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General debate (*continued*)

1. Mr. O'KENNEDY (Ireland): I should like first, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. It is a source of particular satisfaction to me that you should take the chair in the year when Yugoslavia is host to the review conference of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, and in the year in which, after many years of fruitful contacts between our two countries, Ireland and Yugoslavia have entered into formal diplomatic relations with each other.

2. I also wish to extend a warm welcome to our two new Members, the Republic of Djibouti and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. This represents a further significant step towards that universality of membership which we all wish to see and which can be one of the major strengths of this Organization.

3. I should also like, following his election last year, to voice my Government's confidence in the Secretary-General, Mr. Waldheim, whose deep concern for this Organization and for the preservation of peace is so clearly manifest in his latest report on the work of the Organization [A/32/1].

4. Since I have very recently taken office as Foreign Minister and since this is the first time I appear as representative of my country before this General Assembly, I think it is appropriate that I should reaffirm the commitment of the new Irish Government to the principles and the Charter of the United Nations.

5. Ireland has always strongly supported this Organization since we were admitted in 1955, and my Government will continue to do so. We know that the United Nations is not perfect; but it has a valuable—and indeed essential—role to play in world affairs. It is a meeting-place which is now almost universal in membership; and States from all corners of the world which belong to different regional groups find here that they have so much in common. They may come to understand—if not necessarily agree with—each other

through formal and informal exchanges; and States in dispute with each other can explain their respective positions and seek the support of the world community in resolving these disputes.

6. Indeed the mere fact that the opening weeks of the session bring government leaders here from all around the world and oblige them to focus their attention seriously on major world problems can be so valuable in itself. Already at the current session there are some indications of modest progress on major issues such as the Middle East, southern Africa and Cyprus—though it would, of course, be unwise to be too optimistic.

7. We also see an important mediating role for the United Nations—through the actions of our Secretary-General, for example, or by the provision of peace-keeping forces in situations of conflict or potential conflict. Ireland has welcomed and supported such efforts in the past and we will continue to do so in every way open to us.

8. These are all good reasons to value our membership in the Organization and make it for each of us a pledge of our common commitment to peace, justice and the right of each member of the human family to a life of human dignity. But we must now, I feel, ask ourselves a further question: are we prepared to face together, as truly united nations, a series of major problems which have forced themselves upon our attention with a new urgency as problems for the world community as a whole?

9. It seems to me that arms control and disarmament in particular are issues where we need a new sense of collective responsibility. This is vital because, as the Secretary-General points out, if we stumble once again into a world conflagration all our other hopes and activities will be in vain. While the Charter does not impose disarmament as an absolute obligation or specify exactly how it should be brought about, we know well that we do face a time-table.

10. It is a time-table imposed by the steady build-up of probabilities. If the world continues to arm and prepare itself for conflict, it becomes increasingly likely that it will stumble into conflict. If the balance in the world continues to depend on a regular and competitive addition of weight and force from each side, it becomes increasingly probable that it will not be maintained but will topple into disaster.

11. It follows then, as is said so often here, that a halt must simply be called to the growth of armaments, and real progress towards disarmament must be achieved. But can we move on from such a statement at the level of general principles? Can we make the specific choices and, if necessary, accept the particular risks which will lead to concrete negotiations and result in specific measures? This

is a question which each of us must answer. But there are some for whom such specific actions are a special responsibility because they, more than others, have chosen to develop and accumulate increasingly massive and destructive weapons. They have thus, for their own reasons, become front-runners in the arms race.

12. This means, in particular, the nuclear Powers. A State does not become a nuclear Power by accident, but by choice. It is legitimate therefore for those who are not themselves engaged in this race to suggest that those who are have a very special responsibility to all of us. President Carter, in his statement to the General Assembly yesterday [18th meeting], drew attention to this special responsibility and accepted it on behalf of the United States. But others, too, have their responsibilities to face, in particular those who have chosen to build up their forces for the purposes of general or regional deterrence or advantage, or who help others to do so, even if they have not themselves become nuclear Powers.

13. The need to curb the staggering waste of the arms race and to redeploy for the good of mankind the resources thus released explains the world-wide support for a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament next year.

14. In some ways the forum which this General Assembly provides is not well suited to disarmament negotiations. But it can and must focus attention on the problem and bring the forces of world opinion to bear in establishing priorities.

15. We need to speak plainly and we need to elaborate a precise programme if the world public is not to regard the special session as another ritual meeting irrelevant to their real concerns.

16. We need a strengthening of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; we need a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests; we need to limit and reduce the immense expenditure on conventional arms, since more than 80 per cent of the world's military expenditure goes on such weapons.

17. A particular burden of responsibility in the matter of nuclear restraint rests on the two nuclear super-Powers. It is important, in my view, that the hopes expressed by President Carter here yesterday for progress towards a Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty should be realized, and that progress should be made on a workable international programme which will ensure that peaceful nuclear technology is available, under proper safeguards, to the non-nuclear Powers.

18. But what we do on these questions, at the special session or otherwise, will be a success only if we work towards genuine disarmament and not simply towards controlled armament, which would not be an acceptable substitute for a real reduction in weapons systems. The Secretary-General has made this point very clear in his report [A/32/1, sect. IV].

19. The Secretary-General has reminded us, too, that we have not yet produced the results which were hoped for

when the United Nations Charter was written some 32 years ago. We have not yet established a system, as was then said, "to ensure the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources". On the contrary the waste of resources in the widening and increasing build-up of armaments has become a scandal which is crying out for change.

20. Today 25 per cent of the world's scientific manpower is engaged in military-related pursuits, and 40 per cent of all research and development spending is earmarked for military purposes. For the past several years, military expenditure has been about \$300 billion each year. This sum is spent in a poverty-stricken world which urgently needs a new, more equitable, international economic order. It is a chilling fact that the resources devoted to the arms race since the end of the Second World War are roughly the equivalent of the total 1976 gross national product for the entire world. Think for a moment what a difference it would mean to the developing world if even a proportion of these funds could be used to help the countless millions living in poverty, those still without clean water, the sick, the uneducated, the deprived.

21. How much longer can the community of nations accept this scandal, that we direct so large a part of our resources to weapons with which to destroy one another? Surely a basic concern for humanity should make us cry out against this in a world where there is large-scale poverty and premature death from starvation of millions each year.

22. An end to wasteful expenditure on armaments alone is not sufficient, however, since much of the world's poverty and misery is due to under-development and to inequity in the distribution and use of the world's resources. We now have new reasons for concern about this. Mutual interdependence is no longer simply a phrase to be used in a speech. It is now an evident reality in the market-place and in the world economy as a whole. Whatever the historic origin of the present gross imbalance between those who are developed and those who are not, each now needs the other, and neither can go it alone. If the rule for our world today is to be, as it was often in the past, "what I have I hold", then the rule for tomorrow may well be "what we now ignore will return to haunt us".

23. We have surely had some salutary lessons in this regard in recent years. Few of us can have good memories of the crisis in energy supplies over these past years. But it has at least brought home some valuable lessons to those who suffered directly as well as to those who appeared to gain.

24. It seems to me that the drawing of these lessons and the setting of priorities to deal with the problems which arise should be a particular function of the General Assembly, because it can take a broader and more political view of what is necessary than other specialized agencies. But detailed negotiations to bring about the necessary change may have to be held elsewhere.

25. Economic development, of course, is not simply a matter of the transfer of resources, though that will certainly be required. It must also involve consideration of structural change which will permit development, once under way, to continue, and which will ensure that the

benefits of that development will reach all of the populations who are entitled to benefit from it.

26. In seeking development and a fairer distribution of resources, we must also take account of the need to conserve and manage prudently the resources and environment of our planet. I would hope in particular that something can be done soon to give a new impetus to efforts to find and utilize new and cleaner sources of energy.

Mr. Ashtal (Democratic Yemen), Vice-President, took the Chair.

27. My Government notes, therefore, with particular interest, the Secretary-General's recent proposal that the energy problem must be recognized as having a global dimension which calls for international action within the United Nations system. His proposal that the United Nations could contribute to the establishment of a world "energy order" [A/32/1, sect. VII] is important and will, I feel sure, be carefully studied during the current session.

28. My own country is itself part of the developed world. We are not, indeed, the most prosperous part of it. We have now come to see that, despite our own economic problems and our wish to improve our living standards, we must count as "wealthy" and not as deprived; and we accept the responsibility which goes with this.

29. In material terms Ireland's capacity to help poorer countries is limited by comparison with that of the more affluent donor nations. We are a small, open economy at an intermediate stage of industrial development, and we are consequently very vulnerable at a time of world recession. Our development co-operation policies must therefore be realistically tailored to our size and resources. But while the percentage of gross national product which we devote to official development assistance is still low, we have been able to increase it substantially in recent years, and it will be one of my principal objectives as Foreign Minister to increase it still further.

30. Over the past few years, too, we have considerably broadened the base of our development co-operation. Through our membership in the European Economic Community we participate in a wide range of development activity, principally in the implementation of the Lomé Convention¹ with the countries of Africa, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific.

31. Through our participation in the Lomé Convention we have had an opportunity to understand better the problems which face many countries in the third world and we have a particular sympathy for them because of our own historical background. This has strengthened our determination to take positive and consistent steps to work with them, through the institutions of the European Community, to help resolve these problems.

32. In addition to our participation in these multilateral activities we have recently begun our own bilateral aid

programme. In doing so we have decided to concentrate on areas where we would appear to have a special competence. We believe that the experience of our own relatively recent economic development, achieved largely by self-reliance and based primarily on rural development, should be of particular interest to many developing countries.

33. Many of the state agencies in Ireland which contributed so much to our recent economic development now find that they can be of particular assistance in helping developing countries. Indeed, there is a great deal of good will in our country towards the third world and its problems—based in large measure on our own historic experience, both political and economic. This finds expression in the personal commitment of a very large number of Irish men and women to voluntary service in developing countries. These men and women have built up a tradition of selfless personal service and I would like to reaffirm that it is my Government's policy to give their efforts every possible support.

34. A third major area where we need a new sense of collective responsibility is that of human rights.

35. Some may argue that this can be of concern to this Organization only in a limited way, since anything more would be unacceptable interference in internal affairs. That is perhaps appropriate to a world and to an Organization which is concerned simply to regulate and moderate the relations between States. But can this any longer be enough?

36. Of course there will be different interpretations of human rights. We here do, after all, differ greatly in our political outlook, cultural background and our fundamental beliefs. But we have a measure of common ground and we must build on it together. Already we have established good foundations in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other conventions and covenants which have come into force over the past 30 years. There is a growing acceptance of common norms in relation to civil, political, social and economic rights, and it is now important further to secure these rights by working out acceptable investigation procedures.

37. A proposal to nominate a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights may come before the Assembly again this year. This proposal has as its aim to encourage full respect for and observance of the human rights obligations which we have all voluntarily accepted. My delegation will continue to support this proposal.

38. I would also like to commend the initiative taken last year in the General Assembly by the Belgian Foreign Minister who put forward the idea that States should voluntarily commit themselves now to accept, under appropriate United Nations procedures, that a United Nations committee of enquiry would be admitted to investigate any alleged breaches of human rights on their territories.² My delegation will again give its fullest support this year to this Belgian proposal.

¹ ACP-EEC Convention of Lomé, signed on 28 February 1975 at Lomé. The text was circulated as document A/AC.176/7.

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 10th meeting, para. 66.

39. States in Western Europe have accepted, under the European human rights Convention,³ certain additional commitments and obligations which allow the investigation by an international tribunal established for that purpose of alleged breaches of human rights. We recognize that approaches to this question may differ from one region to another. But I would like to endorse here the hope expressed by previous Irish Governments that it may soon prove possible in other regions of the world—and ultimately at the level of the United Nations—to adopt similar procedures to ensure that the obligations we have all accepted in the matter of human rights will be observed.

40. In a world of nation-States it is particularly necessary, of course, to recognize the right of each people to independence and self-determination. This is one area of particular success in our Organization since, under its auspices, the larger part of humanity has, over the last 20 years, come to freedom and independence. We are happy that so much has been achieved—and this largely by peaceful means. Only in parts of southern Africa is this process resisted today.

41. In Rhodesia there can be no doubt as to the outcome. All that remains to be determined is the manner in which majority rule will be achieved. We must hope that, even at this late stage, the minority régime can be brought to realize that it must come to terms with reality and negotiate a peaceful settlement with a view to an independent Zimbabwe. The present British proposals, supported by the United States, may well be the last chance. As the United Nations has been deeply involved since 1965 in the efforts to bring about majority rule in Rhodesia, I particularly welcome the involvement of the United Nations in the present proposals and wish the United Nations representative, on his appointment, every success. It is of crucial importance at this juncture that all possible pressure be maintained on the régime and that sanctions be rigorously enforced.

42. There are at last signs that the South African Government is responding to the view unanimously expressed by the international community that Namibia should be permitted self-determination and the right to independence while maintaining its territorial integrity. We have welcomed the efforts of the five Member States which have undertaken the task of persuading South Africa to agree to a solution in accordance with Security Council resolution 385 (1976). Given the special responsibility of the United Nations in this area, this Organization will naturally wish to be closely involved in the implementation of any settlement and in ensuring that the wishes of the Namibian people are accurately determined and faithfully carried out.

43. In South Africa itself there is the major problem of an institutionalized form of racial discrimination known to the world as *apartheid*. There are, of course, many kinds of discrimination and much injustice in the world. But, in our approach to racial discrimination, we cannot forget the degradation, suffering and bloodshed which led to the

creation of this Organization and which resulted, in part, from racist doctrines originating, I am sad to say, in Europe.

44. Racial discrimination in itself is deplorable and wrong; when it is institutionalized and given form in political structures it is both wrong and dangerous; and when those political structures are used to suppress permanently a majority of people in their own country, it is disastrous. This is what is happening today in South Africa. How can those who impose the *apartheid* system in the name of “separate development” not see that it is a recipe for disaster?

45. Year after year this Assembly has expressed itself virtually unanimously on this issue, but there has been no perceptible result. For many years the leaders of the majority black African population have tried to lead their people to seek by peaceful means their basic rights and an end to their degradation. But nothing changes—except in minor detail—and each new generation must grow up to accept a system which limits and stunts its life and its possibilities. Is it any wonder that younger black South Africans and the movements through which they express themselves have turned more militant and that other African countries feel bitter? Indeed a major part of the world community would itself be classed under South African law as non-white and racially inferior—and so they, too, feel personally the injustices of the *apartheid* system.

46. My Government welcomed the decision of the United Nations to hold in Lagos the recent World Conference for Action against *Apartheid* and the opportunity given to Governments, including my own, and other interested organizations to outline their views in detail. We associated ourselves gladly with the Declaration⁴ adopted by consensus.

47. My Government condemns *apartheid* as an affront to the principle on which our own democratic State is based—the fundamental equality of all human beings. *Apartheid*, in contrast, is designed to maintain power permanently in the hands of a minority and to relegate to permanent poverty and under-development the majority of the citizens of South Africa. The application of the system necessitates oppression. The inhuman consequences of the “bantustan” and related policies have been made too tragically evident in the past year. We deeply regret the death in custody, under circumstances yet to be fully explained, of Mr. Steven Biko, a particularly gifted representative of his people.

48. The international community has recognized its obligation to those who are victims of oppression in South Africa, and we have contributed regularly to United Nations funds for that purpose. But, given the nature of the situation, merely to condemn those policies and aid their victims is not enough; persuasion must now be accompanied by action to bring pressure on South Africa for change. The majority in South Africa must be satisfied that the international community will help in their struggle for

³ Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. See United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 213, No. 2889, p. 221.

⁴ See *Report of the World Conference for Action against Apartheid* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.XIV.2), chap. X.

their just demands if they are to be persuaded that there is an alternative to violence; and those in power must be convinced of the disastrous consequences which will ensue if they do not change their ways. In this regard we find the arguments for concerted and binding action by the international community compelling. We therefore favour the imposition by the Security Council of a mandatory arms embargo, no less for the impact which such a decision could have than for its practical effect. Furthermore, my Government will continue to examine, with our partners, ways in which the collective weight of the European Community can be brought to bear on the Government of South Africa so as to cause it to change its policies, as announced in our common statement of 23 August 1977 to the Lagos Conference.

49. There are of course many other areas where there are particular regional problems and conflicts. In many such cases we can use the possibilities of this Organization to encourage the parties to negotiate and help to set up a framework for a settlement. But detailed negotiation and, ultimately, solutions most often depend on the parties directly concerned. Beyond their individual interests they must accept their share of the collective responsibility and be ready through negotiation to work to reconcile differences and end long-standing conflicts.

50. It is in that spirit that my own Government approaches the tragic situation in Northern Ireland. I would like here to speak of our hopes and aspirations within the broad framework which we have set for ourselves.

51. For more than eight years now violence has taken a heavy toll of life and property in Northern Ireland. Out of a small population of 1.5 million, almost 2,000 people have lost their lives and over 20,000 have been maimed or injured. The direct costs of this violence have run into hundreds of millions of pounds and the quality of life there has been seriously impaired. It will be readily understood that that tragic conflict with all its human and political implications is the source of deepest concern to everyone in Ireland; and my Government attaches a particularly high priority to working for a solution to it.

52. At the root of the complex problem of Northern Ireland is a difference between the aspirations of two main traditions in the island of Ireland. The island was divided 50 years ago in an effort—which proved unsuccessful—to solve the problem. Today the majority tradition in Ireland as a whole, including the minority section in the north of Ireland, maintains a hope of seeing Ireland united and independent, and they wish to bring this about peacefully and by consent. The aspiration of the other tradition—upheld by what is now the majority section of the Northern Ireland community—is different. It wants to see that part of Ireland remain a part of the United Kingdom.

53. The division of the island 50 years ago did not solve those differences. Instead it concentrated them within Northern Ireland; and the result was a new obstacle to a genuine political dialogue between the two Irish traditions and a distortion of normal political life in that area.

54. We do not underestimate the difficulties confronting all of us who are involved in the efforts to reconcile these

apparently irreconcilable traditions. Much time and effort have been devoted in recent years to seeking political structures which will both take account of the present wishes of the majority in Northern Ireland to retain their link with the United Kingdom and yet enable the minority there to give expression to its political aims and to work peacefully for its aspirations to Irish unity. But further urgent efforts are required, and my Government shares the anxiety of those politicians who have expressed concern at the situation of constitutional stalemate which has existed in Northern Ireland since 1974. It has not, of course, been easy to pursue political goals in an atmosphere of violence and fear, and the burden imposed on the political representatives in Northern Ireland has been enormous. The stalemate which has led to the present political vacuum imposes particular obligations on the two sovereign Governments involved, namely those of Britain and Ireland, to renew and intensify their efforts to create a climate conducive to political progress. The role of the two Governments immediately concerned, working with the Northern Ireland elected representatives, is of first importance. External influences, whether on the part of other Governments or of international organizations, can be constructive only if, first, they are supportive of the efforts of Britain and Ireland and, secondly, are based on the fullest possible understanding of the nature of the problem.

55. Here I should like to pay a tribute to President Carter's recent offer of encouragement for investment in Northern Ireland in the event of a settlement being worked out involving both sections of the community and supported by the Irish and British Governments. In his timely and generous offer of assistance the President has highlighted the economic aspect of the problem which, if improved, would contribute a great deal to creating the conditions for political stability. I have already referred to the fear and violence in Northern Ireland. There is also the depression and despair caused by economic deprivation which, because of a policy of discrimination over 50 years, is felt in a particularly acute way in the minority section of the Northern Ireland community. There are minority areas, especially in Belfast, where the unemployment rate is estimated at almost 40 per cent and there are families living there who are now entering into a third generation of unemployment. You will appreciate the difficulties in this atmosphere of creating a spirit of hope and confidence which is so vital to political progress. Policies must be created and implemented which will enable people not only to live without fear and violence but also to give them the dignity and self-respect to make their personal contribution to building for their future. A start has been made in recent years and all of us must, in our own way, help to create trust instead of distrust, dignity instead of despair, and confidence instead of uncertainty.

56. It was with this constructive approach that the Prime Minister of Ireland, Mr. Lynch, and I had discussions in London last week with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr. Callaghan, and his Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. Mason. I am glad to be able to report to you our view that the full understanding of each other's position which derives from that meeting has identified a certain harmony of approach and we expect that this measure of harmony will provide a fruitful basis for progress through co-operation. We look forward with hope

and confidence to further such meetings which will build on this solid basis. The pace of progress will inevitably not be as rapid as many of us would wish. The problem we are dealing with has its origins, even more than most of the problems facing this Organization, deep in the past—a past of which we are proud and which places on us obligations which we must not ignore. But there are, as you will appreciate, no instant solutions.

57. To the consciousness of the past we must add the realities of the present and it is following the fullest consideration of both elements that my Government believes that it is in the interests of the people of Ireland, and of Anglo-Irish relations in general, to work now towards the eventual coming together of all the people of Ireland by consent, by persuasion, by peaceful means and under agreed negotiated structures. This has been, and remains, the long-term aim of our policy; and in the recent discussions which our Prime Minister and I had with Mr. Callaghan and Mr. Mason in London we repeated this view.

58. It is important, in advocating this approach to the Northern Ireland problem, to emphasize that the unity we speak of is a free and voluntary coming together of the people through new political structures on the island of Ireland.

59. There are important considerations which follow from this fact. First, in common with all Irish Governments since the foundation of the State, and with all the political parties represented in our Parliament, my Government totally rejects the use of force in relation to the Northern Ireland problem. The Government which I have the honour to represent was elected this year with a very large majority. The Irish Republican Army [IRA], a self-appointed group which refuses to recognize our democratic institutions, has no right to thwart the mandate which we have been given to implement our economic and political programmes. We reject and condemn the violence of the IRA and of the loyalist paramilitary groups, and my Government, for its part, has pledged its full support to deal firmly and decisively with violence from whatever source it emanates. To eliminate violence, in all its forms, from the political process in Northern Ireland will continue to have for us the highest priority. In this way, we have been and will continue to make our very practical contribution to that most basic of human rights, the right to live.

60. Secondly, and precisely because our objective is one of eventual unity by agreement among people whose present aspirations differ, there must be a full and generous respect now for each of those aspirations. This is the essential pre-condition for the process of growing reconciliation which we wish to promote. We consider that any approach which attempts to suppress or ignore either of the different traditions is doomed to failure, and we are happy to welcome the assurance given in our recent talks with representatives of the British Government that its policy still is to work towards a devolved system of government for Northern Ireland in which both sections of the community would, by a sharing of power, participate on a fair basis. I acknowledge also the very considerable role being played by the various voluntary organizations north and south of the border in the process of reconciliation and

pay a tribute to the courage and dedication of all those who are actively working in them.

61. In the light of the particular economic problems in Northern Ireland to which I have already referred—and these problems are acute in some border areas—the Irish and British Governments I am very happy to say have, at last week's meeting, also agreed to review the arrangements and opportunities for economic co-operation with particular reference to Northern Ireland. We are together about to embark on a review of current and proposed cross-border studies and will seek to identify subjects and areas for further examination, with assistance from the European Economic Community where appropriate. The Irish Government, in its approach to the general problem of Northern Ireland, takes courage from the fact that economic co-operation has played an important role in rebuilding a spirit of political co-operation in Western Europe since 1945. We are encouraged that historic differences there have been overcome. This achievement points the way for us in Ireland and in Britain.

62. I have already referred to the reassurance which derived from the recent meeting in London, and the Assembly will recall our support for the policy of working in the immediate future towards a devolved power-sharing government in Northern Ireland. This means, first, that there is an obligation on my Government and on those who belong to the Irish nationalist tradition to take account fully of the views of the majority in Northern Ireland, whose viewpoint is not directly represented in this Assembly. We look to the day when those who inherit that tradition will play a vital and important role in the future of the island of Ireland. Meanwhile, we believe that the power-sharing political institutions to be established in Northern Ireland must give appropriate expression to their views.

63. Equally, however, we maintain that it is important to respect the other tradition and aspiration—that of the minority. The institutions which we hope to see established in that area must not be such as to suppress those aspirations. They must not impair the effective exercise of political rights of those who wish to promote by peaceful means their legitimate aspiration of transcending the present division of Ireland to create new structures in the island as a whole.

64. Unless political structures can be found which accommodate both communities adequately in the way which I have just outlined, there is a very grave danger that, whatever the short-term improvements in the security situation, the initiative will ultimately go by default back to the men of violence. It is therefore the urgent hope of my Government that all those involved will use every endeavour to establish and work towards agreed structures, which alone will enable Northern Ireland to escape further cycles of the violence which has ravaged it for so long. This task will require persistence and imagination. The British and Irish Governments and the political leaders of the two communities in Northern Ireland are all in various ways constrained by history. The harmony which we are now seeking cannot be based on a rewriting of that history and we cannot ignore the injustices of the past. However, we pledge ourselves to face the present realities in a generous

spirit and we invite the other parties to move forward with us with the same generosity. We need now a co-ordinated effort to rise above the past—an effort which will show on a smaller scale in relation to the problems of our own small island that sense of basic collective responsibility and common interest of which I spoke earlier. I can pledge that my Government will for its part make every effort to contribute to this process of co-operation in the search for a peaceful solution to the problem of Northern Ireland. Our aim is to work through peace for peace.

65. I should like now to refer briefly to two of the other areas of conflict of particular concern to us.

66. In Cyprus also, the future is bleak, unless those involved are prepared to seek reconciliation through negotiation. As the representative of a country which has itself experienced the unhappy effects of partition, I would appeal to the two communities to renew the search for a settlement through the intercommunal talks under the auspices of the Secretary-General. The aim must be a freely negotiated, just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus problem which will guarantee the territorial integrity and independence of the Republic and the viability and security of both communities. I sometimes feel, as the Secretary-General has suggested recently, that we too easily take for granted the existence of the invaluable organs of the United Nations and their availability for peaceful negotiation and reconciliation. I hope that this will not be so in the case of the two communities in Cyprus but, rather, that they will take advantage of the framework available to them to resume substantive talks shortly and build on the guidelines agreed upon in February last.

67. The Middle East is an area where failure to achieve progress by negotiation and peaceful reconciliation could clearly have the most serious consequences for all of us. My Government has followed recent developments with close attention and concern; our basic views, which we hold in common with our partners in the European Community, were outlined in the statement issued by the nine Heads of Government at their meeting in London on 29 June last. What I should like in particular to emphasize here is the need for restraint by all those with power and responsibility in such a volatile situation. It is my earnest hope that recent welcome developments will create the framework for a comprehensive settlement and lasting peace.

68. In this statement, my first in the Assembly as Irish Foreign Minister, I have spoken of only some of the major issues which we face in this Organization and I have tried to give my views on how we should approach them. It is clear that in the face of these major problems we need a new and deeper sense of our collective responsibility for the management of a world in which we all depend so heavily one on the other.

69. Many of the countries here belong to particular regional groups. They have committed themselves to such groups in the first instance for reasons of geography or for political or economic interest. The particular value of the United Nations is, however, that it brings together representatives of States from every part of the world. It identifies a common interest which is not contrary to, but will often transcend, the interest of any particular regional group. It

seems to me important that wherever possible States belonging to a particular group or region should use the meeting-place which this Assembly affords them for contacts and exchanges with States in other regions with which they may feel special sympathies because of similar historic experiences or otherwise. This action by individual members of regional groups can help to draw those groups together and establish between them a sense of common interest.

70. My own country belongs to the European Economic Community. We are one of its nine members. Our interest and our concern to contribute to building a new structure of co-operation and, ultimately, integration in Western Europe impelled us to join four years ago, and our people voted overwhelmingly in favour of this decision. But they never saw our membership as limiting or constricting. Rather, they believed that membership in the European Community would open up new perspectives for us on a wider world. We are committed to a close co-operation with our partners in the Community and we seek to establish common positions with them in the external field wherever possible. We shall be giving expression to this commitment as far as we can in our approach to various problems on our agenda, and we shall of course give our full support to the statement made earlier in this debate on behalf of the nine members of the Community by the Foreign Minister of Belgium, Mr. Simonet [7th meeting].

71. But none of us, however cohesive the group to which we belong, can ignore the larger world and our collective responsibility for it. We in Ireland see our membership in the Community as helping to open that world to us and we want to discharge our share of that responsibility through the Community to which we have committed ourselves.

72. It is our belief that my country's particular history and our particular economic experience give us the possibility of establishing links with countries of a similar background, even though they are geographically distant from us, and we would hope that this in turn will help to establish better relationships between the European Community and the regions and regional groups to which they belong.

73. At the outset I pledged my Government's commitment to, and support for, this Organization, its aims and objectives. I did so because I believe that many of the problems which face us today are closely interconnected and world-wide in character and that a solution to them can only be achieved through the United Nations. It is certainly here that they can best be identified so that public opinion may be mobilized.

74. I believe this Organization can serve us all well, but only if we now use its possibilities to the full. This means seeking dialogue rather than confrontation; making a proper choice of the instruments and procedures available to us for international negotiation; and above all, showing a new sense of collective responsibility for the future of humanity as a whole.

75. Mr. PAHR (Austria): May I through you, Mr. President, congratulate the President of this Assembly on his election. Our pleasure at seeing him in the chair is also

explained by the fact that he represents Yugoslavia, a neighbouring country with whom we share a host of common interests and manifold traditional ties.

76. In the election of Mr. Mojsov this Assembly has chosen a President who combines extensive knowledge acquired through his own observation with a deep devotion to the ideals of our Organization. The fact that he will be conducting the work of this Assembly augurs well for the success of our common endeavour.

77. At this stage I should also like to express to his predecessor in the chair, Ambassador Amerasinghe, my country's thanks and recognition for the tact and exceptional insight with which he led the previous General Assembly. His conduct of our deliberations was in keeping with the best traditions of his country, Sri Lanka.

78. It is a special joy for me to greet the new Members of this Organization, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Republic of Djibouti. Their admission is consistent with the principle of the universality of the United Nations laid down in the Charter and will contribute much to the success of our work.

79. The Vietnamese people have painfully experienced the horrors of war. We can therefore expect that that people will be among the most resolute champions of a policy of peace.

80. This Organization was created after the catastrophe of a great war in order to give mankind peace and security. The immediate past, in which millions were denied their dignity and were deprived of their rights, was the origin of a deepening concern to protect human rights for the future.

81. By setting up the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and proclaiming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this Organization made itself an advocate of the rights of man. Next year will be the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration. That occasion makes it appropriate to assess the work of our Organization and this Assembly in the light of the goals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

82. Since the admission of my country to this Organization, Austria has consciously sought to promote the protection of human rights and has made such protection a major effort and objective of its foreign policy.

83. At the time of the founding of the United Nations the concept of human rights was limited essentially to the so-called civil and political freedoms as they emerged at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Today, however, human rights embrace, in addition to these freedoms, economic, social and cultural rights. At least since the 1968 Teheran Conference,⁵ their equal status was no longer disputed. Man's dignity, the guaranteeing of his social and economic security, and the free development of his whole personality are today's goal in the protection of human rights.

84. However, it is not only the significance of human rights that has changed. Certainly, human rights are violated today just as they were in the past. Thus, the Secretary-General has stated very pertinently in his report on the work of this Organization that:

"Perhaps more than in any other field of international activity we face in the human rights field the gulf between idealistic declarations and hard realities." /see A/32/1, sect. V./

85. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that today more than ever before in history human rights are more deeply rooted in the consciousness of men and even of Governments—even those which violate them. This may well be the reason why we frequently have the impression that today human rights are violated on a larger scale than in the past.

86. In the past, with less awareness of the subject, violations of human rights were often not recognized as such. The first and decisive step in the realization of an idea is always the creation of awareness. Therefore, information and education play an all-important role in the realization of this idea. For this reason Austria follows with great interest the relevant work of UNESCO and the United Nations University. We shall vigorously support these efforts.

87. Recent years and decades have enabled us to recognize the interdependence between a policy of respect for the dignity and worth of the individual and the maintenance of peace and security. Today we see more clearly than ever that peace and security require progress in man's free social, political, economic and cultural development.

88. It is, therefore, a source of deep concern for us that, despite repeated and sincere efforts in the past year, hardly one of the world's crises is closer to a settlement. The people of the areas concerned are still denied a life in security and peace. It seems worth making the point that the causes of all these problems lie ultimately in the violation or denial of human rights. This is true for the crises in the Middle East, in Cyprus and in southern Africa, as well as for the lack of progress of the disarmament efforts. It applies equally to the crisis in the relations between North and South. That crisis has its origin in the imperfect provision on a global scale of economic and social rights to all the peoples of our planet. In view of its joint commitment to guarantee human rights, the international community as a whole bears joint responsibility for improving this situation.

89. We are still far from securing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Prominent among the indispensable elements of a peace settlement are the principles laid down in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Another element is the reciprocal recognition of justified demands. In this connexion it must be expected of Israel that it recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, in particular their right to self-determination and a homeland. From the Palestinian people we must expect the recognition of Israel's right to exist in peace with its neighbours in the area.

90. Finally, the parties to the conflict must refrain from any action that might prejudice a negotiated solution. Thus,

⁵ International Conference on Human Rights, held at Teheran from 22 April to 13 May 1968.

we note with concern that the Israeli Government is authorizing the establishment of settlements of its citizens in the occupied territories.

91. The Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East offers an appropriate forum for negotiations. Its reactivation and support for it seem to us more urgent than ever. We do not underestimate the difficulties standing in the way of reconvening that Conference. We welcome, therefore, the resoluteness with which the Co-Chairmen of the Conference have just recently called for the resumption of the negotiations.

92. The continued suppression of the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia has already led to violence and bloodshed. We are particularly distressed that the victims of violence include innocent men, women and children, and people who had dedicated their lives to the service of their fellow-men.

93. Every opportunity must be seized to secure by peaceful means the long overdue exercise of their right to self-determination and to introduce forms of Government that are based on democratic principles and on respect for the rights of the majority, as well as those of the minority.

94. The important role the United Nations plays in the implementation of the right of the people of Zimbabwe to self-determination has been demonstrated by the recent decision of the Security Council concerning the appointment of a representative of the Secretary-General for Southern Rhodesia in its resolution 415 (1977).

95. We appreciate highly the endeavour of Western members of the Security Council, in close co-operation with the South West Africa People's Organization and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to secure the speedy independence of Namibia. We are also following with great interest the further efforts of the United Kingdom, supported by the United States, to create the necessary conditions for majority rule in Zimbabwe.

96. The most serious problem in southern Africa, for which a solution is still not in sight, is the policy of *apartheid* of South Africa. The Government of that country must be brought to realize that the system of *apartheid* offends our sense of moral decency. The South African Government must finally recognize that peaceful co-existence among the peoples of southern Africa is not feasible as long as the vast majority of the population of South Africa is denied full and equal enjoyment of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. There can be no doubt that it is also in the self-interest of South Africa's white population to renounce the inhuman policy of *apartheid*.

97. The World Conference held at Lagos last August furnished yet another impressive proof of the world-wide rejection and condemnation of the policy of *apartheid*.

98. Human rights also play an important role in another crisis: the crisis of Cyprus. We hope that this crisis will be resolved by maintaining the century-old bonds of the two communities in a Republic of Cyprus, whose independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity this Organization has so often acknowledged.

99. The Secretary-General of our Organization deserves thanks and recognition for his tireless endeavours in the search for a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus conflict. This is perhaps the place to give general acknowledgement to his large personal contribution to the cause of peace in the world and for the success of the Organization.

100. Credit for the significant role which the United Nations plays in the maintenance of peace in the Middle East and Cyprus belongs not least to the peace-keeping forces operating under the United Nations flag.

101. May I once again express to all the United Nations troops our deeply felt thanks for their splendid contribution. At the same time I wish to pay a tribute to the memory of those who gave their lives serving the United Nations.

102. In this connexion, may I express our deep concern about the current state of the financing of the peace-keeping operations. Compared to the modest amounts spent by the international community on peace-keeping operations, the scale of the annual expenditures on armaments remains enormous.

103. The arms race of recent years has not led just to an extremely dangerous blurring of the line between nuclear and conventional weapons and to the increased danger of a further proliferation of nuclear weapons. It also entails irresponsible squandering of financial resources, of human research capacity and of raw materials.

104. I am very well aware of the very complex nature of disarmament and arms control measures, as well as of their link with the security of States. For this reason we realize the difficulty for the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. Yet we must use that opportunity, which may not come again, to devise, with the active co-operation of all, a new and a comprehensive approach to the problem of disarmament and to adopt genuine disarmament measures. If, in so doing we again point to the special responsibility of the great Powers, that does not mean that all other States are released from their responsibility. It means rather that by objective criteria the existing arsenals of those Powers imply not only special prerogatives but also the obligation to clear the way for genuine disarmament, which is inconceivable without their co-operation. In this respect we are encouraged by the forthright stand taken by President Carter in his important address to this Assembly yesterday [18th meeting].

105. Finally, in addressing the problem of disarmament and particularly the problem of non-proliferation of nuclear arms it is impossible not to mention the important role of IAEA.

106. The world economy is another area which requires intensified international co-operation. The uncertainty that now marks the economic situation of many countries demands resolute concerted action by the international community.

107. A broad consensus is now emerging that a new international economic order is one of the most important pre-conditions for the establishment of better economic

relations reflecting a higher degree of world-wide solidarity and justice. The ideas related to the new international economic order have been spelled out more clearly in recent years and point, in particular, to the urgency of satisfying man's basic needs, especially in the poorest countries and population groups.

108. A new international order will contribute, therefore, to the realization of human rights, without which many hundreds of millions have no hope of worthy human existence. But such an order will also require new forms of international co-operation, especially with regard to the creation of the infrastructure necessary for economic and social progress in the developing countries.

109. At an earlier stage of the debate the Austrian Chancellor, Mr. Bruno Kreisky, urged a faster rate of infrastructural development, primarily in the field of transportation, within the framework of a major multi-lateral plan for the developing countries, especially those of Africa. As many industrialized States as possible, together with other States in a position to do so, should co-operate in an endeavour of this kind. In view of the tasks to be accomplished and of the scale of the resources required, such an initiative could well be compared with the Marshall Plan, which was so essential for the rebuilding of Europe after the Second World War.

110. We have noted with particular satisfaction that the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, responding to an initiative of African States, agreed on measures for the improvement of Africa's economic and social infrastructures, with emphasis on transport and communications. A further step was taken at this year's summer session of the Economic and Social Council by the adoption of resolution 2097 (LXIII) providing for the proclamation by the General Assembly of a Transport and Communications Decade in Africa for 1978-1988. Austria warmly welcomes this resolution and hopes that it will be endorsed by this Assembly. The Austrian Federal Government is ready to co-operate actively in the preparation and implementation of programmes for the attainment of the objectives of such a decade.

111. One of the central tasks of the United Nations in the coming years will be to work out a new international development strategy consistent with the new international economic order. We expect that the current General Assembly will begin, in a practical way, to lay the groundwork for the formulation of this strategy and thus create the conditions for real progress in the relevant negotiations. Particular care should be taken, in our view, that work on the new strategy does not prejudice commitments entered into for the current Second United Nations Development Decade.

112. The fundamental objectives of international development co-operation undoubtedly include a better exchange of scientific and technological knowledge and closer international co-operation in the application of this knowledge to the development process. Hence the special significance of the 1979 United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development.

113. Austria stands ready to contribute its best to the successful conduct of this most important United Nations

Conference. As an expression of my country's great interest in international co-operation in the field of science and technology, the Austrian Federal Government extended an invitation for that Conference to be held in Vienna. It gives me great pleasure to reiterate that invitation at this stage.

114. In the process of breaking new grounds and creating new ideas we expect a significant contribution from the commission whose establishment was announced from United Nations Headquarters by Mr. Willy Brandt,⁶ the former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

115. My remarks so far have focused on the need for comprehensive and universal implementation of human rights and fundamental freedoms and their connexion with economic and social development. Concern for the well-being of the individual is one of the cardinal principles of Austrian foreign policy. We are not afraid to stand up for the victims of human rights violations, no matter where they may occur, and we are always ready to give help to the greatest extent possible.

116. Austria has always tried to make an active contribution to the work of the United Nations bodies concerned with human rights questions. I should like to express Austria's appreciation of the work done by these bodies. They have constantly sought to advance the cause of human rights despite the wide variety of views and the differing social and political systems represented in these bodies.

117. In speaking of human rights I should like to pay a tribute to the valuable contribution which regional organizations make in this field. As the representative of a European country I should like at this point to stress the significance of the European Convention on human rights and the European Social Charter.⁷ By adopting these instruments the member States of the Council of Europe have agreed on effective machinery for the protection of human rights.

118. Respect for the dignity of man, of all men, is, as I have already said, one of our essential concerns. The denial of equality and of the equal dignity which is the birthright of all people by means of racism, especially in its most extreme form—*apartheid*—is revolting to the conscience of man. Therefore we support the objectives of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, as proclaimed in resolution 3057 (XXVIII), and we hope that the world conference to combat racism and racial discrimination, scheduled for 1978, will bring us closer to the goal of eliminating all forms of racial discrimination.

119. We agree with many other members of the Assembly that the combating of international terrorism, which represents a serious threat to fundamental human rights, is an important task of our Organization. In addition to dealing with the comprehensive aspects of this issue, we must also tackle as a matter of particular urgency its most abominable manifestations. Therefore we welcome the fact that the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Drafting of an

⁶ Independent Commission on International Development Issues.

⁷ See *European Yearbook*, vol. IX (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), pp. 247-277.

International Convention against the Taking of Hostages established by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session [resolution 31/103] has begun its work.

120. Despite earnest efforts the United Nations has still not succeeded in making a decisive break-through in the fight against the use of torture. We appeal once again to all the Members of this Organization to work together to eliminate this barbaric form of violation of human rights and to create an effective tool for combating it.

121. The primary task of our Organization is the establishment and maintenance of peace in the world. This task cannot be viewed solely in terms of the Organization's mediating role in conflicts or the sending of United Nations troops on peace-keeping missions. The United Nations has rightly recognized that peace requires a broad basis. Day by day we in this Assembly are working at building and extending this basis.

122. We consider the promotion and development of the policy of détente to be an essential prerequisite for that endeavour. We should like the policy of détente to be understood not merely in its original East-West context; rather it should be understood in a broader sense. In an interdependent world where space and time have been mastered on an unprecedented scale, détente must be seen as a global process. It should be understood to be that desirable minimum of mutual trust in inter-State relations which provides the fertile soil for the flowering of human potentialities. Détente is the foundation on which human rights and freedoms can be shaped and developed, the framework for the peaceful competition of ideas and systems. For us, détente is a goal to which world politics must constantly aspire; it is a dynamic concept.

123. In this connexion I wish to express our appreciation of the special role of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which marked a qualitatively new dimension in the process of détente. The review conference that has just opened in Belgrade is another important step in the direction in which the Helsinki Conference has pointed.

124. If détente is to be effective and lasting it must operate also at the human level and must take account of humanitarian concerns and the desire for a better flow of information and exchange of contacts across frontiers. If people and nations can perceive the direct results of détente in this way, they will better understand the need for détente.

125. Let me now briefly refer to the agreement reached between Austria and Italy eight years ago which is concerned with increasing the autonomy of the South Tyrol and lays down a time-table for that process. In the spirit of neighbourly co-operation between our two States we have been able to make further progress this past year within the framework of that agreement. However, a number of measures provided for in that time-framework have still to be put into effect. We are confident that the efforts devoted to this question, on which the General Assembly adopted resolutions 1497 (XV) and 1661 (XVI), will soon produce further progress and bring us closer to a final solution.

126. I should also like to refer to Austria's traditional role as host country for international organizations and conferences. As in the past, Austria had the honour this year again to host a number of important conferences and sessions of United Nations bodies.

127. Work on the Donaupark Centre, which is being built in Vienna for the United Nations and will be made available to the Organization free of charge, is going ahead according to schedule. Office accommodation will be ready for occupancy at the end of 1978. From those facilities the United Nations will derive considerable financial and organizational benefits. Therefore we expect that the General Assembly at its thirty-third session will take, in accordance with the phased plan contained in resolution 31/194, adopted unanimously by the General Assembly on 22 December 1976, necessary decisions in this matter.

128. The past year has again witnessed serious and tragic conflicts. Yet it cannot be denied that no other era has been so convinced of the possibility and necessity of resolving these conflicts by adhering to universally accepted standards conceived by the ingenuity of man. International co-operation, especially within our Organization, is of the greatest significance for the attainment of that goal. The success of the United Nations depends on the contribution that each individual Member State is prepared to make.

129. As in the past, Austria will make its contribution to the attainment of the high purposes of the Charter of our Organization.

130. Mr. GBEZERA-BRIA (Central African Empire) (*interpretation from French*): This universe, full of clash and clamour, can it become more harmonious in its very diversity? Harmony, diversity, peace, justice, equality: these are the ideals which our Organization embraced after the worst test that mankind has ever been put to. Man was revealed in all his nakedness, his moral bankruptcy, his monstrosity.

131. But some 30 years later, the world is facing a crisis, and beyond the challenges of illiteracy, famine, malnutrition, economic disorder, armaments and ideological wars, we discern a rather bleak future. We must avert it.

132. Before continuing my reflections, would this august body allow me to perform the pleasant duty of transmitting to it the best wishes for its encouragement and full success of His Imperial Majesty Bokassa I, whose coronation will coincide with the end of this session. His Majesty expresses the ardent hope that our work can go forward in tolerance and calm, so that we can find the proper ways and means to promote a lasting peace, real détente and a new and more just international economic order.

133. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has been able firmly to translate into practice these principles which are dear to my country: those of non-alignment and genuine national development. Therefore, on behalf of the Central African delegation, I warmly welcome the election of the President for the thirty-second session. His experience and expertise in international affairs, I am sure, gives him the capacity to lead our work to a successful conclusion.

134. My congratulations go also to Mr. Amerasinghe, the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, for the perfect tact he showed as President of the previous session.

135. We express to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim all our support, our deep sympathy, for the delicate and valuable task he has in seeing to it that the purposes and principles of the Charter are observed. He does this task with the modesty and discretion we have come to expect of him and which are guarantees of his effectiveness. Quite rightly, my country voted for his second term.

136. The Central African Empire welcomes with particular pleasure and pride the admission to our Organization of the Republic of Djibouti and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Those countries have shown us yet again, through their heroic struggle and their determination, that the just cause always wins. We are sure that the Republic of Djibouti and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam will bring new life to our Organization.

137. I mentioned a rather bleak future.

138. In southern Africa, the stronger the wind of freedom blows, and the greater black awareness becomes, the more violent become the death throes of the minority régimes and the greater grows the risk of conflagration throughout the continent. Here and in other bodies, my country has said, and I repeat, that the Central African Empire joins the international community in reaffirming its condemnation of any discrimination for reasons of race, colour or creed. My country, the melting-pot of African civilizations at the heart of Africa, holds the position traced by the philosophy of our great national party, the Movement for Social Development of Black Africa, the philosophy of "*Zo Kwe Zo*" and "*Zo Ayeke Zo*": in other words, every man is a man.

139. In Namibia, the Central African Empire reaffirms its support for all the authentic forces, and particularly the South West Africa People's Organization, and will continue to support initiatives such as those already under way, to see to it that in 1978, finally, that Territory will become effectively independent.

140. Zimbabwe is still a source of concern. So many efforts have been made to re-establish legality and justice.

141. Despite the efforts undertaken by the international community at Geneva and Maputo and by the front-line States, Ian Smith entrenches himself in his position by a number of clever delaying tactics. Such an attitude is without a future and can only lead to chaos. Events cannot be deflected from their course. The black majority will inevitably come to power under the flag of the Patriotic Front, recognized at the last session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held at Libreville in July.

142. These hotbeds of tension, which will soon be eliminated, have, unfortunately, been joined by others. Africa has become the field of choice for hegemonic conflict and an attempt is being made to implant foreign ideologies. From this rostrum I affirm and proclaim that the Central African people has chosen its path and nothing

can deflect it from it. We dare to believe that the expression "Africa for the Africans" will be heard and understood throughout the world.

143. International peace is dangerously threatened in the Middle East. The refusal to recognize the identity and the individuality of the Palestinian people, the occupation of Arab lands, the plundering of the land of the Arab populations, the difficulties of coexistence between communities with different origins and religious beliefs constitute, in our opinion, among other causes, the signal characteristics of this explosive situation.

144. Despite the establishment of committees of all kinds, the peace plans proposed here and there and the goodwill missions which have followed one on the other, tension continues to increase.

145. Thus we note, with apprehension, that the delays in a settlement of the question constantly give the highest degree of concern to the international community, because of the latest events which have escalated the confrontations, bringing wounds and bloodshed to the region.

146. Over and above all the differences, we consider that there is a people which has a right to a fatherland and to recognition of its legitimate rights: that is the Palestinian people.

147. However, within the framework of a peaceful settlement laid down by our Organization, the parties in conflict must find the political will to seek solutions which transcend all other motivations. In any case, my country will continue to bring all its support to the effective application of the relevant resolutions adopted by our Organization, among others, resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) of the Security Council, for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region.

148. In the Eastern Mediterranean, that is in Cyprus, efforts have been undertaken, within the framework of a peaceful settlement of the matter, on the basis of resolutions 3212 (XXIX) and 3395 (XXX), but little progress has been made.

149. The Central African Empire will contribute to any initiatives, within the framework of our Organization, to preserve the independence of Cyprus and initiate a reconciliation between the two communities within an indivisible and free State.

150. I cannot pass over in silence the terrible problem of the arms race which involves ever more murderous and sophisticated weaponry. Everything leads us to believe that international détente, which has been so ardently sought by our Organization is far from having been attained. The nuclear and thermonuclear tests, the control of the seas and oceans for military and hegemonic purposes and the insidious proliferation of atomic and conventional arms make disarmament, we must say, a distant prospect. What would we not do to devote this infinite potential of intelligence, knowledge and colossal wealth that has been thus diverted to the solution of the problems of poverty, ignorance and disease, which are the lot of most of the inhabitants of the world.

151. My country will never stop protesting most vigorously against the folly of this headlong charge to death and will support always and in every forum the promotion of the kind of peace which is not necessarily just the absence of war but a true peace between peoples. Therefore, we optimistically await the special session of the General Assembly and the World Disarmament Conference.

152. This analysis of the international situation should serve to strengthen within our Organization our will to bring about necessary and urgent changes in a spirit of sincere friendship, tolerance and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

153. Almost a year ago my country underwent a radical change at the institutional level. On 4 December 1976, the Central African people, united in the national party, the Movement for the Social Development of Black Africa, freely and in complete sovereignty adopted a new Constitution which raises the Republic to an Empire and proclaims His Majesty Bokassa the first Emperor.

154. This act of national sovereignty, the establishment of the Central African constitutional monarchy, demonstrates the originality and the will of the Central African people to confirm, in national independence, a new democracy designed to bring about the full flowering of the Central African personality and the harmonious economic development of the Empire.

155. Hence, concerned to associate the Central African people closely with their own destiny, the Constitution provides for a National Assembly elected by universal suffrage and an Economic and Social Council, and makes the Supreme Court the supreme guardian of constitutional freedoms.

156. Furthermore, the Constitution accords the Central African people the fundamental rights laid down in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, in particular, confers upon Central African youth and women a special place enabling them to affirm their identity and play their full part in the nation.

157. Finally, the Constitution makes the Emperor the arbitrator and regulator of the proper functioning of the institutions. He symbolizes the national unity of the Empire and assures its enduring future.

158. Every country freely chooses its path, and does so in strict observance of the fundamental principles of our Charter. The Central African people has chosen its path, in accordance with its aspirations.

Mr. Mojsov (Yugoslavia) resumed the Chair.

159. We wish for peace. My country—another Switzerland—has always wanted and always sought peace, basing itself on sincere friendship as the way to better co-operation with respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. It is our expectation that the same should be true reciprocally.

160. That is why we shall respond to any attempt at interference in our internal affairs and any attempt to lay

down the law to us. Let those who seek to give lessons, and whose acts tend to do the most harm to relations between States, reflect on these words of Alain Peyrefitte: "We cannot have an insight into the present situation without an insight into history." Let these givers of lessons look into their own history.

161. What can be said that has not already been said about the pressing need to establish a new international economic order based on equity, growth and above all, justice?

162. My country, which is land-locked, feels acutely the effects of economic and financial disorder, particularly the deterioration in the terms of trade aggravated by inflation.

163. Of course, many conferences and approaches to the matter have been either held or proposed. The last to date, the North-South dialogue, despite a few agreements obtained, has not produced the results so long awaited by the developing countries. None the less, we must note that a move has been made, as we must fully appreciate the Lomé Convention between the European Economic Community and countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

164. Furthermore, the problem of the release from indebtedness of the developing countries, particularly those countries most affected, must find a rapid solution, if we are to be able to talk of solidarity. Similarly, the specific conditions and needs of the developing countries must be taken into consideration on the basis of preferential treatment, in accordance with the economic declaration of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo in August 1976.⁸

165. It is in this spirit that the Central African delegation appeals to the developed countries and the international organizations to facilitate the transfer of resources by increasing the real value and volume of assistance to developing countries, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) of the seventh special session. My country also supports the idea of convening a conference of donor, creditor and debtor countries to study the means of easing the burden of indebtedness of the third world.

166. My country also supports unreservedly all measures aimed at putting an end to the devious practices of transnational corporations and at drawing up an international code of conduct for this purpose.

167. The establishment of a new international economic order is a long-term collective task, of course, but the fundamental problem remains the awareness and the political will of the "have" countries to bring this about.

168. It is up to the disadvantaged countries to strengthen their solidarity, because the primary responsibility for their development is their own.

169. In this respect, the results of the Conference on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries, held in Mexico last year, and of the ministerial conference on economic co-operation among African countries, held at Kinshasa also in 1976,⁹ are highly encouraging.

⁸ See document A/31/197, annex II.

⁹ Eleventh extraordinary session of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, held at Kinshasa from 6 to 10 December 1976.

170. Furthermore; the success of the First Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States, held in Cairo this year, also gives cause for satisfaction. The important measures laid down in the declaration, the programme of action and the agreement on the organization and methods to be adopted form a sure basis for a relationship of co-operation between Africans and Arabs in the political, economic, financial, commercial, technical and scientific fields.

171. We are sure that such horizontal co-operation is part of the irreversible tide of history.

172. We certainly expect a great deal from international co-operation, but it must be in addition to national efforts. The Central African Empire, within the framework of "operation Bokassa"—a strategy for economic and social development—is making vast efforts in the struggle against under-development. There are many examples to prove this to men of goodwill. We shall mention here only the case of the port works at Bangui, Mongoumba, mainly financed from the national budget and intended to solve the delicate and difficult problem of the interruption of navigation on the Ubangui.

173. To complete the national effort under the programme to provide an outlet from its land-locked situation, my country sets great hope in the building of a railway between Bangui and the ocean, and in the Trans-Africa Highway between Lagos and Mombasa. The Central African Empire, through me, declares itself ready to accept any assistance making it possible to carry out these ventures, which are vital for its economy and for the exploitation not only of resources already known but also of those revealed by satellite and known as the "Bangui anomalies". Of course, this must be in the spirit of dialogue and confidence which the Central African Government has always shown.

174. But the Central African Empire, land-locked country, cannot dissociate the thorny problem of being land-locked from that of the law of the sea. Therefore, it greatly regrets the inconclusiveness of the sixth session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, recently held in New York, as the Central African delegation, from this rostrum on the same occasion last year,¹⁰ had expressed its hope of seeing the work of that Conference achieve positive results.

175. We launch a heart-felt appeal to the countries which have the technology, to their spirit of solidarity, so that a consensus may be found in the negotiations to be held at Geneva in 1978 during the seventh session of that Conference.

176. The position of the Central African Empire is dictated by the following principles of equity: that every country should enjoy freedom of transit and access to the sea; that, since the high seas are open to all States, the resources of the sea-bed and the ocean floor beyond the exclusive economic zones are the common heritage of mankind; and that the exploitation of those immense resources must not be carried out only for the benefit of those countries which have the advanced technology but also for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

177. Finally, in the same spirit, we also appeal to the international community and its various organizations to ensure that special terms for transport are offered to the land-locked countries of the third world.

178. After having mentioned and considered with representatives the events that are of concern to our world in this third decade of the United Nations, I cannot but reflect on the progress made in the twentieth century.

179. Intelligence, science and technical expertise have dangerously increased man's power, giving a more than disquieting dimension to his instinct of domination. A system of ethics is needed to make him aware of his actions and his responsibility towards others.

180. That restraining influence, that rampart of solidarity, is of course to be found in the United Nations. That is a human endeavour subject to success but also to vicissitudes. None the less my country, the Central African Empire, remains optimistic and is confident about it, because the United Nations remains the privileged place where together, large and small, rich and poor, we can deliberate and seek ways and means likely to create effective conditions for co-operation for peace and international security.

181. On 20 October 1970, from this rostrum, His Imperial Majesty Bokassa I, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, said:

"The Second United Nations Development Decade ought to be both the Second Development Decade and the disarmament decade. I think it would be pointless to refer to a disarmament decade if an ever-growing multiplicity of situations of wretchedness, hunger and frustration did not give hundreds of millions of men, who would have little to fear from an apocalyptic death from modern weapons, the ultimate recourse of a different sort of death, but one which in the end analysis is just as final."¹¹

182. Those words still hold good today and, in closing, I should like to join representatives in hoping that tomorrow will be a more cheerful outlook. Let us hope that at least it will be less bleak.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

¹⁰ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 25th meeting, paras. 1-61.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, *Twenty-fifth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1875th meeting, para. 146.