this simplistic plan could not stand up to the pressure of the actual facts which have become clearer every day. The facts are Israel's policy of occupation by force, the planting of colonies in Arab territories, exactions of all kinds and political assassinations. The recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization [*PLO*] by the international community and even by the most faithful friends of Israel as an essential element in the problem of the Middle East and the fact that the need has now been accepted for the evacuation of Arab territories make absolutely clear the isolation of Israel and the disapproval of its policy. It is none the less surprising that countries which have long experience of international life and perhaps are better acquainted than any one else with the true nature of the problem should continue to demand that the PLO recognize the existence of Israel as a preliminary to any negotiations. This approach indeed is tantamount to telling the Palestinians: "Accept your lot and come to negotiations with your hands tied"; while

Israel rejects the participation of the PLO even after this recognition. In so doing they are asking the Palestinian people, which has been driven out of its land and robbed of its possessions, to abandon everything that it still holds as an element of negotiation. In a word, the Palestinian people are being asked to bend to the will of Israel while recognizing its legitimacy without any counterpart.

22. If the PLO were to go beyond the recent extremely moderate and responsible statements of its leaders, it would run the risk of damaging its representativeness and render its presence in the negotiations and its possible commitments without significance. In fact, this is what Israel is aiming at in demanding of the Palestinian people, by proxy, something that would probably lead to the division of the PLO and its weakening, so as later to be able to attribute to it the failure of any attempt at peace in the Middle East.

23. This, in our view, is the error of those—some of whom, of course, are acting in good faith—who are still subjecting the PLO to such demands. Those demands have in any case been rendered obsolete by recent events, particularly because all the Arab States of the area and the Palestinian people now consider peace in the Middle East not only as a duty but as an imperative necessity, with everything that involves by way of mutual recognition. My colleagues and brothers, the Foreign Ministers of Egypt and of Syria, proposed on 28 September [*10th meeting*] and 29 September [*12th meeting*] from this very rostrum a wise and realistic procedure which should lead to a just and lasting peace because it takes into account all the elements of the problem.

24. There is a fresh opportunity for peace offered by the Arab nation, and here we have all the conditions created to allow the Middle East to undertake and embark upon the course of salvation and finally become once again the land of harmony, coexistence and fraternity which it has always been throughout its age-old history.

25. The choice for Israel is clear; does it want to contribute to peace and to alleviate the sufferings endured by all the peoples of the area? If so, it must grasp this new opportunity which may not recur, recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, particularly its right to a country, evacuate all Arab territories occupied in June 1967, put an end to the establishment of new Jewish settlements, and call a halt to committing sacrileges in the Holy Places of Islam. Or, on the contrary, does it want to continue to have recourse to all kinds of subterfuge in pursuing its policy of aggression and intimidation which is threatening peace in the area and international security? If it does, it will certainly find itself up against an Arab nation which has rallied together and which is determined to use all the means available to it in the service of justice and right.

26. We know that Israel is not animated by a genuine wish for peace, still less today with the accession to power of a new, more arrogant and, no doubt, more intransigent régime. The recent decisions to establish new settlements on the West Bank of the Jordan clearly demonstrate the scorn in which the new Israeli authorities hold the United Nations and the international community. The present invasion of the south of Lebanon also serves to demonstrate

that peace is contrary to Israel's philosophy and its concepts of international relations.

27. Maybe Israel has been encouraged by, *inter alia*, certain unfortunate tensions created artificially here and there in the Arab world and which have divided fraternal States. It is true that to maintain those tensions is to harm the legitimate interests of the Arab nation and to strengthen the position of its enemies. But it is our conviction in Mauritania that the minor and pointless differences which damage our common cause will be rapidly resolved, and our natural solidarity will re-emerge with its full vigour and scope for the good of our peoples. Israel should therefore not count on these differences, which, I am absolutely convinced, are transient.

28. This is the view of my country with regard to the Middle East. Our solidarity with the Palestinian people represented by the PLO, with Egypt, with Syria and with Jordan has been total in the past. It is now and will remain so in the future.

29. Southern Africa and the Middle East have since the end of the Viet Nam war been, in our view, the most stubborn and at the same time the most explosive sources of tension. At any moment, violence may break out and assume vast proportions difficult to deal with and threatening the world with a general conflagration. With the proliferation of weapons of all kinds, the consequences are unforeseeable. Awareness of this situation was no doubt what underlay the initiative of the non-aligned movement when it met last year at Colombo and recommended a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.<sup>1</sup>

30. No initiative could be more judicious, politically as well as economically. Indeed, ever since the problem of disarmament first appeared on our agenda and since the international Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was signed, we have seen nothing but a headlong race to increase military arsenals. In a few years, according to expert estimates, some 30 or so countries will possess nuclear weapons. When one realizes that among them are South Africa and Israel, which are likely to secure the atomic weapon, we can truly understand the dimensions of this deadly danger to our universe. The super-Powers for their part, far from reducing their potential in this field, continue to manufacture new, ever-more sophisticated and infinitely deadlier weapons, each year swallowing up considerable sums of money which could have been used to alleviate suffering.

31. The cause of this arms race is, we think, to be sought not merely in a wish to achieve power and to dominate, but essentially in the absence of a global approach directed towards total and complete disarmament. The arms limitation agreements signed in connexion with the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, although representing a praiseworthy effort, and the partial prohibition of nuclear tests recommended by our General Assembly are mere palliatives, not a solution. Some Powers might legitimately have the impression, indeed, that the various attempts at

limitation are directed towards preserving the nuclear monopoly of the super-Powers, which are thus granting themselves a dominant status in world affairs.

32. This impression, no doubt justified, of military imbalance and insecurity has led to a generalized nuclear and conventional arms race. The General Assembly's forthcoming special session on disarmament should therefore, in our view, attempt to break new ground by proposing general and complete disarmament. On that occasion a programme of action could be worked out made up of three elements, namely, the strengthening of the de-nuclearized zones; a precise policy of disarmament at the regional and world levels; and utilization of the resources thus released to assist development.

33. This last problem incidentally, and quite rightly, constitutes a major concern of the day, because hunger, disease and ignorance also make up a dangerous bomb that we must defuse as soon as possible. They are factors leading to instability and revolution, which always produce war and conflict. The international community is aware of this situation, and we are glad of it. In this regard, the United Nations has recommended in various documents a series of measures that would undoubtedly, if accepted, introduce a greater degree of justice and stability into international economic relations.

34. Outside our Organization, the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, whose report<sup>2</sup> has just been considered by the General Assembly at the 108th and 109th meetings of its thirty-first session, was one of the most appropriate bodies for debating such complex and controversial problems as those of energy, commodities and finance—just to mention a few. These problems are central concerns of the international community. Although that Conference gave the delegations taking part an opportunity to diagnose the most urgent problems facing the developing countries and to seek their solution on the basis of concrete proposals, we cannot but recognize that the results achieved fell well below the hopes that it had aroused.

35. The limited agreements, reached at the Conference were disappointing in terms both of their number and their nature, especially in the light of all the work and time required.

36. It would therefore be unrealistic, in our view, to speak of true progress towards the restructuring of international economic relations, still less of a substantial contribution to the development of the developing countries, which was the very purpose of the Conference. However, if there is anything to be said for the North-South dialogue, it is that it has proved that the United Nations system remains the most appropriate and most representative framework for world negotiations.

37. In the months and years to come, there can be no doubt that those negotiations will multiply and that they will extend to the whole of the economic and social sector. Indeed, it is public knowledge that today, on the threshold of the third development decade, the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade are still far

<sup>1</sup> See document A/31/197, annex IV, resolution NAC/CONF.5/S/RES.12.

<sup>2</sup> See documents A/31/478 and Corr.1 and A/31/478/Add.1 and Corr.1.

from having been achieved. The results that were achieved, although they may vary from one sector to another, on the whole, fall far short of what was hoped for.

38. One of the areas where progress has certainly been slowest is international trade, and particularly trade in primary commodities.

39. The slow rate of progress recorded in that field is particularly alarming because this is a question of vital importance not only for the economy of the developing countries but also for the world economy as a whole.

40. Nevertheless, decisions taken in this regard at the fourth session of UNCTAD,<sup>3</sup> as well as the agreement in principle on the establishment of a common fund achieved at the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, provide a good basis for future action. These first steps are timid enough, and the implementation of the various decisions should be pursued with a greater degree of political will on the part of the developed countries. If this condition is met, there might be grounds for hoping that the plenipotentiaries meeting in the Negotiating Conference on a Common Fund under the Integrated Programme for Commodities, which has been scheduled for next month, would reach an agreement on practical ways and means to set up a common fund.

41. The question of international trade is indissolubly linked with the questions of international monetary reform and the financing of development. Here again the application of the decisions of our Assembly leaves a great deal to be desired.

42. At the very time when a growing number of countries are encountering serious balance-of-payments difficulties, the trend that had been emerging towards a total reform of the international monetary system seems to have faltered as if the problems giving rise to that trend had all, as by magic, been completely and successfully solved. What is more, the agreement achieved at the seventh special session of the General Assembly on the need to establish a link between the creation of special drawing rights and the provision of supplementary development financing<sup>4</sup> still remains to be followed up, while total public aid to development amounts to only half of the target figure laid down in the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade [*resolution 2626 (XXV)*].

43. All these elements have, of course, been examined by the various bodies, and particularly by the fourth session of UNCTAD at Nairobi. But thus far it has not been possible to take concrete measures to promote the solution of urgent problems such as the indebtedness of developing countries, the financing of development, compensatory financing and so on. These are all problems that have quite rightly been considered sufficiently important to be the subject this year of a ministerial session of the Trade and Development Board.

44. With regard to agriculture, which is of particular concern to agricultural countries like mine, the assistance of the international community would be improved if it were increased and dispensed in such a way as to permit the developing countries to bring their agricultural output at least to the level recommended in the International Development Strategy.

45. Such an increase is particularly necessary because for the period 1971-1976 the growth rate of agricultural production in the developing countries was little over 2.5 per cent a year, a figure not only lower than the target laid down by the Strategy but also—and this is what worries us most—lower than the rate of 2.9 per cent achieved in the First Development Decade.

46. National and international food reserves for food security and emergency situations should also be set up as recommended by the World Food Conference.<sup>5</sup>

47. The implementation of another recommendation of that Conference, namely, the establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development, will without a doubt constitute appreciable progress towards the improvement of the food situation in developing countries.

48. Co-operation among developing countries, whether it be technical or economic, is of particular importance in our view. Indeed, the feverish activity which has been under way in recent years at the international level will at least have taught us that the developing countries are themselves primarily responsible for their development.

49. Hunger, disease and ignorance, which are still dangerously rife in so many parts of the world, are problems which are too concrete and too serious for their solution to depend solely on the uncertain outcome of international meetings and conferences, no matter how specialized and representative they may be.

50. However, while the slow progress made so far in the adaptation of the world economic order—an adaptation that is now becoming urgent—justifies such pessimism, the international institutions concerned with finance and economic matters are performing work of capital importance in the furtherance of development and deserve close attention. Despite the deficiencies of the present world system, the role played by IBRD, IMF or UNDP in development assistance remains an essential one for furthering the economic progress of our developing countries and for their social and cultural rehabilitation. Mauritania is aware of the importance of the role those institutions play and we wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude and our willingness to continue to strengthen our co-operation with them.

51. That is the point of view of Mauritania on the principal problems which we consider today to be the essential concern of our world. There are, of course, other questions which should also receive our attention. Among them is respect for human rights wherever they are being

<sup>3</sup> See *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fourth Session*, vol. I, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.II.D.10), part one A.

<sup>4</sup> See General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), sect. II, para. 3.

<sup>5</sup> See *Report of the World Food Conference, Rome, 5-16 November 1974* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.3), chap. II.



violated. That is a goal which without doubt is important and is one which justifies any efforts that we may undertake to achieve it. My country is characterized by a policy of respect for human rights. We have no political prisoners, as shown by page 66 of the recent report of Amnesty International for the year 1976,<sup>6</sup> and we have a clear conscience on this subject. We are ready to make our contribution to the efforts that will be decided upon in this respect by our Organization.

52. The return of the Comorian Island of Mayotte to the motherland is also an imperative necessity, as it is an objective of the Organization of African Unity. What we must do here is preserve the national unity and territorial integrity of the State of the Comoros, that young African country which has just acceded to international sovereignty and which needs internal peace in order to devote itself to the most urgent problems of economic development and social advancement. As a friendly country we appeal to France precisely in the name of the relations which I have just mentioned to facilitate and preserve the national unity of the Comoros.

53. In Mauritania we believe that if the international community succeeds in putting an end to the various sources of tension and in working out appropriate solutions for the establishment of a just and equitable international economic order so as to give every country a sense of security, it will be the most far-reaching and finest task ever accomplished by man. Our generation will thus have rendered an immense service to future generations and will have saved humanity from an otherwise inevitable destruction. My country is ready to contribute with faith and determination to that task. The framework offered by the United Nations for its performance is both unique and perfectly suited to the task. The short-comings of our Organization, which some people deplore and which others decry, do not stem from any deficiency in the structure; they are the result of the absence of a genuine political will to make of the United Nations an instrument for economic advancement and for agreement among peoples. The Charter signed in San Francisco in 1945, in spite of some adjustments which have now become necessary, is still entirely up to date. I think that we all agree that the future effectiveness of our Organization will depend on our commitment and our sincere attachment to its ideals of peace and justice. For its part Mauritania will continue to give this Organization its whole-hearted support and will remain one of its most enthusiastic advocates.

54. Mr. WAIYAKI (Kenya): Mr. President, your election is a great tribute to you personally and to your country, with which Kenya maintains very cordial relations. Yugoslavia has been in the forefront of the struggle for non-alignment in international affairs and is a champion of freedom, equality and dignity. Kenya is proud to be its friend. My delegation is satisfied to work under your enlightened and wise leadership and I should like to assure you, Sir, of our full co-operation.

55. I wish also to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to your eminent predecessor Ambassador Amerasinghe, who

guided the General Assembly so ably during a difficult session. It was thanks to his calm wisdom and vast experience that we were able to deal effectively with many difficult problems, and we owe him a debt of gratitude for all he did for the United Nations and the world.

56. Our sincere thanks go also to our untiring Secretary-General and his staff for their devotion to duty and loyalty to the Organization. They have our support.

57. My delegation is very happy to welcome among us the two new Members of our Organization, namely, the Republic of Djibouti and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. I extend to them a most sincere and warm welcome and I should like to assure them of our co-operation in the deliberations and work of this Organization.

58. The admission of Djibouti and Viet Nam is a significant milestone on the road of the struggle against all forms of colonial domination. The heroic struggle waged by those two States against colonialism is well known to all of us. Their triumph is indeed a bright light for those still under colonial domination and oppression. It is a significant step in rendering irreversible the trend towards ridding this world of the inhuman practice of colonialism. We are confident that they will always jealously guard their sovereignty which has been won at such great human and material cost.

59. As we are meeting here, a savage war is ravaging the Horn of Africa, with all the ramifications that entails for international peace and security. My country cannot but be very concerned and it is for this reason that we draw the attention of this august body to a most dangerous situation developing in that area. If all members of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations respected the principles and charters of the two bodies, perhaps dangers to international peace and security posed by the war and the risk of external interference in the internal affairs of member States in that subregion would not have arisen. We must all agree to respect the territorial integrity of each member State.

60. Southern Africa continues to constitute a main centre of tension in the world today, threatening peace and international security. The white minority régimes continue to oppress and exploit the black majority with increasing brutality and ruthless savagery. As I pointed out last year,<sup>7</sup> it is not sufficient for us to recognize that the racial policies of these régimes constitute a threat to international peace and security. What is needed most is agreement on a programme of practical steps and measures to be taken to put an end to this threat.

61. The International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, held in Maputo, and the World Conference for Action against *Apartheid*, held in Lagos, were clear indications of the determination of the international community to grapple with the problems of the area. My delegation pledges Kenya's full and unswerving support for the declarations and programmes of action of

<sup>6</sup> *The Amnesty International Report, 1 June 1975-31 May 1976* (London, Amnesty International Publications, 1976).

<sup>7</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 14th meeting, paras. 1-53.

Maputo<sup>8</sup> and Lagos<sup>9</sup> and calls for their implementation without delay.

62. In complete disregard of the opinion of the international community, the racist régime in South Africa continues to intensify the application of the diabolical and inhuman policies of *apartheid* with greater determination. The indignation of the world community over the barbarous murders of innocent children in Soweto last year did nothing to jolt the conscience of the racists in South Africa. Instead, the racist régime continues to maim and kill innocent children whose only crime is to demand their inalienable rights to dignity and equality. The barbarity of the régime has been exposed further by the murder of peaceful and young Steven Biko. They have told us that they have no intention of relenting. We have pointed out on numerous occasions that the tree of freedom is watered with blood, and Vorster is determined to see it flow. So let Vorster and his clique know that no amount of murder or intimidation will reverse the hands of the clock of freedom in Azania. Africans have avoided blood thus far, but let white South Africans reflect. They can only continue with their acts at their gravest peril. Their blood can also be shed.

63. This world Assembly rejected the antics of Vorster when it rejected the so-called independence of the Transkei. No sooner had this resounding defeat been inflicted on the policies of *apartheid* than Vorster instigated a blockade of land-locked Lesotho. We condemn such acts as illegal and call on all peace-loving countries to assist Lesotho and Botswana in their predicament.

64. The entire world was treated recently to contradictory statements from officials of the same régime regarding the reported preparedness of South Africa to explode a nuclear device. Africa had issued a warning against giving any technological assistance in the field of nuclear know-how to South Africa, but its warnings, unfortunately, fell on deaf ears. In pursuit of short-term economic gains, some countries had aided South Africa to arm itself to an extent that is obviously dangerous to peace and security, not only in the region, but in the world as a whole. All previous pretensions that these arms were given for the defensive needs of South Africa had been unconvincing. No one else in Africa has nuclear capability and it would be sheer hypocrisy for anybody to argue that South Africa needs to defend its territory by the use of nuclear weapons. We are convinced that South Africa wants to use this capability to intimidate black African States in their efforts to aid the freedom fighters in Azania. But even nuclear bombs will not deter the African fight for freedom. Those who helped South Africa with knowledge and nuclear fuel should advise against its ideas; it will burn itself as it tried to burn the rest of us. In any case, the rest of Africa might be driven to seek the same capability in time, so the nuclear club would expand instead of shrinking, which would be a real disaster.

<sup>8</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-second Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1977*, document S/12344/Rev.1, annex V.

<sup>9</sup> See *Report of the World Conference for Action against Apartheid* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.XIV.2), chap. X.

65. Because of appalling conditions in South Africa for our people, despite United Nations resolutions which have remained unheeded, Kenya has resolved to assist the freedom fighters of Azania further and to a greater extent materially, both through bilateral and multilateral avenues. We call upon all Member States to increase their support for the cause of freedom and dignity. The prolonged misery of the oppressed black majority has increased their bitterness with the inevitable consequence of terrible racial conflagration. We call upon all Member States to implement the United Nations resolutions against South Africa as a lever to persuade it to change its dangerous course. We appeal especially to those countries that have economic influence in South Africa to use their power to ensure that this weapon is used to force the short-sighted white minority to change their attitude and share the fruits of self-determination on an equitable and fair basis with the other communities in South Africa.

66. Africa will not be satisfied with the token removal of petty racism in public places. What we are calling for is a complete removal of all racial laws and practices. Until that is done, Kenya calls for the total isolation of South Africa in all fields. That is the price we are asking the international community to pay for the cause of human rights and dignity in Azania, and we think it is a small price compared with the immense loss of human lives that will obviously occur if we sit back and do nothing, leaving the freedom fighters no option but to wrench their freedom from the hands of the minority régime in a violent confrontation.

67. Last year, my country called upon South Africa to leave Namibia and to hand over power to the Namibian people. We rejected the so-called constitutional talks and the arrangement of hand-picked ethnic delegates not only as illegal and obnoxious, but also as delaying tactics by Vorster in surrendering power.

68. Kenya has stated again and again that it does not recognize the authority of South Africa in Namibia. The international community has also stated on many occasions that it does not recognize the authority of South Africa in Namibia. What is needed therefore is not any more condemnations of the illegal régime for its illegal occupation of Namibia. What is needed is action to dislodge the illegal régime from that African territory.

69. Since we last met a group of countries from the West has contacted South Africa and persuaded it to change its attitude and hand over Namibia to the Namibians. While we cannot doubt the good intentions of those countries, my delegation would like to give a warning that Vorster can no longer be trusted on matters relating to the self-determination of Namibia. In 1974 he vowed that if he were given only six months the world would be surprised by the changes that he would effect in Namibia. It is now over three years since we were asked to listen to what appeared to be a "voice of reason". The situation in Namibia has not improved. Instead, Vorster has repeatedly found one reason after another to create impediments to the immediate transfer of power to Namibians. We should like, therefore, to caution the contact group to be wary of his tactics and not to rely on his promises alone as the basis for progress in the solution of the Namibian issue. We would, rather, call upon them to use all other available

means, including military sanctions and economic measures that would force the régime in South Africa to act faster. All States should support and implement a total embargo on the sale, gift or transfer of arms to South Africa. We call upon all concerned to put respect for human dignity and rights above short-term economic interests and to cut their economic ties with South Africa as long as that country continues to defy the United Nations and occupy Namibia illegally.

70. We have always maintained—and we shall continue to do so—that there can be no permanent solution of the Namibian problem unless the people of Namibia are consulted through their proper representatives. For this reason we insist that the South West Africa People's Organization should be fully involved at every stage of the negotiations and progress towards independence. If no real progress is achieved the war of liberation should continue until freedom is won.

71. We are meeting when again hopes for a negotiated settlement of the Zimbabwe situation are being expressed. Ironically, when the Assembly was meeting last year hopes were also high that at last a solution might be at hand for this intractable problem. Kenya was not convinced then that rebel Smith was honest when he said that he was prepared to accept majority rule in Zimbabwe. Events since then have proved that Smith was only buying time. He had no intention whatsoever of handing power to the black majority. As we sit here today he is still dreaming of, and trying to establish, a so-called responsible Government consisting of the whites and a handful of hand-picked African stooges. He calls it an internal solution.

72. Kenya has stated on many occasions that there can be no sense or logic in seeking peaceful negotiations with an incorrigible rebel and that the only language such a rebel understands is force. We urged the United Kingdom Government, the administering Power, to take appropriate measures to remove the rebel from its colony. However, the present Anglo-American proposals attempt to restore the British presence in Rhodesia by the appointment of a British resident commissioner. While Kenya welcomes the return of British say in Southern Rhodesia, the United Kingdom and Smith cannot surely coexist, for the unilateral declaration of independence and legality are diametrically opposed. We are not convinced that Smith will step down voluntarily, however, and we therefore call on the Governments of both the United Kingdom and the United States to ensure that he is forced out. Until he goes Kenya will continue to support the armed struggle and the strict application of sanctions against the rebel Government. All peace-loving people should increase their material and moral support to the freedom fighters until genuine prospects for majority rule in Zimbabwe cannot be reversed. Our support for continued armed struggle should not be seen as obstruction, but experience has taught us that Africa's best guarantee of liberation is the freedom fighter and his gun.

73. The Anglo-American proposals appear promising, but at no time should Smith have the last word or they would lose their value in the minds of many of us. Kenya is in agreement with the proposal to have the presence of the United Nations in the Territory through a representative of

the Secretary-General. It is our strong view, however, that such involvement of the United Nations must not be viewed as in any way providing for a reduction in the ultimate responsibility of the administering Power to ensure a rapid and complete transfer of power to the black majority of Zimbabwe.

74. Kenya, of course, is in favour of the proposal for the early holding of elections to choose the leaders that will guide independent Zimbabwe. We believe that the Zimbabwe people, given the opportunity and without interference, can freely choose their leaders on the basis of one man or woman, one vote. A Government so elected will have our supreme support but, as I say, Smith, his rebel and illegal Government and the Selous Scouts must go immediately as a start. The mercenaries and other undesirable elements in the army cannot be trusted and similarly should go. It should become clear that in the event of insecurity the freedom fighters would have the upper hand. They are the Zimbabweans' best guarantee of safety and genuine independence.

75. The proposal can therefore only be considered as offering a basis for further negotiations and not as a package deal. We would therefore urge that the steps necessary for the commencement of such negotiations be taken urgently before the will and resolution of those involved are dampened again by Smith's obstructionist tactics.

76. I turn now to the Middle East, which continues to be a region fraught with all the elements of danger to international peace and security. The hopes that had been raised at the beginning of the year that peace is possible in the region have been severely shaken by recent events there.

77. Kenya has stated, and I want to repeat, that peace in the area can only prevail if the following three conditions are fulfilled: first, the recognition of the right of all States in the region to live in peace and within secure and recognized boundaries, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973); secondly, the withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab lands that it has continued to occupy since the war of 1967; and thirdly, the recognition of the human rights of the Palestinians as a people and their right to an independent and truly sovereign homeland.

78. We have noted with much regret that Israel has continuously disregarded the resolutions of this Organization concerning the Arab territories it occupies. The Israelis, against all reason and international opinion, have been engaged in changing the demographic and physical aspects of the region. Therefore Kenya joins the world in condemning Israel for taking these measures that do nothing but threaten international peace and security. We call upon Israel to respect this august body and to desist from building permanent Jewish settlements on occupied Arab lands and the West Bank.

79. I must say that recently we noted with some relief that Israel had agreed to the convening of the Geneva peace talks. As we have stated on many occasions, we consider that for the success of these talks the participation of the Palestinians on an equal basis with all the other parties



concerned is essential. The Palestinians have chosen the PLO as their mouthpiece and we should respect that position. The time when the Palestinians were considered only as refugees is long gone. All discussions of the political issues affecting them must of necessity be conducted with them. We therefore urge all concerned not to put any pre-conditions on the participation of a people so central to peace and security in the region. Eastern Africa is very much concerned that there should be peace with honour in the Middle East. Let no one obstruct progress towards a conference that could bring such enormous advantages to those immediately concerned as well as to the rest of our countries in the Horn of Africa and south of it.

80. It is now over three years since the fragile peace and tranquillity of Cyprus were once again shattered, first by the abortive coup engineered and executed by Greek officers stationed on the island and then by the massive invasion of the island by Turkish forces. The communal talks that have been going on since then have made very little and slow progress, primarily because of external interference.

81. Kenya has always called and will continue to call for respect for and recognition of the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Cyprus. We urge the people of Cyprus, with whom we have very cordial relations, to bury their sectional interests for the benefit of the entire population of the island. We urge them not to be discouraged by the many obstacles in their way and we call upon all external forces to stop interfering in the internal affairs of non-aligned Cyprus.

82. It is now 32 years since the United Nations was founded with the fundamental desire to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to create conditions of peace and security in the world. While major conflicts have been avoided, we cannot but note with much regret that there still exist many areas of international tension in the world. We note with indignation the threat to international peace and security brought about by the continuation of the diabolical *apartheid* system and racism in southern Africa. Looking at other areas of tension we find flagrant disrespect for and violation of the territorial integrity of other sovereign States and the occupation of other people's territories by force of arms, contrary to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. The continued failure to fulfil the basic daily needs of man in many parts of the world is not conducive to the creation of a climate of tranquillity in which man can spend his time in pursuit of peace and happiness.

83. The most serious of all the obstacles to peace and security in the world is the ever-escalating armaments race. While everyone agrees that there is an urgent need to halt this dangerous escalation, progress towards arms limitation and reduction is not yet in sight. The proposed special session on disarmament is a first step towards this objective and has my delegation's support. It is, however, the view of my delegation that this session should tackle all the problems of disarmament and should not only examine the question of limitation of armament escalation. It should also work out practical steps for the reduction and eventual elimination of armaments.

84. It is not justifiable for the world to continue pouring billions of dollars into an industry whose sole aim is the development of the most sophisticated machinery of destruction while more than half of the world goes hungry. We once again urge the major manufacturers and countries to consider diverting the human, technological and financial resources which they use for producing arms to fulfilling the economic needs of mankind. Above all, we urge all countries to abide truly by the principles of good neighbourliness and peaceful coexistence as a positive contribution towards the elimination of tension that encourages the escalation of armaments.

85. Kenya is seriously concerned at the slow progress made by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean and the reluctance of a number of States Members of this Organization to the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. The continued build-up of the naval might of the super-Powers in the ocean and the construction of naval and military bases in the region constitute flagrant disregard of the fears and sentiments expressed by all the littoral States that have solemnly declared that they would like the Indian Ocean to be a zone of peace. While we note some recent improvement in the willingness of the super-Powers to discuss this subject, we feel that it has not yet been accorded either urgency or the seriousness of consideration which it calls for. In particular, we are aware that during the period of delay in the convening of a conference the super-Powers have continued to expand and intensify their naval and military presence, thus increasing the level of tension in that area.

86. Kenya once again calls on all States to respect this solemn declaration and to ask those that have bases in the zone to remove them so that the States in the region can pursue their development efforts without intimidation.

87. Allow me now to turn to another important subject of vital interest to my country, namely, the on-going negotiations on the law of the sea. The Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea has already held six sessions, the last one having taken place here in New York from 23 May to 15 July 1977.

88. It will be recalled that Kenya's delegations to these negotiations have always played a constructive role in a spirit of compromise, in an effort to evolve a more equitable and just régime for the seas, whose immense resources have up to now been the preserve of the major maritime Powers. The negotiations have so far been lengthy and complex. The seas are of vital importance to each and every nation. Covering well over three-quarters of the surface of our planet, the oceans are vital for the very existence of life, and with the increasing world population they are becoming more and more important as a source of food.

89. As a communications link, it is imperative and of vital importance that the seas shall continue to be open for innocent passage for all nations. At the same time we must arrest the misuse of the oceans as a cesspool for the dumping of wastes and other noxious substances, as the destruction of the seas will inevitably lead to the destruction of life on the earth.

90. The General Assembly solemnly declared that the sea-bed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction and its resources constitute the common heritage of mankind [*resolution 2749 (XXV)*]. For us in Kenya this is not a mere slogan. The common heritage concept is an imperative norm and must be translated into a régime which guarantees the developing countries' rights to participate in the exploiting of these resources and protects them against unfair competition from the maritime Powers, which at the moment have more technological capability for exploiting these resources.

91. The Kenya Government is currently studying the results of the sixth session of the Conference on the Law of the Sea. Our preliminary view is that the informal composite negotiating text<sup>10</sup> which was produced during the session represents a significant advance and provides a suitable basis for negotiating the final draft treaty during the forthcoming seventh session in Geneva next year.

92. While the informal composite negotiating text does not fully satisfy the wishes of all Member States, we nevertheless believe that if delegations go to the next session determined to work in the spirit of compromise, the text will be of great assistance in reaching the final conclusion. Kenya will go to the next session prepared to negotiate. We shall, however, completely reject any attempt by any State or group of States to dictate terms to others. The failure of the informal composite negotiating text to meet all the aspirations of such States should not be used as a pretext or justification for taking unilateral measures to plunder the resources which are the common heritage of mankind.

93. The Conference has been going on for too long now and my Government, I believe with many other developing countries, is not in a position to continue these negotiations indefinitely. The cost in both manpower and financial resources is too great for countries which have many competing needs. We therefore urge all Member States to work towards the conclusion of this treaty during the forthcoming session.

94. I would now like to turn to some of the major economic issues which have become so pressing and which need urgent solutions in the interest of justice, equity and peace in the world. The Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation held earlier this year is the latest in a series of efforts to conduct meaningful and objective negotiations on these issues. Earlier, at the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly, promises and declarations were made which appeared to indicate that the international community had now, at last, realized and fully recognized the realities of economic interdependence and the common destiny of the world. In particular, the sixth special session adopted the Declaration and Programme of Action for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [*resolution 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)*], giving further hopes of an early resolution of the problems of development and international economic co-operation.

95. The developing countries had therefore expected that the Paris Conference would lead to the formulation of a practical programme of action which would lead to negotiations and some measure of agreement towards creating a more just and equitable economic order. In accepting the invitation to participate in this Conference, the developing countries did not expect miracles and did not expect that a new international economic order would be established overnight. However, they expected, quite justifiably, that the developed countries would agree to work positively towards the removal of those obstacles which have persistently been placed in the way of progress towards a more meaningful form of economic co-operation and partnership. These constraints, which have been discussed time and again, are all man-made and can be removed with a little more resolution and political will on the part of the developed countries. The problems were clearly defined in the meeting of the Group of 77 in Manila in 1975, and specific proposals for their resolution were made in the Manila Declaration which was presented at the fourth session of UNCTAD in Nairobi in 1976.<sup>11</sup>

96. The recommendations included specific proposals with regard to the establishment of machinery for stabilizing the export earnings of developing countries. Practical measures were proposed for compensatory financing of export shortfalls, the reorganization of commodity markets and the writing off or rescheduling of debts which were already proving too great a burden and an obstacle to development. Suggestions were made as to how to accelerate the transfer of the relevant technology and management skills which are so much needed in the developing countries.

97. After 18 months of discussion in Paris, little progress was made towards an acceptable solution to this problem. The developed countries still appear to believe that the problem can be solved within the traditional concepts of economic co-operation. They invariably point to their commitments to provide more bilateral and multilateral aid, although they know that any increase in aid is more than nullified by inflation and other economic factors beyond our control. They elaborate on the steps they have taken in order to increase private investment in developing countries. And yet we all know the unfortunate role which has been played by private investors in perpetuating the evils of economic domination over developing economies. We know the part they have played in maintaining unfavourable terms of trade and a régime of unjustifiable outflow of profits from the countries of their operation.

98. In this context, we must once again state clearly our position regarding the transnational corporations. The developing countries are no longer prepared to have their destiny in the sphere of economic and trade relations subjugated to the interests of transnational corporations. It is for this reason that we have called upon the United Nations system to establish a code of conduct for those corporations and to establish a realistic capacity to assist developing countries in ensuring that their dealings with transnational corporations are on the basis of equitable sharing of returns from investments. Developing countries

<sup>10</sup> See *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. VIII (to be issued as a United Nations publication), documents A/CONF.62/WP.10 and Add.1.

<sup>11</sup> See *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fourth Session*, vol. I, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.II.D.10), annex V.

are still awaiting the outcome of those two decisions but, sadly, little progress appears to have been achieved.

99. On the whole, therefore, I feel obliged to voice the increasing disappointments and frustrations of developing countries at the lack of progress in the evolution of a more meaningful international economic order. However, in spite of the failures of those negotiations—not only in Paris but also at the fourth session of UNCTAD in Nairobi, at the multilateral trade negotiations under GATT, and the discussions within the IMF—World Bank Group—the developing countries cannot give up hope. To do so would be to accept defeat and to condemn two thirds of mankind for ever to a short life of misery, hunger and social deprivation. We still believe in the justice of our cause and in our conviction that the developed world has the ability to resolve those problems, given more goodwill and political determination.

100. The developing countries themselves have a role to play in furtherance of this economic evolution. Kenya believes strongly in the promotion of economic and technical co-operation between countries of the developing world. The similarity of our resources as well as our problems, our wishes as well as our capabilities, and the identity of our aspirations and purpose all create a strong base for co-operation in technical, cultural and trade relations.

101. In considering the role of developing countries in a new economic order, we must refer to the question of the management of natural resources and the human environment. As producers of basic raw materials and agricultural commodities, developing countries cannot ignore the irresponsible and reckless way in which mankind has in the past exploited both renewable and non-renewable natural resources. Of the utmost significance at the moment is the whole question of the management of water resources and the halting of the encroachment of deserts on the human environment. This is a problem which has been ignored for too long, to the extent that it now constitutes a menace and a real threat to human life. In this context, my country supported the resolutions of the United Nations Water Conference<sup>12</sup> and of the first United Nations Conference on Desertification, held in Nairobi from 29 August to 9 September of this year.<sup>13</sup> Kenya was honoured to have been host to the latter Conference. We are convinced that the Plan of Action adopted by the Conference is a milestone on the road to ensuring that appropriate remedial actions are taken to stop mankind from being wiped out by lack of water and food owing to the reckless use of land and its resources.

102. The Plan of Action, which is before this session of the General Assembly, reflects the combined efforts of professionals and others working in related fields. While commending their work, and in particular the role of the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Mostafa Tolba, we call on all nations to give the practical support and

commitment necessary for the implementation of the Plan of Action. In particular, we ask all nations to contribute generously towards a global effort to combat desertification and its related problems. We ask them to participate vigorously in the subregional and regional efforts recommended in the Plan of Action to ensure that man's habitat is not destroyed while we lethargically watch in a state of inaction by the encroachment of deserts.

103. At this point I should like to make a short reference to the question of human settlements, now commonly known as "Habitat". This subject has been discussed at various levels of preparatory committees of the United Nations, the Habitat Conference,<sup>15</sup> the UNEP Governing Council and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the General Assembly. Other numerous consultations and discussions have taken place at regional and subregional levels.

104. This session of the General Assembly will be asked to make final decisions on the establishment of "Habitat", its institutional arrangements and its location. My delegation has taken a most active role in all discussions on this subject from the beginning, and we were honoured to chair the United Nations Preparatory Committee for Habitat. We are convinced that the views of all the delegations on this subject have now been fully expressed and examined and that a final decision should be taken at this session of the General Assembly.

105. The problem of human settlements, particularly in the developing countries, is urgent and pressing. Millions of human beings are today living in subhuman conditions waiting for this Assembly to do something concrete to alleviate their misery. Suffice it to say therefore that my delegation, like the overwhelming majority of the members of the Economic and Social Council, will support the consensus recommendation of the sixty-third session of the Economic and Social Council on this subject.<sup>16</sup> We fully appreciate that, in an organization like the United Nations—now with 149 Members—it is impossible to have a solution best suited to each Member State's aspirations. It was in the spirit of compromise that my delegation agreed to go along with the majority and adopt a resolution acceptable to most delegations. I should therefore like to appeal to all delegations at this session to adopt the Economic and Social Council recommendation by consensus so that the United Nations agencies concerned can embark on the urgent and difficult task before us of ensuring a more tolerable and meaningful life for the millions of people throughout the world who now know nothing but misery and abject deprivation.

106. Mr. CHATTY (Tunisia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It is a pleasure for me, first of all, to express to you, Sir, on behalf of the delegation of Tunisia and on my own behalf, warm congratulations on the occasion of your election to the presidency of the thirty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly.

<sup>12</sup> See *Report of the United Nations Conference on Water, held at Mar del Plata, from 14 to 25 March 1977* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.II.A.12), chaps. I and II.

<sup>13</sup> See document A/CONF.74/36, chap. II.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. I.

<sup>15</sup> Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held at Vancouver from 31 May to 11 June 1976.

<sup>16</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 1*, decision 262 (LXIII).

107. We are doubly pleased by that election: first because of your experience acquired in this Organization, your thorough knowledge of international problems, your sensitivity and your adherence to the opinion of the overwhelming majority of delegation on major problems. Those qualities assure us that you will conduct our work with wisdom and competence and that you will guide our discussions towards results that will have the most fortunate consequences for the development of international affairs. We are also pleased that the man occupying that post is the representative of a country which is dear to us and to which we are linked by bonds of an old friendship and by the close relations that were established between our President Habib Bourguiba and Marshall Tito and derive from a common struggle for independence, the strengthening of national sovereignty and the triumph of law everywhere where it has been ignored. Furthermore, there is nothing more natural than to see those two men, after having accomplished their domestic missions, meet again to promote the policy of non-alignment which they have guided side by side until it has acquired the authority it has today.

108. I take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the enormous efforts unceasingly made by marshal Tito to strengthen the policy of non-alignment and we wish him long life and all success in his task.

109. I should also like to express my thanks to your predecessor, Mr. Amerasinghe, who presided over our last session with an exemplary skill, which can be a source of pride not only to his country but to all non-aligned States.

110. I also wish to pay a tribute to Mr. Kurt Waldheim, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his good work in strengthening the foundations of our Organization and for his serenity in meeting the difficulties he encounters in the service of peace and security with good grace, dedication and devotion.

111. This year the United Nations has admitted two new Members. We warmly welcome that major event and we rejoice at the happy tradition adopted by the United Nations of welcoming new Members to the international family in succeeding years. That tradition allows us to foster the firm hope that the efforts of peoples fighting for their independence will inevitably be crowned by success and that year after year we will welcome new Members in our midst. Thus, in a few years the remaining peoples who are struggling will be freed and colonialism will have disappeared from the surface of the globe.

112. On behalf of the Government of Tunisia I address a welcome to the delegation of Djibouti, a brother country. We express the hope that the accession to international responsibility will herald for the people of Djibouti a new era in which it will realize its hopes of dignity and development. I assure that country on behalf of the Government and people of Tunisia of our solidarity and our support in strengthening the basis of Djibouti's sovereignty and guaranteeing its invulnerability.

113. I bid a most warm welcome also to the delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and on behalf of President Bourguiba and of the Tunisian Government I

greet the great people of Viet Nam and the memory of its immortal leader, President Ho Chi Minh. That people has given the noblest example of heroism and we hope that its admission to membership in the United Nations will strengthen this Organization and will enable it to extend its basis of universality and solve the problems it is called upon to consider.

114. Every year we meet on this occasion in order to take stock of our actions and to assess the progress we have made in the service of international peace and solidarity. To judge by the extent of that progress, we can hardly claim that there is cause for satisfaction or that we can feel reassured. The present situation is particularly obscure, and it gives rise to doubts and apprehensions of all kinds. The international political situation reveals no more substantial progress than the economic and social situation since last year. Thus we begin this new session facing the same problems we considered at the last session. However, these problems have become worse, and this situation constitutes a serious danger for peace.

115. We are among those who firmly believe that the United Nations is the best body available to mankind as a forum where opposing views can be voiced and appropriate solutions sought. We believe also that there is a need to consolidate the foundations of this Organization and to guard against its adopting positions contrary to its principles.

116. The agenda for this session is full of important items and I do not intend to go into them all in detail. That would take up too much time. I shall simply refer to the most important questions and define the position of my Government on them.

117. First of all, we have the question of Palestine and the question of the Middle East. It is undeniable that last year these two problems were subjects of increasing interest to world opinion and world leaders. But that interest, in our view, has not been commensurate with the danger that those two problems entail. In fact we in the twentieth century are facing the greatest test for mankind, which squarely confronts the United Nations. In such circumstances we cannot give way to inertia or despair, especially when we realize the dimensions of the problem and when everyone recognizes today that the guilty party in this situation and the party responsible for its deterioration is not the victim, a people expelled from its home, robbed of its property and forced into exile, but, on the contrary, the party which has despoiled the land of another, disregarded all the rules of morality and has had the effrontery to deny the truth of history and of the real facts.

118. The problem we face today has gone beyond all ordinary political criteria and all normally admitted moral rules. More than ever we must ask ourselves whether or not the fundamental ideals of the United Nations can inspire it to act with the same rigour towards all its Members. Are we to believe that some Members have formed the unbreakable habit of not complying with the rules and of responding to events with inertia and indifference? If that is so, what recourse is left for the victim of aggression? How can we ask the victim to be patient, to prefer political solutions, and to be realistic, while the aggressor hardens his position



further, closes the door and invents all sorts of excuses to close the way to any sincere and frank negotiation, and while the aggressor denies the victim the right even to a normal life of human dignity.

119. For a year now both problems have gone through a difficult stage. The General Assembly last year was not able to reach positive resolutions likely to open up the way to settlement of the problems. The reason was that the last Israeli Government refused to undertake any action on the grounds that Israeli legislative elections were near, and that we heeded the recommendations of those who wanted us to observe restraint, to wait for the elections to take place, and for a Labour Government to emerge from the elections which would have been strongly supported by the voters and which would be sure to take matters seriously in hand and to heed the voice of reason. We were in no way convinced that the future Government would in any way change the attitude of the Israeli State. On the contrary we were certain that that was simply a manoeuvre to gain time, and to get through a difficult political moment when world opinion was becoming increasingly concerned.

120. The world is a witness to the fact that the Arabs have shown flexibility and patience, that no Arab State has taken any measure which could in any way be regarded as chilling the climate or worsening the crisis. On the contrary, the Arab Governments and the PLO itself have tirelessly explored every avenue in seeking means to open the way to a positive solution.

121. The elections have now been held, and events have justified our apprehensions. The Begin Government has come to power; it threatens, it orders, it implements projects about which the least one can say is that they have led to a further deterioration of the situation by carrying aggression and provocation even further and by constantly challenging world public opinion.

122. The entire world, including the friends and supporters of Israel, recognizes that the question of the Middle East can be resolved only by settling the Palestinian problem and allowing the Palestinian people to exercise its rights, that is, to take form as a political entity and regain its sovereignty. But the Israeli Government denies the existence of a Palestinian entity or Palestinian sovereignty, going only so far as to offer the Palestinians only the prospect of absorption within the Israeli or Jordan entities or other Arab entities.

123. Political experience and sound reasoning have taught us that discussion will be effective only if it takes place between the two belligerents represented respectively by their delegations. But the Israeli Government would keep away the organization which is at war with Israel and which is the genuine representative of the Palestinian people—the PLO—and will consent to discussions only with partners of its own choosing.

124. The United Nations has recommended to the parties concerned, and Israel's friends have earnestly counselled, that no step be taken that is likely to impede the search for peaceful solutions or further complicate the situation. Israel has not heeded this call; it has increased the number of new settlements in the hope of altering the demographic

structure of the occupied regions. It is committing aggression against an independent neighbour country, Lebanon, for the purpose of facing the world with a *fait accompli* likely to strengthen its position in future bargaining and to create a new problem so as to distract world public opinion from the fundamental problem.

125. The conscience of the world proclaims the illegitimacy of the occupation of foreign territories by force and the need for Israel to withdraw from the Arab territories occupied since 1967. The Israeli Government responds with various devices. At one time it claims that if a territory was occupied and settled it was not with a view to subsequent withdrawal and surrender of that territory; at another it claims that withdrawal from a territory is a negotiable principle.

126. Thus we find ourselves, with regard to the Palestinian problem as well as with regard to the question of the Middle East, in a situation more tense than before.

127. Of course, laudable efforts are being made to bring the matter out of the confusion with which Israel is busily beclouding the issue. Complete knowledge of the question and of the basic facts is becoming more general and taking hold. The Tunisian Government wishes to pay a tribute to these efforts and to any sincere and honest initiative to that end. However, the Tunisian Government believes that such efforts must stem from the following essential considerations.

128. First, the Palestinian question and the question of the Middle East are complementary and inseparable elements of the same whole.

129. Secondly, the Palestinian problem will find a final and lasting solution only with the participation of the sons of the country and the participation, on their behalf, of those whom they themselves have chosen to that end, excluding all other imposed representatives. The Tunisian Government believes that at present there is no one speaking on behalf of Palestine with more credit, more representative character and more authority than the PLO.

130. Thirdly, the discussion must start with the recognition of the right of the Palestinians to form an independent Palestinian entity in conformity with the United Nations resolution of 1947 [*resolution 181 (II)*], as President Bourguiba has frequently recommended.

131. Fourthly, the *fait accompli* which emerged from the war of 1967 is null and void. The withdrawal from occupied territories is therefore not subject to discussion but is a matter of compliance under international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

132. Fifthly, coexistence can be established only if Israel renounces its expansionist policy, and its wish to impose its hegemony on the region and if the right of the peoples of the region to make the choice of their destinies is recognized.

133. In any event, like other speakers who preceded me to this rostrum, I wish once again to appeal to the conscience of the countries represented here, and to ask them to join



in active and deep solidarity so that, going beyond the stage of words, we may undertake positive action. We have spoken for a quarter of a century, we have adopted tens of resolutions. Israel has become familiar with that method of work, and has become used to it. To every resolution we have adopted, Israel has responded by an active challenge ranging from the increased torture and harassment of our fellow Arabs to the multiplication of settlements to give it a better hold on the area. Our task at this session is to adopt firm resolutions to halt Israel in its tracks and prevent it from pursuing its arrogant challenge. We cannot permit that challenge, for it carries with it the seed of a war which could go beyond the region of the Middle East and present the gravest dangers to world peace.

134. There is another region which arouses our concern and deep anxiety. In this region, the situation in principle is not different from that prevailing in occupied Palestine, because public order there is based on racism and racial segregation. I am referring to southern Africa. Although we thought that the independence of the countries neighbouring South Africa and Rhodesia would lead these two countries to change their view of things and to take into account the inescapable evolution of mankind, we note that their régime is increasingly turning inward and persisting in its excesses and obstinacy. I need not recall the various resolutions adopted by the Organization over the years, which have been made dead letters by the South African Government. Nor shall I recall the worsening of the situation in Zimbabwe and Namibia. The events of Soweto are still present in our minds and remind us of the horror of the tragedy, and of the executions and sufferings which have become the lot of the indigenous population of the area. In addition, the racist South African Government has made Namibia a base from which to launch acts of aggression against Zambia, Angola and Mozambique, thus endangering the security of those African countries.

135. It is perhaps futile to propose new resolutions on the subject, for we know that their fate will be the same as that of previous resolutions. Nevertheless, Tunisia calls upon the Security Council to ensure the implementation of its resolution 385 (1976) requiring that free elections be held in Namibia under the supervision and control of the United Nations.

136. The Tunisian Government, furthermore, appeals to the great Powers and the African States to adopt a firm position in that regard and to impose political, economic, military and cultural isolation upon the Governments of South Africa and Rhodesia in order to exercise pressure which would place both régimes under the obligation of complying with resolutions of the United Nations.

137. The most recent news we have received indicates that the Rhodesian question may be moving towards a settlement. The proposals made by the Governments of the United States and of the United Kingdom, while not responding entirely to legitimate African aspirations, are in fact a negotiable basis for action and can serve as a new point of departure for treatment of the problem.

138. What is important in our view is to get things moving and once and for all to cease treating the problem in a colonialist spirit. There is no longer any question of

resorting to manoeuvres, to procrastination or to delaying tactics to gain a few weeks or a few months. While giving its full backing to African liberation, my Government supports every laudable effort aimed at facilitating peaceful solutions and in bringing closer the period of security and peace.

139. During our statement at the previous session of the General Assembly,<sup>17</sup> we stressed our concern over the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Our apprehensions are not less today, in view of the trends which we see in the world and which indicate an increase in the quantity of weapons in their accumulation and in proliferation. What gives rise to even greater concern on our part is the probable existence of those weapons in some countries, such as Israel or South Africa, that would not be prevented by international morality and law from committing aggression against others.

140. Many resolutions of the United Nations adopted on this subject have remained a dead letter. As an example, I would mention the resolution which appeals to militarily and economically developed countries to reduce their military budgets and to devote some of the funds thus freed to assistance to developing countries [*resolution 3254 (XXIX)*].

141. We deplore the fact that no progress has been made so far along that road, although there have been abundant contacts and discussions and the means to overcome present difficulties are not lacking. While we are pleased that a special session of the United Nations on the question of disarmament will be held in May and June of 1978, my Government hopes that at the present session the Assembly may overcome the obstacles to a conclusion of an international agreement on the prohibition of the use of force in international relations.

142. This leads me to refer to international economic relations and to present the position of my country on that subject. Tunisia, as the entire world knows, is as a matter of principle in complete solidarity with the positions adopted by the Group of 77 and defined in the many conferences of the non-aligned countries.

143. The international economic situation continues to be characterized by disorder and disequilibrium which give rise to what the Secretary-General in his report has wisely described as "an uncertainty more pervasive than at any time since the end of the Second World War" [*see A/32/1, sect. VI*].

144. It is increasingly obvious that this situation is the result especially of the economic policies followed in industrialized countries, which, by concentrating on solving their immediate national problems, neglect the search for lasting solutions which would benefit the international community as a whole.

145. The protectionist measures recently adopted by some developed countries with regard to the textile exports of a large number of developing countries, including Tunisia, is proof of that regrettable trend. Those measures and other

<sup>17</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 22nd meeting, paras. 33-68.

similar ones, by limiting the scope of action of international co-operation and in dangerously limiting the expansion of world trade, especially that of developing countries, not only further retard the economic development and social progress of the latter countries, but also hamper recovery in the developed countries themselves.

146. Let us not be mistaken. The concept of the interdependence of economies proclaimed here and there is more than a mere slogan. It cannot be interpreted in any restricted sense. Non-compliance with the obligations of interdependence can have nefarious consequences for all.

147. The need to establish a new international economic order arose out of the desire to shield the economies of all countries from upheavals of that nature and to provide the international community with the conditions for harmonious development with justice and loyal co-operation. Now, while we applaud the decision adopted recently by some Powers to remove their objections of principle to the pursuit of that objective, we can only regret the obstinacy which persists in refusing to implement the measures needed for its implementation.

148. While the hopes we had with regard to the seventh special session remain unfulfilled, we see that the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation has concluded with results which fall well short of the most reasonable aspirations. However, it would be wrong not to recognize that the action of the North-South dialogue made possible a break-through towards the establishment of a new international economic order.

149. Is it not comforting to note that, despite all the difficulties, developed countries and developing countries have declared that they wish to pursue the dialogue? Countries members of the Group of 77, for their part, have reaffirmed their favourable disposition in this respect in the declaration which their Ministers for Foreign Affairs adopted on 29 September last [A/32/244].

150. Now we must give new momentum to global economic negotiations and place them within their normal framework, which is that of the United Nations system under the continuous political supervision of the General Assembly.

151. Those, global negotiations naturally can be supplemented by regional and interregional negotiations which, in their appropriate forums, can contribute to the dialogue and to efforts at establishing a new international economic order. Euro-Arab discussions and Afro-Arab discussions which have already produced concrete results are part of those efforts. Tunisia for its part is making its contribution to the initiation and pursuit of such discussions.

152. Global negotiations should continue to be based mainly on the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations, and in particular on the resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions<sup>18</sup> and on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [resolution 3281 (XXIX)]. It should, however, be possible to include

in the over-all process of the establishment of a new international economic order any specific decisions adopted at the prior Paris Conference that Member countries of our Organization as a whole consider to be positive.

153. The agenda of this session makes it possible to start, on a solid footing, the process whose progress has to be reassessed in the coming two or three years so that it may be taken account of in connexion with the adoption of the new international development strategy planned for the beginning of the next development decade. Furthermore, it would be tragic to think that what was expected of the dialogue would be attained by placing developing countries in categories or by deciding to benefit one group of countries or another through limited or ephemeral measures that would be contrary to general measures aimed at the basic restructuring of international economic relations and the solution of the problems, especially structural problems, of all the third-world countries, such as those of indebtedness, industrialization, food production and, naturally, access to the markets of the developed countries.

154. For its part, Tunisia, in beginning this year its fifth development plan, has once more as its central objective control of the problem of unemployment by trying to satisfy all of the additional demand for jobs for the period 1977-1981. We believe that is an objective that is in accordance with the hope that several speakers have expressed here, namely, the hope of ensuring, through employment, a better distribution of income within each country, and so meeting the essential needs of all members of society. In this, my country relies mainly on the efforts of its people and on its national resources. Those resources are, however, as limited as those of many countries which receive particular attention from the international community. We should like to hope that such aid and understanding will not be lacking.

155. All the questions that we are discussing at present are being dealt with only at the official government level. It is rare for them to be made the subject of the dissemination of information as they deserve or to be brought to the attention of public opinion in order that public opinion may participate, even though indirectly, in the search for the solutions they call for. In fact, public opinion is no longer satisfied with incomplete information and does not easily accept facts transmitted to it which are moulded according to the views of those who publish or disseminate them. There is certainly no need to add that any political, economic or social project could not easily succeed unless accurate and objective information were available concerning it. Aware of the importance of this problem, the developing countries, proceeding with the context of non-alignment, have taken it up and are seeking appropriate solutions at the international level. This effort has not escaped the notice of the United Nations, which, through UNESCO has begun to compile information. At the General Conference of that organization, held at Nairobi in 1976, very important resolutions were adopted.<sup>19</sup> However, those decisions are but a first stage which must be followed by others.

<sup>18</sup> General Assembly resolutions 3201 (S-VI), 3202 (S-VI) and 3362 (S-VII).

<sup>19</sup> See *Records of the General Conference, Nineteenth Session, Nairobi, 1976*, vol. I, *Resolutions* (Paris, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1977).

156. In accepting the presidency of the intergovernmental council for the co-ordination of information among non-aligned countries, my country has assumed a heavy responsibility in the field of information within that group. More than once, Tunisia has taken the initiative of entering into a dialogue with Europe directed towards the aim in view, namely, that of compiling information more in keeping with the new type of relations desired by the international community. I would recall here, in particular, the many meetings of African, Arab or non-aligned countries held during the last two years.

157. It was thus that the idea was born of establishing a new world order in the field of information, on the lines of the new international economic order to which we aspire. This new order of information should be aimed at providing world public opinion with more objective and better information able to serve the cause of peace, justice and co-operation among all nations.

158. We hope that this question will attract the interest it deserves in the United Nations so that we may discuss it among the subjects included in the agenda of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly.

159. Mr. CHŇOUPEK (Czechoslovakia) *interpretation from Russian*: Comrade President, I have already taken the opportunity of congratulating you personally from this rostrum and of expressing our satisfaction at the fact that we are working under your experienced leadership. I have also had the opportunity to welcome the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Republic of Djibouti upon their admission to membership in the United Nations. I should like too to congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, upon his re-election to his high post and to wish him further creative success in his responsible work at the head of our Organization. I wish also to associate myself with the gratitude expressed to Mr. Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe for the work that he did at the thirty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly.

160. While expressing the views of the Czechoslovak Government, I should like, along with other speakers here, to express my satisfaction at the fact that in so far as concerns the development of international relations, we believe that the past year has been a period of a continued deepening of the trend towards détente, which is the paramount task of all those who cherish peace. We can all take pleasure in the fact that the idea of détente has been penetrating the consciousness of people ever more deeply and has become a phenomenon that promotes the solution of urgent international problems—a material force acting in the interests of peace and security, for the benefit of the economic, social and cultural development of mankind.

161. That is why this reality finds a place in a particularly topical context, that of an event that is undoubtedly the most significant in the history of mankind, namely, the Great October Socialist Revolution, the sixtieth anniversary of which we shall soon be commemorating. Its fundamental foreign policy orientation, embodied in Lenin's Decree on Peace, the very first document of the Revolution, the master-plan of the policy of peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems, is in direct line of cause and effect with the principles which have today found their objective reflection in the policy of détente.

162. It is undoubtedly remarkable that it is precisely those principles—of the solution of international problems by negotiations, and of the search for the most effective forms of mutually advantageous co-operation and means of safeguarding real human rights—which today constitute the principal objectives of the activities of the United Nations.

163. Indeed, the October Revolution shattered the old social structures and gave birth to the first State in the world which from its very founding guaranteed fundamental human rights, a State in which the voice of the working people has been the decisive force and in which genuine equality and justice prevail. This fundamentally new historical experiment provided inspiration for the rest of the world, had a revolutionary effect on the development of mankind and led to the liberation of nations, to the collapse of the colonial system and to an unprecedented upsurge of democracy and social progress. The basic principles of that policy are fully reflected in the draft of the new Constitution of the Soviet Union and will be embodied therein as the supreme law of the Soviet State.

164. That peaceful policy is of profound interest to Czechoslovakia, the founding of which was directly influenced by the great October Revolution. "We have always proceeded and will continue to proceed from the principle of the peaceful coexistence of States with different social systems", said the Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and President of the Republic, Gustáv Husák, at the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. He went on to say:

"In our time, when the means of destruction have been accumulated in huge quantities in the world, that is the only acceptable alternative. This policy is not only in keeping with the vital interests of the peoples of the socialist countries, but also with the interests of the peoples of the whole world."

165. In our view, this policy, which is based on and oriented towards mutually advantageous co-operation and the search for universally acceptable solutions to problems, as well as strict observance of the principles of equality, non-interference in internal affairs, the universal application of the most-favoured-nation clause in economic relations and the elimination of any discrimination for political or other reasons, encourages the further rapprochement of peoples and countries, enhances the democratization of international relations, strengthens the circulation of the blood in the world organism of peace and opens up entirely new possibilities not only in the political sphere but also in the sphere of the exchange of scientific and cultural values. It contributes to the solution of problems of the protection of the human environment, the rational utilization of energy and food resources and other vital questions of today's world. In other words, détente means renouncing threats and coercion and embarking on the road of co-operation.

166. If the paramount task of the United Nations lies in the strengthening of world peace and international security, then it is we, the representatives of its Member States, who are to a considerable extent responsible for the performance of that task.

167. It is therefore not so much our task in this important forum to prove to each other the need for peace, that is, to preach to the converted, but rather, on the basis of a profound analysis, to come to agreement as to what effective, active and constructive measures are necessary to achieve that goal.

168. In considering these questions we should proceed with a sense of great responsibility, soberly and rationally, from the generally known and objective data, from the structure of the world today, from its political spectrum, relationship of forces, trends and perspectives.

169. In that context we should definitely take into account the fact that on our planet a community exists without which it is impossible to resolve any world problem today. That is the community of the socialist countries, which people no longer try to describe as a kind of historical misunderstanding or historical anomaly. That attempt has been given up even by those who have been making it for so many years.

170. Thanks to those countries, a correlation of forces has evolved in the world today which cannot be changed either by means of the intimidation characteristic of the times of the cold war nor by the use of tactics to obtain cheap advantages, nor even by means of new types of weapons. Therefore, all those who intend to act in that way or who are already doing so should remember that the countries of socialism today represent a powerful community, whose power and success are constantly growing, a community which enjoys tremendous influence and is sufficiently strong to ward off any threat or any blackmail. And those who think differently and fall back on the use of old methods must understand that such a policy is doomed to failure, because a completely different correlation of forces exists in the world today and an entirely different climate from that which existed, for example, 20 years ago. Those opponents of détente are harming not only the cause of peace but their own peoples, as they lead them deeper and deeper into the maelstrom of the devaluation of currencies, inflation, unemployment and the constantly increasing economic difficulties for which, of course, they themselves are responsible.

171. It follows logically, therefore, from all this that only through joint efforts on the part of us all shall we be able, as we believe we can, in the future to eliminate potential sources of fatal military conflicts and to take preventive measures against the emergence of new ones.

172. In this forum the great significance for peace of the Final Act of the European Conference on Security and Co-operation<sup>20</sup> has been stressed many times. The two years which have elapsed since it was signed have shown that security in Europe has been strengthened, that an atmosphere is being created conducive to complementing political relaxation by relaxation in the military sphere and to the further development of equal and mutually advantageous co-operation. All this demonstrates the durability, viability and soundness of that policy.

173. Czechoslovakia, a country in the heart of Europe, one of the few situated directly on the border between two

worlds with different social systems, is particularly sensitive to the political situation in Europe. That is why we say this with a full sense of responsibility.

174. However, the new quality of international relations emerging in the process of détente requires now not only general declarations but new, constructive action. We are therefore entitled to expect that the responsible leaders of Western countries will display the necessary statesmanship and foresight in the interest of increasing the results in this basic sphere of human rights—the right to life, the right to peace and the right to international security.

175. Our Government pays constant attention to the serious and comprehensive implementation of the results of the Helsinki Conference. We have never viewed the Final Act of that Conference as something abstract; we welcomed it as the result of the positive changes in relations among European countries, as an exceptionally important international document creating a reliable and peaceful basis for a long-term, mutually advantageous development of relations among States, as an important bulwark of the present structure of international relations in the world in general and as an over-all programme of co-operation in the political, economic and humanitarian fields.

176. We whole-heartedly support the proposals by the Soviet Union relating to the expansion of all-European co-operation in a number of important fields. A good start could be made in this by a conference on co-operation in such vital fields as energy, transport and the protection of the environment.

177. We trust that this document will be approached in the same manner by all those who today are sitting around the negotiating table in Belgrade in order to discuss what further action should be taken and how to ensure that the spirit of Helsinki will continue to be the prevailing factor in the formation of relations among States on the European continent.

178. My country, as a firm element in the socialist system, gives pride of place to the all-round development of fraternal relations and co-operation with the Soviet Union and all socialist countries. Our co-operation and closely co-ordinated joint action within the framework of the Warsaw Treaty and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance is expanding and deepening, and this contributes towards the further strengthening of security, economic prosperity, culture and living standards of our people. The constantly growing strength and power of the countries of the socialist community has become an important factor in the stabilization of relations throughout Europe.

179. With regard to the bilateral relations of my country, I should like to point out with satisfaction that in the period that has elapsed since the last session of the United Nations General Assembly we have expanded and deepened fruitful and useful contacts with a large number of countries with different social systems. We have developed broad contacts, primarily in the political sphere, as reflected in the negotiations, visits and exchanges of view that have been held at all levels, including the highest level. Such positive developments took place in our relations with Finland, France, Turkey, Denmark, Belgium, the United Kingdom,

<sup>20</sup> Signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975.



Greece, Cyprus, the Vatican, Portugal, Iceland, Spain and other countries.

180. We have made some progress also in the development of our relations with the Federal Republic of Germany and we are ready to make further progress in that direction. In a word, we want to enjoy good neighbourly relations between our two countries. The same can be said also in relation to another of our neighbours, Austria. We are striving to develop good mutual relations with that country. We want to deepen those relations on the basis of equality, mutual respect and non-interference.

181. There have been favourable developments in our relations with Canada, something which unfortunately we cannot say of our relations with the United States of America, because of issues which still remain unresolved through no fault of ours. However, if the United States of America demonstrates the appropriate willingness and makes the necessary efforts, we are fully prepared to develop equal and mutually advantageous relations with that country too.

182. In the course of this active dialogue with the countries signatories of the Final Act we held dozens of specialized consultations. We made progress in our legal contractual relations on a bilateral basis with the majority of these countries and concluded with them some 50 agreements. Our cultural relations now exist on the basis of the agreements, protocols and programmes of exchange with 22 countries which signed the Final Act.

183. In a word, the Final Act is an extremely important document and we have regarded it as a source of momentum and initiative which directs the signatory countries further to deepen and broaden their mutual co-operation, thus confirming the familiar truth that the fundamental cell of the complex process of international relations is to be found in bilateral relations, which are an irreplaceable supplement to multilateral relations.

184. Czechoslovakia, which before winning its independence for so many centuries fought against foreign oppression, whole-heartedly shares the aspirations of the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America. We provide consistent support to developing countries fighting for their political independence and striving for economic development and social progress. Our country has a sincere interest in the strengthening of mutual trust and co-operation with these countries in all spheres of common interest.

185. We ascribe great significance to the role of the movement of non-aligned countries, which are striving actively for the freedom and independence of nations in their struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism. We welcome the fact that these countries consider it useful and objectively necessary for the process of détente to become a universal and dominant factor in international relations in all continents. We believe that this idea will be fully supported at the forthcoming meeting of non-aligned countries in Havana.

186. However, imperialist circles are not interested in the stability of international relations. By causing conflicts among young independent States they try to destroy the

unity of the anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist front. That is why we support and shall continue to support in the future efforts designed to strengthen further the co-operation and co-operative action of the developing countries. We are convinced that there is no question that cannot be resolved peacefully by means of negotiations.

187. The Czechoslovak Government shares the view that the time is not far off when the last remnants of colonialism, racism and *apartheid*, those abhorrent blemishes on the face of mankind, will be liquidated once and for all and will disappear as a shameful political anachronism and an intolerable legacy of the past.

188. Czechoslovakia has always supported and will continue to support resolutely the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia in their just struggle for freedom and independence. Attempts to put forward a settlement of the problem of southern Africa which would satisfy only the racist minority régimes contain potential dangers of conflicts and new sources of tension.

189. We categorically condemn the policy of *apartheid* pursued by the Republic of South Africa and fully support the decisions adopted at the World Conference for Action Against *Apartheid* held recently in Lagos.

190. Reports that preparations are under way in the Republic of South Africa for the production of nuclear weapons are alarming because this represents a potential threat not only to the peoples of Africa but to world peace in general. We are in favour of the adoption of resolute measures to prevent this kind of development.

191. The Middle East continues to be a serious source of tension as a result of Israel's policies of annexation. The establishment of lasting peace in that region requires first of all the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and the granting of the legitimate rights of the Arab Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and the creation of its own State. A Middle East settlement must also ensure the right of all States in that area to independence and security. The path to the solution of this burning problem leads through the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all the States directly concerned, and the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of its people.

192. Similarly, we unequivocally advocate a solution of the problem of Cyprus, which would strictly respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. We support efforts to solve this problem in the hope that the United Nations and its Secretary-General will continue to play an important role in this respect.

193. We are following with close attention the situation in the Korean peninsula. We support the policy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea designed to create conditions for the peaceful, democratic and independent reunification of Korea by means of the withdrawal of foreign troops.

194. We are in full solidarity with the people of Chile in their just struggle for the restoration of their fundamental civil rights and freedoms.



195. This general debate has shown that the most serious task facing our Organization is the safeguarding of the further development and consolidation of international détente in order to make it solid and irreversible and to spare mankind the impending threat of a thermonuclear cataclysm.

196. That is why Czechoslovakia warmly welcomed and whole-heartedly supported the proposal submitted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. A. A. Gromyko, to include in the agenda of the thirty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly as an important and urgent matter the item on the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war [A/32/242]. It is our belief that all peace-loving States will whole-heartedly support the draft declaration on the deepening and consolidation of international détente [*ibid.*, annex I] and the draft resolution on prevention of the danger of nuclear war [*ibid.*, annex II]. Czechoslovakia will do everything in its power to bring about their adoption and implementation.

197. An important instrument for the systematic improvement of the general climate in the world could be an agreement on the non-use of force in international relations as proposed by the Soviet Union last year.<sup>21</sup> In our view we should work intensively on that.

198. In the post-war period the Soviet Union and other socialist States have submitted more than 70 initiatives, from the proposal on general and complete disarmament to a number of proposals for partial disarmament measures. This in itself is proof that we regard the problem of disarmament and of the relaxation of military tension as being of paramount importance and as something that requires an immediate, positive solution.

199. This year those initiatives were supplemented by the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, which was signed in May in Geneva. I should like to take this opportunity to emphasize once again the usefulness of the work done in Geneva by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament which prepared that Convention. Czechoslovakia, as a founding member of that body, which has been working for 15 years now, believes that its work is of long-term significance. An exceptionally important step towards peace and co-operation would be the general prohibition of the further perfecting of nuclear weapons, including the so-called neutron bomb, the advantage of which is claimed to be that it does not destroy material objects but only human beings. How baldly ironical and cynical is the contradiction between the decision on the development of this bomb and the campaign launched at the same time for the so-called protection of human rights. We believe that the introduction of such appalling weapons must be stopped by the conclusion of an international agreement which would prohibit the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. Every effort should therefore be exerted to bring about the implementation of the proposal submitted by the Soviet Union.

200. Of invaluable importance also would be the adoption of the proposal by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty addressed to all the signatories of the Helsinki Final Act to the effect that those States should conclude among themselves an agreement not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other.

201. Highly important, too, are the talks on the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in central Europe, in which Czechoslovakia is a participant. Those talks can be successful only if the Western participants in the negotiations stop trying to gain one-sided advantages by infringing the interests of the socialist countries. If the Western side takes a realistic approach, the attainment of this goal is fully possible.

202. Speaking of disarmament, I have to say that the situation in the field of disarmament negotiations is far from satisfactory. It is therefore our duty to do everything possible to prepare properly for the special session of the General Assembly which will deal with this situation in detail next year, and to make extensive use of the capacities of the Preparatory Committee set up for this purpose in which all regional groups should, however, be more fairly represented. The effectiveness of the special session in 1978 would be enhanced by the knowledge that it was to be followed by a World Conference on Disarmament, for which favourable conditions should be created with a view to obtaining the desired results.

203. Thanks to joint efforts by the socialist and developing countries, the first favourable results have been reached in the restructuring of international economic relations in accordance with current political realities. This has been done despite the attempts by imperialist States to maintain an economic system bearing the imprint of colonialism, neo-colonialism and a recurrence of the cold war. It will, however, be necessary to exert considerable efforts to eliminate the discrepancy between the present character of international economic relations formed in the past and the timely demands now being presented by the majority of countries.

204. Czechoslovakia is waging a consistent struggle for the restructuring of international economic relations on a democratic and equitable basis. We therefore support the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, and all the progressive provisions of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. Consistent implementation of the provisions of those documents in accordance with the generally recognized principles of relations among sovereign and equal partners will undoubtedly contribute to the elimination of the remnants of colonialism and neo-colonialism. The establishment of a new economic order would strengthen the economic and thereby also the political independence of young developing countries.

205. Czechoslovakia is prepared to intensify even more the development of all forms of economic, scientific and technological co-operation with the developing countries, both at the bilateral level and through the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance. Although we bear no responsibility for the economic under-development of those countries, we shall continue to assist them in an effort to

<sup>21</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Annexes*, agenda item 124, document A/31/243, annex.

contribute to the solution of their burning economic and social problems.

206. Every year from this rostrum I have emphasized that we regard the United Nations as an important international forum. I am doing so today also, expressing our interest in this Organization's even more active contribution to the strengthening and deepening of the process of détente. In our view, the United Nations Charter is a document of universal validity. We are convinced that only its consistent implementation is a guarantee of future effective activities of the United Nations.

207. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, a founder Member of the United Nations, through its purposeful, active and realistic contribution to its work, assists in the deepening of the process of détente and the expansion of constructive international co-operation.

208. We do so with the profound conviction that this policy, while expressing the genuinely humane essence of our socialist system, is in full accord with the vital interests of our people and of the peoples of the whole world.

209. Mr. ABDULLAH (Afghanistan): On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Afghanistan, I should like to join the representatives who have spoken before me in congratulating you, Sir, on your well-deserved election to the high office of President of the thirty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. It gives us particular satisfaction to see a distinguished son of Yugoslavia—a country with which Afghanistan enjoys very close ties of friendship and co-operation—occupying this important position. We are confident that your very able and wise guidance will lead us to the successful conclusion of our deliberations.

210. Allow me to seize this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Amerasinghe, for the efficient manner in which he conducted the proceedings of the last session of the General Assembly.

211. We should also like at this juncture to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, for the dedication that he has unfailingly demonstrated in his ceaseless efforts in promoting the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

*Mr. Anwar Sani (Indonesia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

212. It is a source of great satisfaction to welcome in our midst the Republic of Djibouti and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam as States Members of the United Nations. It is a matter of joy for our delegation to welcome the independence of Djibouti from colonial rule and alien domination and its entry into the United Nations as a sovereign Member State. We are indeed happy that the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, a member of the non-aligned movement, has finally joined the family of nations. The admission of these two countries brings us closer to the goal of universality of the United Nations, a goal to which our Government is ardently committed.

213. We have once again gathered here to take stock of what has been achieved in the years that have elapsed and,

basing ourselves on past experience, to try to chart a better course for coping with the challenges confronting us.

214. While this Assembly provides a welcome forum for drawing up a balance-sheet of failures and achievements, it is heart-breaking to realize that our performance always falls short of our expectations concerning solutions for problems of peace and co-operation. The balance-sheet to which I referred has unfortunately been so often negative that even the usefulness of our gatherings and the necessity of our deliberations are being questioned. The helplessness of this Organization in dealing with issues that face it and the extremely slow pace of our progress in composing our differences regarding them have caused great disillusionment, especially among the people of the third world.

215. Year in and year out we assemble and deliberate here and in other forums to seek ways and means of building a better world based on understanding and justice, but either our decisions resulting from those gatherings remain unimplemented or, as is often the case, we fail to agree altogether—no matter what the urgency or the importance of the issue. Such stagnation entitles those whom we represent to ask whether there is something wrong with the system of international co-operation, or whether the principles of the Charter have become obsolete and are no longer applicable to present-day situations. Viewing the contradictions that we are unsuccessful in removing, people everywhere in their perplexity ask themselves, for example. How is it possible that an expansionist country like Israel, in spite of all the United Nations resolutions, continues to enjoy immunity? Why is it that a new international economic order, the need for which is apparently no longer questioned, should be so difficult to establish? Why is it that in Zimbabwe the illegal régime arrogantly maintains itself in power while the international community helplessly watches? Why is it that Namibia is still occupied by South Africa, and why in this day and age is the abject policy of *apartheid* flourishing in that country?

216. I submit that there can be nothing wrong with the universal principles of the Charter or with the aims of the conferences that we usually attend. What must be wrong, therefore, is the lack of political willingness on the part of the Member States to bring into being a more effective United Nations and our reluctance to accept to be guided in international gatherings by the norms of reason and justice. This attitude very often prevents a sound operation and consequently damages the very fabric of international understanding. The proponents of such policies unfortunately fail to realize that decisions based on justice and equity and aimed at benefiting the majority will in the long run be advantageous to all concerned, white and black, North and South.

217. I believe that it would not be out of context if I said that sometimes, because of influences that cannot be termed altogether unselfish, the composition of some international gatherings does not reflect the existing reality, and that is perhaps one of the reasons why they are not successful in dealing with the problems facing them. To mention but one example, I wish to draw the attention of this Assembly to the fact that the least developed, land-locked countries were not represented at the Conference on International Economic Co-operation in Paris.

How can a meeting which ignores the existence of such an important section of the international community and its problems safeguard the interests of the least developed, land-locked countries and consequently reach decisions benefiting the whole of mankind, including those countries? After all, no other countries are better acquainted with their problems and can defend their interests better. To remedy that deficiency, I propose that in future that factor should be taken into consideration.

218. Another disappointing factor which seems to erode co-operation is apathy with regard to the problems of others, especially the most needy in the international community. This lack of solidarity is indeed bewildering. A case in point illustrating this state of affairs is the complete absence of enthusiasm shown by the wealthy nations with regard to the special fund created in favour of land-locked countries. Representatives are aware that, after crossing 101 hurdles—which in itself conveyed a rather poor image of international solidarity—we succeeded in establishing that fund. But now that at last it has come into being the cold-shoulder treatment to which it has been submitted is, to say the least, quite frustrating.

219. Having made those observations, I should now like to state briefly the policy and position of my country in respect to certain issues.

220. The Republic of Afghanistan has always endeavoured and will continue to endeavour to establish friendly and peaceful relations with all peace-loving countries, including those of our region, in order to develop its relations and co-operation for the benefit of the peoples of the world and of the region.

221. With respect to Pakistan, as has been stated in this Assembly in the past, Afghanistan had and still has one political difference. Last year in the General Assembly<sup>22</sup> I expressed the hope that the only political difference between us could be resolved. I avail myself of this opportunity to state that it is our hope that the efforts of Afghanistan and Pakistan that have already begun for a just and honourable solution of that political difference will lead in the future to a successful conclusion in accordance with the consent and satisfaction of all the parties concerned.

222. With regard to the problems of the Middle East, no just and durable peace will be achieved without the complete withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied territories and the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian State in their fatherland, as the question of Palestine forms the core of the Middle East problem. For the attainment of these purposes the full participation of the representatives of the PLO in any future negotiations on an equal basis is indeed necessary. In view of the recent development we are of the opinion that Security Council resolution 242 (1967) needs to be supplemented.

223. The delegation of Afghanistan has always been of the conviction that durable peace could only be attained if

general and complete disarmament, under effective control, is achieved and if a significant part of the resources thus released is devoted to the economic and social needs of the developing countries, among them the least developed in particular. Afghanistan, together with the non-aligned countries, supports the convening of a special session of the General Assembly in 1978 devoted to issues relating to disarmament. We believe that by convening such a special session for a comprehensive review of the issues involved it would be possible to take the necessary effective measures towards the achievement of the goal of general and complete disarmament.

224. The extreme imbalances in economic development between the developing and developed countries is in itself a constant and aggravating danger to the maintenance of world harmony and co-operation. Unfortunately, we notice with regret and concern the ever-widening gap between the developed and developing countries in development and trade. Despite professions of the rectification and/or amelioration of their adverse terms of trade, no positive action has been taken so far. Runaway and aggravated inflation, compounded by recession emanating from the developed countries together with arbitrary monetary manipulations, has set in motion a vicious inflationary-cum-recessionary cycle with far-reaching negative effects which leads to detrimental imbalances of the economies of the developing countries as the whole and, in particular, of the more vulnerable economies of the least developed, land-locked, island developing and most seriously affected developing countries.

225. The problem of the soaring and ever-increasing external debt of the developing, and especially of the least developed, countries, remains unsolved, with only unsatisfactory and inadequate efforts, if any, having been made towards their rectification or amelioration. No real or long-term solution to this problem was achieved at the recent Paris Conference.

226. The inalienable right of free access to and from the sea of the land-locked countries, whose additional transportation, transit and transshipment costs constitute a major obstacle and impediment to their development efforts, remains to be implemented.

227. I believe it would be good for us to ponder on the reflections that I have had the honour to share with this Assembly; reflections that I am sure are not exclusively mine. It is high time for us to rededicate ourselves to the high ideals and principles of the Charter and free ourselves of bias and see in this world something other than our own narrow and selfish interests. We have to co-operate in all sincerity to build a better world based on justice and equality, and share the benefits of human civilization which undeniably belong to the whole of mankind. Unless we do so our present meeting and even our future ones will remain meaningless, and our deliberations could be nothing more than exercises in futility.

228. In conclusion, I should like to state very briefly that mankind will survive together in hope and faith or give way to despair and destruction. We may seem at present as though we are unsure of ourselves and groping to find our way. Economic difficulties, political tension and the uncer-

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Thirty-first Session, Plenary meetings, 10th meeting.

tainty of the future bring many problems to the surface. The past may or may not inspire us, but it is the needs of the present and the challenges of the future that must constitute the driving force for a united action in the attainment of world peace and the establishment of an international economic order that would ensure the progress and prosperity of peoples everywhere. The cause of peace is not advanced by political means alone. To be realistic and enduring peace must be buttressed by the economic potentialities of all nations.

229. Mr. MALMIERCA PEOLI (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, may I first express to you how joyfully the Government and people of Cuba welcome the entry of triumphant, united and socialist Viet Nam to the United Nations.

230. General Antonio Maceo, an illustrious Cuban patriot, who fell in battle fighting for the independence of our island, said that you do not beg for rights, you win them with the sword's edge. The right to become a Member of this Organization was won by the people of Viet Nam with the sword's edge, with a heroic struggle which inflicted a historic defeat on the imperialist armed forces which attempted to impose partition and neo-colonialism on the country.

231. The admission of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam is a great victory for its people, but it is also a victory for all progressive forces; a victory for the socialist community, which gave it its moral and material solidarity; for the movement of the non-aligned countries, which supported its struggle; for world public opinion, and even for public opinion in the United States, which opposed the fierce aggression unleashed by imperialism against Viet Nam. The admission of Viet Nam was also possible because of the conditions which these forces created in favour of peace and coexistence.

232. At this time it is important to recall that the United States is morally and legally committed to contribute to healing the wounds of the war which it started against Viet Nam. The General Assembly and other organs of the system must advocate and facilitate that contribution. Those who yesterday massively and indiscriminately bombed homes, hospitals, roads, railways, factories and temples, cannot today flee from the obligation to make a substantial contribution for reparation of the vast damages caused.

233. Together with the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Republic of Djibouti joins our Organization. To their people and Government we extend our warmest congratulations.

234. Djibouti is the forty-ninth African State, and this fact bears witness to the relentless advance of the movement of national liberation, which in the last decade succeeded in destroying the old colonialist empires. The contribution which the new independent States have made to the United Nations cannot be overlooked. With the Organization's membership trebling it has really come close to the universality postulated by its constituent documents and its debates reflect the expression of the opinions and interests of the immense majority of the nations of the world.

235. Thus, in the decisions of the organs of the United Nations we find an echo of the victories of the socialist community, of the movements of national liberation and of the workers of the world in their struggle for peace and for the eradication of colonialism, neo-colonialism, *apartheid* and discrimination—that is to say, the elimination of imperialism.

236. An impregnable bastion of this cause is the homeland of Lenin, the Soviet Union, which came into being during the glorious October Revolution and which, by defeating the Russian tsarist régime, liberating the people chained to its domination and creating the first proletarian State of the world, opened up a new era for mankind characterized by a general crisis for imperialism.

237. The people, the Communist Party and the Government of Cuba wish to pay a heartfelt tribute to the sixtieth anniversary of the triumph of the Revolution led by the Bolshevik Party, with the noble Vladimir Ilich Lenin at its head. We appreciate the enormous economic, scientific, cultural and all other successes of the Soviet people, which by building communism is able to enjoy, without exploiting any other people or robbing them of the products of their labour, constantly improving standards of living within a structure in which respect for human rights is guaranteed for every individual and for the nation as a whole.

238. We are equally pleased to note that the internationalist ideals of the October Revolution are obvious today, as they appear in the agreements and resolutions of the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in the tenacious defence of détente and peace, and in the historical peace decree signed by Lenin, ideals which, founded on the military power of the Soviet people and placed it at the service of its own defence and that of the sovereignty and independence of peoples, as well as at the service of that policy of peace, bind ever more tightly the aggressive hands of imperialism. This internationalism is also revealed in the firm and decided moral and material support which the Soviet Union has given and continues to give to national liberation movements resisting colonialism and *apartheid*, to the anticolonialist and anti-imperialist forces, and to any country invoking its just national interests in defence of its sovereignty and peaceful and independent development. This is proved by its assistance to Viet Nam, Cuba and Angola.

239. The fact that the thirty-second session of the General Assembly began with the admission of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam at a time close to the sixtieth anniversary of the Great October Revolution is an augury that its work will be fruitful and successful.

240. Our delegation joins in the general pleasure expressed at the election of Comrade Lazar Mojsov to the presidency of this session of the General Assembly. It is particularly satisfying to greet in him the representative of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with which we have many brotherly ties of friendship and co-operation. His election is, furthermore, a recognition of the efforts of the Government of Yugoslavia and President Tito, as they are in the forefront among peoples struggling to build a new society, free from exploitation, and international relations



based on the principles of the United Nations Charter. His important contribution to the movement of non-aligned countries and the support given him by the members of that group will, together with his personal competence, contribute to his successful guidance of the work of this session of the Assembly.

241. Our delegation considers that a trend favourable to the cause of peace, independence and progress still predominates in international relations. In past years we witnessed the victories of the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos, Cambodia and Angola as well as the triumph of the national liberation movements in the former Portuguese colonies; today we see the growing isolation and universal rejection of *apartheid* and racism, and the trend towards the independence of Zimbabwe, Namibia and the liberation of the people of South Africa, a rejection which is strongly evident even in important sectors among the major capitalist Powers which are the allies and supporters of the Pretoria régime.

242. There is a growing trend towards peace and security, the strengthening and deepening of détente, a halt to the arms race, and the economic and social development of all peoples.

243. The Declarations of the last two Conferences of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries are a solid basis for co-ordinated action by this important group of countries in favour of the advance of the anti-imperialist and progressive positions. The community of interests among the socialist countries and the under-developed peoples has made it possible to put an end to the mechanical majority which in the past ruled the Organization, and to open up a period of important definitions and decisions which, *inter alia*, recognized the legitimacy of the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and *apartheid* and resulted in documents such as that on the new international economic order and the Charter on Economic Rights and Duties of States.

244. Imperialism, having suffered defeats at the hands of the liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America, facing an indissoluble community of socialist countries in whose favour the correlation of international forces is moving step by step, and having failed to sustain its own economic development and to resolve inequalities and injustices in its own societies, suffered a grave political and moral crisis in its main institutions of power and is now going through a serious economic crisis.

245. This situation is compelling imperialism to seek to adjust its policy in order to survive the new facts of life, and to move back and attempt to find a new image for old claims.

246. The representatives of the major capitalist Powers are very free with expressions implying corrections of injustices and acts of aggression, and promising attention to the just claims of the developing world. We hope that these words will be translated into deeds, but we must not abandon the triumphs which we have obtained nor the positions which we have reached or reduce our vigilance.

247. It is not difficult to single out those who by old means and new are still determined to prevent the free

expression of the will of peoples, to halt the progressive march of history, to repress and destroy revolutionary processes and the progressive Governments which are moving ahead despite external political, military and economic harassment.

248. Those who uphold colonialism and neo-colonialism are organizing their dependent Governments most carefully so as to promote disunion, fratricidal wars and division among the non-aligned countries and among all progressive forces with a view to impeding the advance and consolidation of progressive tendencies.

249. There must be unity among all those who hope to consolidate peace and détente, attain the final elimination of colonialism and *apartheid*, advance general and complete disarmament and arrive at new just and equitable international economic relations. History both within and outside this forum proves that those who share these objectives are the socialist countries, the non-aligned countries and other countries guided by a desire for genuine international co-operation.

250. May I emphasize that we must be particularly alert to the tactic of the imperialists to promote and incite war so as to force a review of the frontiers left by the colonial era and the annexation of colonial territories under various guises.

251. Cuba maintains that such conflicts among the non-aligned and the under-developed countries in general must be resolved by negotiation without having recourse to the use of force, by seeking closer co-operation without territorial claims and, above all, without allowing any room for the divisive aims of imperialism. In this respect Cuba advocates a peaceful solution of the conflict between the brotherly peoples of Somalia and Ethiopia, within the context of their respective revolutionary frameworks.

252. The Ethiopian people have shaken off the secular yoke of feudal domination and have undertaken the revolutionary course of giving the land to those who labour on it, carrying out urban reform, opening up education and culture to the vast masses and increasing attention to health, and this has inspired the support and solidarity of all peoples, and also the threats and aggressions of imperialist and reactionary forces.

253. If the revolutionary régime of Ethiopia were overthrown it would be impossible to arrive at any just solution of the claims now made by imperialism in order to pit the neighbours of Ethiopia against it.

254. Cuba considers that the process of revolutionary development which eliminates social, racial and national inequalities is the sole guarantee for the solving of the complex national and tribal problems which history has left behind in the countries of Africa and Asia.

255. Cuba supports the right of Ethiopia to defend itself from any external aggression.

256. The common heritage of colonialism for all peoples, but particularly for the Africans, was backwardness, poverty, illiteracy, and ill-health. After decades of colonial



exploitation and administration, there emerged into independence peoples for whom no university had been built, for whom no doctor had been trained, for whom no schools, teachers, educational or health systems had been provided. The colonialist and neo-colonialist metropolitan Powers of those peoples contracted a tremendous debt which they must inevitably pay. We consider that the developed capitalist countries which benefited from colonial domination should, through adequate financing for development, compensate for the resources they obtained so as to begin to correct the ills left behind by centuries of pitiless exploitation.

257. It is our own efforts, of course, which are the basis of development; but it is necessary to have recourse to co-operation and collaboration among developing countries. Cuba has made an important but modest effort in this respect. Despite the economic blockade imposed on our country by the United States, and the restrictions caused by it, we have been sending doctors, teachers, agricultural technicians and building brigades to other under-developed countries which requested them.

258. After the visit made by the Comrade President of the Council of State, Commander Fidel Castro, to eight African and Arab countries during the month of March last, these efforts have been intensified. The supreme leader of the Cuban revolution, following the most glorious internationalist traditions of our people, has called upon the youth of the universities and the professionals of Cuba to provide their know-how to other lands, in the conviction that the deepest brotherhood unites all peoples of the world, and that we are obliged to share the still scarce resources we have with those who for so many years have been denied the recognition of their dignity and human rights.

259. Allow me to emphasize that Cuba considers that the task of doing away with the poverty left behind by colonialism is one of the most urgent tasks of this Organization and the entire international community.

260. The time that has elapsed since the last session has seen intense diplomatic activity by the representatives of the allies of Pretoria and Salisbury, who are making every effort to prevent the struggle of the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa from being consolidated and strengthened, and from thus finally achieving the complete and real liquidation of the régime of exploitation they now suffer under.

261. Those who seek to present themselves as friends of Africa are the very ones who have facilitated, and still facilitate, for the *apartheid* régime the acquisition of every kind of armament, factories for manufacturing war material, and even technology and nuclear fuel which make it possible for the Pretoria authorities to possess nuclear weapons. Can anyone affirm that those who desire the freedom of the African peoples are those who arm the forces of South Africa and Rhodesia? Do they aspire to a just solution when, through the transnational corporations and trade with South Africa, they benefit from the exploitation of the black people of that country?

262. In Africa a new situation has arisen because of the overthrow of Portuguese imperialism and the relentless

advance of the national liberation movements. Those who supported Portuguese fascism until the end and who gave unstinting support to the racist régimes have been compelled to recognize in words that it is necessary to change the situation in southern Africa. Within this context the colonialists and the imperialists have been compelled to adjust their tactics and to promote manoeuvres intended to twist the course of the emancipation process and to preserve their interests. But peoples do not forget the lessons learned in the struggles for independence; and in particular they will never forget the lessons of the Congo and of the death of Patrice Lumumba. We must affirm that for any change in the region to be acceptable and to lead to a genuine solution, there must be a total eradication of *apartheid* and colonialist-racist exploitation, and the complete liberation of the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. As long as these objectives are not attained, peoples have an irrevocable right to continue the battle by the means that they deem appropriate; and the international community is duty-bound to give these national liberation movements all needed political, moral and material support to obtain a final victory.

263. While the African peoples face a crucial stage in their struggle, some pseudo-revolutionaries who have become outspoken allies of imperialism and racism, are tireless in their slander and intrigue, uselessly seeking to promote division in the revolutionary ranks. Bands fall and bands rise. But so far, regrettably, they persist in the same despicable course of treachery and felony. The band of yesterday has no scruples about arming the mercenaries who committed aggression against the people of Angola. Even today that band has not yet realized that the African peoples reject their scandalous collusion with the racists. That is why on Thursday last the General Assembly heard a singular statement. After having detailed the harmful consequences of the action of defeated bandits, the representative of that Power used the same language which, during his transitory reign, made the spokesman of the band famous.

264. Cuba reiterates its support for the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa in their difficult, heroic but surely victorious struggle.

265. As has often been said, the phenomenon of colonialism is not limited exclusively to southern Africa nor even to Africa; and we cannot feel satisfied as long as a people remains that is denied the application of resolution 1514 (XV) and access to independence and self-determination.

266. Now that colonialism is reaching its final stage, we can observe that the manoeuvres of the colonial metropolitan Powers are proliferating and all kinds of formulas are being drawn up to conceal relations of colonial dependency. It is therefore necessary to increase our solidarity and support for these peoples, and to prevent the expansionist attempts of the colonial metropolitan States, in the conviction that as long as a colonial territory persists there will be, besides a persisting injustice, a hotbed of potential conflict and a threat to international peace and security.

267. In this context we reiterate our support for the struggle of the peoples of Western Sahara and of East

Timor. We reaffirm our support for the people and Government of the Comoros and their just claim to the island of Mayotte and for the legitimate aspiration of the Argentine Republic to recover the Malvinas Islands. We reject the expansionist plans which the United States is hatching with regard to the island of Guam and the Micronesian territories.

268. In particular, we draw the attention of this Assembly to the threats to which the people of Belize are subjected. As is well known, their territory does not accede to independence because the reactionary dictatorship which oppresses Guatemala is prepared to annex it by force as soon as the Administering Authority withdraws.

269. It is fitting to recall that the present Government of Guatemala descends directly from the one imposed in 1954 by an act of aggression organized and financed by the Central Intelligence Agency [C.I.A.], as is now publicly recognized.

270. In the last months, the diplomatic talks between the imperialists and the servants of the Guatemalan Government, and the bellicose declarations of the latter warrant our assumption that plans are being hatched against the people of Belize. Cuba renews its support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize.

271. During the proceedings of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, at the end of August and the beginning of September, there was a lengthy debate on the colonial situation of Puerto Rico.

272. A long list of petitioners of every political orientation amply demonstrated to the world three facts, namely, first, that there exists a situation of colonial domination in Puerto Rico; secondly, that the United Nations must take action to implement resolution 1514 (XV); and, thirdly, that all the petitioners were in favour of freedom for the political prisoners.

273. Those who attempted to compare the traditional support of Cuba for the people of Puerto Rico with a capricious or arbitrary attitude can find a denial—if that were needed—in the records of that Committee. On that occasion, Cuba reiterated its support for the independence and self-determination of the people of Puerto Rico; it supported the requests for the liberation of the Puerto Rican political prisoners,<sup>23</sup> especially Lolita Lebrón, Andrés Figueroa, Irving Flores, Oscar Collazo and Rafael Cancel, who have languished for more than 20 years in United States gaols because they fought for the independence of their country.

274. Next year, the Special Committee will again consider the item, and it is obvious that it will be difficult to avoid the responsibility of adopting the resolutions that fit this case.

275. In the Middle East, the situation, far from improving, has deteriorated since the last session of the General

Assembly, tension has increased and the just peace that would lead to the resolution of all the factors of the crisis seems more remote than ever. The action of the Government of Israel in continuing to establish new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and in extending Israeli legislation to the East Bank of the Jordan and the provocative declarations made with regard to the occupied territories by the Tel Aviv Prime Minister prove the real expansionist intentions of Israel. Furthermore, the intervention of Israeli military forces in southern Lebanon constitutes an aggression against that independent State and a new cause of disturbance. In the meantime, the allies of Tel Aviv and other reactionaries seek by their diplomatic and military manoeuvres to ignore the rights of the Palestinian people and to divide the Arab peoples. Cuba reiterates that the solution of the crisis can only lie in complete respect for the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and in the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied since June 1967. We deem it to be of the utmost urgency that the Peace Conference on the Middle East be convened at Geneva with the participation on an equal footing of all parties concerned, including the PLO.

276. Together with the other non-aligned countries, we support the declaration that was approved at the special meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries of the non-aligned movement held last 30 September /see A/32/255-S/12410/.

277. When referring to the situation in Cyprus, we cannot fail to express the profound sorrow of our Government and people at the death of Archbishop Makarios, an honest patriot and a loyal representative of his people. His decease is now being used as an occasion for intensifying the division in the island. We demand the total and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops from Cyprus and call for respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of that non-aligned State.

278. Foreign troops are still present in South Korea, thus preventing the peaceful and independent reunification of Korea, by providing support to the brutal dictatorship of Park Chung Hee. We call for the withdrawal of all foreign troops and all military equipment from Korea and the dissolution of the United Nations Command, and we renew our support of the just demands for the implementation of those objectives made by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

279. The Government of Cuba is making every effort to consolidate, extend and render irreversible the process of international détente. To contribute to this we have unequivocally supported the proposal of the Soviet Union regarding a treaty to prohibit the use of force in international relations. Likewise, we support the convening of a World Disarmament Conference and are working for it actively in the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament, to be held next year.

280. We are deeply disturbed at the rise in military expenditure by the United States Government and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and particularly at its decision to continue research into and manufacture of

<sup>23</sup> See document A/AC.109/PV.1097.

neutron bombs and the cruise missile, all of which are moves in the direction of the promotion of a new stage in the arms race and warrant our assumption that they are a dangerous threat to peace and security.

281. The decision to build a neutron bomb has aroused just and angry universal protest, because the nature of that bomb reveals the contempt of the Pentagon strategists for humanity. It is our hope that the General Assembly at this session will repudiate and condemn such decisions.

282. As a contribution to the disarmament process, Cuba has signed or has acceded to the following treaties: the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof; the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies; and the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques.

283. A few months ago, in a dubious manoeuvre, the United States Government signed Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco), thereby claiming to demonstrate its peaceful intentions towards its neighbours to the south. For those intentions to gain credence, for us to be able to accept the peaceful nature of its will it would be enough if that Government, instead of limiting itself to signing documents subject to diverse interpretations, would take the practical action of removing its military bases from Puerto Rico, Panama and Cuba; if it would cease to claim to consider the Virgin Islands as part of its continental territory, thus removing it from the denuclearized zone, even though it is at the very heart of it; and if it would cease every act of aggression and hostility against all countries of the region.

284. During the past year, the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean have continued their historic struggle for the cause of their genuine independence and defence of their national sovereignty.

285. It is important to recall that that is one of the zones in the world where a great number of acts of aggression and intervention in the internal affairs of States were committed, where plans were hatched to assassinate Heads of Government and where territories were occupied in defiance of the will of the peoples by North American imperialism and its institutions and, in particular, by the CIA.

286. Within the context of this struggle, the people of Panama has just brought to a climax one of the phases that will lead to its recovery of full sovereignty over its national territory. The efforts made by the Government and people of Panama, headed in this decisive phase by General Torrijos, compelled the Government of the United States to recognize the right of Panama to total sovereignty over its lands and waters.

287. This lengthy, patient and valiant struggle of the people of Panama, as the Panamanian leaders themselves have said, has not ended. On the one hand, major forces

within the United States Senate are obstinately impeding the recognition of the legitimacy of Panamanian aspirations, thus holding up the ratification of the treaties that have been signed. Furthermore, there is the possibility that imperialist and reactionary aggressive forces will try to hamper the progressive exercise by Panama of the sovereign rights which the treaties restore to it over the course of time.

288. On the other hand, the United States Government has not renounced the right it accords itself of guaranteeing what it calls "the neutrality of the Canal". History has demonstrated that the only force which has prevented the Panama Canal from being neutral has been the United States itself.

289. The Cuban people under the leadership of the President of the Council of State, Comrade Fidel Castro, has been with Panama in its long struggle and we shall continue to be on its side. We cannot fail to rejoice in the victory that the recent signing of the treaties represents.

290. Another important fact has been the development of some of the institutions, such as the Latin American Economic System, which have emerged in the last year and which aim to defend the national interests of our peoples. Their viability and effectiveness have been demonstrated, although they are still in an initial stage.

291. In the southern part of the continent, the Fascist junta which has oppressed the people of Chile since 1973, has added to its long list of crimes, misdeeds and treachery against co-operation among Latin American countries. While international public opinion has compelled it to change the name of its institutions of repression and to launch a press campaign intended to create the impression that political prisoners have been released, in fact the repression and terror continue unabated, as determined by the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile, set up by the Commission on Human Rights to investigate the present situation in Chile. The Santiago authorities adopted the system of having those who were detained disappear without their families knowing what had become of them. Let us recall the desperate action of a group of those families when they occupied the offices of ECLA in Santiago, Chile, and demanded news of their fathers, sons and brothers who had disappeared. The junta has not yet complied with the commitments which it entered into at that time with the representatives of the United Nations.

292. The reactionary forces which, by means of Fascist terror try to maintain their oppressive rule over Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay and other countries and which have shamelessly joined forces with the Vorster *apartheid* régime, will one day be held to account by their peoples, whose determination to struggle they have not been able to overcome.

293. A debate is still going on regarding a critical situation which particularly affects the developing countries.

294. The gap between the developed and the developing countries has become wider because of the continued deterioration in the terms of trade and because of the

growing effects of inflation and recession in the developed capitalist countries, together with their arbitrary international monetary system.

295. The world economy has been characterized by a rise in the foreign debt of the developing countries, which have no oil, by their growing balance-of-payments difficulties. These are compounded by a decrease in the purchasing power of their exports and by greater limitations on their access to the markets of the industrialized countries of the West that are rendered more severe by a renewed tendency towards protectionism on the part of those countries.

296. Despite repeated denunciations of the situation, the developed capitalist countries have not taken any action which would contribute to change this assessment.

297. The Conference on International Economic Co-operation during its 18 months of work frustrated the expectations that many developing countries had of it. The inflexible positions of the developed capitalist countries participating in that Conference clearly demonstrated that they are not prepared to give up the benefits and the profits which they have for centuries enjoyed by exploiting the resources of the developing world.

298. The Group of 77, the Foreign Ministers of which met on 29 September last [*see A/32/244*], arrived at the same conclusions.

299. Nevertheless, the developing countries have drawn valuable lessons from the lack of positive results of the Paris Conference. On the one hand, we learned the importance of maintaining unity and solidarity in the developing world as the only way effectively to meet the repeated attempts to divide us, and to act collectively for our common objectives. On the other hand, it enabled us to confirm the opinion that the only appropriate and representative organ for activities of this kind was the United Nations system. Further, we learned that it is essential that before negotiations of this kind are started, the objectives pursued must be clearly outlined and the results to be obtained must be defined in advance. In this respect, the General Assembly, as an organ for political decisions, must play an essential role. At the same time, the General Assembly must guarantee that fixed time-limits are agreed on for the pursuit and conclusion of negotiations.

300. My delegation is prepared to continue to play a constructive role during the debates of the thirty-second session, particularly with respect to agenda item 67. Yet, we strongly feel it is essential that the principles that should govern international economic relations based on justice and equity, on an absence of discrimination because of differences in economic and social systems, and on common interest and co-operation among States should remain in full force and should prevail in the debates which are to be held and in the conclusions which are to be reached.

301. We must not forget that in this context the negotiations to be carried out will not constitute an end in themselves, but a means to accelerate the real and effective establishment of the new international economic order.

302. To that end, we consider that the basis for our work is constituted by the Declaration and the Programme of

Action adopted at the sixth special session of the General Assembly and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which contain the basic principles necessary for establishing new structures for international economic relations.

303. We, the developing countries, have an important role to play in bringing the new international economic order into being. On the one hand, we must persist in the efforts we have undertaken to develop economic and technical co-operation among ourselves. In this task the non-aligned movement has an important role to play. And we must encourage those developing countries which have considerable surplus finances to extend financial co-operation to those that have suffered appreciably from the effects of the crisis. That is a fundamental principle to be borne in mind in all areas of our co-operation.

304. On the other hand, we also have the task of making a decisive contribution so that the strategy for the third United Nations development decade can break free of the frustrating patterns which were characteristic of the first and second Decades and be realistically adjusted to the purposes and objectives of the new international economic order.

305. On 10 October next, 109 years will have elapsed since the Cuban nation began its struggle for emancipation. The details of that long struggle have been recounted more than once and I shall therefore confine myself to saying that for 30 years the Mambí Army, which was the name of the army of our soldiers who fought for independence, confronted the powerful forces of the colonial mother country in an intermittent war which cost us almost half the population of the island of Cuba. When the heroic struggle seemed to be on the brink of ending in victory for the Cubans, and when the colonial government confessed that it had not a cent more nor a soldier more to contribute to the war in Cuba, nascent North American imperialism intervened, and thus we were prevented from enjoying the fruits that were ours by right, and Cuba became a neo-colonialist republic and remained so until 1959.

306. During all those years of pseudo-independence, the illustrious people of my country, honest patriots and militant revolutionaries, kept the flame lit on 10 October 1868 from being extinguished under neo-colonialist oppression.

307. The price paid as a result of foreign domination is high. Part of our territory, Guantánamo, was occupied by the United States "in perpetuity" under one of the treaties characteristic of the time; the economy of our island was totally distorted and it became a source of wealth for foreigners and of misery for Cubans.

308. On 1 January 1959 we achieved true independence and the exercise of sovereignty and we Cubans were able to conduct our foreign and domestic policy in accordance with our own interests, within the framework of respect for the rules of international law and peaceful coexistence.

309. It is not my intention here to give a long description of the economic, political and military aggression unleashed against the people of Cuba since it became master of its

own destiny and acted accordingly. Suffice it to say that that aggression was initiated, as has been proved today by the investigations of the United States Senate itself, even before laws were enacted to restore to the Cuban nation its wealth, which remained in the hands of foreigners.

310. Since the first acts of hostility and aggression which we have suffered, the Government of Cuba has clearly expressed its desire to negotiate with regard to any differences which might exist with the Government of the United States and any claims, as long as the requirements of mutual respect and complete equality are observed. That desire has been the constant guide of my Government.

311. Already in 1960, when Commander Fidel Castro spoke here in this Assembly,<sup>24</sup> he referred to that position of ours and quoted several notes addressed by the Government of Cuba to the Government of the United States which prove that point.

312. Yet it was not negotiations that followed but acts of aggression—the economic blockade of Cuba, the promotion of subversion, a campaign for Cuban citizens to leave their country and move to the United States, and the infiltration of paid CIA agents, the mercenary aggression of Playa Girón, and attempts at direct aggression during the so-called crisis of October 1962.

313. Nevertheless, Cuba unswervingly maintained its position. We continued to believe that the existing situation could be the subject of future negotiations to the benefit of both and to the advantage of international relations as a whole. However, the prerequisite of any negotiation is and will continue to be the cessation of all acts of hostility or aggression against Cuba and complete equality and mutual respect. That is why we cannot expect such negotiations to take effect as long as the blockade, a unilateral act taken by the Government of the United States, continues in force.

314. During the past months, the development of relations between the United States and Cuba has apparently taken a turn in the direction of respect for the rule of international law regarding peaceful coexistence. The Government of the United States has suspended the espionage flights which illegally violated our air space; North American citizens are once again allowed to visit Cuba and we have satisfactorily negotiated an agreement regulating the limits of the economic maritime zone of Cuba, and the exclusive fishing zone of the United States. These steps have created the necessary basis for proceeding, on the motion of the United States Government and with our agreement, to open a section on United States affairs in the Swiss Embassy at Havana and one on Cuban affairs in the Czechoslovakian Embassy in Washington.

315. We believe that both parties have made gestures and taken steps which are lessening the tension that has existed for many years in the Caribbean.

316. Nevertheless, despite everything that has passed, the blockade is still in effect and it is thus not possible to begin substantive negotiations on the claims and other matters pending between both parties.

317. Nor can we forget the continuance of the arbitrary occupation of a part of Cuban territory that cannot be separated from the rest and that we cannot renounce, that is, the so-called Guantánamo Naval Base. Nor can we forget that the blockade and the military aggression have inflicted grave losses of every kind on our people and have hampered our economic and social development. Such losses must be compensated for at the proper time.

318. The Government of Cuba considers that it has an obligation to the international community to continue to demonstrate its willingness to resolve pending questions, when the requirements of mutual respect have been fulfilled. As has been stated since the beginning of the Revolution by its greatest leaders, it is not our intention to live in an atmosphere of permanent hostility with the United States. On the contrary, geographical and historical conditions exist which should be conducive to the existence of normal State relations between both countries.

319. However, above and beyond such considerations there must be respect for the historic victories achieved by our nation, which took to the battlefield in 1868—victories that we shall not renounce at any price. Cuba will choose its friends, will assist those who ask for help, will develop its own institutions in accordance with its own economic and social system and will be ready to defend its country; it will not recognize capricious interpretations of the limits of its sovereignty, nor of its external or internal affairs.

320. Furthermore, the aim of isolating Cuba politically has resulted in the most ridiculous failure. Today our country maintains normal diplomatic relations with more than 100 States, and thousands of Cubans, at the request of friendly countries, contribute to their development.

321. Proof of this failure lies in the fact that we are now enthusiastically preparing to receive at Havana in 1979 the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, a movement of which Cuba was a founder member, together with 24 other countries, in 1961 and which today has more than 80 full-fledged members. The weight and influence of this movement in international relations in our time cannot be overlooked. Faithful to the principles of anti-colonialism and anti-neo-colonialism mentioned in our statements, and actively participating in the programme for economic co-operation, our people appreciates the high honour accorded it as host to the heads of State or Government of more than half the countries of the world.

322. In concluding, may I quote from a statement made by the President of the Council of State of Cuba, Commander Fidel Castro, on 28 September:

“We are a country that believes in the need for peace among all peoples in the world. We are a country that believes in the need to avert a world war, which would be a holocaust of mankind. We believe in the need to prevent an arms race and a return to the cold war. We are a country prepared to live according to the norms of international law and to respect all other States as our State and our people are respected.”

<sup>24</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 872nd meeting.