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President: Mr. Rüdiger von WECHMAR
(Federal Republic of Germany)

Address by Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa, Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

1. The PRESIDENT: This morning the Assembly will hear a statement by the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. I have great pleasure in welcoming Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa and inviting him to address the General Assembly.
2. Mr. PREMADASA (Sri Lanka):¹ It is my privilege to address this premier international body and to convey to its members the fraternal greetings of the people of Sri Lanka. I do so as the first Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka under the New Republican Constitution of 1978.
3. As representatives will know, our new Constitution was adopted by the freely elected representatives of the people of Sri Lanka after a popular mandate which brought our Government into power with a five-sixths majority in Parliament.
4. I have approached my task today not to indulge myself in the purple of high-flown rhetoric or to lecture this distinguished audience on all the problems of the world. I do not pretend to have a key to unlock the door to Utopia. I come before you in a spirit of humility to join you in the common quest of mankind for peace, for justice and for equality.
5. These are values which the people of my country hold sacred in the light of experience gained over many years in the practice of democracy. Next year we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the attainment of universal adult franchise. They are also values which our people have consistently accepted as truths, by virtue of their deeply religious tradition.

6. I come before you to share some of my own thoughts, moulded in the crucible of working with people at all levels, in the slums, in the villages, in government and out of government, during a political career spanning over three decades.

[The speaker continued in English.]

7. May I, at the outset, extend to you, Mr. President, the warm congratulations of myself and my delegation on your election as President of this thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Your country and mine have enjoyed a long and fruitful bond of friendship and co-operation, which we in Sri Lanka value very highly. Your rich diplomatic experience and your practical wisdom will, I am sure, be invaluable assets in guiding the deliberations of this session. May I offer the good wishes of my delegation and assure you of our co-operation in the discharge of your duties.

8. I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation to the outgoing President, Ambassador Salim of the United Republic of Tanzania. His tenure of office is probably unique for the number of special and extraordinary sessions he had to preside over. His impartiality, understanding and sagacity were of inestimable value during all those sessions.

9. It is also a pleasant task today to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, whose consistent dedication to the cause of peace and tireless efforts in pursuit of it are well known, for the work he is doing.

10. This year, the international community is the poorer for having lost some of its most eminent leaders. The death of Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia removed from our midst the last of the giants of the Second World War era. Few world leaders have helped to mould the structure of post-war international relations as President Tito did. We in Sri Lanka remember him with admiration and affection as a founding father of non-alignment, a policy which my President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, has said "runs like a golden thread through the fabric of our country's foreign policy".

11. We mourn with the people of Japan the passing of their Prime Minister Ohira. We grieve with the people of Botswana over the loss of their founder President Sir Seretse Khama, and we sympathize with the people of Jordan over the untimely death of their Prime Minister, Sharif Abdul Hamid Sharaf.

12. At this session we welcome to our midst two new Members—Zimbabwe and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. My welcome to Zimbabwe must inevitably be tinged with a very personal note of happiness. I had the privilege of

¹ Mr. Premadasa spoke in Sinhalese. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.

being present at the Meeting of Heads of Government of Commonwealth Countries, held at Lusaka in August 1979, when the decisive step which led to the independence of Zimbabwe was taken.

13. It is a matter of personal gratification to me that the cause we argued for and supported on behalf of that country has been achieved and that Zimbabwe has emerged to join us as a sovereign State in this international body. The admission of these two Members illustrates once again the fundamental principle of universality in our membership and the equality of all Member States, irrespective of size, power, population or prestige.

14. I have the honour to convey to this august Assembly the greetings of President J. R. Jayewardene and his good wishes for the success of this session.

15. Over the last few months the view has been expressed increasingly by world leaders that the international situation is deteriorating. Indeed, I think there is hardly anyone who would disagree with this. The disagreement, if any, is in identifying the causes of this deterioration.

16. We are without doubt at a crucial juncture in international relations. What we do, much more than what we say, will shape the international order in the next two decades of the century. Perhaps today more than at any other time in human history we stand at a decisive crossroads. One way could lead us to a world of immense possibilities for the good of the human race; the other could be the path of decline and the destruction of all human values as we know them today.

17. What is our response going to be to this challenge?

18. The dimensions of the challenge are so large, the issues so complex that the response must perforce emerge from the Organization. Certainly, the problems cannot be solved by nations acting on their own or as small groups of countries. Unfortunately, at a time when our response should be global, we see increasing signs of nations trying to seek solutions to the problems individually.

19. Thirty-five years ago, the world established this international body, the United Nations, whose Charter still represents the highest ideals of mankind. It is a matter for concern that its credibility as an institution which is still capable of assisting in the resolution of these problems is being doubted today. The crisis situation we face makes it even more imperative that we act purposefully and positively through the mechanisms that the United Nations system provides for joint and collective action.

20. In our own region we welcome the convening in 1981, under the aegis of the United Nations, of a Conference on the Indian Ocean for the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace [resolution 2832 (XXVI)]. This is a collective effort on the part of the Indian Ocean countries and others to ensure that the Indian Ocean will, in fact, be a peaceful place. We seek this peace in order to permit the countries in our region to focus their attention, concentrate their energies and employ their resources to build prosperous economies for their citizens. We cannot afford the grotesque distortions that tensions, militarization

and arms stockpiling can cause. Implicit in this Declaration are those cardinal tenets of international politics: non-interference in the internal affairs of countries and rejection of the use of force.

21. Sri Lanka has long been known as a centre of Theravada Buddhism. This is a philosophy where among the noble truths non-violence is of paramount significance. This emphasis on *ahimsa*, or non-violence, has made Buddhism a major international force and a means of promoting understanding among nations during its long historical career of over 2,500 years. The best-known instance occurred at the very outset, when it inspired the famous *dharma vijaya*—victory of righteousness—of Emperor Dharma Asoka, in which he attempted to establish a moral basis for relations between States. Emperor Dharma Asoka sent personal emissaries to contemporary rulers in western and southern Asia bearing messages of good will and advocating a code of righteous conduct which to a large extent embodied the tenets of Buddhism.

22. The Emperor's action is unique in history and represents the only initiative of its kind by a ruler to bring a moral approach to international relations. Perhaps what is lacking in our countries is a moral approach to world problems and international understanding; and this may be the root of our crisis. Over the ages, human society has endeavoured to move from the rule of the jungle to the rule of law. Could we not work for the reconstruction of a world society based on the law of love, non-violence? Could we, from here, set an example to all to follow this rule at every level of life, in our personal relations as well as in relations between nations? This, in my view, would be the ultimate fulfilment of this unique Organization to which we belong.

23. Armed conflicts and the threat of such conflicts remain a danger to mankind. The international situation has many flashpoints. To continue to let them exist and to allow new flashpoints to emerge leads to a dangerous mood of cynicism and indifference where the use of force is tolerated and accepted as inevitable.

24. There is disenchantment, too, among those who follow the rules, those who are law abiding; they feel that the lawless win the day. How often have we seen the righteous suffer while the wrongdoer prospers? It is the same in international relations as it is in normal society. Must one shout to be heard? Must one be feared to be respected? Must one threaten to be assisted? Are democracy and human rights to be taken for granted? Is force, and the threat of force, the only password to success? The world seems to be frighteningly close to such a mood of cynicism.

25. There is glib talk of a new cold war and plentiful offers of military aid. We must therefore take positive and collective action, not only to create our zone of peace, but to ensure that a hundred zones of peace are created, both in space and in the minds of men.

26. In this context, the non-aligned movement, with whose origins Sri Lanka is proud to be associated, continues to have a vital role to play. Ninety-four of the 154 nations of this world body subscribe to the principles of non-alignment. Many more, as observers and guests, have broad sympathy with the aims and aspirations of the movement.

27. There are several areas in our relationship within the United Nations which call for action of a kind which will take the international community forward together. Many of these are in the area of what are termed economic relations. We have for example made several declarations to the effect that developing countries should have a greater share of the industrial output of the world—as much as 25 per cent by the year 2000. At the same time, we see the erection of a wall of protectionism in the developed world which constitutes an effective barrier to the development of industries by the denial of markets.

28. We see this disparity between intent and achievement in other areas as well. In the area of concessionary aid—official development assistance—we solemnly declared at the commencement of the 1970s that official development assistance should be at the level of at least 0.77 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries if the developing world economies were to be rehabilitated. At the end of that decade the actual figure was only half of this: 0.35 per cent of the gross national product.

29. The prospects for the future, in the light of the deepening recession that the developed world faces seem, therefore, even more stark. The difference between the intention and the act which these two examples illustrate is, if I may say so, a result of our inability to see the mutuality of our interests and, consequently, of our attempts to resolve unilaterally the problems we foresee.

30. The facts are clear in the case of both protectionism and aid. It has been demonstrated that a progressive lowering of trade barriers in the North would not only reduce the number of unemployed in the third world but even result in an increase in jobs in the North as a direct consequence of the increase in North-South trade. It has also been shown that protectionism holds a greater threat to jobs in the North, and self-interest would require the abandonment of policies which appear so self-evidently short-sighted.

31. The idea that there should be a re-allocation of industries in the world which would benefit the developing countries is not likely to be easily accepted. But it is a fact that, in terms of the global economy, many industries in the developed world are no longer economically viable.

32. When developing countries take similar steps and band together to increase export earnings, they are criticized for taking measures contrary to the common good. What then, I ask, is the justice in this situation? Must we confront each other by adversary strategies of this kind?

33. The case of official development assistance is equally as clear. It is surely in the interests of the developed world to provide the poor countries with the concessionary aid that can help to restructure their economies. For as they grow in strength, their imports will grow with resultant benefits to the developed economies. But the sad fact is that at the present time, when concessionary finance is most needed, there is talk in the developed world of holding back inflation and the need to cut down public expenditure.

34. I hope that official development assistance will not be an area that has to bear these cuts. If the cut has to fall on

public expenditure in the developed world, we make the plea that it may fall gently on overseas aid.

35. In addition to the moral dimension that should motivate the giver of aid, there is the more emphatic consideration of self-interest. The interdependence of the world economies is such that if the poor falter, they will not be able to buy the goods of the rich. The poverty of the poor—which in many cases they have learned to live with—will inevitably pull down the rich as well.

36. There is also the continuing anomaly that confronts us of aid flows being reduced while defence expenditures increase. In the light of third world poverty, the difference between annual global military expenditure, now approaching \$450 billion, and official development assistance of some \$20 billion can only be termed outrageous.

37. This means not only money but also the diversion of real resources, such as manpower in the form of scientists and engineers, and of the most modern technologies which could otherwise be used in the solution of the problems constraining growth in the less developed world.

38. We also know, speaking on behalf of a country which spends less than 3 per cent of its national budget on defence, that the disease seems to have spread, that even some of the poorest of our countries deem it necessary to spend heavily on armaments. These modern weapons of war which sometimes come in as aid are possibly the best examples of a misdirected transfer of resources. It is an open question whether money spent on armaments or defence would in the long run contribute more to international security than money spent on aid to the poorer countries.

39. Why is it that when religions of the world—Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism—proclaim the folly of war and greed for power, nations continue to arm themselves? The *Dhammapada*—the words of the Buddha—touches the crux of this dilemma in the saying:

“From craving springs grief, from craving springs fear,
“For him who is wholly free from craving there is no grief;
“Whence can there be fear?”²

In the search for peace—in our task of waging war against war—perhaps we need to heed the teachings of our great religions and free ourselves from fear.

40. As bilateral aid flows are likely to be reduced in the face of the impending recession, the need for a multilateral funding agency, such as the proposed world development fund, gains heightened significance. The mechanisms by which the surpluses of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [*OPEC*] could be recycled to provide concessionary finance to the developing countries have been clearly described in recent studies. It is our hope that the creation of such a development fund will be speedily effected and will provide yet another source of capital for the restructuring of the economies of the poorer countries.

41. I should like also to make the plea that the increasingly stringent conditions imposed by the multilateral develop-

² Quoted in Sinhalese by the speaker.

ment agencies be reviewed in the light of the quite different circumstances that now apply in the world, particularly in the developing countries. The rules and regulations framed for a more ordered international economic situation must surely change to suit the more complex realities of today.

42. We have just concluded the eleventh special session devoted to international economic co-operation and development. We have identified several areas in which considerable work has yet to be done. I am heartened that the process of negotiation on a broad level of participation will engender fruitful results.

43. I want to emphasize the word "negotiation". We should not be preoccupied with speeches or strategies. It is unfortunate but true that development strategies have not done much to enhance development.

44. We have succeeded in the last 35 years in safeguarding ourselves from the scourge of global war. We have not, however, saved ourselves from the scourge of poverty, which brings sorrow to mankind and affronts the dignity and worth of the human person.

45. In global terms the poverty line seems to coincide with the North-South divide. One quarter of the world's population living in the North enjoys three quarters of the world's income while three quarters of the world's population living in the South have to share the remaining quarter of the world's income.

46. The inequality in the use of real resources and the depth of the problem of poverty are tellingly expressed in this equation. The international community has engaged in numerous exercises to reduce this disparity and to remove this scourge.

47. Most recently we have had the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, popularly referred to as the Brandt Commission. Eleven years before Brandt, we had Pearson. It is chastening to recall some of the words of the Commission on International Development headed by the late Lester Pearson:

"International development is a great challenge of our age. Our response to it will show whether we understand the implications of interdependence or whether we prefer to delude ourselves that the poverty and deprivation of the great majority of mankind can be ignored without tragic consequences for all."³

48. The Brandt Commission is no less cogent in stressing interdependence; no less concerned with the moral imperative of development; and no less bold and imaginative in the action plan proposed, both for the present and for the future. Sadly, what gives cause for despair is the reaction of the world community to those significant reports. Rather than stimulate negotiation, the Brandt Commission report⁴ is in danger of being placed on a shelf, along with similar reports of the past.

³ *Partners in development*; report of the Commission on International Development (New York, Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1969), p. 11.

⁴ See *North-South: A program for survival*; report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues under the Chairmanship of Willy Brandt (Cambridge, Massachusetts, The MIT Press, 1980).

49. Whenever an action plan or a strategy is mooted, countless reasons are put forward to delay its implementation. Either we are told that the time is inopportune or we are asked to scale down the plans. Whatever the reason, the result is the same—inaction.

50. We in the developing countries are not asking for charity on a global scale. We do not believe that poverty can be alleviated by charity, it must be eliminated by removing exploitation. We cannot make everyone and every country equal; we can give everyone and every country an equal opportunity.

51. The exploitation which leads to poverty is endemic in the structure of international economic relations today. That is why the structure has to be changed. That is why we talk of a new international economic order. It is an order where human rights are respected, where economic inequalities and poverty are eliminated and where malnutrition and illiteracy are removed.

52. I am not talking of a new order which must exist among nations and among nations alone. We have to institute that order in our own countries. We cannot have world peace without being at peace ourselves, within our country, within our society, within our family and, if I may say so, within each of us ourselves.

53. Before we ask for restraint from others we must practise restraint and control ourselves. We cannot have a new international economic order abroad and an old economic order of exploitation at home. We cannot ask for the elimination of exploitation and inequalities among nations and allow economic depression and disparities to flourish within our nations.

54. The emancipation of mankind from exploitation must take place both nationally and internationally. The structural imbalances and inequalities within nations are linked together. That is as true for the South as it is for the North. These are many glasshouses. Let us change those houses. Let us also not throw stones.

55. A large part of my life and my own political endeavours have been in the fields of local government and housing. The need, therefore, for involving the people in the decision-making process, both locally and internationally, is clear to me.

56. I see the provision of adequate housing as a basic aspect of the global assault on poverty. We must eliminate the problems of overcrowding, lack of sanitation and insecurity. Housing is important in creating the environment in which our people have to live. In the rush for development, urbanization has run out of control, spawning ugly slums and ghettos, depopulating rural areas and overcrowding conurbations. Urban poverty, congestion and squalor are problems common to many of our developing countries.

57. It is said that as much as 20 per cent of our people in the developing countries are seriously undernourished; 50 per cent do not have pure water; 60 per cent do not have

proper health care; and 20 per cent of the babies die before they reach the age of five.

58. There are equally depressing figures for unemployment, education and other basic needs. Each of us in his own way is attempting to tackle these formidable problems. It is my belief that housing provides a key to the elimination of several of these disadvantages. The problem of housing is not confined to Sri Lanka. It is not a problem confined to Asia. It is a global problem.

59. I therefore call for the declaration of an international year dedicated to homes for the homeless. Perhaps the year could be focused especially on the rehabilitation of the shanty dweller. The replacement of shanties by decent housing is not a peripheral part of development. It is at the very core. It is an investment in mankind.

60. I have touched, if only briefly, on some of the issues that the world will increasingly have to confront and resolve in the years ahead. Standing as we do on the threshold of the decade of the 1980s, it is our duty to face the problems fully and squarely.

61. Conflict, as much as co-operation, has been a part of the history of the human race. In past times the cause of conflict between peoples was almost parochial; language, race and religion have divided men and in their name men have fought and died. Sadly, even today, these symbols which man created continue to divide man. We have also had major confrontations on ideology, and we have spoken much of the antagonism between East and West.

62. The issues which have so clearly emerged today as symptoms of the malaise which afflicts the world—inflation, the imbalance of payments, the monetary system, food, security, the commodity problem, and the like—indicate that future battle lines would be drawn on even a more fundamental basis, perhaps between poor and rich, between South and North.

63. It is surely to forestall this conflict that the debate between the North and the South must be expanded into a dialogue and then quickened into an agreed agenda of action for today, tomorrow and the day after.

64. I believe that our collective will and our united action, not only at the national level but in the global context, will enable us to overcome the challenges of the present. We cannot pass the buck. It is our world. We must not only survive in it. We must improve it.

"May the rain fall in time,
"May the harvest be rich,
"May the world be prosperous,
"May the rulers be righteous."⁵

65. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka for the important statement he has just made, and on behalf of myself and my country I should like to express my gratitude for the kind words addressed to me and to my people.

⁵ Quoted in Sinhalese by the speaker.

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (*continued*)

66. Mr. MITSOTAKIS (Greece) (*interpretation from French*): Permit me first of all, Sir, to extend to you the warmest congratulations on behalf of the Greek delegation on your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly. This important post could not have been entrusted to a more experienced diplomat, a diplomat more committed to the ideals of the Charter and more aware of the serious responsibilities entailed in this task. Furthermore, you represent a country which is linked with mine by ties of close friendship and a long-standing common cultural heritage, and which belongs to the great European family, to which Greece will shortly be admitted.

67. We should also like to congratulate the outgoing President, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, a worthy son of Africa, who conducted the proceedings of the General Assembly throughout a particularly difficult period with a skill, flexibility and efficiency which were truly exemplary.

68. It is also a pleasure for me to convey the congratulations of my delegation to the Secretary-General, who has placed his great talents, authority and prestige in the service of peace in the world, as we can see once again in reading his report to the Assembly on the work of the Organization [A/35/1]. The tireless efforts of Mr. Waldheim to curb the major international crises of our time and assist in bringing about a settlement of them have won for him the admiration and respect of all.

69. I should also like to welcome the proclamation of the independence of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and bid the representatives of this new Member welcome among us, while expressing the conviction that they will play a constructive role in the United Nations.

70. The development of the international situation over the 12 months which have elapsed since the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly has, unfortunately, not been very encouraging. The major problems facing the world, with one or two exceptions, have become increasingly mired in stagnation, thus depriving whole peoples of any hope of a better future. Furthermore, new problems have emerged on the international scene creating an atmosphere of crisis that endangers the process of détente, which alone can enable mankind to apply itself to the major economic and social challenges confronting it, on the handling of which depends its very survival.

71. Among the major problems of our time, that of the Middle East has the grim privilege of being the oldest and perhaps the most complicated. After three wars and numerous local conflicts, this region, with the countries of which Greece has long maintained very close links, continues to be a powderkeg ready to explode at any time.

72. The Greek Government considers that the solution to this problem should lie in the scrupulous application of the following principles: first, evacuation of all Arab territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war, including East Jerusalem; secondly, recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, one of the options of

which would be the creation of an independent State; and thirdly, recognition also of the right of all countries in the area, whether they be Arab States or Israel itself, to live in security within secure, recognized and guaranteed frontiers.

73. Faithful to these principles, the Greek Government has always expressed disapproval, as indeed have the vast majority of Member States, of the Israeli policy of modifying the demographic nature of the occupied territories, either by the establishment of new settlements or by other means.

74. Similarly, my Government wishes to associate itself fully with Security Council resolution 476 (1980), which opposes any change in the status of Jerusalem. I should like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our conviction that the right of free access to the city of Jerusalem must remain inviolable for the benefit of the faithful of the three monotheistic religions, for whom the Holy Places have a sacred character.

75. Furthermore, we deplore armed incursions into Lebanese territory, and we appeal for an end to be put to all these acts of violence in Lebanon. The international community is in duty bound to ensure absolute respect for the territorial integrity of Lebanon and the restoration of the authority of the Lebanese Government over the entire territory of the country. It must also ensure that UNIFIL enjoys conditions which will enable it to continue unhindered the admirable work which it has been doing in southern Lebanon.

76. The importance of the Middle East problem is such that all those who can contribute to its solution should spare no effort to do so. For this reason we take pleasure at the declaration of the heads of State and Government and Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries of the European Community issued at Venice on 13 June [see A/35/299-S/14009], the outlines of which converge with the policy of my own Government.

77. We have also noted with satisfaction the mission entrusted to the current President of the Council of the European Community to contact the parties involved, with the aim of exploring the possibilities of a negotiated solution of the conflict. We believe that such negotiations should be open to all interested parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO].

78. We have seen in southern Africa a development that is both important and instructive: the long struggle of the people of Zimbabwe for its independence has finally been successful and has led to the election of a Parliament and a Government representing all the ethnic elements of the country. That outcome of the long drawn out Rhodesian crisis, an outcome made possible thanks to the political will of all the signatories of the Lancaster House Agreement, demonstrates the moral superiority of reason over force, of conciliation over hatred, and of good will over intransigence. The wisdom and political maturity displayed by the Government of Zimbabwe since it took power has won it the admiration of all. It is therefore with particular satisfaction that the Greek delegation again wishes the noble people of Zimbabwe success, happiness and prosperity.

79. At the same time, we should like to congratulate the Government of the United Kingdom on its contribution to the settlement that was brought about.

80. What happened in Zimbabwe should set an example for Namibia. The plan of the five Western countries endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 435 (1978) is an excellent basis for the free expression of the will of the inhabitants of the Territory and its accession to independence. The South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO] and the front-line States have demonstrated their political will to see that plan implemented. Let us hope that South Africa, whose responsibilities towards the Namibian people are particularly heavy, will follow suit. That is something that world public opinion demands.

81. With regard to the problem of *apartheid*, there has, unfortunately, been no sign that the Pretoria Government has any intention of departing from that odious policy, which is condemned by the universal conscience. This intolerable situation cannot continue much longer without provoking strong reactions both within the country and from the international community.

82. When, at the outset, I said that new sources of tension had emerged over the last few months in addition to the already existing confrontations of the post-war era, which can virtually be called traditional, I was in particular referring to the crises whose impact on world peace and stability is difficult to estimate: the invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet troops and, for a week now, the conflict between Iraq and Iran.

83. The taking of hostages and the detention to this very day of diplomats and other American officials in Teheran should be considered a very serious violation of international law that may well jeopardize the very bases of international relations. The attitude of the Iranian authorities with regard to that incident was unanimously condemned by the Members of the Organization and by its supreme legal authority, the International Court of Justice. On the strength of the ties of friendship that have always existed between the Greek and the Iranian peoples, my Government once again urgently appeals to the Iranian Government to comply with the requirements of the law of nations, which it may in turn invoke in order to settle its differences with the United States.

84. The Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, like that of the Vietnamese troops in Cambodia one year earlier, is an event fraught with serious consequences. Respect for the independence and territorial integrity of States, which constitutes one of the foundations of the Charter of the United Nations, is a rule not only of law but also, and above all, of morality, which should provide the foundation for all international order. If the great and the powerful do not pay all the necessary respect to those principles, there is the risk of intimidation and violence becoming the supreme laws of international life.

85. As for the conflict between Iraq and Iran, which is liable at any moment to assume alarming proportions, I should like to associate myself with all my colleagues who have from this rostrum appealed to the two countries to have recourse to peaceful means to settle their disputes.

Through the Security Council and the Islamic Conference, the international community has declared itself ready to sponsor such an effort. Let us hope that the two adversaries will benefit from that offer before it is too late. At the same time, we duly appreciate the assurances given in various quarters that efforts will be made to avoid internationalization of the conflict.

86. Lastly we should like to state our complete agreement with the statement of the Foreign Ministers of the European Community with regard to the need to ensure freedom of navigation in the Gulf. That need, which is obvious, is increased by the fact that a large number of countries, including Greece, depend, with regard to their energy needs, to a considerable extent on deliveries of oil from that region.

87. The crises I have just mentioned, with all the dangers they entail for peace in the world, make it absolutely clear that it is necessary and urgent for there to be effective disarmament. Furthermore, one of the indispensable conditions for any true effort at disarmament is the gradual elimination of sources of friction as well as suspicion among States. That can be brought about only if all the countries of the world, whatever their power or their resources, refrain from recourse to force or the threat of it and make use of the means available to them under the Charter and other documents of international law to eliminate causes of friction among themselves. Only thus can the current disarmament negotiations, or those contemplated for the future, have any chance of proving fruitful.

88. Another aspect of disarmament, and by no means the least important, is the release of funds to be used in the fulfilment of the major economic and social aspirations of our time. But that requires the sincere co-operation of all countries, beginning with the nuclear Powers and that, in turn, presupposes effective international control over any arms limitations provided for in agreements already signed or to be signed.

89. My country's willingness to contribute to understanding among all European peoples has been manifested in the constructive attitude it adopted in the very opening phases of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, held at Helsinki in 1975. It is in the same positive spirit that we approach the second review session of the Conference, to be held at Madrid, the major objective of which should be to maintain the momentum provided by the Helsinki Conference for the development of harmonious relations among countries belonging to different socio-economic systems.

90. But in the view of my Government it will be easier to attain that objective if at Madrid we undertake a frank and objective examination of what has been done so far and if we ensure the application of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference as a whole.

91. With regard to a field in which the prospects seem to be rather better—that is, the field of international economic co-operation, one of the most constant and encouraging characteristics of recent years has been the Organization's growing awareness of the major social and economic problems confronting our world. The elimination of poverty and hunger; the narrowing of the very wide gulf now separating the rich countries from the poor countries; the struggle

against illiteracy; the limitation of unbridled demographic growth; the protection of the environment; the preservation of non-renewable energy resources, and their gradual replacement by other sources of energy—all are urgent and universal tasks that we cannot shirk without the risk of earning the reprobation of future generations. In the words of the poet, ask not for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for us all.

92. That is why we greeted with great hope the initiation, a few years ago, of the long process that led to the eleventh special session of the General Assembly, one of the major goals of which, as we know, was the undertaking of preparations for negotiations covering the major problems of an economic nature to which I have just referred.

93. That session did not, of course, yield all the results we had hoped for. If on one of its aspects—the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade—we have brought about a consensus which gives us the broad outlines for economic co-operation for the current decade, on the other hand in another aspect—global negotiations—we find ourselves at present in a deadlock. I hope that this deadlock is only temporary. We know that the developing countries consider global negotiations as the means of ensuring acceptance of their legitimate demands. To disappoint them would be a serious mistake, with incalculable consequences.

94. We should not like to minimize the obstacles that remain to be overcome if these negotiations are to be started on time, but it would be wrong to dramatize them. It is our conviction that in the course of the present session it will be possible to eliminate differences in viewpoints, because we do not think that there are leaders in the world who fail to realize the magnitude of the problems and the imperative need to tackle them as soon as possible.

95. If there were any need for proof that it is possible to resolve even the thorniest problems provided there is the necessary political will, one has only to consider the progress achieved by the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. Greece, a pre-eminently maritime country, took an active part in that Conference and, we hope, made a positive contribution to it. The work, as was so well pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization [*see A/35/1, sect. XI*], confounded the pessimists and proved that agreement is possible if negotiators act in a spirit of genuine compromise. We hope that the few points that still remain will be settled at the next session of the Conference and that we will succeed in signing and applying a convention that will make it possible for countries not only to settle their differences and to avoid disputes in the future, but also to devote themselves to the common exploitation of the resources of the oceans and sea-bed to the benefit of all the inhabitants of our planet.

96. I should like now to deal with a subject that is a matter of particular importance to Greece: that of human rights.

97. If the Organization had only one *raison d'être*, it could well be that of ensuring for all the inhabitants of our planet the free exercise and enjoyment of their fundamental rights: that of the freedom of opinion but also the free development of the personality; the right to proper education, but also the right to a satisfactory standard of living; the free election of

representatives of the people, but also the choice of the economic and social system best suited to each country. However, in quite a few cases these rights have been systematically disregarded, if not actually trampled underfoot, either by the State itself or by individuals with the complicity or tolerance of the established authority.

98. What makes the role of the United Nations particularly delicate in this case is the need to prevent this sacred cause from serving as a pretext for purposes that are alien to it. This is, indeed, a difficult task, which warrants as much attention as possible from the competent organs and the countries therein represented.

99. While on the subject of human rights, I should like to mention a specific case. About 2,000 people disappeared in the aftermath of the hostilities in Cyprus in 1974. We still know nothing about what became of these people, some of whom were of Greek nationality, and this in spite of resolutions of the General Assembly and its organs which provided for an international inquiry on the spot. Such an inquiry has not yet been carried out because of the refusal of the Turkish Cypriot leaders, who had, however, agreed to this when Mr. Waldheim went to Nicosia in May 1979.

100. The purely humanitarian aspect of this question should prompt the Turkish Cypriot side, as well as any other authority that is in a position to do so, to help the Organization to obtain information as to the fate of the people I have mentioned and thus do something to reduce the distress of their kith and kin.

101. To conclude, I shall refer to the problem of Cyprus. The fact that I can do this briefly is in itself encouraging. It proves that the prospects for an agreed solution have become a reality once again, thanks to the resumption of the intercommunal talks. May all those who have contributed to this positive development find in this an expression of our gratitude to them.

102. I should like to express the hope of my Government that this time the talks, even if they should prove to be difficult, may finally succeed in bringing about an agreement that will make it possible for the unfortunate island to find its peace, independence and prosperity once again and for the two communities to staunch the wounds of the past and resume their common life. As for my own Government, it will do everything in its power to contribute to a satisfactory outcome of the intercommunal talks. I say everything in our power aware as I am of the fact that the brunt of the responsibility lies with the island's inhabitants free of outside interference.

103. Let me, however, express a conviction that we have always repeated to all interested parties, namely, that only a solution that provides for the State and economic unity of the Republic of Cyprus would be viable. Cyprus is too small a country to be divided in any way. If this fundamental truth is accepted by the two communities, there will be a good chance of seeing them joining forces in the pursuit of a goal that has hitherto eluded them—that of building together a common future.

104. The review that I have just made of the situation in the world is, perhaps, not calculated to fill us with optimism.

International problems, whether they be political, economic or other kinds, often seem to defy the powers of the United Nations to solve them and instead to vindicate those who claim that our world is doomed to catastrophe. It is up to us all to prove that this is not the case. We owe it to ourselves, but we owe it, above all, to future generations.

105. Mr. MKAPA (United Republic of Tanzania): Permit me, Sir, on my own personal behalf and on behalf of my delegation, to congratulate you most sincerely on your unanimous election to the presidency of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Tanzania is particularly pleased to see an eminent representative of your great country occupying this post, for the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Republic of Tanzania have long historical links. You are aware, of course, that present relations between our two countries in diplomacy and development co-operation are flourishing. Your country's interest in the progress of the continent of Africa is also widely acknowledged. Your own high qualities as a skilled diplomat and statesman make you a most worthy choice for this esteemed post. My delegation welcomes your leadership of the current session of the General Assembly and pledges its fullest co-operation.

106. It gives me immense satisfaction now to pay a deserved tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Salim Ahmed Salim, on his achievements. The confidence of my Government in his service, dedication and resourcefulness in the course of his entire career as its envoy was more than vindicated by his assumption, for the honour of his country, of the responsibilities of President of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly. We are proud of the dedication that he demonstrated during the one-year term of office.

107. In addition, I take this opportunity, through you, Mr. President, first, once again to thank the General Assembly for electing him and then extending to him throughout his term of office all the co-operation and assistance that he needed. Secondly, I thank Ambassador Salim himself for the honour he has earned my country by his stewardship of the Assembly's affairs in the regular and special sessions. Thirdly, I thank the General Committee of the thirty-fourth session for its team spirit and co-operation with Ambassador Salim.

108. I should like to extend a very warm welcome to the delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, whose country has just been admitted to membership in the United Nations. The United Nations must feel very proud of and enriched by this latest success in decolonization. We look forward to working very closely with the delegation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the United Nations for the benefit of the peoples we represent and in the promotion of international understanding and co-operation.

109. Allow me also to take this opportunity to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Secretary-General. The smooth operation of the Secretariat is often taken for granted, although the truth is that a lot of arduous work, dedication and perseverance must be put into it, and the onus of ensuring that all goes well is borne by the man at the helm. We are pleased to record our great satisfaction that the

Secretary-General has shouldered this responsibility with dedication and resourcefulness.

110. For the thirty-fifth time the Assembly has convened in regular session to assess the progress made by the United Nations in its noble mission to free mankind from the threat and yoke of insecurity, injustice and poverty. The yearly stock-taking exercise was intended to ensure, by taking appropriate action at each such session, that each succeeding year of the existence of the United Nations records progress that brings us closer than ever before to the aims of the Charter.

111. Although there can be no doubt that the United Nations has achieved much since it was founded—for example, in the field of decolonization—the over-all world situation remains very disturbing. There prevails in almost every area of endeavour by the United Nations a sense of underachievement, great disappointment and sometimes near despair. In its quest for peace and security, in the numerous areas of international tension, for example, goodwill efforts and negotiations are stalemated, while the problems assume even more dangerous proportions. In disarmament, rhetoric seems to a disturbing extent to have replaced meaningful negotiations, leaving the arms race to escalate almost beyond reversal. In the economic field, the world is witnessing a dramatic crumbling of the entire world economic structure, thanks mainly to the stubborn refusal of reform by some of the beneficiaries of the old established unequal economic relations. As confrontation and contest spread from one field to another, tension mounts and peace, naturally, is placed in even greater jeopardy.

112. One of the developments which characterized the 1970s and will, I believe, dominate the 1980s is the fiercely critical re-examination of world economic relations following the proved ineffectiveness of traditional attempts at a solution, especially in the 1960s. This re-examination has resulted in the conclusion that nothing short of a complete overhaul of the world economic system will bring about an improvement in the economies of most of the developing countries, let alone international justice. That is why the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order of 1 May 1974 [*resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)*] remains the number one agenda item in the evolution of present-day international relations.

113. But it is also becoming increasingly clear that the old international economic system is no longer appropriate even for its architects in the North, whose economies are characterized by slow growth, high unemployment, inflation and fluctuations in exchange rates. Even the so-called free trade is increasingly being flouted by some of the developed countries by a proliferation of protectionist measures.

114. The call for the establishment of a new international economic order is based on the genuine desire to establish a harmonious and mutually beneficial political and economic system in which all nations will be able to participate equitably, not only in the decision-making mechanisms on matters affecting all countries but also in the production and distribution of goods and services. And I should like to emphasize at this juncture that the developing countries are not asking for reparations for whatever pillage was committed in the

past, though they are entitled to do so. We are asking for a new type of relationship among all nations based on genuine interdependence, in which mutuality of interests takes the place of conflict of interests in a world of shrinking resources. In the search for such an order with such a purpose, no country is uninvolved and no nation should be excluded. For the future belongs to all of us, developing or developed, capitalist or socialist.

115. Several working conferences have been held since the sixth special session of the General Assembly, which laid down the foundation and goals of this new structure of relationships among nations. Regrettably, little progress has been made in the implementation of the structural changes called for in the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. Responsibility for the failure of the international community to reach agreement on structural changes in the international economic system falls squarely on certain major developed countries. In the report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, the Brandt Commission has given eloquent, succinct and authoritative testimony in these terms:

“... in UNCTAD and elsewhere the Group of 77 faced an uphill task. At successive meetings they put forward proposals for international economic reform, but the North either did not like them or was not ready for them. The North has also argued that the South often makes inflexible demands which allow little room for negotiation. On the other hand, while some countries have made positive proposals, the North as a group has tended to react passively to those put forward by the South, rather than present a constructive position of its own.”⁶

116. These negative attitudes of some of the major industrialized countries of the North were again manifested at the recently concluded eleventh special session of the General Assembly, which was devoted to issues related to development and international economic co-operation. Their lack of political will prevented the Assembly from launching, at that session, the new round of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development.

117. The selective approach to the issues to be dealt with during the global negotiations clearly demonstrates that some of the industrialized countries are interested in discussing in isolation only those issues which are of direct interest to them, in complete disregard of the interests of the international community as a whole. Their insistence that some of the issues concerned should be dealt with exclusively in certain international institutions, of which they have full command because of their weighted voting structures and the non-universality of those institutions, is a clear demonstration of their desire to maintain their privileged position. In all these cases some of the developed countries are rejecting the concept of an integrated approach to the problems facing the world economy in the fields of raw materials, energy, trade, development, money and finance, and they want to reduce the role of the central body in these negotiations to that of a helpless spectator.

118. My delegation is convinced that the new round of global negotiations on international economic co-operation

⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

for development will be meaningful only if they are conducted in a simultaneous, coherent and integrated fashion. These negotiations should result in a package agreement to be negotiated by the central body, which should receive maximum support and co-operation from all the specialized agencies. All the participating parties must be committed to the implementation of that agreement. We therefore appeal to those developed countries which have often made pleas for "understanding and accommodation" to review their position on this matter to enable the global negotiations to be launched as early as possible.

119. We accept that the primary responsibility for the development of our countries rests on our own shoulders. It is for this reason that the developing countries have initiated several projects and programmes for co-operation and mutual assistance among themselves in order to promote their individual and collective self-reliance. The developing countries are committed to the implementation of such policy measures as those elaborated in the Arusha Programme for Collective Self-Reliance⁷ and in other programmes adopted elsewhere. There have also been efforts to promote co-operation at regional levels. The Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for Economic Development of Africa,⁸ which was adopted at the second extraordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity [OAU] in Lagos in April of this year, signifies the importance which African countries attach to co-operation among themselves in order to deal more effectively with their development problems.

120. But we are equally conscious of the fact that all countries, and particularly the developing ones, need an international political and economic environment which will both respond to and support their development efforts. All countries must therefore demonstrate their political will and commitment to implement the Strategy for the 1980s. The developed countries in particular must take the necessary measures to give concrete substance to their pleas for accommodation and co-operation.

121. In August this year an event took place at Geneva that is historic and must have a great influence in other areas of collective endeavour. The Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which has taken over 10 years of difficult negotiations on a vast range of maritime issues, reached agreement on all the major problems before it. Like the negotiations on the new international economic order, that Conference involved numerous very sensitive interests of the participating States and, as in the former, a demand for departure from traditional patterns of world relations was made. The scepticism and sense of despair that preceded the breakthrough were as great as, if not greater than, those which prevail in negotiations elsewhere. The collapse of this Conference would inevitably have had demoralizing repercussions on all other negotiations apart from portending chaos at sea. Yet to all intents and purposes the law of the sea negotiations have succeeded, all the difficult problems involved notwithstanding.

⁷ *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fifth Session, vol. I, Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.II.D.14), annex VI.

⁸ A/S-11/14, annex I.

122. This should serve as considerable encouragement to and an example for all those engaged in similar negotiations in the context of a new international economic order. For what has been proved is that where there is political will, fruitful negotiations are possible.

123. Expenditures on arms and armaments by most Powers no longer bear any relationship to their security requirements. What can we say of this kind of wasteful conduct when in this same world, across our borders, if not within our own countries, there are fellow human beings who live in conditions of misery and abject poverty?

124. The arms race has now pushed the world to the very brink of suicide. Two years ago the tenth special session of the General Assembly had to be convened to draw world attention to this fact. In August of this year the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*] held their Second Review Conference at Geneva. At both meetings there was unanimity on one conclusion, namely, that what has so far been done in the field of disarmament is not commensurate with the urgent requirements in this field. We appeal to the great military Powers to summon up the resolve to begin to beat their swords into ploughshares.

125. My country is seriously concerned at the military build-up in the Indian Ocean zone. We have all along noted with concern and realized that that zone has been of great interest to the major military Powers and therefore a zone of rivalry, fraught with the danger of military conflict. In 1971 the Assembly declared the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, therefore the area should be spared great-Power military presence and rivalry. Of late, under the pretext of developments around the area, there has been an unprecedented escalation in great-Power rivalry and more bases have been openly established, in total disregard of the appeal made here for those Powers to exercise restraint. That is a very disturbing trend, and my delegation calls upon all those concerned scrupulously to respect the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

126. The Middle East situation is one of the most agonizing that the United Nations has had to deal with in its history. Peace has become exceedingly elusive, and as long as it is not accepted by all sides that the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to establish an independent State of its own, is the cornerstone of peace in that area, there can be no prospect of peace.

127. The current Israeli activities in the area underscore that country's intransigence and have justly been condemned by the international community. The establishment of Israeli settlements in occupied Arab lands, the incarceration of Arab leaders, such as mayors, the recent illegal actions on the status of Jerusalem and the constant aggression against Lebanon, to mention only a few such activities, do not contribute to the quest for a just and enduring settlement of the conflict in the region.

128. The recent outbreak of hostilities between Iran and Iraq, which unfortunately still continues, is a source of great concern to my Government. The war between those two non-aligned and developing States has already caused tre-

mendous devastation, both human and material. Its continuance is not only detrimental to the interests of the countries concerned but is also a source of serious danger to the security and stability of the region, with imponderable consequences for international peace and security. We solemnly appeal to both Iraq and Iran to put an immediate end to the fighting and to resolve their conflict by peaceful means.

129. In the island State of Cyprus, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-alignment of a nation is threatened by internal strife and foreign occupation. The United Nations, through the efforts of the Secretary-General in particular, has endeavoured to bring the two communities together to seek a common solution. We urge the two communities to take advantage of those good offices in the interest of their country and of regional peace, bearing in mind that the longer it takes to reach a solution, the more intractable the problem becomes.

130. Efforts for the reunification of Korea have not moved a step since 1972, when the two sides agreed on a common approach to the search for a settlement. The Korean people have a right to demand the reunification of their motherland peacefully and without foreign interference and to demand the withdrawal of all foreign troops, and they are correct in seeking to replace the armistice agreement with a peace treaty to be signed by the parties concerned.

131. Developments concerning Indo-China and Afghanistan continue to exacerbate international tension. We are convinced that the only solution lies in full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the countries concerned. The true desire of those countries is to be non-aligned. That is not only their right, which we fully support, but also the best guarantee of peace in their areas.

132. As we enter the decade of the 1980s, Africa is living out the final chapter of decolonization. Zimbabwe is now free, and it is with a deep sense of pride that we welcome its presence among us here today.

133. But Zimbabwe has taught all of us a lesson that is very relevant to the situation now prevailing in Namibia.

134. South Africa, in the first place, continues to occupy that Territory illegally. Secondly, it has done everything possible to thwart the United Nations plan for settlement and to block the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Despite the many and very serious efforts of the Secretary-General to ensure implementation of the settlement plan, South Africa has continued to employ delaying tactics, using every kind of pretext and excuse to frustrate those moves. Thirdly, South Africa has continued to use Namibia as a springboard from which to launch repeated acts of aggression against Angola and Zambia. Recently, the attacks against Angola have been particularly vicious and almost constant. Those acts of aggression have maimed thousands, and rendered just as many defenceless refugees. We condemn those senseless acts in the strongest possible terms. At the same time, we pledge our solidarity not only with the oppressed peoples in Namibia but also with the gallant people of Angola and Zambia, who have defied South Africa's intimidation and aggression.

135. If South Africa is genuinely interested in solving the Namibian problem peacefully, then the time is at hand. Zimbabwe seemed as intractable as Namibia now is. Yet with the co-operation of all parties, a solution has been achieved. Let South Africa commit itself to the implementation of the United Nations plan for genuine free and fair elections under United Nations supervision. My delegation does not accept South Africa's unwarranted charge that the Secretary-General has not acted impartially on the issue of Namibian decolonization. We challenge South Africa to give the Secretary-General the opportunity to demonstrate his impartiality further by enabling the implementation process to get under way immediately. In the meantime, I reiterate my country's continued support for the armed liberation struggle waged by SWAPO and the calls, in the face of South African intransigence, for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against that régime.

136. You, Mr. President, represent a great country, the Federal Republic of Germany. With a population of about 25,000 ethnic Germans in Namibia, and also as one of the five Western countries, I am sure this question is of great interest and challenge to your country, to you and to them, for it is at their initiative that negotiations took place. I am convinced, therefore, that in our deliberations on this matter, as in all others before the Assembly at this session, your wisdom and experience will not let this opportunity for a peaceful settlement elude us.

137. Apart from Namibia, South Africa itself is at a crossroads. A revolution has already been ignited, and there is no way the *apartheid* régime there can stifle the fire of liberation and equality for all the peoples of South Africa. What is feared, however, is that in its desperation the racist minority régime will perpetrate more crimes in an attempt to prolong its existence. We believe that with the co-operation of the rest of the international community, by isolating the régime in all fields, the sons and daughters of that country will not take long to wrest their freedom and dignity. We appeal to all Members of the United Nations not to put obstacles in the way of these peoples' pursuit of this ideal, which the United Nations itself has always espoused.

138. Still on the question of liberation in Africa, the attention of the Assembly must be drawn to a problem which has already been the subject of numerous decisions by the OAU, the United Nations and the non-aligned movement. I am referring to the problem of Western Sahara. The people of that Territory are entitled to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. But a Member of the United Nations and of the OAU, namely Morocco, insists that Western Sahara be part of Morocco's territory. There certainly is no basis for Morocco's claim.

139. The majority of the African States have already accorded recognition to the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic. Talks have been allowed to go on with all concerned and interested parties in the *Ad Hoc* Committee of Heads of State of the OAU on Western Sahara. It has nevertheless to be made clear that the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence is as unaffected as it is sacrosanct. The Assembly cannot but continue to reaffirm this right.

140. When the United Nations was established, it had relatively few Members, and the majority were the developed countries. The interests of the United Nations in world affairs then were almost identical with those of these Members. It was natural that the United Nations was accorded a very important role in the management of world affairs.

141. Now, we hear of talk that the Assembly consists of too many members to be efficient in its work and that, therefore, serious negotiations can only usefully take place in smaller forums elsewhere. And when the forums are mentioned to us, we cannot avoid concluding that these members want to continue to enjoy a privileged position in the community of nations.

142. This position of privilege is no longer acceptable. All of us have to learn to live with a democratized world system. So long as we continue to live in this same one world, we will have to learn to live with one another as equals and therefore obliged to share responsibility as well as rights. It is no longer possible for a small group of countries to take decisions on behalf of others without their consent and, at the same time, expect acceptance of those decisions by all. Neither the world nor the United Nations continues to be patterned to the purpose and interest of the few developed and industrialized nations.

143. Affairs of common interest in all fields of international intercourse must be dealt with in the United Nations. We maintain that the United Nations is the only hope for the peace, prosperity and dignity of mankind. That is why we also maintain that important decisions on world affairs need the stamp of legitimacy of the United Nations if these decisions are to be of lasting effect.

144. Since the launching of negotiations for the new international economic order, we have witnessed six years of dialogue aimed at averting confrontation. But the dialogue, necessary though it may have been, has fostered neglect and compounded the trend of accelerating economic adversity for the developing countries. Hunger, disease and deprivation have increased, not abated. There is yet the chance to come to grips with these problems and to strengthen the aspiration for the realization of a peaceful world. It lies in the commencement of the global negotiations.

145. Neither rivalry nor isolation can destroy the essential unity of our planet or the dynamic interdependence of nations. We hope that the 1980s will attest to this truth, and that, inspired by the principles and goals of the United Nations, countries will translate it into practical institutional measures. I can assure you that Tanzania will play its part towards this end.

146. U LAY MAUNG (Burma): The delegation of Burma would like to congratulate you most warmly, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly and to assure you of our fullest co-operation in the discharge of your responsibilities. We are confident that the wealth of experience and wisdom which you bring with you will prove valuable in guiding us successfully through the present session.

147. We also take this opportunity to convey our tribute to the outgoing President, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, for his distinguished and sagacious stewardship of the thirty-fourth session of the Assembly.

148. It gives us great pleasure to welcome in our midst the delegations of the Republic of Zimbabwe and of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. We offer them our warm felicitations and friendly greetings on the occasion of their admission to the family of the United Nations.

149. We are gathered here at a time when the world is passing through a critical juncture in international relations, both politically and economically. The perilous trend in world developments that have been worsening for some time has now reached an acute phase, and such developments now pose a grave threat to international peace and security.

150. We are today witnessing a decline in the respect for and observance of the basic principles and obligations we have assumed under the Charter, principles which the world Organization has laboured so unremittingly to uphold and sustain as the pillars of international order. This is frequently evident in the increasing recourse to force, military intervention and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, as well as in the undermining of international norms and principles which have long governed the conduct of relations between States. As a result, new sources of tension and dangerous areas of crisis have emerged on the world scene which defy virtually all efforts at finding acceptable and reasonable solutions.

151. Recent political and military events have brought about changed strategic circumstances in our Asian regional neighbourhood. It is in the nature of such developments that a major move by one great Power invariably provokes a counter-move by the other great Power, thereby exposing the world to the dangers of a conflict which could well result in world disaster. These have found expression in the present surge of rearmament on the one hand and the emergence of the spectre of the cold war on the other.

152. In the domain of international economic relations, the serious ailments which afflict the world economy have their adverse impact on all nations. At the same time the structural imbalance of the international economic system continues to aggravate the relations between developed and developing countries.

153. All in all, the broad trends which have been described are indicative of the difficult and daunting circumstances the world community faces and must tackle as it enters the decade of the 1980s.

154. Taking the broadest view of the basic changes now going on behind the march of events, we can only conclude that the whole international system is undergoing an enormously important transformation. We now stand at a decisive turning point in world history. What we require is to direct and influence the evolutionary process in a way that is positive and conducive to furthering the interests of mankind. All nations have a common stake in overcoming the present threats to world peace and human survival and giving strong support to the work of the Organization to

further the unity of mankind in a vast and vital collective effort. At this historical moment it is essential that a better world of peace, justice and security emerge.

155. Burma considers that today the United Nations alone provides a basis and a hope for such a world order and is the most broad-based international centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in pursuit of peace, friendly relations and co-operation among nations.

156. In common with other nations, Burma is deeply concerned at the deteriorating situation in international relations. In the forefront of our concern is the worsening relations between the great Powers, which also extend to the outlying arenas of their power interests. In military and economic terms, the great Powers stand apart from the rest of us. The disproportionate military and economic power which they possess imposes a very great responsibility on each of them individually to resist the natural temptations of self-interest and the arrogance of power and to show exemplary dedication to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

157. Among the most regrettable effects of the present strains in great-Power relations is the status of disarmament negotiations. These strains dissipated most of the momentum gained from the last two decades of the disarmament dialogue. The fate of the SALT II Treaty,⁹ which the Assembly welcomed last year [see resolution 34/87 F], is now in doubt. This prompts serious concern, as hopes for limiting the arms race and for nuclear non-proliferation hinge very much on the outcome of the SALT Treaty. Without continuing negotiations, or a SALT treaty, there would be nothing to control the pace of technological advances in weapons systems. As a result, the great Powers may turn once more to unrestrained competition and the arms race may get out of control. The delegation of Burma very much hopes that the SALT II Treaty will be ratified in due course, believing that it would be conducive to international stability.

158. We also view with concern the long delay in the achievement of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Concrete steps towards cessation of the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapons can only proceed effectively on the conclusion of a total test ban. We therefore urge the nuclear Powers which are engaged in current tripartite negotiations to make a sustained effort to contribute to the successful conclusion of a draft treaty for submission to the Committee on Disarmament.

159. At the same time, it is a disturbing fact that there have been recent reports of the use of chemical agents in certain areas of conflict. Whether or not those reports are substantiated, negotiations on an effective, total and universal ban on chemical weapons assume major importance and urgency. Eight years have passed since the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction [resolution 2826 (XXVI)] was concluded, and parties to it are committed to the conclusion of a

chemical-weapons ban. We share the general disappointment at the lack of any material progress towards agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

160. The question of disarmament is of universal concern. Recent events have cast a shadow on prospects for early progress and we are no nearer to our professed goal of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. The pace of disarmament negotiations during the coming decade will be determined by the nature and extent of political factors in the international situation and whether they are favourable or otherwise. This underlines the fact that any serious world-wide disarmament strategy, to be effective, must be accompanied by sustained efforts to eliminate tensions and by measures and initiatives aimed at increasing international confidence and security.

161. I should now like to focus on three key areas of the world where the situations present an imminent threat to international peace and security. I refer here to the situations in Kampuchea, Afghanistan and the Middle East region.

162. Kampuchea and Afghanistan have been on the anxious minds of representatives for quite some time, and the situations in those two strife-torn countries are once more before the Assembly. Burma ventures to think aloud and say that whenever the Assembly considers such items, it is of vital importance that it take the global perspective and search deeply for the root causes instead of seeking the mere surface symptoms.

163. Kampuchea and Afghanistan are not, in our view, isolated cases or independent happenings. The root causes of their troubles are inseparably linked with those which generate tension and disturbances elsewhere. They arise in some cases from rivalry among small nations and in others from rivalry among the great Powers and their readiness to arm and abet small unwary nations or groups in order to expand their spheres of interest.

164. As matters stand today, many questions of a fundamental nature arise in the consideration of the issues arising from the situations in Kampuchea and Afghanistan. The firm and consistent policy of Burma is that it cannot condone the employment of armed intervention by an outside foreign Power in the internal affairs of another independent sovereign State to bring about a change in the Government of that State. Any breach of the basic principles of international relations as enunciated in the Charter creates a dangerous precedent that may have wide-ranging implications and far-reaching consequences for the world community.

165. It is the hope of the delegation of Burma that conditions will mature sufficiently in time in both countries to enable a political solution to be found, based on the international recognized principles of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of States. We are strongly convinced that these principles constitute an honourable basis for maintaining friendly relations between States. Our wish is to see the restoration of unity to the peoples of Kampuchea and Afghanistan and the return of conditions in which they can work out their own destiny free from all external interference and pressures.

⁹ Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed at Vienna on 18 June 1979.

166. In the Middle East, we are clearly facing a dangerous situation of rapidly unfolding events and mounting crisis. The positions of the disputing parties in the region remain poles apart. On the one side, there is continuing intransigence and a penchant for unilateral actions; on the other, there is growing inflexibility. Such attitudes can only contribute to a hardening of hostility and long-term bitterness between the parties involved. In these circumstances, where there is an obvious lack of political will, it is difficult to see how conciliation can be achieved in the quest for a peaceful solution.

167. The position of Burma on various aspects of the Middle East problem has clearly been stated at past sessions of the General Assembly and remains unchanged. We do not underestimate the highly emotional and complex difficulties inherent in the situation. None the less, we venture to say that the continuing dispute should be seen in the context of long-term relations in the region. As we see it, realism calls for some serious rethinking by both parties, Israeli and Arab, on the need to try to achieve an understanding on the basis of tolerance and mutual respect for one another's people. Without mutual recognition of each other's legitimate rights, it will not be possible to achieve a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East.

168. The brighter side of the general international scene is the end of the bitter struggle for majority rule by the people of Zimbabwe. The independent Republic of Zimbabwe has now emerged as a fully-fledged member of the international community. To its people go our heartiest congratulations and best wishes. The progress that has been made in Zimbabwe is due to the commendable spirit of compromise shown by all parties concerned. Credit is also due to the British authorities for their realistic and far-sighted approach to the question of Zimbabwe. We should also like to extend to them our sincere congratulations on the successful conclusion of an extremely delicate task.

169. The delegation of Burma hopes that the solution in Zimbabwe will help engender the same spirit of accommodation and lead the way towards independence in Namibia. To our mind, it is imperative to break the Namibian deadlock before that country becomes wholly engulfed in war.

170. We regret that in South Africa the over-all pattern of *apartheid* has undergone no real change. This policy of institutionalized and legalized racialism remains the most persistent abuse of human rights and explains the recurrent violent unrest which continues to make the South African political scene.

171. As far as the world economy is concerned the outlook is sombre. Leading authorities have voiced serious anxiety over the deepening world economic crisis. We share this international concern, as no country is immune from the disruptive pressures of a declining world economy. The

continuing crisis is a problem of interaction among social, political and economic forces. This brings more than ever into perspective the need to go beyond isolated and piecemeal approaches in tackling major issues of economic import.

172. In a world of nations grown so closely interdependent, a co-ordinated and comprehensive effort at international co-operation for mutual benefit and advancement is imperative.

173. Inflation, recession, protectionism, unemployment, payments deficits—these are words which arise in describing the general character of the world economic scene. Since the start of the energy crisis and the break-up of the international monetary system in the 1970s, there has been no cohesion in the international economic mechanism. Conflicting economic interests among and between nations, rising protectionism and restrictive policies mark the desperate search for economic security. There has been no reversal of these adverse trends and the intervals of relative stability have been brief and uneasy. A development strategy for the coming decade would need a much more favourable environment.

174. Major economic challenges facing the world community are the problems of population growth, shortages of food and energy and environmental pressures. The question facing the world community is whether man has the ability to reorganize the material conditions of life so as to create a reasonable international economic system.

175. We meet in the Assembly just after the eleventh special session, devoted to the consideration of global economic issues and negotiations and international economic co-operation for development. Such co-operation can be secured only if all the nations concerned can foresake their set attitudes, which originate in the mutual apprehension and, in part, in the economic insecurity which hold them in their grip, and make a generous move towards more flexible positions in a spirit of mutual need and mutual responsibility. It is common knowledge that mutually advantageous exchanges of goods and services between countries are the foundation of both the prosperity and the peace of the world.

176. Perhaps in voicing the main concerns of Burma on the international situation as the world community faces the decade of the 1980s, we have presented a rather pessimistic picture of the world situation. We have merely given the hard facts of life as we see them. Of course, we must all make what contribution we can towards the solution of world problems and hope that what we say or resolve here will weigh at least a little with those Powers on which the solutions will largely and ultimately depend.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.