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AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. MROUDJAE (Comoros) (*interpretation from French*): Permit me first, Mr. President, to extend to you the most sincere congratulations of my delegation upon your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly. There can be no doubt that entrusting to you this lofty and extremely important responsibility is a well-deserved tribute both to your distinguished statesmanlike qualities and to your country, whose efforts for peace are known to us all.

2. I should also like to extend my congratulations to the Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur of this Assembly.

3. Permit me also, Mr. President, to say to your predecessor, Mr. Lazar Mojsov, how grateful we are for the competence and remarkable devotion that he demonstrated in the thirty-second session.

4. It is a particular pleasure for me to express to the Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, our gratitude for his invaluable efforts for peace, security and progress in the world.

5. I should also like to take this opportunity to welcome most warmly Solomon Islands to membership in the United Nations. Let us hope that this new Member, whose arrival has enriched our Assembly, will have our sympathy and support.

6. This session is being held at a difficult moment in our history. Passions, covetousness, hatred and extreme selfishness are evident. Throughout the planet, hotbeds of war are becoming ever more frequent—and particularly, unfortunately, on the African continent. In spite of an equally great proliferation of declarations replete with expressions of generosity and good intentions, the future of the whole of mankind seems to be in serious jeopardy. It is time for wisdom to gain the upper hand once again. Over and above

doctrines, special interests and interests of all kinds, our major concern should be that mankind may flourish in a restored peace.

7. Before I set forth my delegation's position on the major problems that concern us, I should like to say something in parenthesis. These parenthetical remarks are made necessary by the absence of information following the events that occurred in our country quite recently and by the use that was made of it. It is for me not so much to justify what happened as to try to offer for your assessment an objective account of the facts.

8. Over the past three years the Comoros have been going through an experience that I hope will never befall any other country. Apart from its destructive effect on our political, economic and social plans, this experience had a traumatic effect on the population at large.

9. At the political level, there was a reign of violence and excesses of all kinds. The country fell into the grip of a single man, under whose dictatorship the citizen was muzzled and terrorized and had to submit or be massacred. The country became a vast laboratory for one of the most controversial doctrines, which, according to its adherents, was to serve as an example to the world. The archives, registry office records and documents of inestimable value were destroyed in an immense bonfire, which was to mark the dawn of a new era. The public service was dissolved and power was put in the hands of young schoolchildren.

10. With nobody knows what designs in mind, all the resources of the Comoros were mobilized for the purchase of weapons and the maintenance of a very large army. Because of a lack of means to pay the thousands of workers who were working on the show-places that were being built here and there, most salaries were suspended and forced labour was instituted. Arbitrary rule became the order of the day, and religion was the subject of derision and its followers were persecuted. This process, which had the most incomprehensible roots, led the country into an enormous economic morass. The country was on the brink of bankruptcy and the national identity of the Comoros was all but destroyed.

11. Faced with such cold-blooded and deliberate devastation, with fierce repression, with people informing on each other, with corruption elevated to the level of a system, our citizens lived in terror and fear for the morrow. Many, risking their lives on fragile canoes, tried to flee that hell. Most of them will never return. They died at sea, shot down by machine-guns. Others died in their villages, also machine-gunned; as they sat in the sun in the public square, for example, at Anjouan, Grande-Comore and Mohéli. These crazy massacres were everyday events, and diplomats

at their posts in the Comoros or passing through were able to look into them and assess the cold cynicism behind them.

12. Over the years of suffering and humiliation each of us tried to maintain our hope. We Comorians inside the country and those living outside, patiently combined our efforts to put an end to that yoke of oppression. It is necessary to have lived as we have through moments of painful distress to understand the relief of the entire Comorian people, its explosion of joy, on recovering its freedom, and its spontaneous acceptance of the changes which occurred on 13 May 1978.

13. Immediately after that historic date we decided to turn a new page, to devote ourselves to the restoration of democratic institutions and the strengthening of peace in the area of the Indian Ocean. Thus, internally, a federal-type constitution was prepared and submitted to a vote of all the people and approved by practically the entire Comorian people. This Constitution guarantees to all those living on our territory the fundamental rights enshrined in the Charters of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity [OAU]; it also founded a liberal society, one of the pillars of which is Islam—Islam, which is the generator of progress and the source of fraternity among people.

14. The approval of that Constitution by the people is the first step, to which everyone aspired, that will bring us very rapidly to the establishment of all the usual institutions of State whose principles are based on freedom, justice and democracy: that is to say, the choice of a president, then a federal assembly elected by universal suffrage and, consequently, the establishment of all the structures of the State. This resolutely democratic process, which takes account of the rights and freedoms of each citizen, contributes—if there is any need for this—to dispelling any misunderstanding about the intentions of the team installed after the events of 13 May last.

15. We take this opportunity to declare solemnly once again that the Federal and Islamic Republic of the Comoros has every intention of respecting and abiding by all the conventions signed and international commitments undertaken by the former régime.

16. Externally, on the basis of reciprocal respect for national sovereignty and the political choices freely made by their peoples, we hold out a hand of friendship to all States which love justice and peace.

17. I stressed, at the beginning of my statement the concern my delegation feels with regard to relations among States. Indeed, they are becoming more and more marked by relations of force buttressed by ideological antagonism. Violence is being unleashed everywhere and, with it, its chain of despair, horror and desolation. We must acknowledge that, in spite of the progress, which is certainly appreciable, achieved in certain sectors, a great deal of ground remains to be covered if we are to attain the objectives we have set ourselves.

18. However, we must not give way to pessimism or discouragement, because the cause is a grand one: it is on

the level of creation itself. It derives from ourselves, from the unfathomable depths of our collective conscience. We must not allow an act prompted by fear, hatred or despair to unleash the apocalypse and nullify the great human endeavour. That is why peace remains our primary objective; but peace in its noblest sense, in harmony with our deepest aspirations, is still an abstraction incompatible with the degree of self-abnegation and humility of mankind today.

19. Let us therefore speak more simply of putting an end to violence, that blind violence which has broken out in so many parts of our world, particularly in Africa. No effort likely to yield concrete results, however minute, should be neglected.

20. Let me begin with Namibia, where the evolution of the situation is giving rise to the most profound concern. Indeed, the South African Government, basing itself on completely fallacious arguments, has no hesitation in flouting international public opinion and rejecting as incompatible with the initial plan the report of the Secretary-General.¹ That report, however, is the practical reflection of the plan prepared by the five Western Powers members of the Security Council.² Such an attitude on the part of the South African Government is liable to open the door to all kinds of adventures. For our part, we wish to reaffirm our firm support for the fighters of the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO], the only authentic representatives of the Namibian people, and venture to hope that the international community will discharge its responsibility for restoring the security conditions necessary for the attainment of independence by Namibia within the framework of its territorial integrity.

21. With regard to Zimbabwe, we strenuously condemn the delaying tactics and treacherous manoeuvres of the rebel Ian Smith, the head of the illegal Salisbury Government, who indeed, is making every effort to sow confusion and discord in the ranks of the freedom fighters in order to delay the advent of majority rule. It is clear that any solution that does not include the nationalist forces outside the country, particularly the Patriotic Front, is irrevocably doomed to failure. Those forces are indeed waging a heroic and legitimate struggle which compels our admiration, because it is moving with the current of history and is in keeping with human dignity.

22. It is urgent for the international community to take practical and effective measures to put an end to the criminal activities of the racist Salisbury régime and to create favourable conditions for self-determination in conditions of dignity and freedom.

23. Turning to South Africa, we are filled with consternation that there should still exist in our day and age a régime whose very foundations, because they are so unspeakably barbaric and uncivilized, are an affront to all mankind.

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-third Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1978*, document S/12827.

² *Ibid.*, *Supplement for April, May and June 1978*, document S/12636.

24. The Government and people of the Comoros resolutely condemn the humiliating policy of discrimination, constant frustration and racial segregation practised by the South African authorities, who persist in turning their backs on the tide of history. They continue to defy with impunity the international community on the strength of the political, economic and financial support provided to them by certain States in spite of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the OAU.

25. We believe that the strict implementation of a general embargo on goods destined for South Africa, as well as increased assistance to the liberation movements, would constitute an important step towards the conquest of freedom by the oppressed people of South Africa.

26. My delegation reaffirms its firm opposition to the bantustan policy pursued by Pretoria. That policy is in fact nothing but a perverted means of perpetuating domination by the racist minority. We would consider as null and void any travesty of independence granted within this framework.

27. On the issue of Western Sahara, the Government of the Comoros approves the decision made at the most recent session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU to entrust the settlement of this question to a "committee of wise men" within the framework of the principles laid down by its Charter and the resolutions adopted on this subject at its various sessions [see A/33/235 and Corr.1, annex II, resolution AHG/Res.92 (XV)]. My delegation very much hopes that that committee will meet as soon as possible, and that the wisdom of the parties concerned, supported by law and equity, will prevail over all other considerations.

28. With regard to the Middle East, we believe that this matter deserves particular attention at this session, because of the threat posed to international peace and security and the risks of a generalized confrontation.

29. We can no longer remain insensitive to the sufferings endured for the past 30 years by Arabs and Palestinians in their attempts to liberate their territories. Nor can we remain indifferent to the tragedy of the Lebanese people, who have been dragged into a holocaust for the satisfaction of base interests.

30. Our Organization condemns the annexation of territory by force, just as it recognizes the right of peoples to self-determination. Israel deliberately ignores these principles and, by its bellicose attitude, is blocking all peace efforts. This is a challenge to the whole international community and seriously undermines the credibility of our Organization. It is the duty of us all to put an end to it.

31. We welcome the efforts made by all men of goodwill to establish peace in the area, and similarly we reaffirm our support for the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization in their legitimate struggle to recover their rights.

32. We believe that any just and lasting solution in the Middle East necessarily entails, *inter alia*: first, recognition of the inalienable and infeasible rights of the Palestinian

people to self-determination and independence; and, secondly, the evacuation of the Arab territories occupied since 1967.

33. We have every hope that our Organization will be unstinting in its efforts to achieve these objectives.

34. My Government is concerned at the evolution of the situation in Cyprus. The prolongation of the crisis through foreign intervention, requires urgent measures by the international community. Those measures should lay stress on the withdrawal of foreign troops and on the resumption of the dialogue between the two communities so that within the framework of territorial integrity and non-alignment it may lead to peaceful and harmonious co-existence.

35. Similarly, my delegation very much hopes that our work will contribute to the establishment and strengthening of peace in the zone of the Indian Ocean, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI).

36. Within this context we support the convening of a regional conference on the demilitarization of that zone, so that ways and means of making such demilitarization possible can be rapidly worked out. For our part, the Government and people of the Comoros are ready to contribute to the achievement of this objective and we declare our determination to pursue a policy of friendship and sincere co-operation on the basis of mutual respect.

37. This question of peace in the Indian Ocean leads me, albeit briefly, to dwell on just a few aspects of the grave problem of disarmament. Indeed, at the present time the arms race has assumed alarming proportions. The destructive capacity of existing stockpiles is mind-boggling because, if we are to believe what we are told, there is enough destructive power available to destroy the planet a thousand times over. When we think of the scandalous disproportion that exists between military budgets and the sums of money devoted to development and survival of peoples in distress, we cannot help asking ourselves many questions about the nature of the human race and doubting the validity of the cultural and moral values governing humanity today. That is why my delegation is in favour, first, of the denuclearization of certain zones, particularly in Africa; and secondly, of stricter control over stockpiles and the manufacture of armaments under the aegis of the United Nations. What we must do ultimately is to bring about general, progressive and controlled disarmament which will guarantee international peace and security.

38. I shall now turn to the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte. In this regard I should like to pay a tribute to the United Nations and to the OAU for their ceaseless efforts since 1975 to preserve the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros. I shall not revert to the circumstances which gave rise to the question of Mayotte. Members are familiar with them since they supported the Government and people of the Comoros in their legitimate claims. As we have already confirmed, we intend to turn a new page and to dispel any misunderstandings which might have existed in our relations with certain States.

39. That is why, immediately after 13 May, we demonstrated our will to renew with France the dialogue which

had been interrupted in recent years, thus complying with General Assembly resolution 32/7. To this end a Comorian delegation went to Paris to explain to the French authorities our views on this question, that is to say, our advocacy of the reaffirmation of the Comorian character of the island of Mayotte, and the reintegration of the Comorian island of Mayotte in the archipelago.

40. Those are conditions which can be subject to no concessions. The Comoros have always formed a single entity and in the colonial period that fact was endorsed by their constitution into a single whole, embracing the islands of Grande-Comore, Anjouan, Mohéli and Mayotte. Their decolonization therefore could not take place in a state of dismemberment.

41. However, in order to take account of the specific features of each island, we decided, as I have already said, to set up a federation which would include the four islands and would give each of them a certain measure of autonomy, in accordance with the aspirations of its inhabitants. The Constitution setting up this federation was approved on the basis of universal suffrage on 1 October last.

42. We believe that this attitude, which testifies to our goodwill, will contribute to the creation of conditions propitious for a just and equitable settlement. We await a response from the French Government and we count on the understanding and support of all friendly countries so that together we can put an end to this dispute which has lasted all too long.

43. The peace we want to see, peace in the noblest sense of the word, as I have just been saying, is difficult to achieve. But in spite of everything, we must do everything in our power to build such a peace because it is nothing more nor less than the primary precondition of life itself. If we want to be sincere with ourselves we must recognize that we are far from this goal. Nothing tangible in my view can be done without a radical review of relations, particularly economic relations, which prevail in our society at the present time.

44. On the one hand, for a very small number of people, there is wealth, exploitation of all kinds and an extravagant use of the products of the planet; on the other hand there are the countless masses of the third world who languish in poverty, disease and ignorance. Because of the scandalous injustice underlying even the very definition of the terms of trade, because of the inflation which with every day is becoming more acute and more widespread, to the detriment of the poor countries, the gulf is widening and the threat of irreversible disequilibrium with incalculable consequences is becoming ever clearer.

45. That is why my country welcomed with interest and hope the proposals of our Organization to promote a new economic order which would be more just and more human. On that occasion, which should have proved to be one of the most important opportunities for the normalization of relations between the industrialized and the developing countries, we applauded that initiative. We have not yet lost hope, in spite of the less-than-satisfactory results of the preliminary actions which were undertaken.

However, we would like to welcome here the regrouping of the countries that produce primary commodities. Their awareness of their essential role and of their contribution to the expansion of the world economy, should make it possible, without any doubt, to eliminate the imbalance between production and the marketing of finished products.

46. The creation by developing countries of vast yet viable economic groupings in this regard, should be a priority in our development strategy. In fact, apart from the fact that it permits the formation of entities capable of becoming valid partners, it contributes also to the strengthening of co-operation among developing countries. This attitude will also be in keeping with the resolutions adopted last September in Buenos Aires at the end of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries.³

47. The second observation, which incidentally arises out of the previous one, concerns basic commodities because of the essential role that they play in our economies and the threat of a paralysis or regression posed in regard to those commodities by any fluctuation in world rates or any natural disaster.

48. The setting up of a fund, recommended by the Paris Conference,⁴ which would make possible the financing of stockpiles of these primary commodities and would guarantee earnings from exports according to modalities at once flexible and effective seems to us to be one of the most appropriate solutions making it possible to avoid a repetition of the crisis, the consequences of which would be pernicious for the whole of the community.

49. The same applies to the transfer of technology, without which any action undertaken cannot be effective. Certainly we do not intend to call for this highly developed technology, as the lack of competent, skilled specialists, and the absence of appropriate structures, would make it impossible for us to use it properly at the present time. We are simply asking for access to this know-how which will help us to begin or reinforce our economic take-off. This point is particularly important because it will permit the developing countries to benefit better from their own resources.

50. Another question—and this will be the last—that holds the attention of my delegation is that relating to the new régime which should be established for the sea.

51. We agreed, at sessions held in Caracas, New York and other capitals, on the creation of an exclusive economic zone extending over a distance of 200 miles, without prejudice to the interests of other States in regard to international communications.

52. We also agreed to consider the resources of the ocean as lying outside national jurisdiction, because these resources constitute a common heritage of mankind.

³ See *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August to 12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11), chap. II.

⁴ Conference on International Economic Co-operation, held at Paris from 30 May to 2 June 1977.

53. In this search for a new régime more in keeping with the aspirations of the world community because it will be based upon more equitable and more moral bases, we should give priority to the creation of a supranational institution with the task of exploiting the resources of the ocean. The differences in development between States still, of course, prevent the conclusion of an agreement. But the exhaustion of most of our resources, which is going to take place sooner or later, condemns us to the necessity of having to achieve as rapidly as possible the elaboration of a policy statement which will take account of the interests of all parties.

54. We have defined this decade as being that of development. The establishment of a more just economic order has been the keystone to this because it would be the starting-point of all the actions to be taken to promote the rapid, continuous and harmonious growth of our States.

55. The work is tremendous and most difficult, but it is an exalting task. It is the basic task, and on the response that we give to this challenge will depend our relations in the future.

56. My delegation very much hopes that confrontations which are harmful to all of us will give way to sincere, equitable co-operation based on an exalted notion of the destiny of man.

57. Mrs. AMORIM (Sao Tome and Principe) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, the delegation of Sao Tome and Principe, which I have the honour to lead this year at the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, hastens to convey to you its most heart-felt congratulations upon your unanimous election to the high office of President of the current session.

58. Our hope in participating is that the results we achieve may be such as to bring us closer to the realization of the great expectations of all the peoples on earth: namely, dignity for all nations, peace and progress for all the countries in the world.

59. My delegation does not forget the President of the thirty-second session, Mr. Lazar Mojsov, who conducted, with firmness and competence, the very important work of the eighth, ninth and tenth special sessions of the General Assembly.

60. Over and beyond the sometimes necessary procedural business which is a characteristic feature of our debates, over and above routine, the United Nations remains the place where all hopes, all the efforts of the peoples of the world in search of justice, peace and freedom converge. The United Nations and all its specialized agencies are perhaps today the most vigorous expression of international solidarity. The balance-sheet that we can draw up after an objective analysis of United Nations world action cannot but strengthen our optimism, the optimism with which the peoples of the world view our Organization. Possible failures and short-comings do not change the essential; namely, our faith in the United Nations.

61. But before going any further, I should like to extend our warmest greetings to Solomon Islands and to express to that State our satisfaction as being able to welcome it in our midst. I am certain that the people and Government of Solomon Islands will successfully accomplish the difficult but exalting task of national reconstruction.

62. Even a cursory perusal of the agenda of this thirty-third session prompts our delegation straightaway to make a number of observations.

63. There is first of all the fact that certain questions have become almost classic items continually before this Organization, from session to session and from meeting to meeting. How many relevant resolutions have we already adopted to reaffirm the right of peoples to self-determination? How many times have we denounced and condemned the glaring imbalance that exists between the industrialized countries in the Northern Hemisphere and the developing countries in the Southern Hemisphere? How many times have we recognized the illusory nature of the so-called North-South dialogue?

64. From this high rostrum of the United Nations, our declarations, however strongly-worded or energetic, appear to have no effect on stubborn reality. Everything goes on as if the magic of words only served to express, by way of confession, its impotence in the present-day world.

65. We feel deeply the uneasiness created by the distance that separates words from deeds, our statements from the actions that those same statements should engender.

66. Let me explain this point, because the serious questions of contemporary inequalities affect above all the underprivileged peoples of the world.

67. The dispossessed are weighed down by misery. For them each day means privation, humiliation and political, economic and cultural, if not military, aggression. They wait and hope as they toil.

68. It is here that we find the greatest injustice in the world. Peace and progress for the whole of mankind implies, first and foremost, the elimination of this enormous international injustice.

69. It is worth mentioning that the poorer peoples do not form an envious retinue knocking at the door of outrageous opulence. Neither do the dispossessed covet the comforts of the rich. They do not ask for charity or pity. It is a much more important question that is involved, a political one, which concerns the very structure of contemporary society. What we are talking about is human justice in the world today.

70. Very often a semi-historical, semi-political explanation is offered for this important problem that we have highlighted, namely, that of the international injustice which is evident at the level of the economic and social structure of the world today.

71. According to the historical explanation we have to take account of the process of time, because the wealth accumulated today by the rich countries is the product of

many centuries of unremitting labours. All the dispossessed have to do is wait; their demands, their impatience for quick results, are not understood.

72. What is not said in those allegedly historical explanations is that the actual development of the rich countries of Western Europe, for instance, was not in the beginning separable from the exploitation of the colonial empires. The international division of labour is affected even today by colonial exploitation.

73. The political explanation would have us believe that the Western consumer society is the ideal model. The fact that the material and intellectual products of Europe have spread throughout the world is deliberately confused with the model of a social organization as it exists in Western Europe.

74. Suffice it to say to rebut that argument that the Western society itself is no paradise, since a general crisis pervades the West today, a crisis which manifests itself in inflation, unemployment and a degree of alienation of the young, the women and the aged, as well as in violence, terrorism and waste.

75. The problem we have mentioned cannot be solved by a selfish approach. A dialogue is necessary, but it must be an open, frank dialogue, without distortion and without inhibiting the intellectual capacities of any of the parties involved.

76. After all, we must have a global vision of things in this world, and historical experience cannot be transposed from one country to another without its undergoing certain necessary modifications and changes. The development of the poor countries can only follow the course that is most fitting for those countries at a pace that guarantees harmony, security and progress in dignity.

77. That means, essentially, that the poorer peoples today must become the true masters of their natural resources and win their economic independence, which is the basis of social justice and political independence.

78. Thus we see in which way and on which premises international co-operation should be carried on today to be mutually advantageous for all the peoples and countries on earth. It is a question less of quoting statistics than of respecting political options for the underprivileged countries, whose development in the modern world does not depend solely on assistance but, in the last resort, on their own desire and effort to build a better world.

79. Incidentally, in the present state of affairs, we know very well who profits from co-operation between the developed countries of the West and the poor countries of the world. A comparative analysis of the existing information is very enlightening.

80. A new spirit in the general framework of the new international order should emerge in order to govern co-operation among the peoples of the world. So long as the spirit of international justice is lacking there will be nothing but difficulties in the way of human solidarity.

81. The problem of international justice to which I have just referred is urgent. Africa is suffering from great contradictions as a result of the existing international division of labour. Moreover, that continent is the object of the covetousness of many, and the chosen arena for the forces of evil, which can lead to bloody and lacerating confrontations. Acts of aggression by mercenaries seek to destabilize the continent and divide African States members of the OAU in order to divert them from the important common task of national and continental reconstruction.

82. In February 1978 President Pinto da Costa warned the Security Council⁵ and the OAU of certain disquieting events that were taking place at that time in my country, the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe. Indeed, our country, from June 1977 to July 1978—that is, for almost one year—experienced very serious events which I must describe in detail at this rostrum of the United Nations.

83. From June 1977 to October of that same year a number of attempts at a coup d'état were made, and what was especially sought was the assassination of the President of the Republic.

84. From December 1977 to July 1978 the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe was constantly threatened by the violation of its air space by unidentified aircraft flying at low altitudes over strategic areas. During that same year its territorial waters were violated by vessels which were obviously spying on our coasts.

85. On 10 February 1978 a foreign vessel anchored in our port and the captain requested assistance and asylum from a group of 34 persons alleged to be in distress.

86. On 11 February, that is to say the next day, five persons in military clothing and carrying weapons landed in an isolated area of the island.

87. Those intimidating manoeuvres were intended to create a climate propitious for future intervention by mercenaries. Of that there is no doubt. The mercenaries use the same tactics everywhere: first they create a situation of confusion, then they stage provocations, acts of aggression and attacks and, finally, they destabilize a country.

88. But what the mercenaries forget is that people are put on the alert by such acts. That is why our people reacted with indignation against the provocations of the forces of evil and have redoubled their vigilance and watchfulness over our leaders.

89. There is a general context which gives a broader and more tragic dimension to the destabilization manoeuvres to which I have referred. Those intimidating manoeuvres and acts of provocation and aggression are criminal acts which fall within the framework of a vast neo-colonialist strategy that obviously seeks to recapture the African continent.

90. Specifically, that anti-African policy is reflected in the strengthening of retrograde positions, the proliferation of

⁵ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-third Year Supplement for January, February and March 1978*, document S/12559.

attempted coups d'état, the assassination of Heads of State, the artificial creation of border conflicts and the installation of military bases in many African countries including the islands of the continent. The assassination of President Marien Ngouabi of the Congo, the mercenary aggression in Benin and the latest events in the independent and sovereign State of the Comoros are dramatic examples of that strategy which thus reveal that there is a permanent conspiracy against the peoples of Africa.

91. We are all aware of the strategic importance of the African islands, which are therefore particularly the target of the forces of domination. The situation prevailing in the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe therefore merits the attention of our Organization. I am in duty bound to inform this Organization of the situation, which is as disquieting as it is urgent. It is the duty of our Organization to seek ways and means of assisting the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe to safeguard what it has obtained through its revolution.

92. United Nations assistance to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe in accordance with resolutions 31/187 and 32/96 should be provided within a reasonable period of time.

93. The short- and long-term requirements of our country do not require vast means of implementation. We believe that the international community is in a position to provide a rapid, effective and adequate response to the request for assistance of a country threatened by aggression.

94. We share the hopes of those who believe in human solidarity. The Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, well deserves the tribute we pay him. We are convinced that his unrelenting efforts to make human solidarity a reality will bear fruit, that they will be healthy and that they will prepare mankind for a new phase in its development.

95. In the independent countries of Africa which have chosen a particular system of development, aggression, acts of provocation and intimidation have become the daily lot, while another part of that same continent of Africa struggles to achieve freedom, political independence and national sovereignty. It is in fact one and the same struggle, an anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist, anti-neo-colonialist struggle. That is why the situation at present prevailing in southern Africa is of the greatest interest to my Government.

96. The situation in Namibia evolves slowly, nevertheless it evolves. That is a positive fact. It is a good thing that South Africa's allies should have understood at long last that history militates in favour of the Namibian people, who are entitled to self-determination and independence, which is their inalienable right. My Government strongly supports anything that our Organization may do to bring to fruition in a reasonable period of time the Declaration on Namibia and Programme of Action in Support of Self-Determination and National Independence of Namibia adopted at the ninth special session of the General Assembly [resolution S-9/2].

97. In view of the imminent solution of the problem of Namibia, in other words the inevitable accession to inde-

pendence of the people of Namibia under its sole representative, SWAPO, it is indispensable for our Organization to speak with one voice in view of the delaying tactics of South Africa and its continued flouting of the decisions of this Organization.

98. Our delegation reaffirms its unswerving solidarity with the sister people of Namibia and their leading force, SWAPO, and sincerely hopes that we shall share the joy of that people at the next session of the General Assembly, which will welcome Namibia as a full member of the world community.

99. With respect to the situation in Zimbabwe, it is obvious that the armed struggle being waged by the Patriotic Front has considerably changed the relations of strength in that region.

100. When Ian Smith refuses to heed the voice of reason, when Ian Smith and his troops attack and massacre the defenceless civilian populations of Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia, when Ian Smith seeks to divide the black majority in Zimbabwe, all he does is demonstrate to the world the illegality of his régime.

101. Henceforth, any dialogue with the Rhodesia of Ian Smith, as with the South Africa of Vorster is manifestly impossible, because neither Smith nor Vorster is a man of dialogue or a man of justice. They bring evil.

102. The countries which co-operate with South Africa therefore bear a heavy responsibility before mankind because they allow the most abhorrent régime of our time to survive. Nothing could be more harmful to peace and security in Africa and in the world as a whole.

103. My Government is equally concerned by the problem of the Western Sahara.

104. For many years the Saharan people have been prevented from freely exercising their right to self-determination. The incomplete decolonization of their country has facilitated the fulfilment of ambitions of which we are all aware. It has led to the present war for survival of the Saharan people. That courageous people, under the Frente POLISARIO,⁶ wages that war to express its elementary right to exist. That is what the whole question is essentially about. The international community must therefore do everything in its power to put an end to the martyrdom of the Saharan people.

105. The colonized peoples of yesterday and those still under the colonialist yoke today have in common a centuries-long history of foreign domination, of deep suffering, of rebellion, which reflects their resistance to annihilation, or, in other words, their hope for the progress of mankind.

106. From that springs the feeling of true identification of all the oppressed peoples which claim the right to life, dignity, well-being and international co-operation—in fact, their status as men in the international community.

⁶ Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el Hamra y Río de Oro.

107. That is why my country has not ceased to express its solidarity with the people of East Timor, under the direction of FRETILIN,⁷ in its struggle for freedom and national independence.

108. The position of my Government concerning the Palestinian question, which arose soon after the Second World War, is well known. Israel must be asked to abandon its policy of aggression, occupation and expansion, a policy which keeps alive the existing conflict in the Middle East, which we all deplore. To be more explicit, Israel must be asked to withdraw from the Arab territories occupied since 1967 and to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to a homeland. Peace in that region is closely linked with a change of attitude by Israel, which must henceforward understand that war is in no way beneficial to the development and progress of the world or to understanding among the nations and peoples of the earth. War renders ill service to international peace and security. War is destructive from every point of view.

109. Israel's recent aggression against southern Lebanon is an unacceptable violation of the sovereignty and integrity of that country. That aggression has intensified the evils besetting the Middle East, the constant state of siege in which innocent peaceful peoples have been living for so many years.

110. We wish to reiterate our full support for the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization in their struggle to regain their dignity, a struggle which they wage with so much courage and resolution. The cause of the Palestinian people is a just cause, and that is why we support it unconditionally.

111. In Cyprus, the evolution of the crisis towards a lasting solution through peaceful negotiations still appears difficult.

112. However, if we want to eliminate the source of tension in the eastern Mediterranean we must concentrate all our energies on ensuring the implementation of United Nations resolutions, in particular resolution 3212 (XXIX).

113. The arbitrary and tragic division of the Korean people is also of concern to my Government. General Assembly resolution 3390 B (XXX) embodies basic elements likely to promote the peaceful reunification of that Asian country without foreign interference.

114. Disarmament has become a matter of life and death for the whole of mankind. It is at once horrifying and scandalous that so much physical and intellectual energy, so many material and financial resources, so many sacrifices—in short, so much work—should be devoted to research on and the manufacture of weapons of war of high destructive capacity capable of destroying all human life on our planet if ever there were to be a confrontation between those possessing such weapons of mass destruction.

115. Have the fantasies of modern man become so confused that the will to die prevails over the will to live?

116. In the face of the horrifying and senseless accumulation of destructive weapons of every kind it is necessary to

adopt every possible measure to ensure the application of the ideas put forward at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, on disarmament.

117. My country's Government fully subscribes to the idea of convening a world conference on disarmament. We are profoundly convinced that the United Nations remains the most fitting body for the discussion of both general and specific questions of disarmament, which affect all the peoples and countries of the world.

118. I now wish to explain my Government's position on another important and redoubtable question affecting contemporary life.

119. The Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [resolution 3202 (S-VI)] and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [resolution 3281 (XXIX)] emphasize a very important fact: it is not enough to reorganize the traditional framework of co-operation among the countries of the world; henceforward we must establish among the nations of the world new relations based on the principle of reciprocity in terms of both the interests of peoples and respect for their dignity.

120. The pressing need for a better balance among countries makes it necessary for decision-making powers to be shared more equitably by all.

121. We believe it is imperative to destroy the vicious circle that links the development of the developing countries to the continued growth and prosperity of the rich countries.

122. We think that it is neither rational nor equitable for about a billion human beings—more than one quarter of the earth's population—to have to content themselves with *per capita* revenue of little more than \$100 whereas in the developed world \$3,000 *per capita* is regarded as quite insufficient.

123. It is quite clear that the structures that turn on the fundamental axis of international co-operation require great and sweeping changes at every level, otherwise many commitments will go unfulfilled.

124. In the context of these questions, assistance for the development of the Sahelian countries, the island countries and the least privileged countries appears to be an urgent duty of the United Nations.

125. We await with great hope the holding in Manila in May 1979 of the fifth session of UNCTAD. We are convinced that that session will consider in detail the results achieved through the implementation of the decisions of the fourth session,⁸ including the possible results of negotiations at present under way.

126. But all of this presupposes the political will of the more fortunate rich countries.

⁷ Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente.

⁸ 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 and corrigendum).

127. The new alternative—that is, technical co-operation among developing countries—is also a historical necessity. This is a conscious, responsible, politically motivated process the fundamental objective of which is to forge all kinds of links between developing countries.

128. In conclusion, we should like to express our support for the principles of the movement of non-aligned countries. We are convinced that the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, to be held in Havana next year, will help to strengthen the united action of that movement.

129. In fact, the non-aligned movement is a dynamic force whose contribution is highly constructive within the context of the many contradictions of the contemporary world.

130. Suffice it to recall the assistance given by that movement to national liberation struggles throughout the world, in particular in the African continent. The non-aligned movement fights imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and *apartheid*; and that is good; it is healthy.

131. The link between national liberation struggles, international economic, technical and cultural co-operation and disarmament is a strong one, and this makes all those problems the real problems of our time. Therefore, there must be greater solidarity and justice to ensure that peace and progress prevail for the whole of mankind.

132. Mr. GAUCI (Malta): I ask you, Sir, to be kind enough to convey to the President, Ambassador Liévano, our congratulations on his election and to assure him of the co-operation of my delegation. We express our best wishes for his success as he presides over this important session.

133. I also wish to compliment his predecessor, Ambassador Mojsov of Yugoslavia, on his record-breaking performance.

134. The people of Malta welcome the admission of Solomon Islands and were glad to become a sponsor of the draft resolution by which another fellow developing-island country and member of the Commonwealth joined this world body.

135. I respectfully pay homage to the many leading statesmen, spiritual and temporal, who were called away from the world's stage in the course of this year. Hundreds of millions mourn their memory, as also the memory of those who lost their lives in conflict or in natural disasters.

136. In some of the statements made so far, new proposals have been advanced. My delegation will express its considered reaction to those proposals when they are discussed in Committee; but in principle we can say that we favour those which have prospects of beneficial practical application, as well as those designed to reach the hearts and minds of men in the eternal quest for peace.

137. I should like to compliment our indefatigable Secretary-General for the thoughtful analysis contained in his latest annual report, which clearly calls for detailed

study. My delegation agrees with his observations and enthusiastically supports his conclusion that:

“We can, and must, develop a sense of human solidarity, finding practical expression in a strong family of international institutions, if our major international problems are to be contained and ultimately solved.” [See A/33/1, sect. I.]

There is much food for thought in that objective. It stands the test of time, since it was the dream that inspired our founding fathers when they drew up the Charter. But are we now any nearer to reaching that elusive goal, and are we using the institutions we have available, and our collective resources, to the utmost of their potential?

138. In the view of my delegation, on the basis of the accumulated evidence of 33 years of experience, the answer to both these questions is negative. I must quite frankly say that, measured against what needs to be done, the performance rating of this Organization is poor. Its institutions are misused, at worst paralysed by inaction, at best dealing only marginally with the serious issues that face us.

139. It is true that this forum provides the opportunity for an essential dialogue of immense value in itself. It constitutes a reflection of present international opinion, and provides a portent of future events. It has produced countless recommendations on every single issue and repeated them often enough. The strenuous effort and escalating expenditure that go into the making of these recommendations, however, cannot indefinitely satisfy the hunger for tangible progress. Stated objectives must at some point actually be achieved in practice, instead of remaining, as our experience shows, illusory, theoretical and only capable of giving rise to endless debate; otherwise frustration and cynicism will eventually and inevitably erode our confidence. The rumblings of discontent are becoming more and more insistent with each passing year. Neither this Organization nor the imperatives of peace can afford to ignore these messages much longer.

140. A number of factors have contributed to this evident lack of progress; without doubt, the primary cause has been the inability of the major Powers, backed by their respective allies, to settle their differences, to lessen their mutual suspicion or to abandon their inflexible competition in the pursuit of their conflicting objectives. As a result our Organization, which was predicated at the end of the Second World War on the notion of a mutuality of interests among the victorious Powers, so far has not been able to function as was foreseen.

141. That has been the visible pattern of the past. Why else would it have taken our Organization so long merely to acknowledge that the question of Palestine was one of the core issues in the Middle East problem, and why, as the Prime Minister of Jamaica reminded us so eloquently yesterday [30th meeting], should the shameful racist policies in the southern part of Africa have existed for so long before the need for moral pressure and concerted political action was contemplated? Why should it have needed years of marathon discussion before the relatively simple question of a sufficiently representative platform to discuss disarmament issues was finally settled? And why

has the accent of the past remained so much on division, when the trend towards unity has never been so manifest? These are only a few of the many questions that can be raised, questions to which our Organization, unfortunately, has not provided an adequate answer. On the contrary, the clouds of division and strife continue to hover menacingly over every single crisis area in which the interests of the major Powers are diametrically opposed—Cyprus, Lebanon, the Middle East, Korea and southern Africa in particular.

142. On the basis of this accumulated evidence, to expect change to come from the super-Powers themselves is not merely unrealistic; change from that quarter is a demonstrated improbability. The impetus for change is more likely to succeed if it comes from outside those Power blocs. This role fits the non-alignment movement. Practical results will require much time and strenuous and sustained effort; but ingrained attitudes have to be changed, and new initiatives pursued, if we wish to move forward.

143. It is now recognized that the problems we face in today's interdependent world have become of vital concern to the international community as a whole. They cannot remain perpetually unresolved, through a mere continuation of the negative attitudes of the past. These problems lend themselves much more readily to a solution when independent and objective recommendations are made which would not be detrimental to the interests of either one of the major Powers but would, on the contrary, at least attract their tacit acquiescence, preferably even their co-operation.

144. However, the co-operation of the strong, when it is forthcoming, cannot be based on narrow, outdated conceptions of national interest or on the preservation of a *status quo* that denies fundamental rights and dignity to others. The strong must be prepared, in co-operation with the weak, at least to play a constructive role in the shaping of a new world order of peace, co-operation, social and economic progress, justice for the disadvantaged. This demands that collectively we also apply at the international level the principles that professedly guide our internal policies. It requires that we strive, as an objective, to overcome, in broad terms, the political polarization between East and West, and to prevent the economic polarization between North and South.

145. Admittedly, this is a difficult, long-term process, which demands as a corollary deliberate planning and adequate resource allocation. However, in the final analysis we have no rational alternative, because with today's weapon systems, unless we are masters of change, we run a serious risk of falling victims to chance.

146. My own Government sees no future in a world recklessly squandering its scanty resources in a revolting race for lethal weapons, which could destroy civilization, when at the same time 40 per cent of the world's population leads a miserable existence with lower than acceptable levels of nutrition, sanitation and education. The prevalent, overriding concern in the world today is for peaceful social and economic progress; any contrary activities will not in the long run attract public support in democratic societies.

147. If, gradually but surely, our present attitudes can be sublimated and oriented in a more positive direction, what then will be needed is a reordering of our priorities, a deliberate, planned reallocation of scarce intellectual and material resources. This can be done in the political sphere if we take pragmatic and parallel action by concentrating also on what unites us rather than constantly labouring and being paralysed by what divides us.

148. The record of performance in connexion with the traditional problems of economic development is also indifferent. My delegation is concerned not only at the slow pace of progress but also at the direction that it seems to be taking. One common element stands out with remarkable clarity: the reluctance of the major developed countries to embark enthusiastically on a sincere appraisal of the imperatives for the new economic order. Whatever limited progress is achieved is constrained by the inhibitions of an obsolete and outdated order: partial and isolated arrangements, donor-recipient relationships and glaring institutional deficiencies. The failure to reach agreement even on the functions of the Committee Established under General Assembly Resolution 32/174, usually referred to as the Committee of the Whole, is a fundamental indication of the absence of a political will in the developed countries to face up to the enormous dimensions of what is required.

149. The Maltese delegation has actively involved itself in the dialogue. Our deep conviction of the primary role of the United Nations in international economic and social issues is of long standing. We have been foremost among those seeking to ensure that the system is adequately equipped, financially and institutionally, to undertake its responsibilities in these sectors. Our participation in the restructuring negotiations was motivated by this objective. There is still much that needs to be done even in this administrative approach, certainly on such matters as the streamlining of bodies and institutions, the avoidance of overlapping activities and the elimination of unnecessary expenditure, but also, which is of more importance, on such matters as the need for the various secretariats within the system—particularly here at Headquarters—to be more attuned to the needs and objectives of the developing countries.

150. In recent years we have also taken direct initiatives in chosen sectors of special concern to us. As a developing island country lacking in natural resources, Malta has piloted various resolutions, both in UNCTAD and in the General Assembly, calling attention to the particular problems of this category of developing country, and recommendations have emerged whose application we shall pursue. On social affairs, we have raised the question of the elderly and the aged in society, a phenomenon of increasing importance in modern population trends and one with regard to which we have developed new models of treatment at home.

151. In all modesty, let me not only say but also prove to the Assembly that, parallel with our active participation in this forum to resolve enduring problems inherited from the past and as we became increasingly conscious of the difficulties of securing a sufficient rate of progress, Malta did not content itself with merely pointing out the need for changes in our attitude and joining in the passage of countless resolutions.

152. We felt that much more was required, that the time and opportunity for change had arrived and that they should be seized before they were lost. We felt that it was within our individual and collective capability to envisage new horizons. We felt that the more formidable the obstacles the more strenuous and persistent were the efforts required at the global, regional and national levels. And so we looked into the future, to a new arena of human endeavour on our planet and to emerging perspectives in Malta's own region. We fitted our own national policy to and concentrated our energy and resources on the pursuit of those approaches, almost revolutionary in concept but entirely just and peaceful in application. We put forward concrete proposals which have been translated into specific action.

153. In 1967 we felt that a start could at least be made, with better prospects of success, in deciding on a course of action over an area of activity that at that time was only a future possibility. Consequently, after months of quiet but intensive research, the Maltese delegation placed before this Assembly a detailed projection for a new concept of international co-operation in the area of this planet beyond national jurisdiction,⁹ which up to that time had been protected from man's rapacity by the superjacent marine environment. We signalled in advance the potential—either for partnership or for conflict—that new technology would soon make possible, within our lifetime, in the militarization of the ocean floor and the exploitation of its mineral resources.

154. The result of that initiative has not yet crystallized into a permanent convention and institution, despite a decade of intensive negotiations. Already, however, much has been accomplished, and the end is in sight. The concept of the demilitarization of the ocean floor is already embodied in a treaty [resolution 2660 (XXV)], subject to improvement though it may be. A certain amount of co-ordination among previously independent institutions and haphazard activities has been secured. A new legal concept of the common heritage of mankind has been accepted and its provisions elaborated. Contributions by dedicated scientists, such as Cousteau and Heyderdahl in their admirable peaceful research, have dramatically opened our eyes to the beauty and fragility of the marine ecology and environment, and their scientific expertise has been devoted to preservation rather than to destruction. Other resources and intellectual efforts have also been expended on this worth-while attempt to introduce order and equity in a new field of human endeavour, instead of possible anarchy and the continued injustice of the strong to the detriment of the weak. This constitutes a practical example of cumulative concerted effort and concentration of resources by this Organization for the common good. It will pay enormous dividends in the years to come and could provide a new spirit of partnership in the relations between developed and developing countries, which Malta has long advocated.

155. With success within the grasp of the international community acting in concert it would be deplorable if economic interests in one or more industrially-advanced

nations were to be given unilateral legal sanction to embark on exploitation activity before a convention was negotiated. This element of power-play would deal a psychological blow to the delicate negotiating process. My country has expended much energy on this initiative, and as a token of our faith in eventual success the Government of Malta continues to keep available valuable land and building sites for the proposed international sea-bed authority, which we hope will be established, with its headquarters in Malta in recognition of our historic and timely initiative.

156. In our own region we have stressed the need for greater concentration on the potential for unity and have derived encouragement from the evident trends towards regional integration. Consequently no opportunity has been lost to point out the significance of new perspectives in Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. Despite psychological and historical obstacles, at times even derision, popular movements for understanding and co-operation are reaching out to each other among Mediterranean countries even as new clouds of confrontation are unfortunately looming in other parts of the world. We have nourished these popular peaceful movements, and many meetings have been held in Malta over the past few years in which wider co-operation has been discussed and given new impetus.

157. From our own contacts and from the strength of these popular movements we sense that Europe as a whole is slowly awakening to a fuller realization of the political, strategic and economic significance of the countries on the opposite shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Malta is strenuously engaged at the governmental level in promoting the advancement of the muted dialogue that has been initiated so as to transform it into a permanent platform of political consultation. We believe that such consultation, recognizing mutuality of interest and conducted in a constructive spirit of equality, could lead to the gradual disappearance of past division; it could forge the links of a new partnership capable of keeping peace in our own region, without outside interference, while restoring to the region a new spirit and an independent, respected role in the council of international relations.

Mr. Liévano (Colombia) resumed the Chair.

158. Even as I speak today, on my country's initiative representatives from all the Mediterranean countries are meeting in Malta to establish a regional centre for the practical utilization of renewable energy sources—wind, solar and biomass energy. This is future-oriented planning, on a regional basis, but we are not neglecting the global aspect. We therefore support the proposal for the holding of an international conference in 1981, and have in fact offered to act as host to that meeting. A few years ago, also on Malta's initiative, decisive action was finally taken through the co-operative action of all concerned to prevent and halt pollution in the Mediterranean, which was threatening to turn that beautiful sea into a lifeless sewer.

159. At the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe we insisted that a declaration that did justice to the importance of the Mediterranean should form an integral part of the Final Act signed three years ago at Helsinki. Subsequently, at the first review session in Belgrade in 1977, while pointing out deficiencies in implementation,

⁹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Session, First Committee*, 1515th and 1516th meetings.

we secured agreement to a meeting of experts on the Mediterranean to discuss specific avenues of co-operation—the only new and practical outcome after the promise of progress raised by the Helsinki Agreement. That meeting will be held in Malta in February next year. It will, we hope, constitute a watershed in the history of our region. It is the first meeting of its kind, and we are dedicated to making it a success. Preparations are already under way, and consultations will soon be initiated, to smooth the way for the substantive discussions that should lead to several recommendations for specific areas of co-operation. Malta's objective is to turn the Mediterranean area into a hive of friendly co-operation, throbbing with peaceful activities so demanding in time and resources that none will be left for military confrontation, and the tensions of the past will eventually be relegated to our history books, so that we shall truly have transformed the Mediterranean into a zone of peace, through common endeavours.

160. The February meeting will hardly have ended before we pass another important milestone in our chequered history. It will herald a new era for Malta, because we do not preach in the abstract; what we propose regionally and globally we apply rigorously at home. Accordingly, in March 1979 the existing military bases in Malta will be closed down for good. This will be a major turning-point for which we had deliberately planned a phased approach in advance. As a first step, my Government in 1971, on the basis of its popular mandate, told the people of Malta and the world at large that it had set itself a target date, by agreement with the United Kingdom, for the dismantling of the military bases on the island.

161. The second phase was a search with our European and Arab friends for a formula for a political status that would permit Malta to give its fullest contribution to peace and security and continue to serve European interests in a peaceful way in future, in stark contrast to the tremendous sacrifices in blood and tears that Malta made in the past when it served Europe militarily. In historical perspective, that past period in our history covers several centuries, but particularly in living memory it is represented by the darkest days of the 1940s, when Malta, constitutionally not even authorized to take its own decisions, was inextricably caught in the European fratricide. The people of Malta at that time suffered the world's most concentrated bombing and came within a few days of outright starvation, and the island incurred enormous physical damage.

162. Subsequently, when sanity was restored, despite Malta's valiant contribution to the cause of democracy and despite the strivings of its political leaders, we were denied contributions in financial aid compatible with our needs, even though our economic infrastructure had been damaged beyond repair. One pretext after another was advanced against our just claims, and the little effort made to diversify the economy had hardly any effect on the island's heavy dependence—almost 50 per cent—on income generated from the military bases. The real needs of the island's security were also subordinated to military considerations, as seen, not by Maltese leaders, but by outsiders.

163. This was the formidable problem that Malta faced in 1971, at the time the momentous decision to do away with

all military entanglements was taken. This decision implied a radical change in the structure of the entire economy within a relatively short period, necessitating the transformation of all activities and a transfer from war-related services to the new industries of peace. Ever since the decision was taken, therefore, the Government and people of Malta have been strenuously endeavouring to build the necessary political and economic infrastructure that would permit a truly independent Malta to pursue its natural yearning—to serve as a haven and catalyst for peace in our troubled region and to erase our old image as an island-fortress for the dominant foreigner.

164. In these endeavours we have felt it both necessary and legitimate to turn to our partners and neighbours for understanding, assistance and support. Many countries have responded tangibly and enthusiastically. To our regret we have found those sources that are the best equipped, and from which we had expected the greatest measure of assistance and co-operation, consistently failing to give us the necessary response, which could have created the basis for mutually satisfactory arrangements. European countries that we contacted in a search for political and economic support to guarantee our neutrality only gave responses that were, and continue to be, vague and vacillating.

165. This we find difficult to understand, because it is clear to us that a peaceful island in the centre of the Mediterranean will contribute to the stability of the region, which is in the best interests of Malta's immediate neighbours and even of distant Powers. Why, then, should there be hesitation, given these convergent interests, about taking effective action when the opportunity presents itself? Is it considered unnatural or eccentric these days for a small, defenceless country to seek to promote stability and security within its region?

166. By contrast, Malta's objectives and aspirations were quickly understood and endorsed by the non-aligned countries, near and far. They have all decided to extend moral, economic and political support, for which we express great appreciation. It is only in Europe that difficulties persist, despite our affinities in all other respects. My Prime Minister recently took the occasion of a Council of Europe meeting forthrightly to explain our aspirations, and to ensure that they were well understood and evaluated.

167. But time is running out. Even as we continue to search for this understanding, the transition-period we had allowed ourselves is nearing its end. Undeterred by obstacles, Malta plans to move ahead, serenely to meet its moment of destiny, to honour its undertaking. In good faith, with pride and dedication, Mr. President, we bring before you and this Assembly at least one example in today's turbulent world of a country turning away from militaristic confrontation and transferring all its energies and resources to peaceful endeavours, backed by the courage of its convictions, by the determination of its own people, and by the sympathetic understanding and tangible support of many countries, starting with some of our most immediate neighbours—particularly Algeria and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. In this connexion I wish to thank the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for publicly confirming here his country's unquestion-

ing and timely support for Malta's peaceful strivings [28th meeting].

168. We are convinced that one day the community of nations will have cause to appreciate the initiatives, the energy and the foresight of small countries in their disinterested pursuit of promoting change from policies of almost instinctive military confrontation to a more peaceful, just and co-operative society.

169. In terms of all that is needed before universal peace is secured, Malta's contribution, coming as it does from a small island, cannot but be modest; set against what the island can contribute on its own, it represents our maximum potential. We appreciate that mankind's final objective can be attained only by all nations acting in concert, and that many have a far bigger contribution to make.

170. This body is the receptacle of mankind's most cherished aspirations. The message from my country that I bring to you remains one of determination and hope. I want to let you know that before we next meet, in the spring of next year, the guns of Malta's famed fortifications will officially have fallen silent; the beacon that now illuminates the ramparts is the torch of labour, for peace and economic and social justice in the years ahead.

171. It is against this background and in the spirit of this philosophy, in pursuit of our peaceful but activist role in international relations, that for the first time we are seeking to serve on the Security Council. In accordance with the democratic principles of this Organization, and on the basis of geographic rotation, we hope that our candidacy will obtain the support of the group to which we belong and of this Organization in which we are proud to serve. We will seek to bridge the psychological gap that at this critical period seems persistently to separate the Western European countries from the non-aligned. We confidently rely on your verdict, on the basis of our motives and our record in this Organization.

*Address by Sir Eric M. Gairy, Prime Minister
and Minister for External Affairs of Grenada*

172. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs of Grenada. I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Sir Eric M. Gairy and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

173. Sir Eric M. GAIRY (Grenada):

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands,

"Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing.

"Know ye that the Lord He is God; it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.

"For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and his Truth endureth to all generations." [Psalm 100.]

174. Please accept from our people, our Government and myself personally, from the depths of our hearts, warm and sincere greetings and felicitations, and, indeed, very best wishes for a successful and meaningful thirty-third session of our General Assembly currently in progress. Grenada is still the smallest Member of the United Nations, and we continue to reassert that we will not be inhibited in any way or at any time by our size. We have an irrevocable commitment to make our contribution, and in consequence we have been making—and by God's grace we shall continue to make—our contributions in every sphere within the boundaries of the United Nations.

175. Permit me, Sir, for and on behalf of our people and our Government and for myself personally, to extend to you our heartiest congratulations on your election as President of this thirty-third session of our General Assembly. Your election to that high and enviable office should be no surprise to those who have kept in touch with the illustrious record you have established in your public life in the areas of law, political ingenuity and statesmanship. Your supreme and excellent performance in these and certainly other areas leaves us with absolutely no doubt in our minds as to your ability to harness, identify and surmount the challenges and perform with excellence the task concomitant with your office, the office of the presidency. May God, the Supreme Architect, guide you, direct you and inspire you in the execution of your duties and obligations.

176. Mr. President, may I take this opportunity also to express congratulations and commendation to your predecessor, Mr. Lazar Mojsov, who held his office with dignity and with eminence. His task was by no means an easy one, since he had to preside over the thirty-second session and three special sessions during his term of office. I commend him and wish for him God's divine blessings.

177. And now please permit me to say that I feel a deep sense of compulsion in stating that Mr. Kurt Waldheim, our Secretary-General, is loved and admired by all who come in contact with him. Mr. Waldheim is a true and living symbol and, indeed, a graphic manifestation of discipline with an unflinching dedication to world peace and a marked and special concern for the developing countries and the under privileged. It gives a feeling of joy and comfort, a feeling of inspiration, to hold a dialogue with our Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim. It is indeed a privilege and a blessing for us to have him as our Secretary-General. I wish him continued success in his office.

178. Over the past year we have been saddened by the passing of men who had had distinguished careers and who in their private and public life gave hope for a world built on the principles of the freedom of peoples, peace and human rights. I refer to the untimely death of one of Italy's foremost statesmen, Prime Minister Aldo Moro. I refer also to the passing of the well respected Senator and former Vice-President of the United States of America, Hubert Humphrey, and more recently that of one of the champions of the liberation of black Africa, the late President of Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta. The Caribbean also mourns the

passing of a distinguished leader, Premier Robert Bradshaw of St. Kitts, Nevis and Anguilla, a man who during his 30 years of political activities earned respect, not only among the people of the Caribbean, but also among the leaders of the Western Hemisphere.

179. The Christian Church in particular, especially millions of Roman Catholics the world over, and in a general way people of all denominations, beliefs and doctrines are still in a state of shock over the passing of such eminent spiritual leaders as Pope Paul VI and, more recently and more shockingly, Pope John Paul I. Death, transition, is indeed a very necessary and inescapable phenomenon. Unfortunately, however, the average man has not yet grown to accept this phenomenon as a rebirth. Death simply allows us to divest ourselves of our earthly habiliments, for man's body is simply a garment of flesh, a material robe, a vehicle by which man operates within earth's vibrations. But, fortunately or unfortunately, after physical death we must face the world of reality with full consciousness.

180. We mourn the passing, the transition, of our beloved ones. But mourning and sorrowfulness should never be allowed to supersede or to take precedence over the importance of the lessons we ought to learn from death—physical death. Man has grown to be so materialistic today that he places undue value and importance on his physical self, his material worth, his political power and achievements, in such a manner that all these things seem to overshadow the recognition of the real man, the soul—man's consciousness. From this important and inescapable event, death, let us learn a lesson; let us face the realities of life and recognize the fact that our life-span on earth is comparatively short and, in consequence, let us in conscience and in truth examine our life style; let us restructure our patterns of behaviour towards our fellow-men, for in the final analysis the decisive and all-important question is, "How well we truly loved; how well we truly served".

181. Please permit me to add my quota to the expressions of congratulations and welcome to Solomon Islands. Grenada has already stated its stand regarding freedom and independence for all emerging countries, and I now respectfully crave indulgence to repeat among the many expressions I adduced in this regard, one short statement:

"I am particularly gratified by every step taken, at any time, and in any part of the globe, bilaterally or unilaterally, with a view to giving full, uninhibited and unconditional freedom from colonial oppression or minority domination to our brothers and sisters, to join us in this assembly of people."

I offer my heartiest congratulations to the Government and people of Solomon Islands and welcome that State as a Member of this body.

182. During our four years of membership in the United Nations we have raised many matters of importance—some of which have been considered innovative, others were current and regular but our views ushered in new thoughts about them, thoughts that aroused new vistas in an attempt to tackle traditional thought-patterns. And still further we have been introducing some very thought-provoking sub-

jects of world importance and world concern, subjects considered by some to be strange and extraneous, but which we feel are sufficiently important and significant to merit our constant articulation and review of them, however and whenever the opportunity permits. Permit me to refer to only a few: the question of women's rights, the universality of God, economic cruelty, the problems of man and his environment, disarmament, man and his material and spiritual behaviour, the Bermuda Triangle, unidentified flying objects and extraterrestrial phenomena, decolonization and territorial integrity, human rights, and undue solace given to terrorists.

183. It is my desire to make a contribution to the subject of the New International Economic Order relating to the third-world countries, and I must emphatically state that one of the most tragic circumstances in our time is the disturbingly slow rate at which the world is moving towards the establishment of a New International Economic Order based on equality and social justice. Last year during the thirty-second session of the General Assembly I said:

"Grenada is concerned and feels a sense of frustration over the seemingly endless dialogue that has been proceeding in international forums on the establishment of a new international economic order, though there are certain hopeful signs which indicate that the discussions concluded so far cannot be regarded as a 'dialogue of the deaf'."¹⁰

Indeed, we in Grenada are grateful for the considerations we have received from the "North" through the existing Lomé Convention¹¹ and we are heartened by the spirit of co-operation now prevailing at discussions taking place for the preparation of the second Lomé Convention.

184. Grenada welcomes the action taken by the Caribbean Group for Co-operation in Economic Development and the tangible results that have been forthcoming through the establishment of a Caribbean development facility. This initiative, spearheaded by the World Bank, the IMF and the Inter-American Development Bank, indicates a concern and a desire to act positively in an effort to help the countries of the Caribbean. There is still need for other developed countries to follow this example and demonstrate that they are really committed to the fullest possible extent to providing meaningful and substantial assistance in the less developed countries of the world, realizing, of course, that the world is indeed a family of nations and that what affects one country, in spite of geographical distance, can and does affect the rest of the world in varying degrees. And so when poverty and the absence of the basic requirements of life tend to relegate Governments and people to a state of dehumanization and economic belittlement, it then becomes inevitably incumbent upon the developed countries to do something meaningful and effective about it.

185. There is need to create an economic interdependence among developing countries and to take drastic measures

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, *Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 25th meeting, para. 12.

¹¹ ACP-EEC Convention of Lomé, signed on 28 February 1975 at Lomé. For the text, see document A/AC.176/7.

designed to change the conditions that now compel the developing countries to remain producers of raw materials with little or no control over prices and, at the same time, enable the developed countries to remain as the processing agents of those raw materials, and the beneficiaries of the value added.

186. In this context let me repeat the point I have made here on several occasions: that there is an urgent need to revise the criteria on which co-operation from developed countries is based, criteria which were devised for different times and in different circumstances and which today are anachronistic and unrealistic, especially as they relate to the small island nations of the world.

187. There is need for the developed world to pay a modicum of attention to the problems of energy, and to assist the developing countries in their search both for conventional energy resources, which are known to be available but which are untapped, as well as for alternative sources of energy, including solar, wind and geothermal energy in many of the developing countries, where these exist in great abundance.

188. There is need for greater justice and equity in the allocation and exploitation of the abundant resources of the ocean, and in particular for the protection of the rights of island nations in this matter. Hence Grenada's interest in the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and the results that might emerge from it.

189. There is also great need for the developed countries to assist in the transfer of technology to developing countries, but we must be very careful to avoid the "dumping" of certain technology which is unsuitable to the scale of operations, the culture of the people and the trust of the "developmental exercise" itself. Indeed, perhaps it might be appropriate to suggest to developing countries that they must supplement the transfer of technology from developed countries with research into their own "folk technology" and the development of their own "indigenous technology", both of which might be more relevant to their needs and circumstances.

190. Furthermore, the recently concluded United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation Among Developing Countries, held in Buenos Aires, indicated that the developing world is recognizing that there is already a good deal of co-operation and assistance given by developing countries to one another, and the Plan of Action agreed upon at the Conference¹² holds out great possibilities for national, regional and international co-operation among the least developed countries, building a bridge across the South, as it were. However, the developed countries continue to have a great responsibility for assisting the developing countries as a contribution towards the establishment, fostering and maintenance of world peace.

191. It is not that developing countries do not want to help themselves. The fact is that many of our developing countries need as a "take-off" the necessary infrastructure:

roads, international airports, water, electricity, trained manpower, and so on. In Grenada, we have just launched an ambitious development programme, called "Operation Industrialization and Employment Bootstrapping", designed to encourage the establishment of industrial projects through partnership between the private and public sectors, and to provide employment for the many unemployed young people in our State. Grenada recognizes that in order not to remain for ever hewers of wood and drawers of water we must take deliberate action to lift ourselves by our own bootstrapping. The response to our project, both by our own people and by foreign entrepreneurs, is most satisfying, and indeed it gives me a deep sense of gratification at having taken that initiative, which in some ways and to many developed and affluent countries and funding agencies is a logical and attractive prerequisite for economic and technical co-operation.

192. We in Grenada have also embarked upon another developmental project which might be worth mentioning in this international forum. It is called "The Prime Minister's weekly national project" and it is designed to encourage in our people a spirit of self-help and community development. It is led by me, as Prime Minister, actively supported by my cabinet Ministers. The projects include: land reclamation; building of sea defences; action against hillside erosion; cleaning and beautification of parks, roundabouts and other public areas; collecting and cultivating particular types of plants; building and repairing bridges; repairing the homes of poor and helpless people; and reconstruction and resurfacing of roads, among other things. This project also has created a tremendous public stir and has aroused the consciousness of all people regarding their participation in community self-help projects as part of a national development plan. This is a project which we undertake one day in every week when I, as Prime Minister and chief servant of my people, actually lead and launch the attack with approximately 600 persons, including peasants, police, military personnel, people from the agronomic and extension divisions of our Ministry of Agriculture and volunteer citizens and residents. We are certainly making the world's loveliest island even lovelier, and that is Grenada, the beautiful isle of spice.

193. I now turn my attention to the question of human rights, a matter of increasing concern not only to the international community but also to peoples everywhere which continue to struggle against want and oppression. Our concept of human rights in Grenada encompasses the basic needs of the human species: food; water; shelter; health care; education; the right to work, earn and own; the right to due legal process; the right of association; the right to worship; the right to protection against terrorists, and so on.

194. Our position in these matters is quite clear and precise, and this has been manifestly borne out by our action. When Grenada, with pride and a sense of satisfaction, put into effect the American Convention on Human Rights by depositing the necessary instruments of accession on the historic day of 18 July 1978, and when Grenada became the eleventh State to ratify and thus give effect to the Convention which, for the first time, provides for the establishment of an Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Grenada joined the other acceding nations in

¹² See *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August to 12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11), chap. I.

undertaking the obligation to preserve and uphold the rights and freedoms recognized by the Convention; and agreed to ensure that all persons are subject to the jurisdiction of the free and full exercise of those freedoms, without any discrimination for reasons of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic status, birth or any social condition.

195. Our Government took further action to protect and preserve human rights by ratifying the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft signed at The Hague in 1970; the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, signed at Montreal in 1971; and the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board aircraft, signed at Tokyo in 1963.

196. In addition, my Government is currently giving active and special consideration to all the international Conventions of the United Nations in the field of human rights, with a view to taking appropriate action as expeditiously as possible.

197. But please allow me to remind this Assembly that I have always held that human rights must not be regarded as a one-way street. We need to be objective and concerned about the over-all well-being of a nation and avoid supporting or encouraging terrorist and other disruptive groups whose operations are often carried out in the guise of the protection of human rights. How can we support the terrorists who held up that train in Holland and made hostages of pregnant mothers and children? How can we support the terrorists who kidnapped the distinguished Italian statesman, Aldo Moro, and savagely butchered him in pursuit of the interest of a small and dangerous group? I respectfully submit that groups like these very often mislead the public, mislead the media, mislead commissions of enquiry and even mislead honest, well-meaning human rights bodies into believing that their causes are justified and are in the public interest. This could be most dangerous, and calls for continuous vigilance at both national and regional levels.

198. To underscore the point I have been making, let me use Grenada as an example to show what small, disruptive, politically ambitious groups within a country can do, not only to undermine the stability of a Government, but also, which is more important, to bring discredit on the entire country and frustrate the hopes and aspirations of its people.

199. There is a group in my country known as the New Jewel Movement, a group with a strange and highly dangerous ideology, which has deliberately embarked upon a propaganda campaign to smear Grenada's good name and to interrupt the country's development. For instance, Grenada had the good fortune to get the assistance of some expert fishermen from Korea who came to help us make a survey of our fishing banks and to assist our fishermen with improved methods of fishing, fishing being one of our very important economic activities. The members of the New Jewel Movement, however, gave out the false propaganda that the Koreans had come to scrape the bottom of our sea and destroy all the fish with their trawlers, and thus deprive the local fishermen of their livelihood. They also said that

the Korean fishing experts would be shooting any Grenadian fishermen they met at sea. It is surprising how many people believed this, despite the obvious benefits the country had derived from the Koreans, who left a most revealing and helpful report on Grenada's fishing industry and its potential.

200. The New Jewel Movement spread the rumour that we did not hold fair elections in 1976, and actually filed an election petition against one of our Ministers. Many gullible people believed this, until that movement lost the petition both in the lower court and in the Court of Appeal, and in addition was made to meet all the costs involved in both trials.

201. The New Jewel Movement spread some unbelievably vicious rumours about Grenada's connexions with Chile, saying that at home Chileans were training our people in methods of torture and that we had policemen in Chile being trained likewise. Representatives would be surprised to know how many people believed that, and indeed that matter was actually discussed in the United Kingdom Parliament and Grenada was even threatened with the withdrawal of aid.

202. Chile is a member of the Organization of American States (OAS); we have cordial relations with Chile, as we have with other members of the OAS; and we received some assistance from it, as from others, in connexion with the holding of the seventh regular session of the General Assembly of the OAS in Grenada last year. Other propaganda emanating from that group and carried extensively by the international press about Grenada was so vicious that it almost led to a cancellation of the OAS meeting in Grenada. I am happy to say, however, that the good name of our country has been amply vindicated by the many ministers, ambassadors and other representatives and officials from the OAS who actually visited our paradise during the seventh regular session of the General Assembly of the OAS in June 1977. So it is with Chile. The world will see that our relations with that country are above-board and have nothing to do with any ruthless purpose of undermining the human rights of our people.

203. Let me mention one more example of that phenomenon of wilful disruption by the New Jewel Movement with which my country is afflicted and which imposed tremendous hardships on our people about the time of our independence. That Movement, in an attempt to wrest political power from a duly elected Government holding 12 out of the 13 elected seats in Parliament and with its authority deeply rooted in the confidence of the people, actually attacked a police station and attempted to take over control. The people reacted against this treachery and might have taken strong action against the leaders of that group were it not for the quick and considerate action taken by the Senior Inspector of Police, Innocent Belmar.

204. Despite that, the New Jewel leaders were able to get many people and organizations, including some churches, some trade unions and some service groups—22 such organizations in all—to accept that deliberate propaganda that they had been denied their human rights and beaten up by the police, especially by Innocent Belmar. That almost led to a complete paralysis of the country. Demonstrations

were mounted—21 within one month—in which school-children, farmers, housewives, business people, trade unions and so on participated. As a result of that a commission of inquiry was set up, headed by the Chief Justice of Jamaica. The Commission's report, based on the evidence of many misguided persons, blamed the Government, condemned Mr. Belmar, the senior police officer, and condemned him as being unfit to hold any public office. The Government was not satisfied with the findings about Mr. Belmar and put him up as a candidate for election. Mr. Belmar won an overwhelming victory and was made a minister of government. The Jewel members were not satisfied. Belmar was assassinated the very day he was sworn in as Minister of Agriculture.

205. God works and brings out the truth in people in many ways—and this is the point I wish to make: the conscience of the New Jewel Movement, through its Deputy Leader, Senator Kenrick Radix, prodded its members to make a startling confession in the Senate regarding the innocence of Mr. Belmar and, therefore by implication, the extent to which that Jewel Movement had deliberately misled the country under the guise of promoting human rights. The following is what Senator Radix said in the Senate on Saturday, 18 February 1978:

"The memory of Innocent Belmar will live on. It is often said that the evil which men do lives after them—this is certainly true—but the good is often interred with their bones. Let me say—and I will say something today in the memory of Innocent Belmar which I have never said on any public occasion—in the Parliament of the people, that, had it not been for Innocent Belmar on the night of 18 January 1973, I would not be alive today. He was a complex man. I say publicly that, had it not been for Innocent Belmar, the Leader of the Opposition today would not have been alive to chart the destiny of our country in the years ahead. Had it not been for Innocent Belmar, the Honourable Unison Whiteman would not be alive today; Mr. Selwyn Strachan and Mr. Hudson Austin would not have been alive today. This is a confession that I make, because it is true."

206. The cost to Grenada resulting from that last incident ending with the assassination of a trusted government minister has been heavy: our port, the lifeline of our country, was closed for several months, and so our economic life was at a standstill. The many schoolchildren who participated in the demonstrations were denied a full education and were all the worse for that experience. The inquiry cost the Government approximately \$150,000, which the country could hardly afford. And then after that confession "bombshell", the commissioners, the churches and several prominent people in Grenada must have been terribly embarrassed by the extent to which they themselves had been grossly misled by an irresponsible group which mistakenly peddled its struggle for political power under the guise of advocacy of human rights.

207. The aforementioned reference is to a purely domestic matter affecting Grenada, but it is certainly a lesson for the rest of the world. Nations must not take action against other nations on the basis of the vicious propaganda from small, vocal, disruptive groups within a country whose main purpose is to seize political power for the selfish ends of

their members. A nation must not heed a call to isolate another nation just because small groups within the country make such a request. We must be warned about this unrealistic and unacceptable appeal on behalf of human rights. The world is full of deceit and deliberately false information.

208. I remember when I was recently in Costa Rica there was an international rumour that a certain Mr. Vesco was in Grenada negotiating resident status with the Government. There is absolutely no truth in that. But somehow it suited the purpose of disruptive groups to peddle that propaganda against Grenada, our isle of spice, God's veritable paradise.

209. Please allow me once again to reaffirm Grenada's unswerving commitment to upholding the principles of human rights enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the inter-American Conventions and in several other Conventions relating to human rights. Grenada stands unswervingly with the rest of the international community in this firm resolve.

210. And now, having presented our contribution on the subject of human rights, permit me to cross a new threshold and to dwell upon a subject somewhat innovative but at the same time not entirely unrelated to human rights. The subject is "The rights of life on earth other than human life". Let us bring into focus for a moment some of God's other creations—the animals of the forest, the pets at home, the mammals, the birds, the fishes, the reptiles, the huge forest trees soaring high in splendour and elegance, and the sheltering shrubs, the carnivorous and numerous other sensitive plants, the flowers and the multifarious varieties of other plant and animal life.

211. I wish to state here and now with unchallengeable authenticity that every creature, animal or plant, has a purpose to serve on this planet earth and is serving that purpose, except when obstructed by their several enemies—man being the greatest.

212. In actual fact, some animals and some plants have proved to be more responsive than some human beings. Today many individuals, groups and institutions, and some Governments as well, are engaged in research programmes that are revealing some very astounding facts supporting the theory relating to the importance of the so-called lower creatures on our planet. Man is busily engaged in wars and conflicts within and against himself and against his brother man. Man is so deeply embroiled by his greed for power, through politics, through wealth, through territorial expansion, through the control of the basic and important commodities of our world—indeed man is so unduly preoccupied with the material things of life—that somehow he fails to get into tune with the needs and concerns of forms of life which he considers lower than himself but from which he can learn many important lessons.

213. For many reasons, each of those so-called lower creatures could be congratulated and commended for the manner in which it has retained its natural endowments in terms of the sensitivity of its physical senses, in terms of intuitiveness and instinct, in terms of emotion, while on the other hand it could justifiably be said that man has lost some of his natural endowments by virtue of what he calls

civilization, inventions, modern gadgetry and amenities. The dog has kept its sense of smell, the cat can see in the dark, the horse can perceive beyond the dimensions of man, and some plants and flowers, loved and cherished by a person, react more spontaneously in the event of sadness, mishap, accident or death involving such a person—in fact, some react even before the event took place.

214. Have we ever stopped for a moment to study the life of a family of ants, bees, birds or some wild game? We would be amazed. Each group of creatures has its means of communication, be it sounds, signs or otherwise. God, the Supreme Architect, has certainly placed these creatures on this planet for specific purposes, but man with his complex mentality, man with his complications and in his madness, has set out without any justification whatever, and in some cases simply for fun, wantonly to destroy animal and plant life without any regard for the Creator, or for the purposes served by those so-called lower creatures. The demonstration of love by some pets for their owners is definitely more impressive than that displayed by some people for members of their own families and their friends.

215. I have said all those things to preface the following: first, that all things on earth created by the Great Master, be they animal or plant life, have been put here to serve specific purposes; secondly, that it is no fault of theirs that we cannot understand them or in a general way communicate with them; and thirdly, that they cannot represent themselves within this noble Organization. Consequently, for and on behalf of all animals and plants I appeal to this world body, and certainly to every Member Government, to take the necessary steps first, to recognize the importance of every creature on this planet, be it animal, mammal, reptile, plant, flower, bird, fish or any other; secondly, to take steps to protect and preserve their lives. In this context, if bullfighters and spectators must find their fun and pleasure in bull-fighting they should by all means go ahead, but they should stop before maiming, paralyzing or killing the poor, dumb animal innocently taken from its natural habitat to provide fun for thousands and then suffer a merciless and painful termination of its natural life.

216. Have we ever stopped to consider how we would feel if some beings superior to humans came on our planet earth and decided to use us and treat us as we treat animals and plants? Let us imagine that they were making us fight to kill, for their pleasure, shooting us down as food for lunch or dinner, crushing us to bits with their huge feet, piercing us with spears and sticks, peeling the skins off our backs as we peel the bark from trees, cruelly trapping us by putting food, alcohol, cigarettes and other things that man craves for into traps that crush our bones, inflicting on us excruciating pains until we die. Yes, amazing and depressing as all this may appear, that is exactly how some people treat those poor creatures created by the great, universal, divine God for specific purposes.

217. I appeal to all Governments and peoples to try to recognize the divine nature and beauty in all that God has created and placed on our planet and to take the necessary measures to care for, protect and preserve the lives of those creatures. They in turn would then love our human kind, and the Master would bless us and give us peace abundantly.

218. I should like now to deal with another subject of great importance, the International Year of the Child. The declaration of 1979 as the International Year of the Child focuses the attention of all Member States on the rights of the child. The children of today are the men and women of tomorrow. Given a good start in life, given the tools and equipment for decision-making and physical, psychological, spiritual and social guidance from an early age, children will become better citizens of tomorrow. Parents, teachers and societies have an obligation to promote their interests and Governments have an obligation to protect those interests.

219. The Government of Grenada is committed to the protection of the child and to ensuring that, although its resources are limited, the children have access to shelter, food, clothing, security, health and dental care, recreational facilities and education at all levels—pre-primary, primary, secondary, technical and vocational and university education where possible. In the case of the handicapped—the mentally retarded, the deaf, the blind and the physically handicapped—special educational facilities are being made available for children at an early age.

220. It is the duty of parents, guardians, society and the State to provide the child with the basic requirements and skills in order to bring him to the threshold of self-reliance. It is important also that the educational system should bring out, develop and reinforce the natural aptitude of the child without making him deviant and anti-social.

221. We believe that the quality of the child's life is related directly to that of the parents, so we have striven first to improve the lot of parents, especially those in the rural areas in Grenada. We were responsible for introducing an active trade-union movement as early as 1950 and we can say with some pride that through our efforts in the trade-union movement the great mass of our people are now enjoying vastly improved conditions of living and enhanced levels of human dignity. Young people can now enjoy greater hope for the future mainly because of the improved lot of their parents.

222. Despite our limited resources, the Government of Grenada will continue to seek ways and means of expanding the day-care facilities for infants whose parents must work, and in many cases the mother is the only concerned parent and sole breadwinner. It will continue to seek solutions to problems of nutritional deficiencies among infants and to provide adequate pre-primary school facilities for the two- to five-year-olds; to intensify its efforts to improve educational facilities and opportunities at the primary and secondary levels; and to provide recreational facilities for children in specially prepared centres all over the country. In the field of health, our Government in its efforts to cut down the incidence of disease, has embarked upon a massive immunization programme against the perennial diseases which usually affect young children—poliomyelitis, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, measles and typhoid. In this connexion, I should like to pay special tribute to the Brothers' Foundation of Pennsylvania and Rotary International for the tremendous assistance given in this massive inoculation programme.

223. We recognize that this is only the start and that much more needs to be done. That is why we are so deeply

involved in preparations for the International Year of the Child. We have established a national committee of which I myself am Chairman, and there are several sub-Committees dealing with specific concerns such as social legislation, exhibitions of art and craftwork, the improvement of social amenities for children and so on. We join with the rest of the world in the effort to improve the lot of our young people. The expenditure involved for the proper care and the right kind of education for the child today, in preparation for his role in society tomorrow, must be identified as a very vital and laudable expenditure which must inevitably lead to a better world for him, with a better chance for a survival, and to lasting world peace.

224. It is my strong and irrevocable conviction that the time has come when the United Nations and, certainly, Governments of Member States should adopt appropriate measures, possibly through legislation, designed to correct improper behavioural patterns among pregnant mothers, behavioural patterns inimical to the interest of their yet-unborn children. I refer to pregnant mothers who indulge in excesses of alcohol and smoking and even in the abuse of dangerous drugs. I feel that I am to some extent reflecting the views of the various women's organizations that are concerned and desirous to ensure that all steps be taken so that children are born strong and healthy after having spent a period of nine months under the best possible conditions. And since I am well known to champion the cause of women in United Nations organizations and elsewhere in the struggle for equality, I now call upon the women of the world to indicate their support to their respective Governments wherever they may be for the benefit of children yet unborn.

225. I come now to a matter of great concern to Grenada and one which I have been bringing to the attention of the General Assembly since 1975. I refer to the subject of unidentified flying objects [UFOs].

226. Grenada is now identified the world over with efforts to get the greater Powers to share information on the phenomenon of unidentified flying objects, mainly because of the persistence with which we have been raising this matter in this General Assembly since 1975. We are satisfied that the subject of UFOs is of sufficient interest and importance for it to be raised again this year and for us to seek the support of Member States for research in this field to be co-ordinated by the United Nations organizations.

227. Sightings of UFOs are not restricted to just one or two parts of our planet. Reports come from all over the world today, and scientific analysis of these reports strongly suggests not only that a growing number of people believe that UFOs exist as a physical phenomenon but also that more and more countries believe that a more in-depth investigation into this phenomenon might make a significant contribution towards the well-being of the planet earth as well as towards man's better understanding of himself and his purpose on earth.

228. The question is now being increasingly asked, why should man be precluded from information on UFOs, a matter of great interest and importance to man, while at the same time he is fed so many trivialities which can

contribute nothing to his personal enrichment or to the advancement of mankind.

229. When I spoke before this body last year I made the following statement:

"Grenada takes no categorical theoretical stand on the question of unidentified flying objects. Theories as to the nature, origin, and intent of unidentified flying objects are many, and are amply known to civilian and governmental research groups. Irrespective of theory, however, the major research groups are dedicated foremost to achieving the following main objectives in their endeavours: to study all significant reports on unidentified flying objects with a view to making a reasonable and acceptable determination of the nature, origin and intent . . .; to disseminate the substantive results of such study to the public and the news media; to work co-operatively with, or within the framework of, the United Nations to help establish a communications system through which important data can be rapidly exchanged internationally."¹³

230. I wish to say that I have received the strongest support from individuals and organizations as well as from distinguished "ufologists", or trackers of unidentified flying objects, the world over in our efforts to get the United Nations more actively involved in co-ordinating research on the phenomenon.

231. Indeed, it was with great pleasure that I met some of the undoubtedly most prominent of these scientists earlier this year, and together with them I met the Secretary-General of the United Nations to discuss how best we might make our presentation to the General Assembly in our continued efforts to persuade the United Nations to take positive steps in the matter of UFO research. That joint effort involving distinguished scientists of world repute in UFO research has indeed given a great boost to our efforts in this important matter.

232. Those scientists who joined us in dialogue with the Secretary-General included Mr. J. Allen Hynek, recently-retired director of the Center of UFO Studies, Evanston, Illinois, often called the "father of ufology" or the study of unidentified flying objects; Mr. Claude Poher, director of the French Agency for the Investigation of UFOs; Mr. Jacques Vallee, distinguished astronomer, mathematician and UFO researcher; Mr. Ted Phillips, leading trace expert on UFO landings; Mr. Gordon Cooper, well-known astronaut, executive vice-president of Walt Disney Enterprises; Mr. David Saunders, statistical psychologist and creator of "UFOCAT", a computerized listing of between 60,000 and 70,000 UFO sightings throughout the world; L. Strongfield, UFO researcher and author; Lee Spiegel, researcher and visual consultant on UFOs; Mr. G. Bravo, UFO researcher and organizer of the First International Congress on the Unidentified Flying Object Phenomenon, held in Acapulco; and many other distinguished "ufologists", some of whom are here today.

233. In addition, we are in touch with scientists, research groups, writers and people in all walks of life from all parts

¹³ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 25th meeting, para. 31.

of the earth, people who have expressed great interest in what we are attempting to do here in the United Nations and who have promised support when the matter comes up for discussion in the Special Political Committee.

234. I would be the first to admit that there is no unanimity among scientists regarding all aspects of the UFO phenomenon. Some believe that international security is endangered by the appearances of UFOs. Others deny that and affirm that UFOs are surveying our planet with a view to giving assistance to the weaker and less sophisticated earthlings. Still others believe that UFOs are embarked upon a mission to save man from self-destruction. It is my purpose not to touch on these controversies here today but rather to point out, with Mr. Allen Hynek, that UFOs are undoubtedly a global phenomenon. However, it is astounding to note that the various characteristics in terms of physical structure and patterns of behaviour have been observed and corroborated by reputable persons in places scattered all over the world.

235. Since addressing the General Assembly in October 1977 I have been literally inundated with literature of all kinds as well as direct calls urging me to continue pursuing in this forum the matter of UFO research and its co-ordination by the United Nations. Indeed, there is a strong possibility that a centre for UFO research will be established in Grenada by agencies with a deep interest in this matter. Also, in response to the resolution unanimously adopted at the First International Congress on the Unidentified Flying Object Phenomenon, held in Acapulco from 17 to 24 April 1977, preliminary plans are now being worked out for the second international congress, to be held in Grenada in late 1979.

236. Somehow great forces are at work in support of our efforts to have the United Nations play a more general role and a more central role in the matter of co-ordination of research and dissemination of information on the UFO phenomenon. The time is more than opportune for the United Nations to become involved in this important area of knowledge and research. The polls show that the peoples of the world are expecting such involvement. Again I call upon Members of this distinguished world body to support the call of the world's leading scientists in this field of ufology, the call of the communications media, and today, certainly, the peoples' call for the United Nations to play an active and leading role in co-ordinating research on the UFO phenomenon and in disseminating the information for the benefit and enlightenment of all mankind.

237. Finally, I turn to the subject of God and His universe. Here I wish to crave the indulgence of members while I reiterate a few of the many thoughts I have already adduced in this General Assembly on past occasions:

"... I am proposing that the time is ripe and that the peoples of the world are ready and willing to discuss the concept, the recognition, the acknowledgement and the acceptance of a universal God

"I am not unaware, however, of the fact that this subject may offer some degree of controversy. I speak without fear of challenge that there is no subject throughout this planet that is of greater significance or

greater importance or greater urgency than this subject, and I call upon the leaders of the world—political, philosophical, mystical, spiritual, doctrinal, theological and religious—to consider its importance

"....

"Do the astronauts, when they are in outer space or when they traverse the surface of the moon, feel themselves outside the precincts of the God we worship on earth? The God we worship is certainly the God who is present in outer space, on the moon and all other planets, for He is God of the universes—the God of galaxies of worlds, and yet that God is also present in the minutest entity conceivable by the human mind. In other words, God is everywhere: He is within and without, around and above, in us and all around us. God is filling this room with His loving presence.

"Man has made great advances in science and technology and so man can construct a building or a room that is completely light-proof, completely sound-proof, completely magnetism-proof and, by proper insulation, even completely electricity-proof, but man cannot make anything that is God-proof, for God is everywhere."¹⁴

238. Man may claim with some measure of justification to be the greatest creation on God's earth; but certainly man would be more than short-sighted and conceited if he were to conceive for a minute that the planet earth is the whole of God's estate, for God created universes and many worlds. It would be more than short-sighted and conceited for man to think that he is the most intelligent being of his time created by the divine Master, for certainly evidence in contradiction of this theory is not only voluminous but ever unlimited. We are on this small, nay infinitesimal, portion of God's domain and we fail to recognize the glory and the splendour with which this planet is so copiously endowed. We should spend some time trying to recognize some of nature's beauty all around us; and beauty is certainly an attribute of the universal divine. For instance, examine any flower closely and discover for yourselves the wondrous works of nature—of God—the symmetry, the precision in its pattern, the coloration and so many other features vividly revealing the presence of a divine intelligence. If man were to allow himself to grow psychically and to pursue the inner development, he would certainly perceive the beautiful auras emanating from the flowers—colours of crimson, of gold, of blue, among other elevating and inspiring auras; but the average man seems to be degenerating and losing some of his natural endowments.

239. In God's universe—and more specifically on our planet earth—there are always wars and rumours of wars. There are many inhibitions and obstacles that man himself has established which are inimical to world peace; but there are also some other factors that contribute significantly to wars and conflicts. For instance, the lack of a universal language is certainly an eminent factor, and perhaps it is not out of context to suggest that the time is ripe for the United Nations to give serious consideration to initiating the measures necessary to establish an international lan-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings, 22nd meeting, paras. 21, 22, 27 and 28.

guage—a language of the people, a language for the people of this globe, a language that will essentially transcend all boundaries. Now please allow me to conclude with the prayer and supplication of the great saint, Saint Francis of Assisi:

“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

“Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to

understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”

240. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank His Excellency, the Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs of Grenada for the important statement he has just made.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.