



Thursday, 14 October 1982,
at 3.30 p.m.

Official Records

NEW YORK

President: Mr. Imre HOLLAI (Hungary).

In the absence of the President, Mr. Kafando (Upper Volta), Vice-President, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. TANNIS (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): It is with a deep sense of pleasure that I venture to associate myself with the many well-merited complimentary statements, as my sources have indicated, made to Mr. Hollai on his election to this most important office of President of the General Assembly. I am sure that, as his predecessor and others before did, he will conduct the affairs of that office so as to enhance its authority and add greater lustre, meaning and dimension to the office itself and the Organization which it serves. I should like also to extend to the Secretary-General my warmest congratulations on his appointment as administrative head of this world body. He has assumed the reins of office during a year of varied far-reaching problems in different parts of the world. I wish to assure him that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines will give full support to his endeavours to bring this troubled world by patient diplomacy to confront, face and resolve its problems, and so wish him a pleasant and rewarding term in office during which he will draw increasingly the respect of all inside and outside the Organization.

2. The election of Mr. Hollai at this thirty-seventh session comes at a time of unprecedented conflicts and tension in the world. It was the ambitious hope of the founders of this United Nations that such problems as obtain today should not be the lot of the world. That these conflicts and tension exist and have persisted over the years is a serious continuing reflection on national attitudes: ambition, aggressiveness, duplicity, pride and honour.

3. Thirty-seven years after the founding of the Organization, the only real change has come from expanded membership. Many former subject peoples are now free and independent, though not all are equal. National attitudes are following, in most cases, the same consistent pattern. We refuse to learn from the experiences of the past. Consequently, people are dying, combatants as well as non-combatants in Lebanon, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, Namibia and elsewhere, all in the name of furthering national ambition and objectives.

4. For yet another year I urge again that the time has come for all Member States to condemn, and to

continue to do so in the strongest possible terms, acts which clearly violate the Charter, resolutions and principles of this important world body. It must be realized that the Charter is not an instrument to be accepted when it is a convenient adjunct to national policy and abrogated when it is not. The Charter must be accepted as establishing an international code of conduct between nations. A code it is. By membership of the Organization we have all agreed to conform to its spirit and intent. It recognizes that disputes are often unavoidable given the present emotional level of the development of man. He may perhaps evolve into a different creature in another half million years, but for now he is *homo homini lupus*. It was recognized that for our generation a mechanism was necessary, hence a machinery for the resolution of disputes was established. If the Charter is to be respected and if the authority of this body is not to be eroded, it must be respected, the machinery for resolving disputes must be rigidly adhered to, however painfully slow and frustrating may be the negotiations. Parties once at a negotiating table must show a willingness and desire to reach a consensus. This is the sane way, the humane way, the wisest and most resource-conserving way. Is it so difficult for leaders to accept this?

5. I know there are those who would frown and say that this is Utopian and an unrealistic diatribe, for to accept this is to contemplate the remodelling of the innate conflicting attitudes of man. Yet, whatever may be said, it is always better for both sides to avoid confrontation and to settle a dispute at the conference table than on the battlefield. Even for the apparent victor, there are often more hydra heads springing from unexpected quarters than the one which the attempt was made to cut off by force of arms, by military surgery.

6. Since 1947 there have been continuous problems between Israel, the Palestinian people and the Arab nations. For 35 years this problem has preoccupied the attention of the Assembly and of the Security Council and has not been resolved because of the two genuine but conflicting claims by the protagonists of both camps. Israel demands the right to exist within secure borders. The authentic voice of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], demands a free and autonomous State in an area that is not exclusive of Israel.

7. Recent events in Lebanon have compelled my country to look at this issue in greater depth and to speak out about the wanton destruction and carnage that have taken place, particularly in west Beirut. The death and destruction wrought before the massacre were inexcusable and indefensible by any norm of international law; but that a massacre that should have been foreseen or guarded against should have

been committed while aid and assistance were given by Israel to the Christian militia deserves strong censure from the Assembly. A dark deed has drawn sharp and bitter protest and is viewed, justifiably so, with horror by civilized and rational people everywhere. That that act should have been committed on the soil of one Member State by another and that the army of the country ravaged is not at war or even in a state of preparedness for war makes it all the more reprehensible.

8. Whatever allegations Israel may make to justify its conduct and action, the scale of the Israeli response was totally unwarranted and unjustifiable and cannot with good conscience be supported even by their most ardent admirers. The Old Testament advocated an eye for an eye; but Israel has taken 100 eyes for one eye. It is a most callous, inhuman display of brute military might which, while it may have achieved its political and military objectives, has released other possible adverse international forces which may be contained only if Israel withdraws its troops immediately and without pre-conditions from Lebanon and thereafter shows a willingness to accept that if it is to live within secure boundaries, as Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 stipulates, there must be an accepted corollary that it is the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to have a homeland. The recent massacre now brings this need into sharper focus.

9. Countries have to be careful that they do not, even by winning a war, lose the respect and goodwill of the international community as Israel has now done so successfully. No country, however large, can allow itself to become an international outcast; still less one that is small, even though it is in possession of a powerful military machine. We all need the goodwill, friendship and support of each other. Total isolation must be the worst tragedy with which any country can be beset. Israel must in its own interest cease actions which suggest that it has a total disregard for international opinion.

10. If we, inside and outside the Assembly, accept facts, however unpalatable they may be, apparent problems may become soluble and inexcusable and unpardonable Christian barbarities such as occurred in west Beirut may not recur. The fact is that Israel exists in the hearts of all Israelis and as a State. The fact is that the PLO exists in the hearts of all Palestinian people, wherever they reside. It is therefore ridiculous for either side to refuse to accept the existence of the other.

11. For either side to continue to take firm and unyielding positions on this issue could lead to other even more tragic events which, while they must rebound to the shame of the perpetrators and be to the utter disgust and anger of civilized people must not occasion guilt among us for any failure on our part to put an end to this impasse.

12. There are now three options to be examined in the search for a peaceful solution to this Middle East crisis: first, the much-criticized and by some rejected Camp David accords; secondly, President Reagan's initiative; and, thirdly, the plan adopted at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, at Fez. The opposing leaders should now come together and, with assis-

tance, so orchestrate their actions that an effective and lasting peace can come to the area. Those who can encourage this process must do so, so that peace can come to a troubled and tortured land, Lebanon; so that peace can come to a strife-prone and strife-torn region, the Middle East; so that peace can exist between the Israelis and the Arabs, based on a just settlement of the Palestinian problem: a homeland.

13. Lebanon should now be given the opportunity to become a unified country and to live and trade in peace. Its new President and Government must be given the support of the international community to make this possible. It is for the President and his Government to decide when all non-Lebanese troops should leave their country. When it is clear that the Lebanese army, with international financial support, is firmly in control, they should, on request, all immediately depart.

14. The international community must not appear to be indifferent to the fate of Afghanistan, a relatively small country of 15.5 million people. Foreign troops are in that country. The presence of those troops is being contested by the inhabitants of that country—the Afghans. Whatever may be the stated reason for the presence of those foreign troops—whether in support and at the request of the present Government or otherwise—it is evident that a significant segment of the population, indeed a majority, is opposed to the Government and to the presence of those foreign troops. The fact is not contestable, since poorly equipped Afghans at great expense, in terms of loss of life and property, and at great suffering—both to combatants and to non-combatants—continue to wage resistance to an occupation of their country which they consider to be undesirable.

15. Neighbouring States have over 3 million—or about one fifth—of the Afghans as refugees, placing great strain on the resources of those countries. Pakistan alone has over 2.7 million. Providing for these refugees is utilizing a substantial portion of the resources of international relief organizations. All this must make one wonder what purpose is served by a continuing stalemate with blood, death and suffering as the end-product. The image of the occupying Power internationally is being affected, and the validity and wisdom of its political and military objectives must be seriously questioned. Without asking for a response, I am sure that Afghanistan is an embarrassment to that occupying Power. It has touched a lever which it now wishes, quite likely, it had never touched, yet still somehow refuses to release.

16. I appeal to the occupying Power to show that great courage which I know it possesses, and of which it is capable, and set a small country free to determine its own future as it wishes. Let it hold discussions with the Afghan nationalist fighters with a view to ending the conflict; let it agree to the holding of elections under United Nations supervision and secure observer status for such a team; let it negotiate, if possible, a neutral Afghanistan, but this should not be a pre-condition for the holding of free and fair elections. I appeal further to the occupying Power to start the process now and show the greatness and compassion of which it is capable. We of this Assembly must all work unceasingly to bring to an end the cycle of suffering, death and destruction occurring in that

once quiet and peaceful country, now turned into a divided, suffering and unhappy land.

17. The Kampuchean question is another very sad continuing episode. It is wrong for any outside Power to impose itself by force of arms on another country or by direct intervention decide who should administer a country. It is all the more heinous when to achieve that result it occasions untold human suffering. Those foreign troops now in occupation of Kampuchea should be removed. Our national concern is that we cannot be indifferent to human suffering, regardless of when or where it may occur but especially when it occurs under the domination of a foreign Power determined to demonstrate that might is right. Let the people decide whether they wish the new Coalition or the present Phnom Penh Government.

18. The foreign troops occupying Kampuchea have caused, in addition to the loss of lives and property, severe refugee problems in neighbouring countries. Will this unrelenting foreign intervention ever cease? It should and must. The Kampucheans should be left in peace to determine their future by dialogue and through a freely supervised electoral process.

19. The Iraqi-Iranian war, although not one in which foreign troops are the interventionists or the protectors of their perceived but often misjudged interests, is nevertheless a terrible war, being fought with the most sophisticated types of conventional weapons in an important and sensitive part of the world. It is not for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, at this stage, to attempt to apportion blame before being fully apprised of all the facts; it is enough to recognize that this senseless slaughter of the flower and youth of both countries is a reckless squandering of an important national resource. The armies of the contending forces should agree to withdraw, at all points, within their respective borders and begin negotiations with a view to concluding a peace treaty. If there are any Member States which can in some measure exercise influence on one side or the other, or both, they should do so before this dread malignancy takes on incurable proportions—before it spreads even further, with dire consequences for peace in that region and for world peace. One cannot permit reason to be blind or deaf in a dispute. It is like searching for a tiger while blind and deaf, only to be destroyed by it.

20. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines urges the representatives of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran to give support to the resolution of the Security Council and the sentiments of the General Assembly and, within the limits permitted, persuade their Governments to take such differences as exist to the conference table and endeavour to resolve them within the terms of the Charter of the United Nations and resolutions of the Security Council and the Assembly.

21. Yet another year approaches without the inhabitants of Namibia having the right to determine their future as a free and independent people. For yet another year a régime in South Africa which refuses to recognize racial equality and which has institutionalized the dehumanizing system of *apartheid* against the black majority within its borders persists by every ruse and various stratagems to frustrate the aspirations of a people that wishes to be

no longer a ward but a proud people in a free and equal country.

22. The question of independence for Namibia should not be linked to any pre-condition, particularly when it is an issue not related to Namibia itself, but of a third State. Understandable, from a South African point of view, as that concern may be, no one should allow a direct and separate issue to be beclouded by what is, in our view, an extraneous consideration. The question for the General Assembly is no longer independence itself but where do we go from here to bring about independence for Namibia. The question of what progress is being made by the contact group on the implementation of the United Nations plan is speculative but this is still probably an area where results could be achieved. Let us intensify our actions to ensure that this issue is resolved before the Assembly meets for its thirty-eighth session.

23. As a Member State, we shall continue to state that the greatest challenge to the effectiveness of the Assembly lies in the deliberate erosion of its authority by its members. Perhaps Saint Vincent and the Grenadines may have unwittingly been an offender already. Nevertheless, we should not ignore the Charter or resolutions of the United Nations without at the same time appreciating the adverse effect this must have on its total responsiveness. For small States such as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, it should be obvious that it is necessary to ensure at all times that the United Nations is strong and responsive to problems, with the ability, through the collective will of the Assembly, to enforce its authority with regard to regional and world peace for the good of all mankind, since it is the best guarantor of the protection and independence of such States.

24. Too often nations avoid the peaceful path and resort to arms, with unforeseen results. In a world replete with border disputes, civil terrorism and guerrilla unrest, and territorial claims, especially in this hemisphere, prudence and caution should make the negotiating table attractive. The path to a negotiated settlement or the resolution of disputes by discussion can at times be slow; yet this in itself should in no way frustrate the process. The results of quiet, painstaking diplomacy, even if the disputes are ultimately resolved through the process of arbitration, have always so far been more beneficial than the results of war.

25. I spoke at length at the 23rd meeting of the twelfth special session on disarmament, and I do not propose to add anything further to what I said then except to welcome the start of discussions between the super-Powers on nuclear disarmament in the hope that it will be treated in as serious and urgent a manner as the gravity of the situation warrants. However, I would like to read out one portion of that statement:

“Given the suspicion and distrust that exist between countries, it can be appreciated that there are tremendous obstacles to be overcome in bringing about real and lasting disarmament.

“Countries that have been suspicious of each other for years, and still are, will not suddenly believe each other's words. Therefore, in order to eliminate this element of fear and doubt, which is the

result of suspicion and mistrust, inspection and verification must be accepted as an inescapable provision of any such treaty. Any genuine desire to achieve disarmament must realistically accept that States have to move in the direction of an open-door policy rather than a closed-door policy. The prerequisite for reaching agreement on disarmament seems to be the ability of the parties to convince each other that no advantage is sought over the other and that there is nothing to hide by thereby guaranteeing the right of access to each other's territory for inspection. What should then be decided will be who would do the inspection and how such inspection should be carried out—whether by a team selected and controlled by this world body and answerable only to this world body or otherwise. This would actually mean that there would have to be a re-examination of the national concept of sovereignty and territorial jurisdiction. There can be no diminution or compromise of authority in giving to another an entitlement that would be reciprocal. This is the whole concept of ambassadorial and consular representation which specifically limits national jurisdiction on national soil and which encroaches upon national sovereignty in certain cases. This is now an internationally accepted principle set forth in a Convention. There are very rare occasions when this Convention is violated and, when it is, it is as a result of traumatic shocks within a national society. Similarly, what has been achieved in the area of diplomatic reciprocity should prove to be no more difficult in verifiable inspection to achieve disarmament. Willingness to agree to inspection is an indication of acceptance of how crucial inspection must be in reaching agreement on disarmament."

26. It must not be thought that it is only the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that are concerned, for all mankind is concerned. We, the others, the silent spectators, are all deeply concerned. There should and must be an end to nuclear proliferation, through a balanced reduction of the existing terror. Ultimately there should be an end to the international arms race in general, for which a few countries are responsible. It is they that possess the real capacity to fuel the arms race; and once they show the will it can and will cease.

27. One of the continuing, lingering problems with which the Assembly is confronted is the creation of conditions conducive to the reunification of countries divided because of political and ideological differences or differences of language or religion. It must be a source of great hardship when the fabric of life in the parts of a divided country is torn. When there is little or no contact and when it is difficult for friends or families to be reunited, there is the temptation to want to resolve the problem by other than peaceful means. Consequently, in divided countries, when restraint has been shown it deserves praise, and the Governments must be further encouraged to seek the negotiating table as the best and most practical way to a solution. They should renounce the resolution of any dispute by means other than those the Charter envisages, even though they may not be Members.

28. Not all these divided countries seek or can seek admission to the United Nations, but those that can

and do seek admission should be admitted, either together or individually, without the possibility for any of the five permanent members of the Security Council exercising a veto against such admission. Such admission, in the view of my country, would assist in the promotion of peace and might well contribute to the realization of the national aspiration for the reunification of the divided countries. Although past experience has in no way suggested that there is reason for optimism, it has shown that admission has lowered the threshold of tension between divided countries, increased contacts in different areas and permitted a greater degree of dialogue.

29. There is a place for both the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the Assembly. It is time the wounds of division were healed. The process of healing can begin here. Friends of both the South and the North should make this process possible.

30. We in the Assembly must address once again the very grave danger to world security posed by international terrorism, which now appears to make a target of a diplomat for no reason other than that in the discharge of the functions of his office he speaks for his country and thereby personifies his country. We must bring our minds to bear on this problem so that those who perform duties similar to our own work can do so in greater safety. No self-respecting nation can permit itself to be blackmailed by the dark deeds of the terrorist. No self-respecting nation can submit to the will of terror. In such a situation selective terror could be applied against a country extraterritorially to achieve an objective, and unless and until all the countries of the world community take firm and serious collective responsibility for discouraging the commission of such acts on their soil by inflicting for such offences the severest penalties permitted under their legislation, when the perpetrators of the offences are apprehended, the trend is not likely to be contained.

31. While man continues to demonstrate his inhumanity on the field of conflict and by oppression in other forms, there still remains a vast gap between the rich and the poor countries of the North and the South. Prodigious sums are budgeted and spent on the production, stockpiling and deployment of weapons of mass destruction, both nuclear and conventional. While the budgeted cost of defence increases, in most cases substantially, only a few nations have yet been able to achieve the United Nations target figure of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product, in aid to developing countries, to be attained by 1985.

32. The International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade [*resolution 35/56, annex*], certainly recognized the urgent need for aid flows to the developing world. Such payments include contributions made via multilateral institutions. Countries of the Development Assistance Committee are among those that have made the highest contribution of resources on liberal terms to developing countries as a whole as a percentage of their gross national product. In fact, four countries in the Committee exceeded the targeted amount in 1979 and 1980. According to 1980 figures, and based on information from the UNCTAD secretariat, the Kingdom of the Netherlands contributed the highest percentage of

gross national product with 0.99 per cent, and the lowest contribution from the countries in the Committee was 0.17 per cent. On average, the Development Assistance Committee countries gave just 0.57 per cent of gross national product in 1980—that is, just over half of the targeted amount. Only members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC] exceeded 1 per cent, with an average of 1.51 per cent in 1979 and 1.45 per cent in 1980.

33. While this terrible world recession has with high, though now falling, interest rates caused rising unemployment everywhere from the industrialized North to the impoverished South, with only a few exceptions, and has contributed to budgetary strains, balance-of-payment problems and liquidity squeezes within the economies of the developed and the developing countries, and may well tend to cause the development of an inward-looking attitude, nevertheless, even though it is natural for all Governments to be preoccupied with national concerns, introspection should not blind Governments to the realities of the world around them. Although the reality may be that some countries are facing severe financial and other problems, those small island States with highly vulnerable economies often based solely on primary products are in a still more perilous state and in need of greater official development assistance than ever before.

34. In his address to the Commonwealth Finance Ministers at a meeting held at Marlborough House, in London, on 30 August last, the Commonwealth Secretary-General had this to say:

“... the tightening of lending because of the danger of default can precipitate the very danger it seeks to avert and quicken economic collapse. Joint action by private banks alone cannot provide an adequate, reliable basis for handling problems of today's dimensions. The liquidity squeeze is superimposed on a contraction of resource flows to developing countries. Aid flows from the Development Aid Committee and OPEC as a proportion of gross national product are declining, and the growth in World Bank lending, including from the International Development Association, is already projected at much lower levels than in the past.”

This prognosis is gloomy for the developing countries. However, because the economies of the world are interdependent, it is also gloomy for the rich industrialized world. Of sheer necessity the weak must and will, through trade, directly promote the economic well-being of the rich. The rich should therefore continue to be generous in their aid to the poor.

35. For a better world, such help is a necessary priority. As we all now stand watching a world writhing in financial and economic agony, we should not allow our national concerns to override all other interests and so shelve the need to renew the North-South dialogue in an effort to deepen our understanding of the institutional mechanism required to promote the introduction of a new economic order.

36. There can be no doubt that there is a need for the restructuring of the world's economies. Neither the old nor the new economic theories seem capable of energizing the developed or developing economies upon which the economies of the poor and the underdeveloped countries are so dependent, whether for

the sale of their primary products or in the area of tourism. There are too many external factors that seem to interplay and impinge upon national planning over which national planners have no control. It is the unpredictability of the multinational interplay of forces and factors with which small underdeveloped countries must contend and over which they have far less control than the developing or the developed countries.

37. When the higher-priced production of beet sugar is subsidized within the European Economic Community, causing large surpluses in production and competition, the world demand for cane sugar falls, creating huge surpluses in developing countries, thereby sending prices down drastically, with the result that economies dependent on that crop are utterly destroyed, causing serious balance-of-payments problems. These are some of the difficulties which are beyond the control of national planners. There is therefore a need for the Economic and Social Council to look critically at this problem to persuade States which have been subsidizing the overproduction of beet to recognize the harm they are doing and to correct this injury.

38. There are some programmes which in my country's view are having an impact. One such is UNDP. Since just before our independence, it has been having quite a significant impact on our developmental efforts in the area of statistics and economic advisory services. Since it appears that programmes of the Organization are in all probability going to be affected by the inadequate contributions of Members, it is our hope that this useful Programme will continue to receive the support of the international community. For our part, we are prepared to try to make our own modest contribution to this worthwhile Programme. As we demonstrate our faith in it, my country expects donors to keep faith with us and support it—not less generously, but rather more generously, than previously.

39. In my country's policy statement on admission, at the thirty-fifth session, I said that our position on issues would be made quite clear. Our intention would always be to assist this world body in achieving and maintaining world peace as well as economic and social justice. We meant it then, and we still mean it. I wish to conclude as I did then:

“The Assembly can be a most effective instrument; but it cannot be and will not be greater than all of us collectively have the will to make it. Each of us representatives possesses the perception by conscience to know right from wrong. Nevertheless, we are all subject to the policies of our Governments and must represent them or resign. But can we not in the light of our thinking strive to influence those decisions, if by so doing we would enhance respect for the integrity and credibility of this world Organization? To fail in this endeavour is not the problem; only to fail to try.” [5th meeting, para. 246.]

“General Assembly” is a mere name. We are all gathered here in the General Assembly. “United Nations” are only words. Our countries constitute the United Nations. They can serve us as the Charter intended, if only we let them.

40. Mr. DIALLO (Niger) (*interpretation from French*): The annual gathering of representatives of virtually all the sovereign nations of the globe, and of affiliated or interested international institutions within the framework of the regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations is always a source of great satisfaction and moral comfort to us. We see therein the signs of that ideal of tolerance which is inscribed in the Charter and which inspires us all, despite the different views we may hold about the various events which are at present rending the world. We also see therein the demonstration of our willingness to discuss our differences, not to say our divergences of opinion, and to seek together ways and means to solve or eliminate them.

41. That ideal of tolerance and dialogue could hardly be symbolized more fittingly than by the gesture of the unanimous election of Mr. Hollai as President of the Assembly. Crowning his long diplomatic career, that choice constitutes a well-deserved tribute to his country, Hungary, for its positive contribution to mutual understanding among peoples and the strengthening of co-operation among States. Certainly, the reins which our President has taken over from Mr. Kittani of Iraq are difficult to hold firm. But we are convinced that his long and rich experience of world affairs, particularly in the United Nations system, will allow him to undertake the difficult task with the same wisdom, determination and efficiency as his talented predecessor, to whom I should again like to express the appreciation of the delegation of the Niger.

42. The thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly is opening in an international context which is heavy with threats for all mankind, so true is it that the course of affairs of our world and the spirit guiding it remain dreadfully marked by violence, injustice, egoism, and ignorance or disregard of the principles and noble ideals which the United Nations adopted in its Charter in order to establish a world of peace and progress for all. Such a situation is likely, if care is not taken, to do serious and lasting harm to the credibility of the Organization—a credibility which is, moreover, increasingly being challenged by international public opinion, which is disturbed and anguished because of the results achieved by United Nations action in areas as vital for mankind as those of disarmament, development and the maintenance of peace and security.

43. Each of our peoples aspires to live in a world free of wars and conflict, where hunger, sickness and poverty are unknown. The events of today seem to indicate that this prospect is further away than ever, consequently revealing the inability of the Organization, and of the system of international relations as a whole, to respond effectively to the political and economic challenges which confront us.

44. In the political arena, that failure is even more serious because it relates to problems which are at least as old as the United Nations itself and which the international community has assumed a direct moral and historical responsibility to resolve. I refer here to the problems of Palestine and the Middle East and the question of Namibia.

45. To be sure, the United Nations has formally recognized the legitimacy of the struggle for self-determination of the peoples of those countries by granting observer status to their legitimate representatives, the PLO and the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO]. But the fact remains that any mention of Palestine and Namibia results in flagrant and unpunished violations of international rules and customs, brutal oppression, the denial of the rights of peoples to self-determination and the invasion and occupation of neighbouring States.

46. With regard to the question of Palestine, it should be noted that the international community as a whole has now finally accepted that the Palestinian problem is at the heart of the drama which is tearing the Middle East apart, and that any solution to that conflict must necessarily involve the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

47. The great majority of the States of our community recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as well as recognizing the absolute right of those people to self-determination and to the creation of a sovereign State on their own territory.

48. There is also reason to recall that at the seventh emergency special session the General Assembly adopted by an overwhelming majority resolution ES-7/2, an important resolution reaffirming the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without foreign interference, as well as to independence and sovereignty, and stressing their right to create a sovereign State on their own national territory.

49. Similarly, the international community has on many occasions, within the United Nations as well as in other international forums, condemned the continued occupation of Arab territories by Israel and, on the basis of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force, has called for its total and unconditional withdrawal.

50. But we must today note that the international community has not been able to take any specific action to ensure that the Palestinian people can exercise their inalienable legitimate rights, to restore to Arab sovereignty the territories illegally occupied by Israel, and to guarantee the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. Thus far no action has been possible to halt the policy practised by Israel of systematic negation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the rights of the Arab and Lebanese people to peace and calm within their borders.

51. It is a fact that Israel remains deaf to the disapproval, the constant appeals to reason and the condemnations of the international community. On the contrary, guided by hatred, blinded by military power, day after day displaying its growing scorn for the decisions of the United Nations, Israel has adopted and is carrying out in an outrageous manner an unbridled policy of Judaization of Palestinian Arab lands through the modification of their geographic, historical, sociological and religious characteristics.

52. Pursuing its expansionist policy, Israel has successively annexed the holy city of Jerusalem and

the Golan Heights, before launching its army upon the conquest of Lebanon, a large portion of whose territory is today occupied. At the same time, populations living in the occupied Arab territories are pitilessly subjected to ferocious repression which nothing can justify.

53. Recent events in Lebanon, which in fact represent only a single episode in the strategy of conquest pursued by the Israeli State, prove—if any proof were needed—that neither vehement protests nor energetic condemnations are enough to thwart a genocidal undertaking which discredits the action of the United Nations as much as it makes guilty by omission almost the entire international community.

54. In the light of this holocaust of our time, faced with this great tragedy, it demeans the international community that its representatives continue to cling to their well-known positions and to conduct byzantine discussions on the texts of resolutions which, when adopted, remain dead letters. The memory of thousands of Palestinian martyrs and of the innocent victims of Sabra and Shatila cry out to us, and call for decisive action from us to restore the usurped rights of the Palestinian people.

55. Against that background, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, whose thirteenth session of the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs the Niger was greatly honoured to host, urges all the States which love peace, liberty, justice and progress to work collectively within the United Nations for the adoption and implementation by the Security Council of a new resolution requiring in precise terms the Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including the holy city of Al Quds, and the guaranteeing of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, namely, their right to return to their homeland, Palestine; their right to determine their own fate without foreign interference; and their right to establish an independent State on their national territory, under the leadership of the PLO.

56. Furthermore, we believe that a sincere use of the way courageously opened by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez in September of this year, will allow the international community to restore its image in the eyes of the Palestinian people and of history. We say that in the hope that the constructive peace proposals unanimously adopted at Fez will be accepted by Israel and will not suffer the same fate which South Africa dealt to the United Nations plan for Namibia—another situation which persists and seriously concerns my Government owing to the threats it represents for the security of the African continent and for world peace.

57. The situation prevailing in Namibia is known to everyone. It is a situation which is clearly illegal and exceptionally painful for the Namibian people which is enduring it and fighting for its freedom; it is painful for the front-line States which, because of their support for that liberation struggle, expose themselves to repeated acts of aggression by South Africa; and it is painful for the United Nations, which has an historic direct responsibility for Namibia. Inspired both by its own foreign policy and the principles of the Organization of African Unity [OAU], the Niger intends, just as all of independent Africa, to draw

attention once again to that situation and to the need for a rapid solution of the Namibian problem. It does so in the name of law and legality, in the name of morality and justice, and for the benefit of peace and international security.

58. The hope raised by the United Nations plan for Namibia has still not been realized. In spite of information showing notable progress in negotiations for the implementation of the provisions of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), we note that five years after the adoption of that plan by the United Nations the electoral system has not yet been defined, the composition of the United Nations forces has not yet been agreed upon, and the cease-fire has not yet been decreed.

59. During this time South Africa has, with impunity, continued its illegal occupation of Namibian territory, its pillage of its natural resources, and its outrageous acts of aggression against neighbouring countries. Through manoeuvres which now no longer deceive anyone it is attempting to promote the establishment of institutions and bodies which would alter the authenticity of Namibia's independence into something artificial.

60. The racist minority régime of Pretoria, strengthened by solid complicity, continues to flout and defy the international community under fallacious pretexts and with unreasonable demands. Therefore the United Nations is confronted with a deadlock in Namibia, responsibility for which lies entirely with South Africa—and no consideration, in particular one related to Angola's sovereignty, can hide that fact which was emphasized on 4 September at Lusaka by the heads of State and Government of the front-line States.

61. The Government of the Niger reiterates most energetically its condemnation of the illegal and continued occupation of Namibia by South Africa and its repeated acts of aggression against the front-line States. We hope that the international community will display the necessary upsurge of political will to lead Namibia to independence and thus allow the surrounding countries to work for their own economic and social development. In this context, it is important for the United Nations to think about establishing a massive aid programme for those countries which today are heroically bearing the burden of the unjust war imposed upon them by the racist régime in Pretoria.

62. The African peoples also expect of the international community in general and from the United Nations in particular energetic action to eradicate the *apartheid* and racial discrimination that are rife in the southern part of the African continent. They fervently hope and wish for the establishment in South Africa of political conditions that would allow everyone, without any consideration as to race, sex, language or religion, to participate in the building of a multi-racial community like the one which is today being built in Zimbabwe, a country which formerly suffered from the evils of racial discrimination. The achievement of such conditions will allow the African countries to devote their efforts to the improvement of the living conditions of their peoples at this particular juncture in the international economic situation when

things are already particularly difficult and continue to worsen.

63. The world economy is today in a critical state of disruption which many meetings held in various parts of the world on the question have not been able to prevent. Those stages—New York, Geneva, Vienna, Paris, Cancún, Versailles and many others—have been glimmers of hope quickly dashed. The disintegration of the economy has reached such levels that any prognosis today would be daring or haphazard. No one is attempting to do that, neither Governments nor even international financial and economic institutions. Everywhere in the world one envisages the future with pessimism. In this climate of gloom, concern and almost panic, the fate of developing countries, and especially the poorest among them, is particularly alarming.

64. As channels for a limited group of export commodities, developing countries today are facing a marked deterioration in their terms of trade—an evil which they have fought for many years now without success. They are therefore facing a catastrophic dwindling of their export revenues. At the same time, high interest rates on the main international financial markets and the rise in the value of the dollar have increased their loan and debt-servicing costs. They can only watch as the standard of living of their peoples drops sharply owing to galloping inflation.

65. Their export revenues have plummeted, the cost of borrowing and servicing the debt has soared; they have been compelled to slow down the pace of implementation of their development programmes—or to make agonizing revisions. In some cases that has led to the cancellation of those programmes; in others, such as Chad, the effects of a long and disastrous war, added to those of the economic crisis, have created an even more tragic situation which only a vast international programme can remedy.

66. That is the very sombre picture which we find, with varying degrees of intensity, in the world economy today, from North to South, East to West, in the countries of the periphery as well as those at the centre. The destabilizing effects, internally and internationally, of such a situation can be easily foreseen. In this connection and stressing that this difficult situation largely stems from the fact that international financial and economic structures have not adapted to the demands of the present world, President Seyni Kountché said the following at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly:

“We shall spare the world from a very damaging economic confrontation only if together we overhaul North-South relations and work together for a more unified approach to the development of the world and for the well-being of mankind.” [25th meeting, para. 32.]

67. The wealthy countries should become aware of that requirement and, although they, too, are affected by the crisis, they must understand that the recovery of their economy for which their citizens long require decisive action in favour of developing countries. The modalities of such action have been laid down by representatives in various international forums from Cancún to Toronto; but, for various reasons, the proposals that have been made have not been

completely taken into account. People continue to maintain that a considerable increase in the capital of the two main international financial institutions is not needed. Some even continue to advocate limiting the relevant credit facilities for deprived peoples. There is certainly a basically negative and selfish attitude involved; it is embodied in the position of those who prevent all progress towards the establishment of a more just and equitable new international economic order.

68. The various economic conferences held in recent years, both within the framework of the United Nations and in other international bodies, have all shown the need for a reorganization of the present international economic and financial structures. In the light of the serious crisis which is shaking the world economy today, a restructuring of the present order has become a categorical imperative if we wish to spare mankind painful turmoil. We must accept the fact that no nation represented in this Hall, however powerful it may be, can reasonably think that it can do without the others. Attempts to seek isolated solutions to the serious economic problems of our world today are unquestionably doomed to failure. The concept of the interdependence of nations is today more than ever before of special significance.

69. In this connection we find in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization [A/37/1] relevant comments on the development of United Nations action along such lines, because no organ is better able than this one, despite its insufficiencies and limitations, to offer the possibility of fostering a spirit of harmony, interdependence, solidarity and co-operation among nations.

70. I should like to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Secretary-General for the clear and courageous manner in which he analysed the deep-rooted causes of the disorder in the present system of multilateral relations and set out certain guidelines which could be used as a basis for innovative action on the part of the Organization to establish a world order capable of meeting the aspirations of the peoples to peace, justice, freedom and economic and social progress.

71. We are ready to play our part in this major battle, because we are aware that this is a question of saving the world from the cataclysm which lies in wait. As for the Niger, as has been stressed here by President Seyni Kountché “we are ardent supporters of peace, tireless workers for good-neighbourliness and fervent apostles of dialogue and understanding among nations”. [25th meeting, para. 58.]

72. Mr. SCEBERRAS TRIGONA (Malta): The recent visit of the Prime Minister of Malta to Hungary is sufficient indication of the close relations existing between our two countries, therefore it gives me all the more pleasure to compliment Mr. Hollai on his unanimous election to preside over this important session. We also compliment Mr. Kittani of Iraq on his record-breaking performance last year.

73. Our presence in the Assembly is a token of our collective commitment to the processes of peace in inter-State relations which the United Nations offers in opposition to the processes of violence and aggression which have marred human history for untold ages. Yet, in spite of this commitment, we are all

aware of the reality that once again the methods of violence and conflict are on the increase in intercourse among nations. In Asia we are disturbed by the events in Kampuchea and Afghanistan, in Africa by the continuing aggression and inhumanity of South Africa, in Latin America by the recently concluded conflict in the Falklands. In the Middle East we have still not recovered from the shock of the appalling events in Lebanon, which form a tragic climax to the escalating policy of illegality and outrage perpetrated by Israel in its relentless aggression against the Palestinian people, its annexation of occupied territories, its attack on Iraqi nuclear installations and its persistent flouting of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

74. The post-war world order based on the Yalta repartition of spheres of influence, with its ensuing system of armed alliances, is no longer able to maintain even its initial precarious stability. The erosion of the nuclear superiority by one super-Power, leading to nuclear parity, ushered in a state of strategic uncertainty. Together with the challenges by the emergent nations to rigid polarization around super-Power spheres of influence, this led to an increasing resort to the use of force by dominant Powers. Therefore we cannot but agree with the frank analysis of the Secretary-General, in which he points out the reforms which are still required to transform the United Nations into a world body which effectively unites nations in the pursuit of their security on the basis of peace, co-operation and mutual respect.

75. In the absence of all-encompassing co-operation on security at the global level, nations have increasingly resorted to concrete initiatives at the regional level.

76. In the Mediterranean, regional States have traditionally approached their security concerns in different ways. However, while most of the States of the North appear to have chosen the road of complete integration in the armed alliances and all the States of the South are active members of the non-aligned movement, the apparent division is not so rigid. There are evidently different levels of integration in the alliances by the members in the North, while States of the South have established their own links with members of the alliances—links which are based on economic, technological, cultural and historical realities.

77. What constitutes the most pervasive destabilizing element in the Mediterranean at the present time is in fact the massive and increasing super-Power presence in the region. Détente, far from being a global phenomenon, was restricted to central Europe. In Helsinki, at the start of the process begun with the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Malta had striven for the acceptance of the need to extend détente to the Mediterranean, on the basis of the principle that security in the Mediterranean is an integral element in European security. The super-Powers, however, paid only lip-service to the Mediterranean document of the Helsinki Final Act. Eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation is the reality in the Mediterranean today, a reality which is even more threatening to regional and European peace and security because it creates a confrontation more direct than it has ever been in central Europe, where the

military forces of the super-Powers are buffered from each other by the presence of their allies.

78. Because of the vacuum which exists at the global level through the absence of an effective role by the United Nations, super-Power influence in matters relating directly to security and co-operation in the Mediterranean has today assumed excessive proportions. All States in the region must be concerned by the extent of this influence. Many have already come to the conclusion that the only feasible alternative is for Mediterranean countries to forge together their own arrangements for regional security, which would then enable them to work out with the super-Powers an agreed programme of progressive armaments reductions, phased in such a way as to ensure that at no stage would either super-Power consider that its legitimate strategic interests were being put in jeopardy.

79. Such an approach entails two fundamental objectives: first, that the Mediterranean should not be used as a major arena of global confrontation; secondly, that regional States should be more directly in control of security and co-operation questions in their own region. Although we cannot have any illusion as to the continuing impact of bloc politics on our region, we also sense an underlying appreciation of the potential validity of an indigenous regional security system, leading to the ultimate withdrawal of super-Power forces from the region.

80. Malta's experience in its own struggle for freedom, a struggle which is rooted in a strategy for regional co-operation, corroborates this assessment. The Socialist Government which came to power in 1971 after 13 years in opposition was firmly committed to a policy aimed at the elimination of all foreign military bases on the island. The phased and bloodless withdrawal of the forces of Britain and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] from the island commenced in 1972 and was completed by March 1979. When my party was returned to power in 1976 it was pledged to entrench the process of the elimination of all foreign military presence in Malta by the assumption for the island of a status of neutrality, based strictly on the principles of non-alignment. We started discussions with our Mediterranean neighbours on the status we were to adopt after 1979. By 1979 those discussions were already bearing fruit. We found early encouragement and support both from our southern neighbours, in particular the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Algeria, and from our northern neighbours, including Italy and France. In the unfolding of events, our choice of a neutral status received broad recognition from Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean States alike. In different forms and under different circumstances, such broad recognition came from Qatar, Yugoslavia, Italy, Bulgaria and the European Economic Community in 1980; from Saudi Arabia, Morocco, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, France, Senegal, Iraq, the non-aligned movement and the Commonwealth in 1981; and from Algeria, Tunisia, Greece, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, China and the Islamic Republic of Iran so far this year.

81. In May 1980 the Maltese Parliament formally enshrined our neutral status in a proclamation. By

virtue of that proclamation, Malta undertakes not to allow any foreign military bases on its territory, not to allow any military facilities to foreign forces, not to allow any facilities to be used in Malta in such a manner or to such an extent as will constitute a virtual presence of foreign forces, nor that any foreign military personnel be allowed in Malta, and that the shipyards of Malta will be used for civil commercial purposes and will be denied to the military vessels of the super-Powers. Soon after the formal adoption of our status, in September 1980 Italy entered into a bilateral agreement with us in which it welcomed, recognized and supported our neutrality and engaged itself both to avoid any action that would jeopardize that status and to come to our assistance in case of any attack on Malta. That formal commitment by a country belonging to NATO to commit itself actively in safeguarding Malta's neutrality was paralleled a few months later by an analogous undertaking by the Soviet Union in which recognition and support of our status was also accompanied by an undertaking not to do anything that would put it in jeopardy. Both agreements have been duly registered with the United Nations under Article 102 of the Charter.

82. Following its third consecutive return to power in 1981, the socialist Government pledged to utilize Malta's new-found freedom and neutral status to promote a genuine process for peace in the Mediterranean. Several countries have not only formally recognized our neutral status, but have also explicitly acknowledged its significance for the process of peace in the Mediterranean—these include France and Greece from within the NATO alliance and the non-aligned Mediterranean States of Yugoslavia and Tunisia.

83. In addition to its choice of neutrality, Malta had already taken other important initiatives for peace in the Mediterranean. The most comprehensive of those initiatives has been our endeavours in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to obtain recognition of the linkage between security in the Mediterranean and security in Europe, and participation by Mediterranean States in all matters relating to Mediterranean security and co-operation.

84. By 1975 all European States, and the two super-Powers, had accepted non-participating Mediterranean States in the process of that Conference. By 1979 the Conference had launched a concrete initiative for functional co-operation in the Mediterranean. Meeting in Malta in February of that year, participants in the Conference and non-participating Mediterranean States drew up recommendations concerning the exchange of statistical data, environmental co-operation, tourism, energy resources, transport networks, telecommunications research, migrant labour, scientific and technical problems, eradication of Mediterranean diseases, gerontology, seismology, preservation of cultural heritage and a number of other subjects. In the ongoing review Session of the Conference, taking place in Madrid, our objective is now to bring about a thorough consideration of the security aspects of the Helsinki Mediterranean chapter, in particular the recommendations regarding the reduction of armed forces in the region.

85. We have also taken initiatives outside the established bodies. As early as 1972, on the initiative of Malta's Prime Minister, Dom Mintoff, who has identified himself most intimately with the objective of enhancing Mediterranean co-operation, a process of quadripartite collaboration at the ministerial and technical levels was initiated between Italy, Libya, Malta and Tunisia. That initiative has led to the recognition of a common interest in communications, tourism, fisheries, agriculture and the preservation and protection of the environment.

86. A more recent initiative has been the setting up of Radio Mediterranean, which Malta pioneered in 1978 under the auspices of UNESCO and which is now starting to assume its intended role as the collective and authentic voice of Mediterranean peoples. The keen interest which that initiative is awakening has recently been demonstrated by Algeria's participation and by the various approaches made by other Mediterranean States.

87. At the multilateral level in 1975 UNEP launched a Mediterranean Action Plan, which, under the objective of environmental protection, has given scope to the emergence of a number of concrete projects of a technical and practical nature. Malta is participating in various aspects of that Action Plan, in particular through the setting up of a Regional Oil-Combating Centre on the island which is intended to co-ordinate regional action against hazards of oil pollution.

88. Here at the United Nations since 1976 the resolutions on the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security [*resolution 2734 (XXV)*] have included a call, sponsored by Malta and other Mediterranean States, for the transformation of the Mediterranean into a zone of peace. The growing support for that call, which now also includes members of the NATO alliance, is also manifested in the encouraging number, and substantive content, of the various replies sent to the questionnaire on the strengthening of security in the Mediterranean called for under resolution 36/102. It is clear from some of those replies, in particular the one from Yugoslavia, that Mediterranean countries are giving very serious consideration to the question of how they can themselves best take charge of security matters in their own region. We also find great significance in the fact that in its reply France has indicated that it considers its formal recognition and support of Malta's status of neutrality as a direct contribution to the process of strengthening security and co-operation in the Mediterranean. Similar interest has emerged in the various statements made during the current general debate, in particular by Italy and Algeria [*9th and 27th meetings*]. It is our intention this year, in collaboration with our partners, to seek to add to the growing consensus on the question and to identify pragmatic ways of developing the initiative further. One important consideration concerns the need to keep all Member States, and especially those in the Security Council, fully informed of relevant developments in our region.

89. Various initiatives are converging to lend further strength and credibility to the formation of a Mediterranean built upon the awareness of a commonality of interests which bind the regional States together in a process of peace and co-operation. Malta's

uphill task in the mid-1970s to form a consensus for bringing together northern and southern Mediterranean States in the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe has in turn opened up prospects for other initiatives. Thus, Malta and other Mediterranean States, the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Havana in 1979, engaged the explicit support of the non-aligned movement for the proposal that non-aligned Mediterranean States meet in Malta in 1980 with aligned Mediterranean States, participants in the European Conference, to discuss specific projects of co-operation and to co-ordinate positions for further action even in the European Conference itself.

90. That convergence is most evident in the case of Malta's neutrality. The widespread recognition and support for Malta's status of neutrality is proving of seminal value for initiatives aimed at installing a system of regional security in the Mediterranean in which the concerns of super-Power confrontation are neither exclusive nor dominant.

91. Through their unilateral rejection of foreign military bases on their territories, a number of Mediterranean States have set in motion a process of disarmament in the region. With the closing of foreign military bases, Malta, too, has contributed to that formation of embryo zones of peace. But this unilateral approach is not enough. In seeking support for its status of neutrality, Malta has introduced a reciprocity of commitments. At the regional level it has undertaken the commitment that its territory would never be used for armed offensives against neighbouring States, and in return obtained assurances from them that they would not threaten or violate its neutrality; at the broader level, the super-Powers have accepted Malta's assurances that its territory would not be available to either of them for military purposes and in return they have assured Malta of their undertaking to respect its neutrality. If the Mediterranean is to enjoy the benefits of a system of regional security, an extension of this type of reciprocal commitment is indispensable. Only in this way would there start a process of easing of tension, reduction of polarization and limitation of armaments deployment.

92. We are, of course, very much aware that military deployment by the super-Powers in the Mediterranean is not simply a function of regional concerns, but is integrated in global strategic planning. We are equally aware that the options being taken today by some of the States in our region are supportive of the global dimension of the super-Power military presence in the Mediterranean. The current deteriorating situation is not especially propitious. Yet, we have sensed in the developments which took place in the 1970s that the potential exists for an affirmation of the collective role of Mediterranean States in the security of their own region. Our persistence at the present time arises both from the concern that any relaxation would jeopardize the progress which has already been made; as well as from the conviction that in pursuing our objectives for peace we are directly contributing to the overcoming of the current negative trend.

93. Although conditions in the Mediterranean are ripe for progress in the pursuit of regional security and co-operation, current negative trends elsewhere

are adversely affecting this region too. The Mediterranean thus challenges the super-Powers with a crucial test of their willingness and capacity to respond by favouring the processes of peace as opposed to the processes of confrontation. In the light of the remarkable achievements for the Mediterranean over the past decade, a reversal here would forbode ominous consequences for other quarters of the globe, where stability, peace and security are precarious and threatened. Progress here, on the other hand, would give the cue for analogous initiatives to be undertaken in other regions so that peace becomes indivisible and stable. In other words, the crucial test for peace is whether Mediterranean countries and the super-Powers agree on reciprocal assurances as have already been implemented in respect of a neutral Malta. The Mediterranean is ready.

94. For Malta, the struggle against such high odds to bring about a halt to the process of confrontation in our region is in line with the historic linkage which has existed between events in our country and in the region at large. Poised in the heart of the Mediterranean, less than 200 miles from the mainlands of Europe and of Africa, Malta has for centuries been right on the dividing line between opposing and contending forces.

95. Starting with the Roman-Carthaginian confrontation of the pre-Christian era, and running through to the regional super-Power confrontation of our day, Malta's position has always imposed critical choices of alignment and commitment. In the past, these choices were always made by the dominant Power in possession of the island. They were inevitably choices for aggression and military domination of Malta's neighbours. During this century alone, Malta has served as a forward base for major military offensives in Italy, Greece and North Africa; it served as a strategically vital position in the two world conflicts and as an important focal point of operations in the Suez crisis in the late 1950s.

96. Without any choice of its own, Malta has therefore consistently been committed on one or another of the sides in the many conflicts and confrontations taking place in the Mediterranean region. Whenever armed aggression took place, Maltese territory fell directly under attack. The nature and extent of our defences were as much at the discretion of the foreigner as were the strategic decisions leading to the opening of hostilities and the actions and considerations leading to their resolution. The experience of the last World War, when the Maltese people in their overwhelming majority joined enthusiastically in the struggle against fascism and nazism and rejoiced in their eventual overthrow, brought with it the clear realization that in always fighting other people's wars, Malta had never yet had the opportunity to struggle for its own freedom and for peace.

97. In the 1950s and 1960s, the time came for Malta, in common with other oppressed nations of the world, to achieve its independence. The opportunity thereby created for the island to define its role for peace in the region was, however, obstructed by British and NATO collusion that Malta should and, indeed, would continue to pursue economic, strategic, political and cultural choices strictly integrated into the Western alliance, even if that involved actions and policies

divergent from the national or regional interests of a small independent island State in the heart of a troubled region.

98. For a few years the local interests which had thrived on the colonial structures and mentality managed to retain sufficient control over the island to ensure the pursuit of a policy in strict conformity with NATO strategies. The inappropriate economic infrastructure closely supportive of a NATO role, which had been inherited from colonial times, was cosmetically restructured only to the extent that it would not interfere with that role. Control of key factors—ports, airports, telecommunications, media, banking and currency, for example—was retained, sometimes through indirect means, by the British.

99. This continuing control served British interests in two ways. On the one hand, by reinforcing the dominance of an élite which had a weak base of local support, it ensured the continuing loyalty of that élite to the British and NATO objectives. This in turn permitted Britain to convince its NATO allies that in order to ensure that Malta remained firmly entrenched in the Western bloc, it was in their interests not to take any action to improve, at least to Western European standards, the social and economic plight of the Maltese. The Maltese people soon realized that the policies under which they were being led constituted a negation of their freedom, were inimical to their national interests and thwarted their natural vocation to serve as a focal point of peace and co-operation in the Mediterranean. Those who were claiming to maintain the island as a bulwark of democracy by aligning it irrevocably with one bloc were at the same time led into taking measures which, in their disrespect for the basic rights of the individual, constituted a serious denial of democracy.

100. The process of Malta's struggle for freedom came to a critical point in the early 1970s when the people of the island, in anger and frustration, took a dramatic decision to halt the centuries-old military role of their own homeland. Over the last 12 years, Malta has pursued a policy in which the struggle for personal liberty, national freedom and regional peace and co-operation are intimately intertwined. We have restructured our economic infrastructure to make it serve simultaneously the purposes of national development and regional co-operation. We have opened our economic, cultural, technological and political relations to all countries, rejecting any ideological bias in our contacts.

101. This policy both defines and lends credibility to the status of neutrality we have assumed, not out of any escapist desire to steer an uncommitted course between the contending antagonisms in our region and beyond, but out of the fundamental awareness that the future of our nation is intimately linked with developments in our region.

102. This policy has enabled us to demonstrate a forceful integrity in the pursuit and defence of peace. Last week's endorsement of Malta's candidacy for the Security Council in the ministerial declaration of the non-aligned movement encourages us to persevere in our policy. Whenever the occasion has required it, we have not shirked from taking the necessary frank and forthright action. It was the force-

ful integrity of our policies which enabled us to persevere when alone in the European forums, in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, and in the European capitals we put forward such views as the call for a Mediterranean involvement in questions of European security and the equally pressing call for a Middle East solution based on recognition of the Palestinians' right to an independent State of their own. Today, when these views are finding increased support, we can look back on our earlier efforts with a sense of pride, satisfaction and encouragement for the future.

103. This same spirit motivated us in the early 1970s to be equally firm in our negotiations with Britain over the arrangements to phase out their military presence on our territory. We then faced a massed opposition based on prejudice, misconception and vested interests both from within and beyond our shores. Gradually, however, we persuaded our opponents of the integrity and peaceful nature of our objectives.

104. Yet following the final departure of British troops from the island, we again had to face the arrogant attitudes of our erstwhile colonial ruler in connection with the question of the clearing from areas around Malta of war remnants left over from the colonial period which are seriously obstructing some of our major development projects.

105. One particular case, concerning the removal of war remnants, is causing serious problems to our development programme. My Government's development plan calls for the setting up in Malta of a major coal and grain trans-shipment centre in the Mediterranean. A prerequisite for the success of this project is a sufficient draught to enable ships requiring an under-keel clearance of over 14 metres to enter and navigate in the Grand Harbour of Valletta without any problem. Nature has blessed Valletta Harbour with a sufficiently large draught to handle such ships, but the presence of war wrecks in various parts of the harbour and, in particular, at its entrance, has reduced the clearance to 12.6 metres, so that the trans-shipment project cannot materialize unless those wrecks are removed.

106. For the past several years my Government has been trying to reach an amicable solution with Britain on this subject but, in spite of the universally accepted principle that the removal of remnants of war is the responsibility of the country that implanted them, Britain has consistently refused to accept any legal or moral responsibility. Indeed, Britain is making its repeated disclaimer of any legal or moral responsibility whatsoever a pre-condition of any talks with my Government. From this rostrum I repeat the offer which my Government has already made to the British Government of talks without pre-conditions. A satisfactory solution would also obviate the need for us to raise this issue in all appropriate international forums—something which we are otherwise determined to persist in.

107. Our experience teaches that the struggle by a people to achieve dignity and freedom is itself part of the process in the endeavour for regional and global peace and security.

108. For the Palestinian people the road to dignity and freedom is proving particularly tragic, as the recent events in Lebanon have shown. These events have not broken the spirit of the Palestinian people in continuing their struggle but the opportunities for a peaceful solution, which under the leadership of the PLO were genuinely being sought, have been dealt a severe blow. The Israeli actions have deliberately placed a policy of aggression right in the path of the road to peace; in the process they have inflicted unbelievable suffering, and they have torn a country apart.

109. The threat to the peace and stability of the Middle East and the Mediterranean which arises out of the Palestinian and Lebanese tragedies constitutes a direct threat to peace and stability even outside the region. European nations should play a major role to help bring about a solution which both respects the inalienable rights of the Palestinians and at the same time safeguards other legitimate interests in the region. Malta is proud of the role it has played in supporting the Palestinian cause and pledges to continue steadfastly in this course.

110. The actions of South Africa, its internal policies of racism and oppression and its external policies of aggression and domination constitute yet another threat to international peace and stability. The cry of anger, frustration and suffering emerging from southern Africa is urgent and persuasive. It calls for urgent and effective remedies.

111. The aspiration of the people of Korea to the peaceful unification of their country continues to be frustrated. The presence of foreign troops in South Korea and the size and strategic objectives of this presence run directly counter to the already expressed desire of all Korean people to seek a peaceful road to the reunification of their country.

112. Similarly, in Cyprus the illegal presence of foreign troops stands in the way of an already defined basis for a peaceful solution which would ensure the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and independence of that island.

113. The people of Afghanistan and Kampuchea also find the internal evolution of their societies interfered with and distorted by the interplay of outside interests. The departure of foreign troops from these countries remains a necessary pre-condition of the recovery by their peoples of their sovereignty and independence.

114. For over two years now the imperatives of peace have not prevailed between the Iranian and Iraqi peoples. We continue to believe that the possibilities exist for a peaceful solution to their problems and that no means whatsoever should be spared to achieve this end.

115. In the Falkland Islands the resort to force was a tragic outcome of the failure to use the processes of consultation and negotiation recommended by the United Nations. We hope to see wiser counsels prevail in the future.

116. In these and other instances, policies of aggression and force clearly continue to play their dominant role in the relations among nations. The yearning for peace, so urgent and pervasive in the hearts and

minds of peoples throughout the world, has not yet been translated into the actions and policies of nations. And yet the mechanisms for peace exist, here at the United Nations, through regional concertation and through national initiatives. We need to muster the courage and tenacity to make a thrust for peace before the increasing resort to force overwhelms us completely and leads us to an irreversible catastrophe. Malta remains deeply committed to this endeavour.

117. Mr. DOST (Afghanistan): May I, on behalf of the delegation of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, congratulate Mr. Hollai of Hungary on his election to the high office of the presidency of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. His election to that important post is not only a recognition of his professional and human qualities, but also a well-deserved tribute to his country, with which we enjoy the best of relations. These relations were further consolidated by the signing 10 days ago of the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between our two countries during the visit of Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and President of the Revolutionary Council, to his fraternal country. I hope that under his presidency the current session of the General Assembly will make a notable contribution to the cause of strengthening international peace and security. I should like to assure him that the Afghan delegation will fully co-operate with him and help him in every way to discharge his duties. May I also express my appreciation to his predecessor, the prominent Iraqi statesman and diplomat, Mr. Kittani, for his skilful conduct of the deliberations of the last few sessions of the General Assembly. I should further like to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts to make the United Nations more efficient in maintaining peace and security.

118. At the thirty-sixth session, during the general debate [8th meeting], we spoke at length about two trends in the world arena. Since then the confrontation of these two trends has acquired a still more acute and tense character.

119. Numerous facts in international affairs clearly testify to a growth in the aggressive tendencies of the foreign policy of the imperialist forces, the United States of America in the first place. The imperialists are engaged in all-round psychological and material preparations for war, carrying on the arms race on an unprecedented scale and building up their military strength both qualitatively and quantitatively. Their interference in the affairs of sovereign States is being expanded, special forces are being set up for armed intervention, their military presence in various parts of the world is being increased, old bases are being modernized and new ones are being established. One of the negative consequences of that policy is the fact that the non-aligned developing countries are becoming more and more involved in the ruinous arms race, which undermines their struggle to achieve economic independence and social progress.

120. The imperialist policy of the use of force has dragged the whole world closer to the edge of nuclear catastrophe. That is an alarming reality of the present-day situation, which poses a serious threat to the very

existence of all countries and peoples, large or small, developed or developing.

121. This threat urgently demands the collective efforts of all peoples of the entire globe to put an end to the arms race, particularly the nuclear one, to prevent the imperialist, adventurist and militarist circles from carrying on their mad drive towards a new war, to improve the international climate, to find solutions to the crucial problems at the negotiation table and to secure peace all over the world. The concern of millions of people over the destiny of mankind was vividly expressed in the statements by most of the delegations during the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament and in the mass manifestations throughout the world.

122. To avert the threat of an outbreak of a thermo-nuclear war is the main and primary task of the United Nations, which was created for the very purpose of preserving peace and preventing the destruction of man's civilization. In a world where attempts are made in some quarters to convince the public of the admissibility of "limited" or "protracted" nuclear war, will the Organization be able to prevent the world from slipping into such a war? We hold the strong opinion that it is within our ability to avert the danger of a nuclear holocaust. The policies and the tireless efforts of the peace-loving forces, represented by socialist States and the non-aligned countries, are aimed at that very purpose. It is only natural that we have given our full support to all initiatives and proposals for curbing the arms race and, first of all, the prevention of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We regard the unilateral declaration by the Soviet Union on non-first-use of nuclear weapons as a gigantic step towards reducing the danger of the outbreak of a nuclear confrontation. If complemented by similar declarations by the other nuclear-weapon States, the possibility of such an outbreak would be reduced to naught.

123. We also warmly welcome the two new proposals by the Soviet Union which were advanced in the statement of the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Andrei Gromyko [*13th meeting*], aimed at warding off the threat of nuclear war and achieving the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

124. We earnestly hope that the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly will give a strong impetus to the negotiations on the most urgent concrete problems—halting the arms race and achieving real disarmament—and thus help to consolidate international détente.

125. Countries in different parts of the world are raising more and more insistently the question of adopting and carrying out regional measures aimed at creating more harmonious relations among the countries of their regions and promoting stability, which in turn would strengthen international peace and security.

126. In this connection I should like to say that the armed incursions with the use of sophisticated weaponry into the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan still continue unabated, which aggravates the situation around Afghanistan.

127. The hypocritical and demagogic approach of the imperialist countries, particularly the United

States, the Chinese hegemonists and other reactionary quarters is yet another obstacle to the steady and natural improvement of the situation in the region of South-West Asia. In addition to the previous United States Administration's covert and overt actions, the United States Senate took another provocative decision in recent days on the supply of arms to the bands of terrorists attacking Afghanistan from abroad. This is an act of clear and outright interference in the internal affairs of a State Member of the United Nations and is a blatant violation of international law and all norms governing international relations. It is tantamount to instigating terrorism against a small country and exporting terrorism into that country. It must be firmly condemned, and we believe that the international community will take note of it.

128. We emphatically state to the aforementioned quarters and to all others who still cherish the illusion of turning back the wheels of history in Afghanistan that our heroic nation has determined its destiny once and for all and is resolved to construct an independent, democratic and just system. With or without the obstructionist designs adopted by the enemies of our revolution, the glorious march towards those goals will continue unhindered.

129. As for the present-day situation inside my country, the corrective actions and principled line of the Revolutionary Government have yielded the fruits which were expected. A greater degree of stability and normalcy has made possible the speedy recovery of economic and social activities. As a result of the recent call made by Babrak Karmal, large numbers of Afghan nationals who had gone to the neighbouring countries for various reasons have returned to their homes. Had certain quarters not created obstacles, the number of returnees would have been much higher. More and more sectors of the society are now rallying behind their Government and taking an active part in the defence of the revolution and its achievements.

130. The mercenaries and hirelings of imperialism and international reactionary forces are suffering severe blows; most of their hideouts have been wiped out and their arms captured. Needless to say, banditry and terrorism would have long since vanished were they not supported, financed and equipped from external quarters. These interventions and incursions constitute the cause of instability and differences in our region which can and must be tackled by peaceful means, through negotiations. Time has demonstrated the validity of our approach to the problem and has clearly shown that our initiatives put forward on 15 May 1980¹ and 24 August 1981² are flexible and realistic enough to be a sound basis for a comprehensive settlement of the situation and normalization of relations among neighbouring countries.

131. We shall continuously and sincerely pursue our efforts for the resolution of the situation around Afghanistan. As was stated by Babrak Karmal at the ninth plenum of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan:

"We have declared many a time and once again proclaim that it is our desire to make our relations with our eastern and western neighbours, that is,

Pakistan and Iran, normal and even friendly on the basis of good will and reason through constructive talks. ... the Geneva talks showed that foundations existed for the achievement of agreements acceptable to both sides on all of the issues concerning an all-sided political solution, and that only good will and understanding were needed to solve the existing differences. We are ready, as far as the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is concerned, to meet them half-way in order to improve conditions in the region and to normalize our relations with them."

132. We express our appreciation to the Secretary-General and his personal representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, for their efforts to bring the parties concerned closer in order to achieve a negotiated settlement, and assure them of our continued co-operation.

133. The question of strengthening security and easing tension in the Indian Ocean has acquired great urgency in the past few years. The right of the nations of that region to peaceful life and their desire to concentrate their efforts on their economic and social development have been jeopardized by the increased military activity of the United States, by its constant blocking of the efforts to convene the Conference on the Indian Ocean. We have invariably supported the desire of the coastal States of the Indian Ocean to turn that region into a zone of peace where all foreign military bases would be dismantled and no one would threaten the security, independence and sovereignty of the States in the region. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan resolutely supports the holding of the Conference in Colombo on 9 May 1983 as proposed by non-aligned countries that are members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean. We reaffirm our support for the proposal by the President of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar, Mr. Ratsiraka, for the convening of a summit conference of hinterland and littoral States of the Indian Ocean region, to be held in Antananarivo.

134. In the context of regional security my delegation speaks out in favour of the initiative of the Mongolian People's Republic on the signing of a convention on mutual non-aggression and non-use of force in the Asian and Pacific region.³ The decision and proposals of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the three Indo-Chinese countries held in Ho Chi Minh City on 6 and 7 July 1982 [see A/37/334] constitute a concrete and realistic programme for the normalization of the situation in that region of South-East Asia. These steps, if accepted, will undoubtedly contribute to a substantial improvement in the political climate in the region in favour of peace, stability and co-operation between the Indo-Chinese countries and the countries members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

135. The recent setting up of the so-called Coalition Government is but a scheme of China in collusion with United States imperialism and other reactionary forces to cover up the abominable face of the genocidal Pol Pot clique and to be used as an instrument against the rebirth of the Kampuchean people and for interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, to create tension and to halt the tendency towards reconciliation and co-operation in the region.

136. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan also supports the proposals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the reunification of Korea in a peaceful and democratic way as a constructive step towards peace and stability in the region.

137. After over three decades of wars and confrontations the situation in the Middle East has acquired still further explosive dimensions due to the aggressive, expansionist and racist nature of the Zionist entity supported by United States imperialism. During the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon the world was outraged to witness how far Washington's support of Tel Aviv's aggressive plans spreads and how disproportionately great are the ambitions of the Israeli leaders, who are ready to use every means available to achieve their delirious over-ambitious aims regarding the creation of Greater Israel.

138. The hideous Israeli crimes of genocide and massacre of the Palestinian civilians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in west Beirut will forever remain unsurpassed in the history of mankind. But the Israeli aggressors and their American patrons must remember that the popular movement based on the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians cannot be suppressed by brute force. The Palestinian people will never be crushed by an aggressor. Their just cause will eventually triumph. It is evident that the aggressor would not be able to behave so brazenly if its partner in strategic co-operation were not the biggest imperialist Power. That is why the United States shares responsibility for the horrendous crimes that have been and are being committed in Lebanon.

139. Israel's designs to win an easy victory by forcing the Palestinians to surrender proved to be miscalculations. The aggressors met with valiant resistance from the Palestinians, the patriotic Lebanese forces and the Syrian armed forces, whose courage has won them admiration.

140. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, as a staunch supporter of the Palestinian and Arab cause, once again expresses its all-round solidarity with our Palestinian brothers in their heroic struggle. We demand the immediate and complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied Arab territories and restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to establish their national State in Palestine.

141. Afghanistan believes that it is now imperative to start a collective search for an all-embracing, just and realistic settlement in the Middle East within the framework of a specially convened international conference as set out in the Brezhnev six-point plan [see A/37/457]. We have also noted with interest the relevant outcome of the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez [see A/37/696].

142. At its thirty-seventh session the General Assembly is expected to bring pressure to bear on the Zionists and their imperialist supporters, particularly United States imperialism, with a view to ensuring full compliance with the repeated calls of the international community.

143. Since the beginning of the unfortunate armed conflict between Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, the continuation of which will seriously affect

not only those two neighbouring Islamic countries but the entire region, we have sincerely hoped that the Governments of Iran and Iraq will desist from actions that may cause the situation to worsen still further and that they will find peaceful ways and means of resolving their disputes.

144. We express our appreciation for the work done by the Secretary-General and his mission in this regard. We urge him to continue his efforts aimed at finding a just and peaceful solution to this tragic conflict.

145. As in the past, Afghanistan expresses its full support for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and non-aligned status of the Republic of Cyprus.

146. We stand side by side with our African brothers in their struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and *apartheid* and for independence, social justice and development.

147. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan strongly supports the people of Namibia, which, under the leadership of their sole legitimate representative, SWAPO, are struggling against the *apartheid* régime's occupation.

148. We reaffirm our solidarity with the heroic peoples of South Africa in their struggle to free themselves from the abhorrent system of *apartheid*. We resolutely condemn the South African racist régime's continued aggression against Angola and other front-line States and its attempts to topple the Governments of some independent African countries, particularly that of Seychelles.

Mrs. Astorga (Nicaragua), Vice-President, took the Chair.

149. In our view the Assembly should take action to increase assistance to the national liberation movements with a view to accelerating exercise of the right of self-determination and the independence of peoples still under alien and colonial domination.

150. It is in this context that we express support for the struggle of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic for full sovereignty over its territory.

151. We are in solidarity with the people of Puerto Rico trying to exercise their right to self-determination and full independence.

152. My delegation reaffirms the full support of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan for Mauritius's sovereignty over Diego García island.

153. We also strongly demand the return of the Malagasy Islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India to the Democratic Republic of Madagascar.

154. It is our belief that the Malvinas Islands are an integral part of the Argentine Republic.

155. The situation in Central and Latin America and in the Caribbean has been further aggravated as a result of the interventionist, aggressive policies of the United States.

156. While strongly condemning the sinister plots of the United States Administration in the region, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan expresses full solidarity with the revolutionary peoples of Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, El Salvador

and other peoples of Latin America in their struggle against United States imperialism.

157. The present state of the international economic situation constitutes a source of deep concern for the developing countries. The reluctance of certain capitalist countries regarding the launching of a genuine dialogue with the developing countries within the framework of the United Nations has so far prevented the achievement of agreements on structural changes in the mechanism of international economic relations. The prevailing uncertainty about the world economy clearly shows the essential need for a new and just international economic order that would benefit all. Therefore no effort should be spared within the framework of the United Nations and within the regional organizations to overcome the disparities of the present situation. That situation, coupled with the economic policies adopted by many Western countries, places serious constraint for the developing countries, attempts to attain the growth rates established in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade [resolution 35/56, annex]. This adverse impact has been particularly grave for the least developed land-locked countries. Their growth rate has been retarded, and they have witnessed an actual decline in their per capita gross domestic product in recent years. While in 1970 the average per capita gross national product of the least developed countries was 36.3 per cent of that of all developing countries, it declined further, at the end of 1979, to 29.1 per cent.

158. Compared with the average annual growth of 3.1 per cent in the gross domestic product of all developing countries in the past decade, the achievement of the least developed countries was even less than one per cent during the same period. We thus emphasize the need for special measures, large-scale assistance and continued support by the international community for the development of the least developed countries and we stress the need for full and timely implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries adopted in Paris.⁴

159. The distinctive and disadvantageous position of land-locked countries and their need for adequate transport and transit facilities in the promotion of their trade and economic development has been recognized by various United Nations agencies and international conferences, and numerous resolutions have been adopted specifically to overcome those problems. However, it is regrettable that effective and full implementation of those decisions, including the establishment of a Special Fund for Land-locked Developing Countries, has not materialized.

160. We stress the importance of economic co-operation among developing countries as a means of promoting the rational and efficient use of human, material and financial resources available for the progress of developing countries. I should also like to stress that the international community should generate the necessary pressure to put an end to the arms race, in order to release the enormous resources badly needed for development programmes for the developing countries.

161. Realistically, it would be impossible to analyse in one statement all the economic, social, political and security problems facing our world. It is even less possible to suggest the solutions required for those problems. Nevertheless, due attention must be paid to those which are outstanding and remain global in character.

162. To underline the approach taken by the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to those problems, allow me to quote briefly from a statement by Babrak Karmal:

“The Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, in full harmony with its decisive revolutionary domestic policy, follows a principled, peaceful path in its relations with all countries of the world. Afghanistan is and will remain a non-aligned nation. We will profoundly and actively support the principles of positive and active non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, the policy of détente and general disarmament. And we will fight against warmongers, against old and neo-colonialism, against imperialism and zionism, against fascism and racism, against racial discrimination and *apartheid*, together with the peace-loving forces in a vast global front.”

163. Mr. BOLOKOR (Nigeria): On behalf of the people and Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I extend to Mr. Hollai our warmest congratulations on his election to and assumption of the office of President of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. His election is eloquent testimony to his admirable personal qualities as well as an honour to the Hungarian People's Republic, with which, happily, my country, Nigeria, enjoys very cordial relations. I am quite confident that under his able and wise guidance, our deliberations at this session will be resoundingly successful. I assure him of the full co-operation of my delegation in the discharge of the heavy responsibilities of his office. May I also pay a tribute to his predecessor in office, Mr. Kittani of Iraq, who presided over the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly with great dedication and distinction. The able manner in which he guided the proceedings of the thirty-sixth session when grave issues of war and peace were at stake is a credit to him and to his country, Iraq. I also wish to congratulate Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar on his well-deserved election to the exalted post of Secretary-General. His election is thoroughly deserved. It is not only a personal achievement for him and for his country, but one in which we of the third world can collectively take justifiable pride. In the short time he has been in office, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar has already shown great courage and a strong commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We are indeed fortunate to have the services of such a distinguished and accomplished international statesman. He has assumed office at a most difficult period in the life of the United Nations, when confrontation has replaced détente in relations between the super-Powers, when the world economy is sinking into depression and when naked aggression rather than peaceful coexistence and respect for sovereignty has become the order of the day in international relations. I pledge to him the full support of my delegation in

the execution of the onerous task placed on his shoulders.

164. The rapid and seemingly inexorable deterioration in international relations is of great concern to my delegation. Many of the global issues that have plagued the Organization for many years have persisted in the unwholesome atmosphere of confrontation and repeated aggression. There is no doubt that the great majority of nations are dedicated to peace. Nevertheless, one is left with the sad feeling that all our efforts are an exercise in futility since none of the major issues of our time appears to have been resolved. The litany of political and economic crises which now plague the world is formidable and spans every region of the world.

165. Détente between the super-Powers has suffered a severe setback. There has been a resurgence of cold war attitudes—a situation which has been further aggravated by the virtual state of collapse of the international economic system. The spirit of internationalism and the interdependence of nations of the world have been gravely impaired. Nations, particularly the big Powers, are now resorting increasingly to the use or threat of use of force in defence of what they perceive to be their national interests. The provisions of the Charter on the settlement of international disputes and on the maintenance of international peace and security are being brushed aside and ignored by the big Powers in pursuit of their narrow interests.

166. In this present climate of uncertainty, the Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization [4/37/1], called for measures to strengthen the peace-keeping machinery of the United Nations system and to develop the United Nations as a more effective and viable instrument for resolving disputes among States. He has called our attention to the propensity of the big Powers to bypass the United Nations whenever it suits them and to the necessity to return to the United Nations as the primary international negotiating forum. His warnings are timely and should be heeded by all Member States.

167. We are gravely concerned in particular about the areas of tension which continue to exist in Africa. We attach the utmost importance to peace and stability in Africa, without which our efforts to develop our countries will continue to be frustrated. We are concerned about the continued intervention in African affairs of the big Powers and their attempt to turn Africa into a cold-war theatre. Africa's efforts to solve its problems in Western Sahara and the Horn of Africa continue to be undermined by the intervention of the big Powers. We deplore and view with resentment these unwarranted interventions in our internal affairs and the consequent intensification of intra-African disputes. Whenever it has seemed we are close to a peaceful settlement of disputes among African States, the process of peace has been gravely weakened and undermined by the intervention of extra-African Powers. Weapons of mass destruction continue to find their way into our continent in the guise of foreign military assistance. In order to maintain their hegemony in Africa, the big Powers have resorted to so-called military assistance, which has increased sharply over all other forms of aid in recent years.

168. In addition, there has been an insidious attempt by external forces to weaken and destroy our continental organization, the OAU, which they regard as inimical to their dominant influence in our continent. The fact is the OAU, now facing a serious assault by our detractors, has contributed immensely to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region. By bringing Africa together and forging bonds of unity within the continent, the OAU has contributed to the fulfilment of provisions of the Charter of the United Nations on the role of regional organizations in resolving regional disputes.

169. Let me assure our detractors now plotting daily the demise of our organization that we will emerge from our present crisis stronger than ever. In the past our continental organization has demonstrated its resilience and capacity by withstanding several serious internal crises. Africa remains committed to the maintenance and continued stability of its continental organization, and collectively we are determined to repair the damage and the setback which it has recently suffered.

170. My delegation is extremely disturbed and distressed by the stalemate in the negotiations on the independence of Namibia. I believe that we have shown the utmost restraint and understanding in the negotiations with the contact group. It is not necessary to go over the ground covered in those negotiations. However, it is necessary to remind the Assembly that *apartheid*, South Africa's Mandate over Namibia, has been terminated by the United Nations [resolution 2145 (XXI)] and the International Court of Justice. South Africa's continued occupation of Namibia is illegal and in defiance of the unanimous decision of the Assembly, which gives protection to all nations.

171. The greatest threat to the survival of the United Nations is the absolute disregard of its decisions by a few recalcitrant nations. The saddest aspect of the tragedy being played out in the southern African region is that the *apartheid* régime draws comfort, solace and support from the same countries as arrogate to themselves the role of defender of democratic freedoms. How can those Western countries explain to the world why, in spite of resolution 435 (1978), sponsored by the contact group, adopted by the Security Council and unanimously endorsed by the General Assembly, effective pressure cannot be brought to bear on South Africa to withdraw from Namibia as a prelude to the implementation of the United Nations peace plan for Namibia?

172. Last year the impression was created that the Namibia issue was very near solution. It is now crystal clear to all that a peaceful solution of the Namibian problem is as far away as ever. It is now obvious to us that the strategy is to wear us down to a point where we shall throw up our hands and say: "We have tried. Let Namibia fend for itself." This strategy fails to take account of the tide of history, of our resolve to rid our continent of the last lingering vestiges of colonialism and oppression, and of our rendezvous with destiny.

173. A tenuous effort is being made to predicate the independence of Namibia on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. This is unfortunate, and

we reject this unwarranted and arrogant demand; it has nothing to do with the legitimate right of Namibia to self-determination. Right now South Africa is occupying by force a portion of the territory of the independent State of Angola, which the foreign forces are there to protect. But for the decision which Angola took, in the exercise of its sovereignty, to invite the foreign forces, *apartheid* South Africa would have recolonized it. We call upon the Western Powers to support the principle of self-determination for Namibia as a demonstration of their sincerity. We maintain that *apartheid* South Africa's occupation of Namibia is illegal, as well as contemptuous of the United Nations. We believe that the people of Namibia, under the leadership of SWAPO, are entitled to their freedom and the pursuit of happiness. We shall persist in this belief and we shall continue to fight for this belief until our brothers in Namibia are free.

174. Inside South Africa the racist régime has intensified its reign of terror against the blacks of that country, who are still being denied their basic freedoms. Repression and suppression of the blacks have continued with unabated rigour. We have warned often enough that the racist policies of the *apartheid* régime represent a grave danger to peace and stability, not only in Africa but throughout the world; for peace and freedom are indivisible. The world cannot be truly free and peaceful when parts of it remain in bondage. Africa is committed to the eradication of racism in South Africa. Nor will it be deterred by the attempts of the racist régime to destabilize and undermine the independence of its neighbours. We call on the Assembly to redouble its efforts and bring the necessary pressure to bear on the *apartheid* régime by imposing economic sanctions on it. Each time we call for economic sanctions against South Africa certain Western countries demur on the ground that sanctions do not work. When, however, the vital interests of the West are at stake sanctions are invoked, as they have been over Afghanistan, Poland and the Falkland Islands.

175. The present parlous state of the world economy is a vindication of the warning that many developing countries have issued for many years from this rostrum. Today, in every country of the world, the term "depression" is very well understood. At this time last year we were describing the economic phenomenon that we were experiencing as recession. This year we call it depression. Very few countries have registered any appreciable growth in their economic activities during the past year; as a matter of fact, the economies of most countries have been badly ravaged. The consequences of this decline in economic activity are massive unemployment, incredibly high levels of global inflation, high debt-servicing ratio for many developing countries, sharp falls in commodity prices, unstable exchange rates and protectionism in international trade. The slow-down in economic activity is global. The present state of the world economy provides ample proof that our economies are interdependent.

176. Agriculture has all but collapsed in many parts of Africa, due in part to drought and, of course, to the unreasonably low commodity prices, including the high cost of agricultural machinery. The fact is that many countries in Africa spend a significant

portion of their meagre foreign exchange earnings on massive food importations to stave off hunger. Very few developing countries can afford, after paying for food imports, to buy capital goods for industries. The net result is that developed countries are able to market only a small proportion of their manufactured goods in these countries, and so the vicious economic circle persists.

177. The reluctance of the developed countries to embrace the new international economic order so necessary for combatting the global economic crisis is deeply regrettable.

178. We are convinced that the present negative trends in the world economy can be reversed. Since they affect all countries, action should be taken collectively to resolve them. It is therefore a matter of deep regret that the prevailing mood in the developed economies today is a negative one, as illustrated by declines in the flow of official development assistance, a clearly expressed preference for bilateralism over multilateralism which has seriously undermined the integrity of the multilateral institutions of the United Nations and, of course, the lack of encouraging progress in negotiations on various questions relating to international economic co-operation for development. These trends undermine the development process of developing countries, but events have also shown that the short-sighted and unilateral policies pursued by certain developed countries are self-defeating even for those countries.

179. Without losing sight of the need for a fundamental restructuring of the world economy, my delegation would like to join in the call already made for reviving the waning spirit of international economic co-operation in the interest of steady global development and in particular the accelerated development of developing countries. My delegation is of the view that opportunities for further enhancing international economic relations still exist. It is auspicious that two international meetings on trade and development are scheduled to take place within the next few months, namely, the GATT Ministerial Meeting next November and the sixth session of UNCTAD in mid-1983. My delegation believes that these meetings can contribute immensely to the reactivation of international trade and improved trading prospects for developing countries, if the countries of the North will show a more positive attitude regarding the evident need to make the necessary structural adjustments.

180. Similarly, the present structure of international monetary and financial institutions leaves much to be desired and calls for urgent reforms. My delegation does not underestimate the contribution being made by international financial institutions, such as the World Bank group, to the development of developing countries; but there are also many areas requiring a better response by these institutions to the special needs of developing countries. The very stiff conditionality of International Monetary Fund lending, for instance, is resented by developing countries. While we are not suggesting that the principles of sound financial management should be compromised, we can see no advantage in the application of medicine which leaves the patient either worse off than before or dead.

181. With the present credit squeeze unlikely to ease immediately, the need for expanding the capital base of the World Bank has become more urgent. It is also timely to underline the inadequacy of present development aid, as the performance of donor countries has not gone beyond one half of the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product solemnly agreed to in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. We urge them, therefore, not only to step up official assistance to the poorer nations but also to ensure that an increasing proportion of that assistance flows through the development organizations of the United Nations system, which are currently experiencing critical resources problems.

182. The development problems which confront the international community today call for prompt and equitable solutions. Important initiatives need to be taken with a view to alleviating, *inter alia*, the critical food shortages in several developing countries, the slow pace of their industrialization, and the low level of technological attainment, for which the speedy conclusion of negotiations for the international code of conduct on the transfer of technology and the establishment of long-term arrangements of the United Nations financing system for science and technology for development acquire special significance.

183. A feeling of despair and despondency must be avoided, despite the present mood. We should not, in fact, overlook the bright spots in international co-operation which, happily, have resulted from certain efforts by the developing countries.

184. Last year, much was said about the epoch-making event of establishing a systematic framework for the promotion of economic co-operation among developing countries, through the adoption of the Caracas Programme of Action.⁵ My delegation is gratified to note that that initiative has been further consolidated over the past few months, through concrete action aimed at the mutual economic advancement of States members of the Group of 77. We believe that this process will contribute to the strengthening of the individual and collective self-reliance of developing countries.

185. All countries, developed and developing, must show a positive determination to grapple with the present economic problems in a global and concerted manner. In this connection my delegation recognizes the need for ongoing negotiations in various international forums to proceed unhindered and with the requisite good will and understanding, particularly by the industrialized countries. We hope it will be possible to launch global negotiations at this session of the General Assembly, especially as much precious time has been lost over peripheral issues, apparently to gain certain advantages, when what is needed is for every party to go to the negotiating table with an open mind. Now, my delegation hopes that with the flexibility and spirit of compromise shown by the Group of 77 through the proposal submitted last June, our partners will be more forthcoming on the question of launching the global negotiations without further delay. Three years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 34/138, it is surely time the international community took that long-awaited step for laying the basis for a more just system of interna-

tional economic relations, capable of supporting the steady growth of the world economy and particularly the accelerated and self-reliant development of developing countries.

186. In June this year Nigeria participated in the deliberations of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in the hope that ways and means could be found to halt and reverse the extremely costly and dangerous arms race. After five weeks of intensive negotiations we discovered to our utter disappointment that the nuclear-weapon States, in particular, were neither willing nor ready to listen to the voice of reason and sanity. We recall the massive demonstration last June in New York against the immense danger which nuclear weapons pose to human survival. We listened to representatives of innumerable non-governmental organizations voicing their fears that the current trend of the arms race might result in nuclear war by accident, miscalculation or even design. We should not be insensitive to those justified fears of humanity.

187. Yet what did we achieve after five weeks of debate and negotiations? We have neither halted the arms race nor set in motion a single disarmament measure. It is true that at the second special session devoted to disarmament the General Assembly launched the World Disarmament Campaign and increased the United Nations Fellowship Programme on Disarmament from 20 annual awards to 25. Those modest achievements scarcely touched the heart of the matter. Year after year, we helplessly watch the world's military budget leap to higher and higher levels. It is now of the order of \$US 650 billion annually. Not one nuclear Power believes that its nuclear and conventional stockpile of arms has attained the optimum level necessary to guarantee its security. It is obvious that the more sophisticated and enormous the quantum of armaments at the disposal of each State, the less secure the State possessing such arms feels. What purpose is there in pursuing at such colossal cost an unattainable mirage? The world feels more insecure today than at any other time in the past.

188. The increasing reliance of nations on force rather than on negotiations and the good offices of the United Nations for the peaceful settlement of disputes is the root cause of our feelings of insecurity, coupled with the economic disaster, which has afflicted all nations. While the world spends more than \$US 650 billion yearly on armaments, mass unemployment, hunger, disease and ignorance take a heavy toll on two thirds of the world's population. It is a great indictment of our sense of social justice that our fellow human beings in the third world should die of hunger and of disease that we could wipe out at minimal cost, just because our misplaced sense of security compels us to spend billions of dollars on armaments which breed more fear and insecurity.

189. If those vast sums of money currently ploughed into the unproductive arms race were channelled into the economic and social sectors, their multiplier effect would result in vast social and economic activities that would provide millions of jobs, demolish protectionism in trade, expand demand and bring back prosperity to all parts of the world.

190. Is it not grossly immoral for the nuclear Powers to destroy us in a war intended to expand their spheres of influence? Our greatest desire is for peace in the world, especially on the part of peace-loving peoples who have no expansionist ambitions or designs. As we are firmly convinced that it is impossible to limit a nuclear war or to win it, we affirm that the only realistic option is to prevent it. That is why we have repeatedly advocated a nuclear freeze as a first step towards significant nuclear disarmament. We are motivated by the desire to halt the dangerous arms race that is inexorably dragging the world towards self-extinction. We are inclined to believe that a measure of parity has been achieved in the destructive power of the two blocs and that neither side, fully aware of the fact that it cannot win a nuclear war, will be so propelled by a death-wish as to launch a nuclear attack. My delegation therefore calls upon the super-Powers to agree to a freeze, followed by a verifiable comprehensive test ban leading to talks on arms reduction. With good will and faith neither side will find this process detrimental to its national interests.

191. While we were busy deliberating on the great threat to our survival posed by the rapid buildup of lethal weapons, the devastating war machine of Israel was reducing large areas of Lebanon to rubble with disastrous consequences for the lives of innocent human beings unfortunate enough to reside in that region of the Middle East. The Israelis, in an arrogant display of power, callously ignored the pleas of the Organization for a halt to that butchery. For four long months, the Israelis laid waste the sovereign State of Lebanon in utter contempt of the resolutions of the Security Council calling for a cease-fire. In historical perspective, that barbaric act of Israel's is reminiscent of the Nazi "final solution of the Jewish question". The expansionist propensity of Israel and its penchant for settling disputes by force are inconsistent with the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. The horror of the massacre at Sabra and Shatila sends chills down the spine. For a people that has gone through the horrible crucible of a genocide to be associated, even in a distant way, with the pogrom of Sabra and Shatila is a sad irony of history.

192. We believe that the Israelis are entitled to secure borders within the State of Israel. However, Israel's persistent refusal to realize that it cannot continue to enjoy legitimacy and rights based on the Organization's Partition Plan for Palestine [resolution 181 (II)] and, at the same time, deny corresponding legitimacy and rights of nationhood under the same plan to the Palestinians is the greatest obstacle to any lasting peace in the Middle East. The Palestinian Arabs must and should be enabled to have their own independent sovereign State. Nigeria firmly supports the legitimate right of the Palestinians to a homeland of their own.

193. It is a matter for regret that the fratricidal and unnecessary war between Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, two non-aligned States, still lingers on in spite of the efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to put an end to it. We once again call upon our friends in Iran and Iraq to throw aside the weapons of war and strive to settle their differences by peaceful means.

194. We are also gravely concerned over the intensification of other local and regional conflicts in Latin America and Asia and the immense suffering imposed on the peoples of those regions by the conflicts. As a non-aligned country, Nigeria condemns all foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the States in those regions. We support fully the efforts of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to consolidate their national sovereignty and to develop their political and economic systems, without undue foreign intervention or pressure on them.

195. In conclusion, let us resolve to adhere to the provisions of the Charter by faithfully abiding by the decisions of all organs of the United Nations. Let us resolve to eschew force in the settlement of our disputes. Let us strive to be open and candid in our bilateral and multilateral relations, so as to create an atmosphere of trust in which peace will reign supreme and the Organization will blossom.

196. Mr. TOURÉ (Guinea) (*interpretation from French*): It is with real pleasure that, on behalf of the delegation of the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea, we should like to extend to Mr. Hollai our warm congratulations on his well-deserved election to serve as President of this thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. My country maintains with the People's Republic of Hungary the best relations of friendly and fraternal co-operation. We cannot doubt that Mr. Hollai's election will indeed contribute to the crowning of our work with just solutions to our many concerns. In the quest for these just solutions, the President can be assured that the delegation of the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea will be available at all times to ensure our fruitful co-operation. We should also like to convey to the Secretary-General the warm encouragement and high hopes of President Ahmed Sékou Touré for a successful discharge of the lofty tasks he has assumed as the head of the Organization. The son of a third world country, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar will, with his recognized wisdom, be able to deal with the pressing problems confronting the international community.

197. This session is taking place at a particularly difficult and disquieting moment in international life. The aggravation of political tensions, to which has been added a chronic and testing economic recession, is the hallmark of our time.

198. Thirty-seven years ago, on behalf of perceptive humanity, the peoples of the world endorsed the Charter in San Francisco, thereby committing themselves:

"... to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind...

"... to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

"to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

Never had a human act and the legitimate will of peoples raised so much hope, confidence and faith in the future of nations. Between 1945 and 1982, 37 years have gone by; 37 years of thought, action and experi-

ence, 37 years of efforts crowned, to be sure, with victories, but more often ending with failure, disappointment and bitterness.

199. This session is thus being held at a moment when the international situation is from various standpoints extremely unstable. The tragedy being acted out here and there demonstrates to the world the degree of anguish and the urgency of the responsibilities that must be assumed.

200. On 29 June last, at the twelfth special session [26th meeting] President Ahmed Sékou Touré stated from this very rostrum, in this connection:

"War, local though it may be in a given geographic area of the world, is always universal in scope.

"War is raging in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Asia. Lebanon is under attack by Israel, and Angola by the Republic of South Africa. In Namibia, in Western Sahara, ... in Afghanistan, ... in El Salvador ... the fires of war have not been extinguished. Human lives are lost and property is destroyed. Violence continues threatening the life of man and the well-being of society.

"International forums remain indifferent or powerless... Is the unhappiness of some creating the happiness of others?"

201. The outrageous attitude and the extraordinary stubbornness of racist South Africa, which is continuing not only to oppress and exploit the Coloured people of South Africa, but is obstinately maintaining a state of war along the Angolan border and in southern Angola and is illegally keeping Namibia under its colonialist domination, can be cited in this connection. The Namibian question is a question of rights, the inalienable right of peoples to independence. There is no ambiguity as to the correct or incorrect exercise of this right.

202. Alibis arising from the Cuban presence in Angola, used to perpetuate the grip on Namibia, are unacceptable to our delegation. The Cuban presence in Angola falls within the sovereign rights of the Peoples Republic of Angola. Angola cannot be told to renounce that sovereign right. The open aggression of South African troops perpetrated against Angola is inadmissible and repugnant. It is even more intolerable to link that act of aggression to the Namibian question.

203. One can never say enough about the violations of the Charter and the open arrogance of the proponents of the shameful system of *apartheid* in South Africa, maintained with the complicity of certain Powers.

204. It would be appropriate now to reiterate our appeal to the international community to give material, moral and diplomatic support to SWAPO and to all the front-line States, which are the victims of the continuing acts of aggression perpetrated by the South African régime. The Government of the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea considers that in view of the prevailing situation in southern Africa, the United Nations must demand the full and immediate implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) for the decolonization and accession to independence of Namibia, of which SWAPO is and remains the sole legitimate representative.

205. Elsewhere, we must recall here the deep concern my country, the Revolutionary People's Republic

of Guinea, feels concerning Israel's arrogance in the Middle East. It is high time for the State of Israel to face the obvious and to understand that its peace, its development, its survival, reside neither in its military policy, nor in war, but rather in a peaceful and speedy settlement of the Palestinian problem. Israel's obstinate pursuit of a policy of aggression, expansion and confiscation and unbridled and systematic Judaization of Arab territories that it has been occupying by force dangerously jeopardizes its own future.

206. It is time the world recognized that the Palestinian people, under the aegis of the PLO, has the right to a land, to a country, to a homeland; and that Al Quds Al Sharif should have an international status which alone is compatible with its threefold religious calling.

207. The problems of the Middle East and those of southern Africa are obviously not the only concerns of our peoples.

208. Africa, through its continental organization, is currently going through a serious internal crisis. This points to the urgent necessity of finding a just solution to the problem of Western Sahara. We consider that the *Ad Hoc* Committee established at the eighteenth session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government should pursue its work to organize a referendum in the Sahara. The convening of a special session of heads of State and Government would also help to ease the crisis now undermining and jeopardizing the moral standing of the OAU.

209. To talk about African problems is to talk about Chad, Mayotte, the Horn of Africa and the serious worldwide economic recession, of which Africa is one of the main victims.

210. Our delegation notes with some satisfaction the beginning of an internal improvement in Chad that may lead to political stability and the strengthening of national unity. It is appropriate now to appeal to all men of goodwill to support the efforts of the Council of State of the Republic of Chad, so that the work of national reconciliation can be completed.

211. With regard to the Comorian island of Mayotte, my delegation invites both parties to conclude an agreement that would allow the return of that island to the motherland.

212. Another crisis is the deteriorating situation in the Horn of Africa, the gravity of which my delegation has constantly pointed out. Our concern is particularly great in the light of the increasingly obvious intervention of foreign Powers in events in that part of our continent. We call upon the two sister countries, Ethiopia and Somalia, which are embroiled in that conflict to turn to the art of African wisdom: constructive dialogue and mutual tolerance.

213. We must nurture peace where it reigns, restore it where it has been breached, protect it where it is threatened. Tension exists not only in Africa and the Middle East, but also in the Mediterranean basin, in Cyprus, in the Gulf, in Korea, in Afghanistan and in Kampuchea. Only yesterday, in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), such tension flared into open, murderous war.

214. In so far as the situation in Cyprus is concerned, the Government of Guinea encourages and supports all efforts at national reconciliation based on dialogue between the Turkish and Greek communities and respect for territorial integrity and for the unity of the Cypriot people.

215. With regard to the painful conflict between Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Peace Committee continues to do all it can. Despite the exacerbation of hostilities in recent days it will continue its efforts to reach a cease-fire and promote peaceful negotiations between the two Moslem sister countries, which should by all rights be living in peace.

216. Peace remains fragile or threatened in many parts of Asia. Peace is endangered in Korea because of the continued division of that country and foreign interference in the domestic affairs of the Korean people. That people—in the North as in the South—seeks peace, independence and reunification of the country, which should be one and indivisible. My delegation reiterates its appeal to the international community to lend continuing and resolute support to all efforts at a final peaceful settlement of the Korean question. We endorse the idea of turning the current armistice into a peace agreement and effecting the withdrawal of the foreign troops stationed in South Korea, under the aegis of the United Nations. The Government of the Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea approves the conclusions contained in the Lomé Declaration, adopted in June 1982 at the African inter-governmental Conference in support of the reunification of Korea.

217. In Afghanistan and Kampuchea, violation of the fundamental principle of the Charter—non-interference in the domestic affairs of States—which implies the inadmissibility of recourse to force in relations among nations, is today creating tension and war. It is up to the people of Afghanistan alone to determine freely its domestic and external policies, without any pressure or interference.

218. With reference to Kampuchea, my delegation considers that a solution to this problem will emerge from the sincere adherence of all citizens of that country, without exception, to a minimal programme. In this connection, the legitimacy embodied by Prince Sihanouk is one of the components that must be taken into account.

219. Although the guns have been stilled in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), there is reason to fear that peace there remains fragile and at risk. Recent events in the South Atlantic prompt us to support the idea of negotiations between Argentina and the United Kingdom, under United Nations auspices, in search of a peaceful solution to the question.

220. This rapid review of some of the problems affecting peace and stability in the world should serve to indicate that we are indeed living in anxious and dangerous times, times when the spectre of the apocalypse looming on the horizon troubles the peace of cities.

221. At the twelfth special session of the General Assembly President Ahmed Sékou Touré said referring to the arms race:

"Indeed, is there a decent person who is not increasingly alarmed about the negative consequences, already disastrous in many areas, of this frantic race being carried out at the expense of the lives of all the peoples of the world? It is doubtful that such a person exists, for if he did the internal light that God has given us would already have been extinguished. This is not a problem which concerns the nuclear Powers alone; rather, it is a whole set of concerns about which no statesman of our era can be indifferent.

"What actually is threatening peace? It is the practice of colonialism, racism and *apartheid*, hegemonism; the downgrading of the fate of the so-called materially deprived peoples, total scorn for those peoples; the flouting of international laws which guarantee the right of every people to peace, security and progress."

222. I should not like to give the impression that I have come to this rostrum to talk only about political problems. The order designed, desired and maintained by those customarily called the "great" of this world persists and is being perpetuated. Because of that iniquitous order, the rich keep getting richer, and the poor keep getting poorer. The disappointment of developing countries is justified in the light of the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [resolution 3201 (S-VI)], acclaimed here amid general enthusiasm—a new international economic order which shall correct inequalities and redress existing injustices, and ensure steadily accelerating economic and social development for present and future generations.

223. We note with regret the lack of political will on the part of the industrialized countries to begin global negotiations. However, the many discussions between North and South, the various consultations held, and the adoption of Assembly resolution 34/138 had made it possible for the various parties to perceive a glimmer of hope in so far as the fortunate outcome of those meetings was concerned.

224. It now seems more indispensable than ever for the developing countries to promote a sound and viable co-operation among themselves. An open and frank South-South dialogue would, we are convinced, make it possible for the developing countries to reinforce their unity of action and to reaffirm their common determination to solve the many problems arising from the requirements of integrated and endogenous development.

225. The only possible way to ensure equality in North-South co-operation is to establish fruitful relations of co-operation based on justice and the reciprocity of interests, with the United Nations as the framework for negotiations.

226. Above and beyond economic difficulties, our countries in some cases have to contend with natural disasters, which remain the lot of the third world. In this connection, my delegation believes that the restoration of the Fouta-Djallon Massif in West Africa would make it possible for that subregion of Africa to play its part as a regulator and supplier of water for West Africa and would also make it possible to combat the problem of desertification and its many disastrous consequences. By giving massive aid for the

implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in Africa, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 34/185, the international community would be fulfilling its duty to act in solidarity—indeed, to take preventive action—within the framework of international co-operation.

227. We shall continue to repeat that, in our legitimate desire to perfect the Organization and to make it possible for the majority of Member States to play a full and responsible part in solving the serious problems that afflict the world, we consider it indispensable to begin to reform the structures of the United Nations and its operations. As we said two years ago from this very rostrum, the vitality of any institution depends on its ability to adapt to the times and to events. We still believe that if we wish to make international relations more democratic—and indeed we must do so—the democratization of the Organization is essential. We therefore reiterate our appeal that the Charter be revised so as to ensure equitable representation of all the regions of the world within the discussion and decision-making bodies. It would then be possible to give the United Nations system the power to intervene effectively in the settlement of conflicts by peaceful means and to promote a policy of balanced co-operation among nations on a footing of equality.

228. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

229. Mr. MUÑIZ (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): At the 30th meeting, in exercising the right of reply, the representative of the United Kingdom accused the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina of having given a false account of the history of the Malvinas Islands in the nineteenth century. Although this is not the moment to refer to the historical background, I should like to recall the following.

230. First, from the time it achieved independence until 1833 Argentina exercised effective sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands. Even British sources do not deny that the islands were occupied by force on that date.

231. Secondly, no one can deny that when that illegal occupation occurred the islands were inhabited by Argentines and governed by an authority which was dependent upon Buenos Aires.

232. Thirdly, those authorities and that original population were expelled in their entirety by the forces of occupation and replaced by officials and employees of the British Government and the British company that still has a monopoly over the islands' economy.

233. It is an elementary juridical rule that no greater right can be transmitted than one that is legitimately possessed. Nor is it true that, as the British delegation has claimed, the mere passage of time can change that. We must take into consideration the fact that in the case of the Malvinas Islands we are confronted with a situation in which there is no legitimate relationship between the United Kingdom and the territory.

234. If we were to admit the reasoning of the British delegation, the international community would be obliged to accept also that the descendants of the Israeli settlers illegally established in the Arab territories occupied in 1967 could improve their juridical situa-

tion and perhaps in the future exercise the right of self-determination with regard to those territories.

235. If that absurd reasoning were to be applied to the Malvinas Islands, the United Kingdom would be permitted in the long term to legitimize its aggression against the territorial integrity of the Republic of Argentina. For this reason, it should be considered juridically and politically unacceptable by the United Nations.

236. The representative of the United Kingdom referred lastly to the recent events in the South Atlantic. My comments in this regard will be brief. My delegation and the Assembly still hope that the United Kingdom will give a satisfactory reply to the questions that we asked it on 29 September last [10th meeting] in our reply to the statement made by the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

237. In any case, it might give my British colleague a more accurate idea of the nature and scope of the recent colonial aggression by the United Kingdom against Argentina if he read page 25 of *The Observer Review* of London of 10 October last, in which appear letters from an officer of the British Navy who participated in the intervention force sent by the United Kingdom to the South Atlantic. Lieutenant Tinker, to whom I am alluding, said, among other things:

“Here we are, in 1982, fighting a colonial war on the other side of the world.

“Even if Great Britain reconquers the islands, we shall still have to talk with the Argentines and reach some kind of settlement.”

Lieutenant Tinker added:

“If Great Britain turns the islands into a fortress, it will show the complete hypocrisy of the British Government, which had intended to leave the islanders completely defenceless and to take away their British citizenship.”

238. Mr. LODGE (United States of America): The United States delegation takes strong exception to the remarks made by the current representative of Afghanistan, but it will reserve specific comments on the

continuing tragic occupation of that country by over 100,000 Russian troops for the formal debate on this item by the General Assembly.

239. In the meantime I wish to point out that the so-called Minister for Foreign Affairs speaks not for the courageous people of Afghanistan, not for the suffering 2.5 million refugees who have fled Russian occupation and repression, and not even for the general population of Kabul, the capital city.

240. His own words are the clearest demonstration anyone could require that he speaks not as a master in his own house but as one who represents a régime which remains in power only by force of massive Russian weaponry deployed since December 1979 in that once proud and non-aligned action.

241. Yet this monstrous travesty, this perversion of all United Nations principles, this obscene caricature of democracy, this martyrdom of a noble people, this ruthless and brutal crushing of freedom continues despite three resolutions of the General Assembly adopted by overwhelming and growing majorities which call for the withdrawal of foreign forces, restoration of Afghanistan's non-alignment, self-determination and return with honour of the refugees.

242. The delegation of the United States will have a great deal more to say on this subject at the appropriate time.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-fifth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1980*, document S/13951.

² *Ibid.*, *Thirty-sixth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1981*, document S/14649.

³ See A/36/586.

⁴ See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris, 1-14 September 1981* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.8), part one, sect. A.

⁵ Adopted by the High-Level Conference on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries. See A/36/333 and Corr.1.