



President: Mr. Jorge E. ILLUECA (Panama).

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (*continued*)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The General Assembly will hear an address by Mr. Karl Carstens, President of the Federal Republic of Germany. On behalf of the Assembly, I have the honour to welcome him to the United Nations and to invite him to address the Assembly.

2. Mr. CARSTENS (*Federal Republic of Germany*):* Mr. President, thank you very much for your kind words of welcome. For the first time since the Federal Republic of Germany became a Member of the United Nations its President has the great privilege of addressing this world forum.

3. Ten years ago the Federal Republic of Germany became a Member of the United Nations. My visit today is a mark of the high esteem which the United Nations enjoys in the Federal Republic of Germany. At the same time it underscores a great importance which my country attaches to close co-operation with the United Nations in the pursuit of peace and justice.

4. From the very outset the goal of the Federal Republic of Germany has been peace. This policy is an expression of our political conviction, which stems from the bitter experience of two world wars in one century.

5. This policy also has its roots in the tradition of German philosophers and thinkers who saw peace as the basis for the well-being of every nation. Two hundred years ago one of the great German philosophers, Immanuel Kant of Konigsberg, described the pre-conditions for a world order in a treatise which reflects his deep insight into man's nature. The citizen of the world, as Kant called him, is the starting point and the goal, as it were, the subject and the object of politics and law. Kant saw a close link between a State's internal constitution and its foreign policy. A State's internal constitution, its legal system, is also bound to affect its conduct in relation to others. By the same token, injustice in matters of foreign policy poses a serious threat to the State's internal structure.

6. Throughout history mankind has longed for and dreamed of peace and justice, but to this day the reality is, unfortunately, different. Throughout the centuries, right down to the present day, the world has been torn by war and conflict. Today, the United Nations is the great hope of mankind. Imperfect though it may be, there is no alternative to the United Nations. My country has learnt from the terrible experience of two world wars. We have chosen the path of reconciliation and mutual understanding.

7. Today, the Federal Republic of Germany is a member of the European Community. The enemies of yesterday have become the friends and partners of today. The European Community is a unique example of what common ideals and common aims can achieve for the benefit of more than 300 million Europeans and all the 62 third world countries that are linked with us within the framework of the Lomé Convention.

8. The Federal Republic of Germany is also a member of the Atlantic alliance which links Western Europe with the United States and Canada. This community safeguards peace in our part of the world, which so often in the past has been the battlefield of conflicting power interests. The Atlantic alliance differs from the military pacts of former times by virtue of its defensive character and the identity of shared values, such as peace, equality, democracy and respect for the rights of the individual.

9. For over 30 years we have owed peace and security in Europe to this alliance. Peace in Europe, may I add, is not an exclusively European affair. The state of peace we Europeans have been able to enjoy for more than three decades has also placed us in a position to develop and extend our economic relations with the nations of the third world, with the objective of promoting the economic and social development of those countries for the sake of their citizens.

10. The treaties which the Federal Republic of Germany has concluded with its Eastern neighbours have helped to reduce tensions in Europe and opened the way for new forms of co-operation on our continent. The Federal Republic of Germany attaches great importance to continuing dialogue and peaceful co-operation with the countries of Eastern Europe. The 1975 Final Act of Helsinki¹ and the process it initiated have revitalized the concept and the ideal of human rights, the desire for closer human contacts and the intent to reduce tensions between East and West.

11. The agreements between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic have paved the way for closer co-operation between the two States on German soil. We see that co-operation as an element of and a means of strengthening the bonds between the people in divided Germany. It remains our political aim to work for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation will regain its unity through free self-determination. The boundary which cuts Germany in two, the wall that runs right through our old capital of Berlin, cannot be the final word of history.

12. Disarmament and arms control leading to balance at the lowest possible level are one of the foremost objectives of the German peace policy. At many conference tables our Governments are striving for a reduction of armaments. To achieve this what we need above all is mutual confidence. That is why the Federal Republic of Germany sets so much store by confidence-building measures that lead to greater transparency and control. The first significant results to this end were achieved in the Final Act of Helsinki. The Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, as envisaged in the Concluding Document of the

*Mr. Carstens spoke in German. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.

Madrid follow-up meeting to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and scheduled for Stockholm early in 1984, will be another important step in this direction. My country hopes and works for real, substantial results in this field which is so important to us all. Positive results will make peace safer throughout the world. The Federal Republic of Germany, for its part, renounced many years ago the production and possession of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. I wish others would follow this example.

13. Since the 1950s, close co-operation with the nations of the third world has been one of the pillars of our foreign policy. We believe in solidarity and partnership. We respect the right of every nation to choose its own path into the future and to safeguard its independence. It was from a sense of responsibility that the Federal Republic of Germany took part in the International Meeting on Co-operation and Development at Cancún in October 1981. We had hoped it would produce more than it has so far. One of the reasons for the unsatisfactory progress in this sphere is no doubt the critical world economic situation. However, we shall not relax our efforts in pursuit of a constructive North-South dialogue.

14. My country's accession to the United Nations ten years ago was a question of political logic and a result of our conviction that we would thus be serving the cause of peace. It was also an expression of our willingness to participate in global co-operation and to assume worldwide responsibilities. This is exemplified by our membership in the Security Council in 1977 and 1978.

15. From the very beginning the Federal Republic of Germany conceived its membership of this world Organization as service for human rights. We strongly support efforts to reinforce the protection of human rights and to ensure that they can be exercised. This was the purpose of our proposals for the universal abolition of the death penalty, the adoption of preventive measures against the emergence of new flows of refugees and for a convention against the taking of hostages. The reality which we experience every day is depressing and is a long way from the goals to which we all feel committed. Yet we must not relax our efforts to secure respect for the inalienable rights of every individual, irrespective of his religious or political convictions, his origin or race. Here is an important task for the world Organization. The respect which a State enjoys must depend on the freedom of its citizens and not on the strength of its weapons.

16. There is also a deep gulf between the idea of global peace and the reality of a world full of conflict and violence. In his last annual report as Secretary-General, in 1961, Dag Hammarskjöld said:

"A failure to gain respect for decisions or actions of the Organization within the terms of the Charter is often called a failure for the Organization. It would seem more correct to regard it as a failure of the world community, through its Member nations and in particular those most directly concerned, to co-operate in order, step by step, to make the Charter a living reality in practical political action as it is already in law."²

17. It is not sufficient for us simply to regret that not much has changed since those words were spoken. You, Mr. Secretary-General, indicated in your report on the work of the Organization to the thirty-seventh session how the instrument of the United Nations can be used more effectively to achieve the goal of collective security. The Federal Republic of Germany supports your proposals.

18. We continue to have an obligation to mankind not to spare any effort to achieve the goals of the Charter of

the United Nations, no matter how difficult and toilsome the path may be. The moral leadership of the United Nations and the universal acceptance of its decisions and resolutions will be decisively enhanced the more they are seen as an expression of justice and political wisdom.

19. The United Nations plays a major role in the elaboration of new rules of international conduct and in the further development of international law. International law binds everyone, weak and strong alike. There is a natural tension between sovereignty of the individual States and the concept of universality. Here lies one of the major tasks of the world Organization, namely to seek a balance between the interests of the individual Member State and the well-founded rights of the whole international community.

20. I firmly believe that the course of history will lead away from shortsighted, egocentric power politics. Hegemonic aspirations, the desire to dominate others, have no future in this world. Ever more countries regard themselves as members of a world community with equal rights and equal opportunities. It is politically wise to promote this development with energy and patience.

21. We Germans endeavour to understand other nations, their culture and their history and to establish links with them. This applies not only to North and South America, to which millions of Germans emigrated and with whose new home countries we today have many economic and cultural ties. It also holds true for the Far East, whose languages and cultures have fascinated our writers and philosophers no less than the languages and cultures of the Near and Middle East, where the origins of European civilization are to be found. Equally, it holds true for Africa with whom we have close bonds of friendship. Tolerance is the key word for international co-operation and for understanding among nations.

22. Many years of experience in public life and international affairs have convinced me that, as in private life, tolerance is also indispensable in relations between States. Tolerance in the international sphere implies respect for the historical and cultural identity of every nation and its political, economic and social needs. The Federal Republic of Germany, in whose name I have the honour to speak today, is willing, as the Charter says, "to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours".

23. I wish the United Nations endurance and success in its pursuit of peace. The aim of preserving peace and the hopes which mankind places in the world Organization deserve our every effort.

24. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I thank the President of the Federal Republic of Germany for the important statement he has just made.

25. The General Assembly will now hear a statement by Mr. Michael Thomas Somare, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea. I have great pleasure in welcoming him and inviting him to address the Assembly.

26. Mr. SOMARE (Papua New Guinea): My delegation wishes to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as President of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

27. We also wish to express our sincere appreciation of the able manner in which your predecessor, Mr. Imre Hollai, guided the deliberations of the thirty-seventh session.

28. Like other speakers, my delegation also warmly welcomes the admission of the newly independent island State of Saint Christopher and Nevis. We look forward

to cordial and close relations between our two countries both here and within the Commonwealth.

29. When I spoke in this Hall at the thirtieth session [2383rd meeting], a few weeks after Papua New Guinea gained independence, I outlined the approach we were going to take to international relations. That approach we called universalism: friendship for all except racist régimes.

30. Since then our policies have evolved and developed. We have built stronger links with a number of countries—those geographically close to us in the Pacific and Asia and our major economic partners. Our foreign policies have matured and are now presented under the general title of “purposeful direction”. By this we mean that, without being strident or aggressive, we are pushing for progress towards international equity and order.

31. What do we intend by that? Very simply put, we believe that order can be achieved in relations between sovereign States and that an economically and socially equitable world-wide order can be organized. My Government is a strong supporter of the United Nations and other international organizations. We hope and believe that those organizations can bring about a new international arrangement of which equity and order are the paramount features.

32. We believe that neither equity nor order can last long in this world without each other. If we look around the world today we see examples of apparant order coupled with gross inequity and of people striving for equity amid gross disorder. For many people today equity and order must seem to be remote ideals. We in Papua New Guinea, while recognizing the barriers and difficulties, believe that both equity and order can be achieved—indeed they both must be achieved.

33. I would first like to discuss the question of international order. To many people in southern Africa, Chad, Lebanon, Central America and Afghanistan, international order must seem an impossible ideal. They are suffering the effects of racism and international tensions which it seems this Organization can do little to moderate.

34. With regard to the arms race, world-wide spending on arms is estimated to be a staggering \$800 billion a year. Considering this, none of us can safely be said to be immune from the dangers of war or the economic consequences of the arms race. I will discuss the economic consequences of this massive spending later. First I will discuss the implications for the Pacific and South-East Asia.

35. The South Pacific is not a region of intense great-Power rivalry. The possibility of armed conflict arising between military forces of countries in our region appears slight. But we in the Pacific are not immune to the effects of world tensions. Neither the South Pacific nor South-East Asia is far enough away from the super-Powers to be free of the effects of the arms race. The members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations [ASEAN] have had first-hand and extremely painful recent experience of great Power rivalries and regional conflict. A generation ago we in the Pacific suffered similarly. We do not want to see it happen again. We believe that the vast expenditure on arms is not contributing to security; we believe it is contributing to insecurity. We believe the recent increases in arms spending and in international tension are closely related.

36. The present buildup can lead only to tragedy. The recent deplorable shooting down of the South Korean airliner and the tragic bombing in Burma are examples of what could happen. We believe that such incidents underline the need for international disarmament and a

concerted effort to reduce international tensions. They also clearly indicate that organizations like the United Nations must act to provide safeguards for international travellers.

37. I come now to the subject of nuclear testing. Another aspect of arms development which greatly concerns Papua New Guinea is nuclear testing in the Pacific. We have for several years now protested in the strongest terms against the hazards to human health and the environment presented by the French Government's nuclear-weapon testing programmes on Mururoa Atoll. We have also opposed any plans to dump or store nuclear wastes in the sea. To give effect to these positions we have ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII), annex], supported the proposed extension of the Convention on the prevention of marine pollution by dumping of wastes and other matter, signed at London in 1972³ to prohibit the dumping of all radioactive wastes, and consistently expressed our outrage at the French Government's persistent and blatant disregard of regional opinion. Papua New Guinea has accepted an invitation to send a scientist to inspect the Mururoa facilities. This inspection does not imply any tacit acceptance of nuclear testing. Rather, it will promote greater scientific examination of the effects of the French programme. At the same time, we are studying the various attempts being made in all parts of the world to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

38. We believe that racism, along with the arms race, is one of the most serious threats to peace and order in the world today. As I mentioned earlier, when I addressed the Assembly eight years ago as the leader of a newly independent nation, I stated that we would be friendly to all nations except racists. The policy of unceasing opposition to racism still applies. Racism and *apartheid* are by their very nature inconsistent with any concept of lasting international order. They offend the principles on which societies like mine are founded. Practitioners of racism and *apartheid* deserve not only condemnation but isolation. The opponents of racism deserve our strong, continual support.

39. Many small countries are the victims of racism and colonialism. As Prime Minister of a small country, I believe that I have a special obligation and interest in putting their case. Small countries have a right to be free from invasion or other forms of unwanted intervention from outside. The right to be free from foreign invasion or intervention is absolutely basic to any concept of lasting international order. I should like, therefore, to underline my Government's strong support for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchea. For identical reasons, I should like to do the same in respect of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.

40. The most tenacious and extensive form of international interference is colonialism. I grew up and entered public life in a dependency which consisted of a Trust Territory and a colony. That experience has given me a special feeling for the importance of the right to national self-determination and for the role that the United Nations can play in its realization. I should therefore like to lend my Government's strong support to calls that the right to self-determination be extended to the remaining colonial territories. I urge other Members of the United Nations to co-operate in seeing that this right is extended to all those still suffering under the yoke of colonialism.

41. One of the particular applications of this in the South Pacific that we are concerned with is in New Caledonia. One of our regional organizations is the South Pacific Forum, the members of which have accepted a variety of methods of decolonization. We believe that the

continued denial of the right of colonial peoples to determine their own future is an affront to all thinking people. The French Government has announced some reforms. The South Pacific Forum has supported those measures, but we have also called for an act of self-determination which includes the option of independence and provides special safeguards for the Kanakas, a precise timetable for transition to independence and a visit by a mission representative of Forum members to observe developments. We are also considering the possibility of securing wider support for our position by placing New Caledonia again on the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories.

42. The situation in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is clearer, as are the responsibilities of the United Nations. There, my Government has been pleased to be a member of the visiting missions sent to observe the plebiscites on termination of the trust. We want to ensure that the rights of Micronesians are respected.

43. We believe that respect for the rights of other people, which, I would suggest, obviates all forms of colonialism, is integral to the creation of an equitable and ordered world system. It is basic to the kind of society we are trying to build in Papua New Guinea. We urge all Governments to respect human rights.

44. However, human rights, about which the Charter of the United Nations is so eloquent, do not exist in a vacuum. We need to be conscious of their social context. We must be careful to ensure that a concern for human rights does not become a pretext for undue meddling in the affairs of others. While qualifying our stance in that fashion, I reiterate that Papua New Guinea condemns those who ignore, or offend against, human rights, and we add our voice to those calling for remedial action where needed.

45. We are also extremely concerned about the Middle East. That area continues to be among the most disordered regions in the world. Conflicts there could escalate into much wider and more perilous confrontation at any time. This situation disturbs us greatly, and I should like again to add my country's voice and vote in support of those who seek peaceful solutions.

46. As a sign of our concern, my Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade attended the preparatory meetings for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. As he said then, the Papua New Guinea Government "recognizes the rights of the Palestinians, including their right to participate in determining their political future . . . At the same time, we maintain our recognition of the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign State."

47. We have been, and are, supporters of the Camp David accords. Recently we have been impressed by the increasingly active and constructive role being played by Governments and other protagonists in the region in exploring possible solutions. We lend our support to those who are working to bring equity and order to the Palestinian situation, to the calamitous conflicts in Lebanon and to the situation in the other countries in the region.

48. Until now I have been discussing issues related to international order. I should like now to turn to issues related to international equity. We believe that those concepts are inextricably intertwined: there cannot be long-term order without equity, and there cannot be equity without order.

49. The present international economic system is not equitable, and consequently international relations are not orderly. The present system features broad and growing differences in wealth; it is inherently unstable. We

believe that meaningful steps to change this situation must be taken, and must be taken quickly.

50. My country has been hit hard by the current recession. The prices of the commodities on which village people depend for their incomes have fallen dramatically. Many of them are at their lowest real level since we began large-scale participation in the international economy. Government income has been seriously reduced. Plans for increased Government services have been suspended, public works budgets have been cut, and we have been forced to retrench part of our public services. Our long-term plan to achieve fiscal self-reliance has suffered a severe setback. We are grateful to the Australian Government for its increased support, but at the same time regret its necessity.

51. However, while grappling with the effects of this recession we must not lose sight of the fundamental weaknesses in the international economic system. The present system is inequitable, and there is a need for long-term structural adjustments.

52. We in the Pacific are a microcosm of the overall world situation. A villager from my country—from even the most remote village—is affected by international economic trends. Like most developing countries, Papua New Guinea has developed countries as its most important trading partners. Our most important sources of foreign investment, foreign aid and commercial loans are also in developed countries. Needless to say, these relationships are vital to us, but are of far less importance to the developed countries. Manufactured products are imported. So is a good deal of expensive Western expertise. Our exports consist mainly of a small range of largely unprocessed primary products.

53. We in the Pacific have taken several concrete steps towards reducing these inequities. We are seeking increased technical co-operation with ASEAN countries. A trade agreement with Australia and New Zealand gives products from Pacific countries preferential conditions. Our regional forum has established a fisheries agency to secure our common interests, and we have started a regional shipping line.

54. None the less, neither the trade agreements we have with Australia and New Zealand nor the Lomé Convention have made much difference in the kinds of products exported from Papua New Guinea. South Pacific countries in general have an increasingly adverse balance of trade with developed countries. We believe that this trade imbalance is only a part of a wider and deeper imbalance in relations between the two sets of countries.

55. My country has called for regional co-operation towards a comprehensive restructuring of relations in the region, leading to a new Pacific order. We believe that in the Pacific as well as in the rest of the developing world, failure to restructure basic relationships will lead to economic stagnation and decline in developing countries. The primary changes we want to see are reduced tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade with developed countries and a transfer of skills and technology to developing countries.

56. The current recession has demonstrated yet again the interdependence of all national economies. My Government calls on all Members of the United Nations to work together interdependently in an effort to right present inequalities.

57. As I mentioned earlier, we are concerned about the destabilizing effects of the arms race on international order. We are also concerned about its effects on equity. It poses a threat to our vital communications and trade routes in the Pacific. It also, in the words of the secretariat

of UNCTAD, imposes "strains . . . on the flow of resources for development, and . . . on the international economic system as a whole".

58. The majority of South Pacific countries do not have standing military forces. Those forces that do exist are small. Disarmament, therefore, is less of an issue for island Governments and peoples than is the prevention of armament. We are trying to bring basic services and development to our peoples. We wish to avoid the extraordinary costs and dangers of arms spending. As I said earlier, approximately \$800 billion is spent annually on armaments. That spending, given the poverty of most of the people in the world, is obscene.

59. The law of the sea and the establishment of effective 200-mile economic zones are vital economic issues in the Pacific. As Prime Minister of a country with vast, untapped marine resources, I am committed to the establishment of an effective 200-mile economic zone. My Government is also strongly committed to the notion that the sea-bed beyond national economic zones is the common heritage of mankind. We are pleased at the progress being made by the Preparatory Commission for the International Sea-Bed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. I must, however, repeat my Government's criticism of those Governments which decline for reasons of narrow self-interest to accede to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

60. The Common Fund for Commodities and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea must surely rank among the most outstanding contributions to potential international equity and order. I appeal to all Governments represented here to bring the Common Fund and the Convention fully into effect.

61. My Government believes that the present state of international economic and political relations is extremely unsatisfactory. We believe there is need for international equity and order. Today I have noted the trends that we consider dangerous and have outlined in very general terms the changes we believe are necessary.

62. Papua New Guinea is a small country—in United Nations terms, a very small country. We are realistic about our influence in this Hall, but we have not allowed that realism to degenerate into cynical indifference. The people of Papua New Guinea have benefited from the attitudes and influence of the United Nations as well as from the work of its agencies. We believe that the United Nations has the ability to contribute effectively to the struggle for international equity and order. I call on the United Nations and all other international organizations to work for a more just and equitable world.

63. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I thank the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea for the important statement he has just made.

64. Mr. BONGO (Gabon) (*interpretation from French*): As has become customary each year at this time, the general debate gives us the invaluable opportunity to summarize the political and economic situation in the world as it has developed since the last session and thus to assess together the progress achieved by the Organization in the interval.

65. We wish first to welcome very warmly the delegation of the republic of Saint Christopher and Nevis on its admission as the 158th Member of the Organization. We offer that brotherly country a welcome to our midst, and we know that we can count on its contribution in the common search for the advent of a better world of solidarity and peace.

66. When the Charter of the United Nations was adopted 38 years ago the most urgent task given to the Organization was the establishment of peace in a world devastated and exhausted by a great war. Since that time the Organization has constantly and untiringly worked to create a political and economic framework which would be better for mankind. In spite of that noble ideal, the certainty of living in peace is still beyond our grasp today. Indeed, a review of recent years shows that the principles laid down in the Charter have not been respected, just as certain achievements have remained inconclusive. Violence, conflicts with no declaration of war, the temptation to resort to the threat or use of force, the unbridled pursuit of selfish interests by certain Members of the Organization—these are all irreconcilable with the restraint and moderation which should be the dominant characteristics of our time. They destroy the universal dream of the development of the whole of mankind and the flourishing of the human person in the enjoyment of fundamental rights.

67. The deep tensions and murderous conflicts which thus characterize international life make us aware, first, of the hegemonistic struggles undertaken by the major Powers which, under the pretext of strengthening their security, ceaselessly pursue the arms race despite their public statements in favour of détente and peace. These tensions also testify to the persistence of the other scourges of colonialism and *apartheid*, that most repugnant and barbaric form of racism. Finally, we have the selfishness of partisans of the present economic order, and that is not the least of the causes of the crisis situation which the world is experiencing today, whether in southern Africa, especially Namibia, Iraq and Iran, the Middle East or South-East Asia, to mention just the main areas.

68. In southern Africa we note with regret that interference by the major Powers and their attempts to impose solutions in keeping with their own strategic interests are complicating and delaying the settlement of the last colonial questions, particularly the question of Namibia.

69. Regarding Namibia, we note that in spite of Security Council resolutions 435 (1978), 439 (1978) and 532 (1983), this problem remains at an impasse because of the introduction of matters which are totally unrelated to the process of decolonization. My country remains convinced that peace in Namibia can be achieved only within the framework of the strict implementation of the United Nations settlement plan. That is why my delegation rejects any linkage between the accession of Namibia to national sovereignty and the departure of Cuban troops from Angola. Those troops are in Angola under bilateral agreements concluded in complete sovereignty and in conformity with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

70. Still speaking of Africa, my country continues to be concerned over two hotbeds of tension there, Western Sahara and Chad. In this connection I shall leave it to others to recall the efforts made by the head of State of Gabon, Mr. Omar Bongo, concerning negotiations in these disputes. I hope that, thanks to the structures already established by the Organization of African Unity [OAU], the parties to these conflicts will finally agree to sit at the same table to settle these problems through dialogue, in order to bring peace and security to the whole of the African continent.

Mr. Malinga (Swaziland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

71. Two brother countries, Iraq and Iran, with which Gabon has excellent relations, are still fighting. This means an indefinite prolongation of the suffering of the

peoples in that region. Once again we solemnly appeal to the leaders of those two brother countries to put an end, through a negotiated solution, to this war which is a dangerous threat to peace and security in the entire Gulf region and which contains the seeds of a world conflagration. Moreover, we hail all those who are concerned with and aware of the need for establishing a climate of peace in these two countries and who work untiringly to that end. I refer in particular to the Islamic Peace Committee for its sustained efforts to reach a just, honourable and definitive solution to this conflict. We also commend the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General to achieve that solution. Similarly, we congratulate the International Red Cross Committee which, in spite of many obstacles, is continuing to carry out its humanitarian mission.

72. In the Middle East, Israel's systematic refusal to recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people constitutes an inadmissible hindrance to the process of détente in the region. It must be remembered that the right to independence and self-determination implies taking into account the direct aspirations of the peoples involved. No just and lasting peace is possible in this part of the world until Israel realizes that the use of force will never be able to shake the determination nor the will of a people seeking self-determination and independence.

73. Gabon, for its part, reaffirms its total support for the relevant resolutions of the United Nations concerning the rights of the people of Palestine.

74. I would reiterate that peace in the region remains closely linked to the negotiated settlement of the Palestinian problem, and it also involves the recognition of the right of each of the peoples in this region to live in peace and security within secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

75. With reference to the situation in Lebanon, in the same region, we call upon all the parties to exercise statesmanship and good will and to examine the situation realistically, in order to put an end to the martyrdom of the Lebanese people, who should be the sole master of their own destiny. We also support the efforts of President Amin Gemayel to enable Lebanon to recover sovereignty over the whole of its territory, free from any foreign military presence of any origin.

76. In South-East Asia, peace remains linked to the solution of the problem of Kampuchea. The solution to this problem must involve respect for the principles of territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and the non-use of force.

77. The same is true of Afghanistan, which should be left free to determine its own destiny, and of the Korean peninsula where we have always hoped to see the peaceful reunification of the country without foreign interference. We accordingly endorse the steps taken by the Secretary-General to resolve the crises which are disrupting these regions, in particular by obtaining guarantees on the non-use of force against the political independence of any of those States.

78. It goes without saying that the world is following with concern the various tensions and conflicts which are becoming an increasing threat to the future of all mankind. We might well ask whether détente and disarmament are now mere illusions. The escalation of the arms race has taken on a new dimension, both quantitatively and qualitatively, because of the lack of will of the major Powers who have the technology and capital.

79. In 1982 the military expenditures of the United States and the Soviet Union alone, with their respective alliances—the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact—accounted for close to two thirds of all

the military expenditures recorded in the entire world, or over \$700 billion. That money would have been better spent on the pressing development needs, thus contributing to banishing the spectres of poverty, misery and hunger which even today are still causing the deaths of thousands and thousands of men, women and children.

80. Furthermore, the lack of a clear political will on the part of the major Powers with regard to such a vital question for mankind means that the development of new nuclear and conventional weapons continues uninterrupted and the negotiations on disarmament in the United Nations have not led to any agreement.

81. It is clear that this widespread arms race and the need for the developing countries to devote large amounts of money to their own defence increase the political and economic dependence of those countries on the more militarily powerful States and deprives them of substantial resources which could have been devoted to improving the living standards of their peoples. Nevertheless, in a spirit of optimism, my country endorses the work already being done in disarmament with hope of inducing the parties to adopt a much more conciliatory and positive attitude.

82. Unfortunately, it is not just political problems with which we are concerned. Indeed, the international economic situation, characterized by a world-wide depression whose well-known causes are both circumstantial and structural, is, especially for the third world countries, a continuing cause of anguish and anxiety, fully justified recently by the annual report of the World Bank, which emphasizes the bleak prospects for our economies.

83. Beyond the circumstantial aspects, the Gabon delegation believes that this crisis is above all structural because of the rigid positions systematically adopted by the wealthy countries in refusing to adjust their economic structures to the new requirements of today's world economy.

84. The slowdown in world trade, more particularly between North and South, is such that many developing countries, especially in Africa, are seriously affected by this crisis because of the precariousness of their economic structures, which are very dependent upon a small number of commodities, or even on a single commodity. In 1980, for example, of the 32 non-oil producing countries deriving more than 50 per cent of their export income from a single one of the 18 products listed in the Integrated Programme for Commodities, 20 were African. As a result, their economies are extremely vulnerable to fluctuation in the prices of their export products. Indeed, since the end of the last world war, relative commodity prices have dropped by over 14 per cent, falling to their lowest level ever. One ton of coffee or one ton of cotton, for example, now permits the purchase of only half the capital goods that could have been purchased in exchange for them 20 years ago.

85. The present crisis is so serious that the developing countries are forced to postpone implementation of their programmes for economic and social development or purely and simply to give them up.

86. The deterioration in the terms of trade resulting from the fluctuations in the prices of raw materials has gravely compromised the savings and investment capacities of the poor countries, thus increasing their indebtedness, which now amounts to more than \$600 billion. At the same time, the servicing of their debts has suffered the blow of too-high interest rates. At present it amounts to more than \$100 billion—a figure clearly higher than the capital now coming into their economies. Moreover,

there has been a net decrease, in real terms, in the official development assistance.

87. The perpetuation of the present crisis situation is a serious obstacle to the economic independence of these countries and works against their self-sustaining and self-reliant development, as defined in 1980 in the Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa and in the Final Act of Lagos. Thus, if the crisis is to be overcome and the world economy to be started up again, it is important not only to promote the idea of the creation of a new liquidity to make profound changes in the present international economic system, but also to determine where the responsibility lies. And there cannot be the slightest doubt that it is the industrialized countries of the North which have this responsibility; their sole watchword must be: to trade a bit more with the third world in order to bring about the complete integration of the South in international trade.

88. In this regard, many readjustments must be made in the world economy, in the general interest. That requires a global approach to the problems between the developed and the developing regions, in order to draw up the blueprints for joint action in the areas of commodities, manufactured goods, currency and finance.

89. With regard to primary commodities, we are convinced that putting the Common Fund for Commodities into effect is still the driving force for the implementation of the Integrated Programme for Commodities. This is a body based on a new concept. It is both integrated, because it seeks to co-ordinate the financing of various policies for the stockpiling of commodities, and global, because in addition to price stability it meets the concern for managing the supply of commodities by greater participation in processing, marketing and transport. These aspects account for the innovative nature of the Fund.

90. As for manufactured and semi-manufactured products, everything must be done to establish a new international division of labour based on the necessary complementarity between countries at different levels of development.

91. In respect of monetary and financial problems, the present indebtedness of the third world countries requires a redefinition of assistance. Thus, the diversity of the channels used to ensure the transfer of real resources necessitates joint efforts by developing and developed countries. The need for large-scale action to restructure the debt of the developing countries, such as the establishment of some financing facility or the partial or total cancellation of the debt of the least developed countries, is based on the idea that the disequilibrium in the developing countries' balance of payments arises not so much from an excess of demand as from basic rigidities, the elimination of which implies accelerated growth and diversification of the productive structure.

92. At the same time, we must not lose sight here of the necessity for, on the one hand, strengthening the resources of IMF by urging the United States Congress to agree on 30 November this year to increase United States contributions to the Fund and, on the other hand, closer co-operation between the Fund and the World Bank when a country has trouble coping with its structural deficiencies and with the current excessively high interest rates. Naturally, this requires reworking the structures of the Bank, as well as broadening the role of the Fund, which up to now has limited itself to assisting in the rescheduling of balances of payments rather than acting as an arbiter of the world monetary system.

93. Hence, the proposals and solutions advocated in the common interest should be global. The developing countries are calling for international economic relations based on equal rights, with priority being given to joint efforts and multilateral agreements.

94. The present impasse in the global negotiations and, even more striking, the failure last June of the sixth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development once again demonstrate the industrialized countries' negative attitude and their inability to take urgent joint measures to overcome the general crisis and to strengthen the world economy in the interest of all. Faced with that obstinate desire of some countries to freeze the North-South dialogue, the developing countries must understand that in order to fight poverty and seriously develop their economies they must strengthen their unity and mutual assistance, increase their self-sufficiency and promote South-South co-operation. To enable the developing countries to achieve those goals the developed countries are duty bound to honour the commitments they have made in various international forums as part of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. Thus, their agreement to the rapid relaunching of global negotiations would significantly contribute to implementing that Strategy.

95. The task, we agree, is immense and difficult. Nevertheless, we have no doubt but that this thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly will harness its energies above all in order to achieve substantial progress in the areas of political and economic relations, disarmament and the settlement of open or still-brewing conflicts which threaten collective peace and security. That, in any event, is the deep conviction of the Government of Gabon and its head of State, Mr. Omar Bongo.

96. I could not finish this address without paying a sincere tribute to the Secretary-General and to all those who, like him, are devotedly contributing to the achievement of the noble ideals of the Charter of the United Nations and to the safeguarding of its fundamental principles.

97. May I also express my delegation's wholehearted appreciation and thanks to Mr. Imre Hollai, Deputy Foreign Minister of Hungary, for the selflessness and competence with which he fulfilled his duties.

98. And, finally, how could I not take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Illueca on his election to the presidency of the thirty-eighth session? His election is testimony not only to his outstanding talents as a statesman but also to the great esteem and respect which the international community as a whole has for his country, linked to my own by that same determination to pursue the useful work already begun by his predecessors with admirable courage and determination, in order to contribute, within the great family of the peoples of the United Nations, to the safeguard of the ideals of peace, freedom and independence. We are already assured that under his presidency the Organization will have even more outstanding successes and that even more important steps will be taken along the road of the permanent quest for the peace and security which mankind so desperately wants.

99. These congratulations are also addressed to the other members of the General Committee, whose collaboration will be most valuable to the President. It is also a pleasure for me to assure the President of the complete co-operation of the delegation of Gabon in ensuring that the work of the thirty-eighth session will conclude successfully.

100. Mr. MUSA HITAM (Malaysia): At the outset, may I, on behalf of the Malaysia delegation, compliment the President on his well-deserved election to the presidency of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. His election is indeed a testimony of his vast experience and diplomatic skill, as well as a tribute to his country, Panama, with which my country enjoys cordial and friendly relations.

101. My delegation is concerned that the world continues to be confronted with various kinds of political, economic and security problems which the United Nations has not been able to resolve. We believe that this inability and ineffectiveness of the United Nations can be overcome if each Member State fulfils its moral obligation and duty to make the Organization work. Morality in international relations might be dismissed as something simply idealistic, but then idealism is something to be striven for. Certainly no one can deny that it is the lack of moral responsibility that makes nations trigger-happy towards other nations. It is for lack of moral responsibility that nations peddle weapons of death to each warring party and that national leaders conducting international relations calculate their moves on the mere basis of "them" and "us". Coming from a small country like mine, these observations may sound over-simplistic. But then, over-simplification does provoke thought, and this after all is what the United Nations forum is all about.

102. It is precisely because of these principles that the question of disarmament is a matter of serious concern to my delegation. The escalating arms race, particularly between the two super-Powers, is pushing us closer to the brink of destruction. It is incumbent on all members of the international community to exercise restraint and seriously address themselves to the issues relating to disarmament in order to defuse the state of tension and mistrust.

103. One of the most immediate and urgent problems facing us today is the question of Palestine. Indeed, it is relevant to the effectiveness and to the very future of this world body. This is because the question of Palestine embodies all those values and principles of morality, such as justice, human dignity, international peace and security, that the United Nations—indeed humanity as a whole—is called upon to uphold. Therefore, it is not surprising that some 137 States and the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held recently at Geneva, took a major step toward resolving the question of Palestine, the core of the West Asian conflict in all its aspects.

104. It is encouraging to note that major step, contained in the Geneva Declaration on Palestine⁴ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,⁴ in the formulation of which Malaysia was proud to play its small part, beginning with the Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting, held at Kuala Lumpur in May. Indeed, it provides the long-awaited basis for a just and comprehensive peace in West Asia in a clear and specific manner and within an applicable and realisable framework, one that seeks peace for the Palestinians within an independent and sovereign State of their own, co-existing with all other countries in the region within secure and internationally recognized boundaries. All concerned parties, including the PLO, are indeed required to sit at the same table to negotiate for themselves all the essential and final features of a permanent peace in the area.

105. Even though two Member States directly concerned had absented themselves from Geneva, their absence does not in any way diminish the Geneva consensus, which

represents a universal endorsement for peace and security in the region. No one Member of this world body should therefore ignore or close its mind to this sincere and massive global effort and refuse to move in the direction of progress towards a settlement of the West Asian conflict, the crux and core of which is the question of Palestine. We therefore call upon all Member States, in particular the major Powers, to desist forthwith from any unilateral efforts and instead extend full support to the Geneva approach to peace and security, justice and human dignity for all the peoples of West Asia, including the Palestinians, under United Nations auspices.

106. The situation in Lebanon, which is an extension of the Arab-Israeli conflict, has caused deep distress in the international community. Malaysia is therefore constrained to express its gravest concern over the prolonged and escalating violence in that country, which could further complicate the search for peace. In this regard, Malaysia welcomes the recent cease-fire agreement in Lebanon. We urge all parties, in particular the major Powers, to exercise restraint and to refrain from any action that encourages renewed violence and further undermines the unity of the Lebanese people and the independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. A serious threat of the dismemberment of yet another small and helpless country exists, this time merely because of the stubbornness, arrogance and the total lack of respect for world opinion of one party, Israel. It is imperative, then, that Israel withdraw completely and unconditionally from Lebanon.

107. We continue to view the situation in Kampuchea with serious concern. We are saddened that the peace-loving people of Kampuchea have had to struggle against such terrible injustice for so long, resulting in misery, flight and the sorry plight of Kampuchean refugees in neighbouring Thailand. We are furthermore concerned by the continued Vietnamese military occupation, in violation of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which poses a grave threat to the peace and stability of South-East Asia as well as to international peace and security.

108. As ASEAN emphasized in a joint appeal recently, the central goal of that Association's efforts in the resolution of the Kampuchean question is the survival of the Kampuchean nation and the restoration of its independence and sovereignty. Malaysia and its ASEAN partners have shown all possible flexibility so as to achieve this goal in a manner that manifests respect for international principles and takes into account the legitimate concerns of the parties directly involved. This is why the total withdrawal of foreign forces, the exercise of self-determination and national reconciliation are the essential elements of a peaceful solution. In this light ASEAN would consider the partial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops to be credible if it were to constitute part of a total withdrawal.

109. However, we are greatly distressed to learn from recent reports that Viet Nam is engaged in changing the demographic character of Kampuchea. This attempt at the Vietnamization of Kampuchea must cease. This utter lack of respect for human dignity is to our mind no less serious than the crimes previously committed against the Kampuchean people.

110. Notwithstanding the serious obstacles to peace, Malaysia, together with the other ASEAN partners, will continue vigorously to pursue the objective of a peaceful solution. For ASEAN, there is indeed no alternative to regional peace but the establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia. We are

encouraged by the increasing effectiveness of the Government of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, and we are confident that this will enhance the prospect of a comprehensive political solution. We urge the international community to provide every assistance possible to this Government to facilitate the restoration of independence and sovereignty to Kampuchea. We earnestly hope that Viet Nam will participate positively in the efforts to find a peaceful solution to this question so as to remove a serious obstacle to the establishment of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia.

111. For four years the Afghan people, like the Kampuchean people, have been the victims of aggression and military occupation. It is therefore most distressing that, despite universal disapproval, anger and protest, the Soviet Union remains oblivious of world opinion. In fact, this aggression against a peace-loving people and the occupation of its country will remain in the forefront of world attention and will continue to be opposed by the international community. While Malaysia supports the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General to bring about a negotiated settlement, the Soviet Union must show greater sincerity and earnestness concerning this United Nations peace process so that an early solution consistent with the relevant resolutions of this and other international bodies may be found.

112. Another question of concern to us is the continuing conflict between Iran and Iraq, two countries with which Malaysia enjoys close and friendly relations. Malaysia welcomes the efforts of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, of whose Peace Committee Malaysia is a member, to bring to an end that tragic conflict.

113. In southern Africa, the problems of Namibia and *apartheid* still pose a serious threat to peace and security in the region. In this context, we await with keen anticipation the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which would grant independence to Namibia. I understand that the United Nations is in a state of readiness to play its own part with the administrative and operational arrangements. I should like to reiterate that the Government of Malaysia is prepared to contribute to peace-keeping efforts in that Territory. Unfortunately, a solution to the Namibian problem remains elusive, since the South African régime predicates the independence of Namibia on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

114. The policy of *apartheid* of the South African régime constitutes a travesty of justice and an affront to human dignity. Malaysia will continue to support fully the cause of the oppressed people of South Africa in their struggle for equality, justice and dignity.

115. While the world grapples with its already numerous problems, it has to contend with yet another incident which poses a direct threat, this time to international civil aviation. My delegation recalls with horror and shock the shooting down of a South Korean commercial airliner on 1 September 1983, in which all the passengers, including women and children, perished, making it the worst disaster in the history of civil aviation. We cannot but express deep regret at the callous disregard for human lives, in serious violation of accepted international norms and conventions. In the interest of the safety of international civil aviation and in the name of humanity, Malaysia associates itself with and supports any move, through the various international organizations, to ensure that the safety of the lives of air travellers will never again be threatened.

116. We share the sorrow of the South Korean people as a result of this incident. But hardly a month had passed

before the South Koreans had to experience yet another painful tragedy, when four of their ministers and 11 others were killed in Rangoon. The people and Government of Malaysia condemn this cowardly act and extend their deep sympathy to the Korean people in this hour of grief.

117. Another problem which my delegation considers to be closely related to national security is that of the abuse of and illicit traffic in drugs. In the United Nations the conceptual approach to the drug problem has always placed it in the social and humanitarian context. Little consideration is given to treating this matter as a national security problem, which remains the main concern of Malaysia, where 60 per cent to 70 per cent of crimes committed are related to drug abuse. Many deaths among our youth are caused by drug overdoses. As long as the problem is not considered within the framework of its political and security ramifications, international co-operation would at best only give minimal results, as it would not commensurate with the gravity and seriousness of the problem. Therefore, steps should be taken to ensure universal recognition of the drug problem as a national security problem so that it can receive greater priority at the international level.

118. At the thirty-seventh session, the Prime Minister of my country stated [*10th meeting*] that it was timely for the United Nations to focus its attention on Antarctica, the last undeveloped continent on earth, which remains outside national jurisdiction. With the recent adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which represents a milestone of progress in mankind's endeavour to preserve what is left of the planet's surface beyond national jurisdiction, now is an appropriate time for the international community to be prepared to apply the concept of common heritage and common benefit to Antarctica, concerning which there is now growing international interest and a desire for universal involvement.

119. While generally little is known about Antarctica, the economic potential, both mineral and marine, is believed to be vast, though we have been told its exploitation is not technically feasible at present. The 1959 Antarctic Treaty,⁵ although open to all Members of the United Nations, is restrictive and exclusive in nature. It is also discriminatory, since only the Consultative Parties can make decisions concerning the continent. Other Contracting Parties to the treaty are mere participants.

120. The present arrangement regarding Antarctica has created inequities which cannot be allowed to continue. Inevitably, those inequities will lead to instability. It is the position of my Government that Antarctica, as the common heritage of mankind, should be accessible to all nations irrespective of the degree of their economic or scientific development and capabilities. The exploration, exploitation and planning of the conservation of its resources should be carried out for the benefit of mankind. Antarctica should forever be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and should not become the scene or object of international discord. The heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries, at their seventh conference, in March, shared those convictions when they agreed that the United Nations, at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, should undertake a comprehensive study of Antarctica with the view to widening international co-operation in the area.

121. The goal of our request, together with Antigua and Barbuda, to inscribe the question of Antarctica in the agenda [*see A/38/15*] is to have the Secretary-General undertake a comprehensive study of Antarctica in consultation with all parties and taking into account all relevant factors. We are happy that the General Assembly

has agreed to this request. It is our sincere belief that with co-operation from all, the study to be undertaken would benefit mankind.

122. The international economic situation remains uncertain, although there are signs of recovery. Optimists herald them as symptoms of better times, while pessimists warn of a false start. The developing countries continue to grapple with severe debt problems and low commodity prices with no improvements in sight. Malaysia believes that current international economic problems require a restructuring of the international economic system. In a world that is so closely interdependent, solutions to common problems will not be possible without co-operation between the developed and the developing countries. The latter, however, should not lose sight of the vast potential of co-operating among themselves in a process to build up collective self-reliance. Developing countries could engage in increased trade activities among themselves and co-operate in numerous areas of activity to ensure continuing development.

123. Malaysia believes in South-South co-operation. Indeed, we participate fully in various programmes of economic co-operation among developing countries. Malaysia's contribution to promoting this spirit of self-reliance is the Malaysian Technical Co-operation Programme, a modest programme through which we share with friendly developing countries our know-how and experiences in economic development.

124. Like other developing countries, Malaysia, as a major primary commodity producer, has felt the negative effects of depressed prices for our commodities. Our earlier hope that international commodity agreements would help stabilize prices was disproved by the lack of good will, co-operation and political will from consumer countries. Nevertheless, Malaysia still maintains its faith in international commodity arrangements, as manifested

when it ratified the Agreement Establishing the Common Fund for Commodities last month. Malaysia hopes that this will pave the way for the major consumer countries to sign and ratify the Agreement to help realize the operation of the Fund as an example of international co-operation in commodity arrangements.

125. At this session, we warmly welcome to our midst the newly independent State of Saint Christopher and Nevis as the 158th Member of the United Nations. The entry of Saint Christopher and Nevis into the Organization bears testimony to the faith and confidence that many nations have in this body.

126. In concluding my statement, I should like to reiterate my earlier appeal in calling on all Members of the United Nations, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, to give their fullest support, co-operation and confidence in order to generate the necessary political will required to revitalize the Organization so that the cherished ideals and aspirations of the founding fathers as enshrined in the Charter can forever be upheld.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

NOTES

¹Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975.

²See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Supplement No. 1A*.

³United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1046, No. 15749, p. 120.

⁴*Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I.

⁵United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 402, No. 5778, p. 72.