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Thursday, 27 September 1984,
at 10.15 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. Paul J. F. LUSAKA
(Zambia).

Organization of work

1. The PRESIDENT: Before calling upon the first speaker this morning, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to a letter addressed to me by the representative of Botswana, dated 26 September 1984 [A/39/523]. In that letter the representative of Botswana, on behalf of the Group of African States, requests that the General Assembly consider, under agenda item 31—"Policies of *apartheid* of the Government of South Africa"—the situation in South Africa as a matter of urgency, if possible, not later than Friday, 28 September 1984, in the afternoon.
2. In this connection, a draft resolution has been issued in document A/39/L.2. To permit the orderly conduct of its future work, I suggest that the Assembly consider the scheduling of this item during our meeting this afternoon.

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

3. Mr. ORTEGA DURÁN (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, your election to the Chair at this thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly represents just recognition by the international community of your merits and personal qualifications and of your political and diplomatic experience, amply demonstrated in the United Nations as well as in other international forums which have had the benefit of your participation.
4. Panama highly values your important efforts as President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, a post which you have carried out for the last five years with exemplary dedication and effectiveness and a post in which you have made a most valuable contribution to the complete liberation of Africa and to the struggle to uphold the principles of the self-determination of peoples and national independence.
5. My delegation would like to welcome most warmly Brunei Darussalam, which became a Member of the United Nations last week. We hail its entry into the Organization as a sign of our era, an era in which we are moving steadily along the path of decolonization and towards the goal of the universality of the United Nations.
6. I should like to join the voice of my delegation to the unanimous tribute which delegations have paid to the Secretary-General. His tireless efforts to promote peace and his constant dedication to the

achievement of international co-operation deserve the profound recognition of my delegation.

7. I should like to mention with special gratitude the official visit the Secretary-General made to Panama in April of this year, which gave us a greater realization of the dedication with which Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar is carrying out the sensitive responsibilities entrusted to him by the international community.

8. The Secretary-General may rest fully assured that Panama will encourage and support his efforts to turn the United Nations into a more effective Organization for the maintenance of international peace and security as well as the forum for the solution of the grave problems confronting mankind today.

9. Panama is located almost at the very centre of the western hemisphere, where, at the northern end of the Andes, it has a bird's-eye view of Central America and the Caribbean. Having a diversified ethnic, cultural and political make-up, my country has had, from the beginning, pluralistic neighbourly relations. At the same time, it offers the most expeditious route between the Atlantic and the Pacific, and in its settlement it merged men from the four corners of the world. It is precisely because of this geographical and intellectual situation that we at all times identify ourselves with the quest for harmony among the varied peoples of the Americas, who may not be united today but whose destiny is to be united in the future.

10. Inasmuch as it is a country characterized by the national personality of its people, the inter-oceanic and continental communications which are natural to the geographical location of Panama have linked it by culture with South America, the Antilles and the rest of the world. Hence our history, socio-economic structures and culture identify and confirm us as a Bolivarian and Caribbean nation, while at the same time making us aware of our responsibilities as the neighbour of the Central American region.

11. That was indeed the vision of the liberator Simón Bolívar, when he aspired for us to be for the new world what Corinth was for classical antiquity. His dream began to forge a new reality when in 1826 he convened the Amphictyonic Congress in my country "to obtain a system of guarantees which in time of peace or war would mark our new destiny". This has been our mission in the past and it will continue to be our mission. In 1815, a well-known Venezuelan wrote about a republic which, criss-crossed by canals, would shorten distances in the world. Nine decades later, after we became a sovereign and independent Republic, we opened up an artificial waterway, thus speeding up world traffic.

12. These inter-ocean functions very early linked my country with the international community as a multilateral centre for trade and communication.

Since the days of its discovery, after Balboa divided the southern sea in 1513, Panama has become the centre of geographic explorations through the Central and South American shores of the Pacific. During the three centuries of Spanish domination, we had the responsibility of being the meeting-point for communications and trade of the metropolitan country and its overseas possessions. In time, this continued through rivers and over land, by means of a rail network, the canal, inter-oceanic pipelines, port systems, telecommunications and air navigation, the trade and banking complex, among others.

13. Although these physical structures imply world-wide functions, they are merely temporary means to enable us to utilize certain of our country's territorial attributes, which are part of the national Panamanian heritage. This is a very simple concept; yet paradoxically some have refused to understand it. The strategic geographical location of my country has time and again been the object of the greed of foreign Powers, which have exploited that part of our territory for their own benefit.

14. Nevertheless, my country has throughout history demonstrated its vocation to serve the international community, providing universal, effective, neutral, peaceful and safe access to the use of this natural attribute through various means of communication and exchange. We Panamanians ask only that our country should be used with respect for our sovereignty, integrity and national interests and that it should benefit in a suitable way the full development and the peace and security of our people and of our Latin American brothers.

15. The issues we wish to mention here before the international community are closely related to compliance with what I have just said.

16. First of all, it is our duty to inform the General Assembly about the implementation of the 1977 Panama Canal Treaties¹ because of the importance of their proper implementation for world trade and communications and the very significant role of international solidarity and the United Nations in making it possible for the Treaties to be concluded and because of what compliance with those Treaties will bring to good relations and peace in the region.

17. The 1977 Canal Treaties were far from satisfying all the legitimate aspirations of the Panamanian nation. Nevertheless, we must emphasize the fact that they demonstrated the feasibility of finding a viable solution to a dangerous and complex colonial conflict between a small developing country and a major Power by means of a long and difficult process of negotiations, where both parties demonstrated the political will to make mutual and reasonable concessions on the basis of mutual respect for their sovereignty as nations.

18. This spared both peoples and all the users of the Canal inestimable damage and suffering and offered the entire international community an extremely valuable precedent. We are all morally bound to recall with constant gratitude the two courageous and visionary statesmen who were responsible for the Treaties, General Omar Torrijos and President Jimmy Carter.

19. Contrary to what was maintained by the opponents of the Treaties, ever since the colonial régime in the Canal Zone was abolished and the binational régime and the joint administration were set up, the Canal has become much more efficient. When the

Treaties came into force in 1979, the Canal was saturated with traffic and could service 13,000 vessels a year; today it can take 15,000. In five years its daily capacity has grown from 37 to 42 vessels; waiting and transit time has been cut from 40 to an average of 23 hours. At the same time, the number of accidents to vessels in transit has diminished, despite the increase in their size.

20. With respect to the historic requirements of Panama, an important part of them has been completely or partially satisfied. On 1 October 1979, Panama regained jurisdiction over two thirds of the land and water under colonial occupation; it also regained control over its natural ports at both ends of the Canal. Many installations and infrastructure and service facilities were returned to Panama. The Canal itself and the most vital areas and installations remained under a binational régime of joint administration. On 31 March 1982, when the first stage of the transition period ended, the foreign police, courts and judges disappeared from the area and Panama gained full jurisdiction over its entire territory.

21. Following ratification of the Treaties, Panama has received payment of \$352,419,000 for Canal operations. This is considerably less than the direct and indirect benefits received by its foreign counterpart and of course much less than my country legally deserves. Nevertheless, if the Treaties had not been agreed upon, Panama would have obtained only \$9,800,000, the ridiculous sum paid to it under the colonial régime.

22. What is more important is that the Panamanian flag now flies throughout the former Canal Zone as the symbol of our full sovereignty, and in the areas still under temporary military occupation and where the United States flag still flies, the Panamanian national flag always has pride of place. Thus the words of General Omar Torrijos, who said that "there is no colonialism that will last 100 years, nor Latin American who will put up with it", are all the more relevant.

23. At the proper time, in compliance with the subsequent stages of the decolonization timetable agreed upon in the Treaties, on 1 October 1984 Panama will finally regain control of the areas and installations under military occupation at Fort Gullick and the so-called School of the Americas and, more important, on 1 January 1990, the post of administrator of the Canal will be filled by a Panamanian. Panama is most determined that each stage should be complied with on time.

24. Progress with respect to the use of Panamanian workers in the administration, operations and maintenance of the Canal is much less satisfactory. The Treaties provide for a gradual increase in the proportion of Panamanian workers until, by 1999, there are no longer any foreign officials. However, already in 1979 more than 69 per cent of the labour force was Panamanian, and that figure has since increased only to 77 per cent despite the fact that there are many sufficiently qualified Panamanians. Those remaining from the colonial administration have been reluctant to give up the higher bureaucratic posts and so-called positions of trust, in particular, although such posts do not call for sophisticated technical knowledge.

25. The situation has been aggravated unjustifiably by the unilateral decision imposed by the United States majority which still exists in the Board of Directors of the binational Panama Canal Commis-

sion, which directs the administration of the Canal. As a result of this, a number of privileges have been given to the United States officials working in the Canal administration, thus openly and directly discriminating against the Panamanian officials doing exactly the same jobs. This is a clear and direct violation of the 1977 Treaties, which explicitly prohibit all forms of discrimination on the basis of nationality and make no provision for the granting of such privileges.

26. To make matters worse, this measure, which was introduced in spite of the many earlier objections and protests by Panama, results in a heavy financial loss, which is being deducted from the earnings from the operation of the Canal, part of which belongs to the Panamanian side. Thus Panama is in the humiliating position of having to subsidize the cost of a measure which was adopted against its own better judgement and which constitutes an act of discrimination against its own citizens.

27. This is one more case of violations of the letter and the spirit of the Treaties, which have been scrupulously observed by the Panamanian side. As in the majority of the other cases, these violations are based on the Murphy Law, Law 96-70, which was adopted unilaterally by the United States Congress, on 27 September 1979, as internal legislation designed to govern the conduct of the United States Government in the process of the implementation of the Canal Treaties. This is a typical case of an illegal law which establishes provisions for one of the parties to a binational Treaty, contradicting what was ratified by both parties to that Treaty.

28. We refer only to the most flagrant and harmful aspects of the situation, and should give a few examples.

29. First, the Treaty clearly establishes that the rights and responsibilities of each of the two countries will be exercised through the Panama Canal Commission, which is a binational body, rather than directly by the respective Governments. It also states that the Board of Directors of that Commission, composed of representatives of both parties, is the supreme governing body. In accordance with the Treaty itself, the United States has a majority membership of the Board—five representatives as compared with four Panamanians. Following the ratification of the Treaties in both countries, Law 96-70 attempts to turn the Canal Commission into a branch of the United States Executive, placing its leadership in the hands of the Secretary of Defense of that country and attempting to turn the Board of Directors into a mere supervisory board presided over by a representative of the Secretary of Defense. Thus it denies the essentially binational spirit of the Canal administration.

30. Secondly, the Treaties from the very beginning gave a slight numerical advantage to the United States side in the composition of the Board of Directors. Law 96-70 further attempts to establish that there should be a quorum at the meetings of the Board only if there is present a majority of United States representatives, irrespective of the total number of members attending a particular sitting. In this manner, the presence of the Panamanian members is not taken into account for the determination of a quorum, and this places us in an inferior position.

31. Thirdly, this United States majority has imposed a so-called code of conduct on all the employ-

ees of the Canal, including the Panamanian representatives on the Board of Directors—despite the fact that they voted to the contrary—and also the deputy administrator of the Canal, who is a Panamanian. Under this “code” the Panamanian representatives and the deputy administrator are assigned the status of United States employees, subject to the federal laws of that country, contrary to the Treaty, which defines them as Panamanian officials. This is contrary to the Treaty itself, which states that all the officials of the Canal must act in accordance with Panamanian labour laws.

32. Fourthly, Law 96-70 attempts to apply on Panamanian territory United States federal laws and rules, giving the United States jurisdiction in our country even over Panamanian citizens and unions, contrary to what is contained in the Treaties ratified by both parties.

33. That is not all, but I have given sufficient examples to demonstrate the gravity of the situation and the consequences deriving from it. They are important not only because they are so many further violations of the letter and the spirit of the Treaties freely entered into between both parties, but also because they impose onerous conditions which are harmful to the dignity and the interests of Panama. Thus, new, unnecessary conflicts are brought about, to the detriment of the good relations, understanding and co-operation envisaged in the Treaties, the proper development of which is thus impeded.

34. The other aspect of the discrepancies is that relating to the conditions of the protection and security of the Canal. The Panamanian attitude on this subject has always been based on the recognition that this is a sensitive Canal, whose best defence is neutrality and the universality of its services and whose best protection is the sympathy of the people residing in the area. As a sovereign nation Panama has a traditional vocation of neutrality and non-alignment in all matters relating to East-West tensions and more particularly to its well-known decision to participate in actions of conciliation and peace-making in the Central American region. There is no need to elaborate on this, since everyone is aware that my country has taken an active part in the various efforts leading up to the Contadora process, is part of that process and provides the headquarters for its activities. Therefore, those who are friends and partners of Panama, particularly those friends carrying out activities on Panamanian territory, have the moral, political and legal duty to respect that stated vocation of my country.

35. The 1977 Canal Treaties authorize the temporary prolongation of the presence of United States bases and troops on Panamanian national territory until the last day of this century, with the sole purpose of contributing to the protection of the Canal as it exists at present. Any activity of these bases and troops going beyond their exclusive mission of protecting the Canal runs counter to the Treaties allowing for their presence on the territory of my country. Hence we reiterate our protest against and rejection of the logistics, intelligence, planning or military training activities which are being carried out on Panamanian territory aimed against other countries in any region. Similarly, we repeat that such actions not only violate the letter of the Treaties and undermine Panamanian policies and sovereignty but also harm the interests of the other nations using the Canal.

36. The international community and the United Nations made a significant contribution to the process that led to the 1977 Panama Canal Treaties, which have made and continue to make an effective contribution to mutual understanding and international peace and security and are a laudable precedent appreciated by all countries and organizations wishing to defuse disputes and foster peace and security. The proper implementation of the Treaties in all their aspects and at all stages meets the aspirations of all peoples, particularly the Latin American nations.

37. When Law 96-70 was adopted, President Jimmy Carter engaged the word of the Chief Executive of the United States that the text would be revised jointly with Panama in order to bring it in line with the Treaties and with the interests of both countries. One of the Law's articles stipulates that the Law should be revised periodically. Nevertheless, in the last five years the protests of the Panamanian Government and its demands that the revision be conducted immediately have been constantly ignored and this has led to an accumulation of further violations, discrepancies and problems.

38. We should like once again to appeal, in the General Assembly, to international solidarity and understanding to ensure that the process of implementation of the 1977 Treaties be followed more closely and that nations friendly to Panama and to the United States seek their strict application. This appeal must consist in demanding the speedy revision of Law 96-70 so as to bring it in line with the spirit and the letter of the Canal Treaties.

39. We would not wish this appeal to cloud the good relations existing between Panama and the United States. My country repeats this call precisely because we want to continue to improve these relations, and these violations are an obstacle to our aspirations. The United States introduced this law which is the source of the current problems, and it is therefore up to that country to take the appropriate steps. We trust that the good intentions of the United States authorities will be sensitive to this unanimous international appeal we are making here today.

40. Under the leadership of General Omar Torrijos, my country began important social and economic reforms which went hand in hand with a strengthening of national sovereignty and independence, and we are happy to say that there is no political violence in Panama at this time. However, such violence does exist in neighbouring countries which are still suffering from many structural injustices the effects of which are further exacerbated by the international economic crisis and the imbalances in the trade and financial relations existing between rich and poor countries.

41. The fact that there is an area of conflict nearby has given rise in Panama to a foreign policy basically aimed at contributing to the peaceful solution of the problems in the area by means of dialogue and political negotiations between all the parties to the conflict and at avoiding the exacerbation or generalization of conflict situations. This faith in genuine understanding among peoples has been confirmed throughout history, and we trust that it offers the best hope of hemispheric brotherhood in the future.

42. Thus, we consistently uphold the principle of Panamanian neutrality with regard to disputes between other countries in the area or between the great

Powers. For this reason also, we endeavour to develop good relations with all nations of the area without exception, even though they may have political systems different from our own. As our experience has shown, dialogue and agreements jointly arrived at with all countries are the best way to protect the security and stability of each and of the international community as a whole.

43. In the face of the dangerous deterioration of the regional situation, and in keeping with our experience, we prefer Panama to be a centre of understanding and conciliation rather than a party to confrontations. This basic principle has made my country one of the main sites for discussions to achieve peace in the world; the same principle animates the Contadora initiative.

44. We can say today that Contadora has become one of the most important expressions of international political solidarity and an effective means for dialogue in the region. I need not repeat here the readjustment this initiative has accomplished through the Contadora declaration,² the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America,³ the Document of Objectives,⁴ and the document on measures to be taken to fulfil the commitments entered into in the Document of Objectives [see A/39/71], and the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [see A/39/562]. But it is worth recalling that this process has brought to the fore the fundamental principles which have inspired and given purpose to the initiative, that dialogue has become possible and that that dialogue has led to the identification of specific problems and many consensus understandings on the way to a solution. At the same time, it has been possible to contain the trend towards generalization of the state of war which a few years ago threatened the region. What has already been achieved makes it possible to envisage that the necessary agreements will be arrived at shortly to implement the Contadora objectives.

45. At a time of grave peril the world placed great hopes in Contadora. The complexity and very nature of the problem required a process that was both patient and bold, laborious and painstaking, and that also required discretion, despite demands for spectacular action which would not have truly helped. As is well known, the revised version of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, handed over to the five Central American Governments on 7 September 1984, reflects the observations which those Governments had formulated earlier with respect to the original version of that document following an extensive exchange of views.

46. This has made it possible to arrive at viable formulas of understanding which express the many points of agreement necessary to guarantee respect for sovereignty, mutual security and mutual respect and neighbourly relations between all countries in the area—pre-conditions to ensure the political stability and social and economic development required by the people of Central America. Therefore, it is now up to the five Governments to make their final comments on the revised Contadora Act, before 15 October, in order that they may sign it soon, at a forthcoming meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the countries of Central America and of the Contadora Group.

47. When that has been done, it is above all the responsibility of the Central American Governments

themselves to bring about an honourable and lasting peace. It is their duty to show the political will that they have repeatedly spoken about, by speedily adopting the legal commitments in the Contadora Act. Similarly, it is the duty of other Governments with interests in the region and links with it unequivocally to support the adoption and implementation of this agreement, with full respect for the self-determination and sovereignty of the Central American nations.

48. To state here that Contadora has played its role and that the Central Americans themselves now bear the main responsibility in no way means that Contadora's responsibilities are over, or that it has relinquished them, as some seem to think. Contadora's role will continue through its co-operation in orchestrating the agreement, but above all it must maintain an effective presence as long as peace continues to be threatened.

49. From now on the international community will have to redouble the solidarity that it has always given to these negotiating efforts. Its support is today more important than ever in calling on the Governments of all the countries concerned to sign and fully to implement the Contadora Act, and in asking those countries with interests in and links with the region speedily to subscribe to the Additional Protocol, thus committing themselves to contribute to peace and co-operation in Central America. In that way, everyone can contribute to bringing about the peace which the people of Central America, the continent and mankind deserve.

50. The amphictyonic vocation which Simón Bolívar gave to my country forms an indelible part of the national consciousness of Panamanians. Like the other Latin American countries, Panama is closely linked with its sisters in America, not only by our historic and cultural traditions but also by the present similarity and interrelationship of our structures, problems and aspirations, because of which nothing that affects other Latin Americans can be a matter of indifference to us. Moreover, since we share similar difficulties and goals, it is of course of necessity the duty of our nations to act together in ever more effective ways, so that we may save ourselves and develop together, for otherwise we shall sink separately.

51. As is well known, very serious trade and financial difficulties are part of the current problems of Latin America. The main causes of these problems are to be found beyond our borders and outside the control of our countries. There is a wise Japanese saying that the first thing a good businessman must desire is the prosperity of his customers. Indeed, that is the only thing that can develop the market, and only equity in the terms of trade can guarantee it. However, mistaken economic strategies by certain industrialized countries have resulted in turning their partners into debtors, stifling the market instead of contributing to its prosperity.

52. It is well known that the unjust and disorderly structure of international economic relations no longer corresponds to contemporary reality, resulting in harm to all the developing countries. To make matters worse, there is a growing deterioration in the terms of trade between the poor countries and the industrialized countries, the effects of which are worsened by the protectionist and restrictive measures imposed by the major economic Powers, and

particularly by the artificial and unreasonable increase in interest rates.

53. Nevertheless, the major economic Powers still do not listen to our warnings. They have continued to ignore the urgent call for a North-South dialogue, global negotiations and other initiatives. At the same time, they continue to overlook the fact that the freeze in the East-West dialogue and the escalation of the arms race, with their inevitable budgetary and financial effects, are costly to the developing countries and are daily speeding up the deterioration of our economic situation, presenting the world with new threats.

54. Confronted with this situation, Latin America continues to show its political maturity, the best demonstrations of which are the Quito Declaration issued by the Heads of State or Government of the Latin American and Caribbean countries at the Latin American Economic Conference, held from 9 to 13 January this year [see A/39/118], and the Cartagena Consensus of 22 June [see A/39/331].

55. Since it is the mistaken economic policies of certain industrialized nations and their financial organizations that have brought about this situation for the Latin American countries, those nations and creditor institutions can do no less than to accept that they share the responsibility for the present level of indebtedness. Furthermore, in view of the great social and political upheavals that the situation could cause, it is impossible to claim that the problem is exclusively financial or that the Latin American Governments should accept forced insolvency to please creditors who have forgotten their share of the responsibility. The problem requires serious political consideration, and there must be a joint solution, bearing in mind the interests of both sides, since the only answer is the structural improvement and the development of the Latin American economies.

56. The Government of the Republic of Panama, through me, thanks the United Nations for its efforts for peace and mankind. We are convinced that not only our country but the whole international community will solve our problems on the basis of dialogue, political negotiation and mutual respect between States. That is the best contribution we can make for the benefit of our peoples.

57. Mr. GROMYKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): Mr. Lusa-ka, I congratulate you on your election to the office of President of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Our congratulations also go to the representatives of Brunei Darussalam, a State which has become the 159th Member of the United Nations.

58. For almost 40 years now, the words "the United Nations" have been firmly established in the world's political vocabulary. There is virtually no major international problem in connection with which those words would not be spoken in different languages, both in this Hall and outside it.

59. The extensive involvement of the United Nations in world affairs and developments is determined by the very mission of this forum, which was brought into being in order to unite the political will and potential of States for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security.

60. The conclusion reached by the founding Members of the United Nations was very simple indeed. It was born of the experience of the most bloody and destructive war that has ever befallen mankind.

Indeed, it was precisely through united efforts that the aggressor was crushed. High was the cost of the great victory whose fortieth anniversary will be observed next year. All the peoples who fought against fascism contributed to that victory, but the Soviet Union's decisive role in it is indisputable.

61. United efforts were and are still needed today in order to build the post-war world. For it is the main lesson of the Second World War that States must stand together in the fight against war.

62. It is common knowledge, however, that as the war-ravaged earth was still smouldering and thousands of towns and villages were in ruins, the international atmosphere once again began to deteriorate and ultimately to become critical. This happened through the fault of those who, in their quest for world hegemony, began to behave contrary to their obligations as allies in the anti-Hitlerite coalition, oblivious to the lessons of the past.

63. In disregard of the lofty purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which they too had just signed, a group of States set out to escalate their military preparations by putting together a system of aggressive military blocs with the North Atlantic Alliance as its pivot. Those States pledged themselves to a policy based on a position of strength, a policy of brinkmanship. They are responsible for the advent of the cold war, which for a long time froze the normal flow of international life for which the peoples of the world yearned.

64. As a result, in the post-war years the world has been in a state of fever. And whenever international relations were marked—as was the case during the period of détente—by budding co-operation between States with different social systems, no effort was spared to undermine those positive processes, which is exactly what happened at the whim of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] military bloc. It is precisely this trend in world politics that is the source of the situation that characterizes the international climate today. The threat of war has grown and the foundations of world peace have become more shaky.

65. This course, which is manifest as never before in the current policies of the United States and of those who choose to be its accomplices, is opposed by a broad front of peace-loving States and forces.

66. The Soviet Union is in the vanguard of active champions of peace. It has been and remains faithful to its solemn pledge taken right after the criminal Fascist swastika was crushed and the Hitlerite war machine smashed. The essence of that pledge has not faded with the years; it is to fight resolutely to ensure that the flames of world war never flare up again. The fact that it has been possible for almost 40 years to ward it off is largely to the credit of the countries which pursue a policy of peace among nations and frustrate—by their international prestige and influence—aggressive and adventurist designs wherever they originate. The Soviet Union is one of them.

67. Together with other socialist countries, we shall continue to work in the interest of improving international relations. This is precisely the thrust of the documents of the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, held at Prague on 4 and 5 January 1983,⁵ and of the high-level Economic Conference of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic

Assistance, held in Moscow from 12 to 14 June 1984 [see A/39/323].

68. The Soviet Union and the States of the socialist community are concentrating their efforts on attaining the key objective of preventing a nuclear disaster. For if the destructive potential currently amassed in the world were unleashed the human race would probably cease to exist. To prevent that from happening is a goal of overriding importance. All States represented in the United Nations should contribute to its achievement. No one and nothing can relieve them of the responsibility they have assumed under the Charter of the United Nations for the destiny of present and succeeding generations.

69. As was stressed recently by Mr. Chernenko, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: "The world has radically changed. Its problems cannot be solved by force . . . it is imperative to adopt a policy of realism, reason and business-like co-operation in solving the problems that face mankind."

70. Those who truly hold dear the interests of peace cannot confine themselves merely to stating that there exists a threat of nuclear war. It is necessary to pin-point the source of that threat. Clarity in this regard is not merely a matter of historical fairness. An understanding of the factors that are pushing mankind towards a nuclear abyss also determines the answer to the question whether or not this calamitous process can be stopped, and how.

71. It is of fundamental importance to compare the two political trends and the two approaches to the problem of nuclear weapons.

72. Right after Hiroshima and Nagasaki the world witnessed the inception of a policy of ever-greater stockpiles of nuclear weapons and nuclear blackmail. The Soviet Union forcefully called for the outlawing of these most deadly and destructive weapons. Indeed, as early as 1946 the Soviet Union submitted at the United Nations a draft international convention on the prohibition for all time of the production and use of nuclear weapons and on the destruction of their stockpiles. I am sure there are some present here in this Hall who witnessed the discussion of this item at that time.

73. Yet our former allies in the struggle against fascism did not have the heart to vote for that proposal. Their reaction then was bound to make the peoples apprehensive and it did cause serious apprehension.

74. And what is the situation today? Statements are being openly made at the highest official levels that the United States has the right to deliver a first nuclear strike, that is to say, to unleash a nuclear war.

75. Our country sought a ban on nuclear weapons both when it did not possess them and after it developed them. Today, as before, the Soviet Union favours prompt measures to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons altogether. This is the aim of a comprehensive set of initiatives advanced by the Soviet Union.

76. Whenever the United States side showed realism and the will to come to agreement on the basis of the principle of equality and equal security—something that did happen before—it proved possible to reach important accords. Thus, a major step forward was taken with the conclusion in 1972 by the Soviet

Union and the United States of the Interim Agreement on Certain Measures with respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms⁶ and the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems.⁷

77. However, in the years that followed, our attempts to reduce or at least to limit nuclear arms failed to produce concrete results. The tug of war between the groups that determine United States foreign policy has been won by the militaristically minded. They attempt to devalue the existing Soviet-American accords by wrecking what was achieved earlier through long and painstaking work on both sides, as was done with the SALT II Treaty.⁸

78. They broke off and refuse to resume the trilateral talks between the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapons tests. They stalled the ratification of the Soviet-United States treaties on the limitation of underground nuclear-weapons tests and on peaceful nuclear explosions that had been signed a long time ago. And what tremendous efforts were required to arrive at those treaties and agreements!

79. Those and other similar actions are but a few examples of the policy of the United States, whose central objective is to try to secure military superiority for itself.

80. Stories intended to mislead people are being churned out in profusion. Not that they are particularly reticent about saying that, should they eventually feel like negotiating, they would do so only from strength. To that end—they claim—the United States must first build up its military muscle.

81. It took Washington a long time to send its team to the negotiating table at Geneva. However, at the talks the United States side followed a scenario that was not designed to lead to agreement. How else can one describe the fact that while negotiating the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe our partners did exactly the opposite? Beforehand—I repeat, beforehand—they set the date for deploying new United States medium-range missiles on the territories of several Western European States. We were told to accept the United States position or else there would be no agreement. So there is no agreement.

82. As to the Soviet proposals paving the way to agreements, they were rejected out of hand. Anything aimed at reaching agreement on the basis of equality was opposed with hostility.

83. It was Washington's deliberate intention to wreck the negotiations on nuclear arms—both medium-range and strategic. And it succeeded in this. Juggling with words ostensibly in favour of negotiations is a false propaganda ploy. Its purpose is obvious.

84. Now they rejoice that they were able to keep the timetable and begin the deployment of their missiles in Europe, as planned. Even here in the course of the General Assembly one can meet representatives of Western European States who are rubbing their hands with pleasure over the fact that the plan for deployment is being implemented.

85. It makes no difference whether deception is crude or cleverly packaged. A good idea is being exploited for unsavoury purposes.

86. We have noticed that there are realistically minded politicians and statesmen in the West, in-

cluding the United States, who realize that it is precisely in this way that the issue of negotiations is being used.

87. No, the path of stockpiling of nuclear weapons is not the right path to follow. The movement must be in the opposite direction, leading to the removal of these weapons and to their subsequent elimination both in Europe and throughout the world. This is the course of our policy.

88. The Soviet Union is in favour of serious talks. Not only are we prepared for such talks, but we are insisting on them. Our proposals on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms and on the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe remain valid. They neither offer advantages nor do any harm to either side. The United States must remove the obstacles it has put in the way of the talks. Unless these obstacles are removed, of course, these talks will not take place, and this is what the United States has in mind.

89. It is often asked: since it is difficult for the time being to arrive at a radical solution to the problem of nuclear arms, would it not be possible to take steps that would create a favourable atmosphere for that, raise the level of trust among States and ease international tension?

90. We are convinced that such steps are both possible and necessary. An effective measure of this kind would be the implementation of our proposal, endorsed by the United Nations, for a quantitative and qualitative freeze of nuclear weapon arsenals by all States which possess them. This could be done in the first place by the Soviet Union and the United States on a bilateral basis to set an example for other nuclear Powers to follow. Could we not do this? We propose to Washington: let us set such an example.

91. For the time being it is necessary at least to suspend the nuclear-arms race. The world has crossed the line beyond which any further buildup and improvement of these arms is not only dangerous but senseless.

92. In the present circumstances it is futile and hopeless for anyone to expect to get ahead and gain military superiority. It is absolutely illusory to hope to win a nuclear war: whether global or limited, blitzkrieg or protracted—whatever the nuclear war doctrines.

93. Such is the authoritative and unanimous conclusion of scientists and competent military and civilian experts of world renown, with the exception of those, of course, who have lost their honour and conscience or those who were not at all endowed by nature with either.

94. What kind of people can fail to see that peace today is fragile? In spite of the obvious, they once again proclaim a policy of "peace through strength". Moreover, they are trying to elevate this policy to the level of statesmanship. All we hear is that strength, strength and, above all, strength is the guarantee of international peace. In other words—weapons, weapons and still more weapons. But does not the experience of the past—both recent and remote—show otherwise?

95. In the face of the currently aggravated dangerous military and political confrontation it is extremely important not to miss the chance. Agreement should be reached on freezing nuclear weapons and prospects opened up for a subsequent reduction of arsenals of these weapons.

96. Sentiments in favour of such a solution have become widespread in the world. As is well known, the broadest sections of the population in the United States and other Western countries spontaneously come out in favour of this solution, and we fully understand their aspirations.

97. Only ill will can guide those who spawn all kinds of insinuations that the Soviet Union all but manipulates or is behind this movement. Let them ask what it is that the people who take to the streets in mass marches of protest are fighting for. Let them ask those people themselves. Let them ask those people, not us. They will give only one answer: they are fighting for life. What kind of people can assume that the Americans or the British, the French or the Italians, the Germans or the Dutch wish to perish in the flames of nuclear war? We think that those who hope to crush the anti-nuclear movement by punitive measures realize it full well.

98. In this light, what is the value of the human rights rhetoric in which they just love to indulge in their speeches, statements before various commissions and committees, in articles and voluminous reports to parliaments. In fact, the proponents of the arms race do not care a bit about these rights, including the paramount human right—the right to life.

99. There can be no justification for any action that pushes the world to nuclear war. It is only natural that last year the General Assembly adopted—at the Soviet initiative—by an overwhelming majority of its Members resolution 38/75 condemning nuclear war as the most hideous crime that could be committed against peoples.

100. A nuclear age requires that political thinking be consonant with its realities. Where categories such as “strength”, “deterrence” and “superiority” still prevail in this thinking, they must be replaced by concepts of the non-use of force and of trust, equality and mutual regard for security interests.

101. It would be of fundamental importance if nuclear Powers observed, in relations between themselves, certain norms that were formulated by Mr. Chernenko in his statement last March. It is proposed that these Powers: regard the prevention of nuclear war as the primary objective of their foreign policy, preclude situations fraught with the risk of nuclear conflict and, should such a risk arise, hold urgent consultations in order to prevent a nuclear conflagration; renounce the propaganda of any nuclear war scenario, whether global or limited; assume an obligation to forgo the first use of nuclear weapons; under no circumstances use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries which have no such weapons on their territory, respect the status of the existing nuclear-free zone and encourage the establishment of new such zones in various parts of the world; prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form; not transfer to any recipient whatsoever such weapons or control over them, not deploy them on the territory of countries where there are no such weapons and not extend the nuclear-arms race to new environments, including outer space; seek, step by step, on the basis of the principle of equal security, the reduction of nuclear armaments up to and including the complete elimination of all types of such weapons.

102. The Soviet Union is in favour of reaching agreement at any time with other nuclear Powers on the mutual recognition of such norms and making

them binding. This would serve to reduce the risk of the outbreak of a nuclear conflict.

103. In view of its special urgency, it is necessary to single out the question of preventing the race in nuclear and other weapons in outer space, which some want to turn into a staging area for war. We all know who is seeking this.

104. The extension of the arms race to outer space, unless checked in time, could become an irreversible process. Effective measures are needed to keep outer space peaceful.

105. No one country should believe that this is for others, not for it, to decide. Such an attitude would be a big mistake.

106. A major step has been our initiative in calling for Soviet-United States talks on preventing the militarization of outer space [see A/39/335]. We believe that the Soviet Union and the United States, as the leading Powers in the field of outer space exploration, should do all they can to keep outer space peaceful and in particular, with a view to accomplishing this task, to lay the foundations for multilateral agreement. This idea seems to be alive among many States. Full responsibility for the failure to hold the talks rests with the United States side. Washington is unwilling to engage in the talks.

107. Ask any man in the street in any town in the United States, in the Soviet Union or in any other country whether he believes that nuclear weapons should be stationed in space, beyond the Earth's atmosphere, at an altitude of hundreds of kilometres, and that outer space should become a springboard for war preparations, or whether he feels that this should not be allowed to happen. There is no doubt that the answer will be unequivocal: this cannot be allowed.

108. We urge the United States Government to recognize that the militarization of outer space threatens the whole of mankind, including the American people themselves. We express the hope that the United States will refrain from actions which would make irreversible the process of turning outer space into an arena of military rivalry and that it will be willing to engage in talks with a view to reaching an agreement. For its part, the Soviet Union continues to be in favour of starting such talks as soon as possible.

109. The General Assembly would be doing a good thing if it forcefully voiced its concerted opinion that the militarization of outer space should not be allowed to take place and that outer space must be used solely for the good of peoples and not for sowing death and destruction on Earth. We hope that every member of every delegation in this Hall will give serious thought to this.

110. In seeking to promote this goal in every possible way, the Soviet Union proposes the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of the Assembly of an important and urgent item entitled “Use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind”. What we are talking about is, in the first place, the banning, without delay and for all time, of the use of force in and from outer space against the Earth, as well as from the Earth against objects in outer space. In other words, agreement must be reached on the prohibition and elimination of space attack weapons of all systems, whatever their mode of basing, designed to destroy objects in space. This applies above all to States with major space capabilities.

111. The United Nations should speak out emphatically and with all its authority in favour of achieving reliably verifiable agreements on a bilateral and a multilateral basis. The way must be opened for concerted and constructive efforts by States which could eventually lead to the creation of a world organization for the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes.

112. Among those present here there are bound to be people who in 1982 witnessed the Soviet Union solemnly assume in this Hall a unilateral obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. That decision—which was not an easy one to take—is of exceptional importance.

113. Our country continues to urge the other nuclear Powers, which have not yet done so, to assume a similar obligation. This would also be a tangible historic contribution to international confidence-building. Much is said about trust and confidence, but by no means is everything done to bring it about.

114. Surely the implementation of the proposal of the socialist countries to conclude a treaty on the mutual non-use of military force in relations between the States of the Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic Alliance would help to dissipate mutual apprehensions. It would be a welcome decision if an obligation not to be the first to use either nuclear or conventional weapons against one another—in other words, not to use force—were undertaken by States whether or not they belong to military alliances or have a neutral or non-aligned status.

115. We have also submitted these and some other major proposals at the Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, meeting at Stockholm. They have been submitted in combination with certain confidence-building measures in the military field.

116. Representatives of NATO countries, on the other hand, take what is actually an obstructionist position with regard to these proposals. What is proposed under the guise of military and technical measures is a programme, which they have drawn up, of poorly disguised espionage. The measures they are trying to sell do not, of course, affect a single inch of the territory of the United States—that is, the country in which the foundations of the military machine of the NATO bloc are to be found. It is on Soviet territory that they are proposing to carry out these measures.

117. The same can be said about the prospects of the Vienna Talks on Mutual Reduction of Forces and Armaments and Associated Measures in Central Europe. The fruitless “data” discussion started by the Western participants has long been stalling those talks.

118. The NATO countries are evading the business-like discussion of cardinal questions, above all those dealing with arms reduction, although without such discussions there can be no real strengthening of security and stability on the European continent. At the Vienna talks too, there should be no place for any of the kind of political manoeuvring in which our negotiating partners like so much to indulge.

119. Some two years ago at Geneva the Soviet Union introduced at the Conference on Disarmament draft basic provisions for a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.⁹ That draft constitutes a well-balanced basis for agreement. Some of its provisions were subsequently revised and amended

to accommodate the positions of the other participants in the talks.

120. Not everyone wants to see a successful completion of those talks. Some would rather see them fail. It would seem that the ostensible interest of certain States serves to conceal their plans for a build-up of chemical weapons. Such tactics should be strongly condemned. We may presume that certain War Departments are doing this. But where are the statesmen? Where are true sobriety and far-sightedness, a wide-angle look at peace and the fate of the world?

121. The drafting of an international convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons should be speeded up, and the United Nations could contribute to this in no small measure. With time this problem will become even more intractable.

122. Our country expresses its readiness to take part in multilateral negotiations on the limitation of naval activities and naval armaments and on the extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans, especially to regions with the busiest sea lanes or with the highest likelihood of conflict situations. We have already put forward a proposal—and this is worth recalling—for an agreement on appropriate measures, including those applicable to particular regions, such as the Indian, Atlantic or Pacific Oceans, the Mediterranean Sea or the Persian Gulf.

123. The convening of an international conference on the Indian Ocean is being inadmissibly delayed. The United States and some of its allies disregard the will of the littoral States that wish to see a peaceful Indian Ocean and clear skies above it. As before, the Soviet Union continues actively to advocate the turning of this ocean into a zone of peace, something that would be a major step towards preventing the militarization of the world's oceans.

124. The arms race is seriously damaging to people even when the guns are silent, for it is increasingly consuming intellectual and material wealth and impedes the solution of global problems such as the elimination of hunger and disease, the search for new sources of energy, and the preservation of the environment.

125. These tasks will not be accomplished either by declaratory statements or by attempts to make assistance to other countries contingent on their acceptance of a particular model of socio-economic development. Something else is required, namely, the renunciation of all forms of exploitation and of the use of trade and economic ties as tools of political pressure, and a restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis.

126. By pressing for the implementation of tangible measures for curbing the arms race and achieving disarmament in close connection with the solution of world economic and social development problems, we consider that reduction of military budgets in either percentage or absolute terms is a promising way to achieve such a goal. And yes, I am talking about military budgets.

127. Together with the other States signatories of the Warsaw Treaty, the Soviet Union has submitted a proposal to the countries of the North Atlantic bloc to begin talks on the question of the mutual non-increase of military expenditures and their subsequent reduction. In our view, there should be no obstacles to the participation of States that do not

belong to these military and political groupings in implementing the proposed measures.

128. However, so far there has been no response from the NATO countries, and that is no accident. If a picture were taken today using the most sophisticated modern technology to show on a planetary scale the magnitude of the world-wide military preparations by the United States and its allies, it would reveal a view that would stun any thinking person: a palisade of missiles; strategic bombers; naval armadas plying the waters of the seas and oceans; hundreds of military bases scattered all over the globe; and colossal stockpiles of weapons of every type.

129. Some may say that the Soviet Union too has weapons on land, in the air and on and under water. Our answer is: Yes, we do have them, but not by our choice. The objective facts of post-war history irrefutably show that it was not the Soviet Union, not socialism, but rather the other side that initiated the arms race and each of its new spirals. That is where the truth lies.

130. Forced to take countermeasures, our country did so only in response to, and to the extent commensurate with, the protection of its own security and that of its friends and allies. We have never sought, nor are we seeking, superiority. We stand for maintaining military equilibrium, and at the lowest possible level at that.

131. We have put forward no less than 100 constructive initiatives from the rostrum of the United Nations alone. The whole world knows that it was the Soviet Union that came forward with the most radical proposal—general and complete disarmament combined with general and complete control. No one else has proposed this.

132. Numerous proposals have been made by the Soviet Union to curb the arms race in some of its areas. We have proposed—and our proposal still stands—that agreement be reached on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and of new systems of such weapons.

133. The Soviet Union has also been making sustained efforts to reduce conventional armaments and armed forces by proposing that this problem be solved on both a global and a regional basis.

134. The world community welcomed the Soviet initiatives that brought forth major international treaties and agreements—the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Seabed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and so on. They continue to serve their purpose to this day and serve it well.

135. We have voluntarily and unilaterally assumed a number of obligations ranging from no-first-use of nuclear weapons to practical steps limiting our armed forces and armaments in Central Europe.

136. While making its own constructive contributions, the Soviet Union reacts favourably to proposals made by other countries. We support the idea of

establishing nuclear-free zones and zones of peace in various parts of the globe. We have responded positively to the recent initiative by Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania, contained in their Joint Declaration [see A/39/277], which urged all nuclear Powers to stop the build-up of nuclear weapons and begin to reduce their stockpiles.

137. The proposals that we have made constitute an impressive list of initiatives aimed at easing international tensions and developing peaceful co-operation among States.

138. Yet no matter what proposals or arguments we advance, our counterparts say “no”—they are not acceptable.

139. They swear that they favour a halt in the arms race, but only through modernization of arms and through improvement and stockpiling of weapons. Is it not absurd? It is absurd, indeed, and it underlies the entire policy. They would have people believe that they favour a reduction in world tensions, but only by establishing more and more military bases, by intensifying military preparations, by militarizing outer space and by deploying new kinds of United States nuclear weapons in Europe.

140. What is needed to prevent hunger and disease from claiming the lives of countless millions of people? According to the logic of NATO countries, this can be achieved by throwing as much money and resources as possible down the insatiable maw of the war industry.

141. It would appear that there is no other path towards ensuring peace than war preparations. This is twisted logic, a logic of frenzied militarism.

142. All States must have a clear understanding of why none of the important and acute international problems is being solved at present. This applies first and foremost to nuclear weapons and the arms race.

143. They are not being solved because the NATO States do not want it. The instigator of this policy is, of course, Washington. It has firmly linked its foreign policy plans with the further stockpiling of nuclear weapons as well as other types of weapons of mass destruction. It has put up an insurmountable wall on the path to agreement.

144. Even elementary decency is lacking in cases where representatives of the two Powers—the Soviet Union and the United States—meet to discuss one thing or another. Everything the United States side says is intended to secure unilateral advantages for the United States. Therefore, from the very outset things are doomed to failure. If there are political genes, then failure is genetically inevitable.

145. If you read closely the documents setting out the policy of the United States Administration for the future—and there are quite a lot of them—you will see that these documents, which are imbued with the spirit of imperial ambitions and enmity towards the Soviet Union and other peace-loving States, glorify the course aimed at United States domination in the world and extol arms and strength. Thus, they set the stage for deadlocks in the solution of all the acute problems of today.

146. We are convinced that each State, irrespective of its social system, whether big or small, will realize that this is a course that leads to a further aggravation of tensions in the world, to an increased risk of a nuclear catastrophe.

147. The Soviet delegation is authorized to state before this high forum that the Soviet Union will follow the same policy course it has pursued up to now, namely, the course aimed at peace, disarmament, limitation and subsequent elimination of nuclear armaments, and the solution of other acute problems of today.

148. One should face the truth squarely. It is precisely the current United States policy that has made the gap between these two courses in world politics wider and deeper than ever before and has virtually blocked the paths leading to agreement.

149. Today, many people are wondering anxiously if everything has been lost and the only thing left is to acknowledge that international relations have plunged into total darkness.

150. We do not accept such a view of the situation in the world. A feeling of doom is alien to our world outlook. An insurmountable barrier must be erected against war. An end must be put to the stockpiling of weapons in the world.

151. It is understandable that prevention of war is a difficult task. The flywheel of military production is revolving continuously, and influential forces—which place the interests of dominating the world above everything else—will not stop it.

152. Examples are readily available; they are at hand—all you have to do is reach for them. In defiance of the elementary norms of international law and morality, an act of banditry was committed against tiny Grenada, which dared to assert its sovereignty. It was occupied and robbed of its independence.

153. We are witnessing gross interference in the internal affairs of El Salvador. No effort is being spared to prop up the régime of the stooges who are committing brutal crimes against the Salvadorian people.

154. A real siege—military, political and economic—has been mounted against Nicaragua, whose people, defending their national freedom, independence and democratic achievements, are heroically resisting in the face of the undeclared war organized against it by Washington. But the Nicaraguan people want just one thing: they want their independence and they want to resolve their internal affairs as they themselves see fit.

155. The United States still cannot reconcile itself to the existence of socialist Cuba. Threats are being made against Cuba to force that country off the course to which it has been committed in both words and deeds.

156. The situation in Central America—where a dangerous pocket of tension has been created—should be settled by peaceful means on the basis of an unconditional cessation of United States interference in the internal affairs of the countries of the region. Possibilities for such a settlement have been opened up thanks to the constructive approach of Nicaragua and Cuba and to the initiative of the States of the Contadora Group. The Soviet Union supports the efforts to reach a political settlement of the problem.

157. Turning now to the Middle East, here again we can see what the imperialist policies mean for peoples and countries. Still fresh in our memories are the barbaric acts in Lebanon undertaken in an

attempt to force upon it a capitulation agreement with Israel, and these acts are still going on today.

158. Yet the facts show that the United States, which relies upon “strategic co-operation” with Israel, has no intention of establishing lasting peace in that region.

159. The Soviet Union has recently put forward a proposal on the principles of a Middle East settlement. That proposal is well known and has evoked a broad response. We call upon all parties to the conflict to act with sober-minded regard for each other’s legitimate rights and interests, and upon all other States to facilitate the search for a just settlement in the Middle East.

160. Provocative intrigues continue against sovereign and non-aligned Afghanistan. The foes of the Afghan people will stop at nothing and will not abandon their hope of plunging it back into medieval darkness. To this end, military incursions from outside are being organized. Is it possible to solve the foreign policy aspect of this problem? Yes, it is. The way to do that is to stop forming, arming and infiltrating into the country from outside gangs of anti-Government bandits and saboteurs and not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. There can be no doubt that Afghanistan has followed, and will continue to follow, the path it has chosen—the path of independence, freedom, social progress, peace and non-alignment.

161. In South-East Asia the situation is being exacerbated by the policy pursued by outside forces. Acts of provocation against Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea are going on unabated. Attempts are being made to pit their neighbours, the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations [ASEAN], against those countries. We regard the initiative of the three countries of Indo-China on turning South-East Asia into a zone of peace, good-neighbourliness and co-operation, as also their efforts to start a political dialogue among the States of the region, as constructive.

162. The Soviet leadership has repeatedly stated its positions on the question of its relations with the People’s Republic of China. Those positions are well known. The Soviet Union favours normal, good-neighbourly relations between these two great States.

163. Obstacles are being put in the way of the normalization of the situation in the Korean peninsula, thus increasing tension in the Far East. The Soviet Union has consistently affirmed its solidarity with the Korean people in their struggle for the withdrawal of foreign troops from South Korea and for the peaceful reunification of their homeland, without any outside interference. The proposals of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea provide a positive basis for a settlement of the Korean question.

164. The racist régime of Pretoria has all but been formally named a “historical ally” of the United States. In defiance of the decisions of the United Nations, that régime is trying to keep Namibia under the colonial yoke for as long as possible and is threatening—in particular by overt interventionist actions—the independence of Angola and other neighbouring African States. That régime could not engage in such lawlessness were it not for the complicity of some major Powers.

165. There can be no doubt, however, that the Namibian people will win their freedom and independence. In the present-day world, the colonial

policy of South Africa and its patrons is a historically doomed anomaly.

166. The economically weak countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are being virtually plundered by industrialized capitalist States. The Soviet Union, like other socialist countries, will continue to render assistance, to the extent of its capabilities, to the newly independent States in their efforts to develop their national economies. International economic relations should be restructured in such a way that all countries of the world can make economic and social progress.

167. Of late, the world has been increasingly confronted with dangerous symptoms in the policy of the United States, such as claims to impunity and licence to do anything it wishes. It does not scruple to declare any criminal ways and means legitimate if these can serve the desired ends. In world affairs, it intends to follow the logic of the idea that one does whatever one's left foot desires. And so it tramples on other peoples' lands with soldiers' iron-heeled boots—left, right, left, right.

168. We are convinced that the time is ripe to take the most serious notice of the fact that certain States, having set out to achieve military superiority and to pursue the policy of terrorism in international affairs, have resorted to actions designed to undermine the socio-political systems of other States.

169. There is a very long list of documents, decisions, resolutions and various provisions to which States have affixed their seals and which specifically provide that it is inadmissible for countries to interfere in the internal affairs of others. Even the United Nations as a whole has no right to intervene in such matters. It is only necessary to look at Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, which states precisely that. When that Article was discussed and adopted in the course of the discussion and adoption of the Charter, everyone solemnly and unanimously supported the idea that not even the United Nations should have the right to intervene in the internal affairs of States.

170. Yet, flagrant violations of this international law are being committed today before the eyes of the world, while those responsible say that they are acting in such a way simply because they do not like the social system of some State or other. This destroys the very possibility of ensuring peaceful relations and mutual trust among States and increases the threat of war. Such policies and actions flout the international rules of conduct. They cannot be tolerated and must be terminated. The United Nations, in our view, should speak out emphatically in support of the rule of law in international relations.

171. In the light of what I have said, the Soviet Union is submitting to the General Assembly for its consideration an important and urgent item entitled "Inadmissibility of the policy of State terrorism and any actions by States aimed at undermining the socio-political system of other sovereign States".

172. We propose that the United Nations resolutely condemn the policy and practice of State terrorism as a method of dealing with other countries and peoples. It is necessary to renounce any action aimed at changing or undermining by force the social systems of sovereign States, destabilizing and overthrowing their legitimate Governments, or initiating military

action to that end on any pretext whatsoever, and to halt any such action already in progress.

173. All States are duty-bound to respect the inalienable right of the peoples of the world to decide for themselves their own destinies and to pursue independently their own political or any other kind of development.

174. Our proposal stems from the Soviet Union's approach of principle. The adoption of this proposal would contribute greatly to preventing and eliminating international conflicts and to consolidating moral and political barriers against aggression and war.

175. There is much truth in the statement that the international situation is directly dependent on the state of Soviet-United States relations. Today, as always, our country believes in the maintenance of normal relations with the United States—and there has been much talk about this. Until the recent past, that is precisely how these relations were developing, although not without certain vicissitudes, whereas in the years of the Second World War they were relations of allies.

176. In recent years these relations have been disrupted through the efforts of Washington. They have spared no effort to destroy all the gains accomplished together and to undermine the trust that had been built up earlier. What is more, they all but flaunt their indifference to the reputation of the United States side as a partner in international affairs. Yet, that is not something to flaunt.

177. History does not begin on the day when a particular United States Administration comes into office. The periods when the two Powers combined their efforts to defeat fascism will stand out as the best pages in the history of Soviet-United States relations; and those who determine United States policy today have a great deal to do if they wish their words and the obligations they assume to be trusted. No attempts to substitute modifications in form for the substance of a policy and for the need to move away from militarism towards a policy of peace can be meaningful. That is nothing but an empty vessel. What is required is the determination to make such a move if one is truly guided by good intentions in United States-Soviet relations and is really working towards peace. That alone can carry some weight on the political scales.

178. The Soviet Union believes that it is precisely concrete deeds, not verbal assurances, that can lead to normalizing the situation in our relations with the United States. The Soviet Union will not be found wanting. Every American, every American family, should know that the Soviet Union wants peace—and only peace—with the United States.

179. We have developed normal and, in a number of cases, good and fruitful relations with the countries of Western Europe, but we cannot disregard the fact that some of them have permitted the deployment on their territories of new United States nuclear missiles intended for use as first-strike weapons.

180. Nor can one overlook the fact that in some quarters hopes have not yet been abandoned of revising the post-war realities in Europe. Recently such revanchist sentiments have been fuelled by statements which seek to question the commitments assumed by the members of the anti-Hitler coalition. We would caution against yielding to that dangerous frenzy and we appeal for sober-mindedness. No one has the right to disrupt what has not merely become a

pillar of international law but was born of the innumerable sacrifices of the last world war.

181. We regard the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which make up the majority of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries—an influential force in the world today—as our fellow fighters in the struggle between those who work for peace and those who work against it. It is the intention of the Soviet Union to continue to do everything in its power to deepen and develop friendly ties with those countries.

182. It is our firm conviction that it is possible to correct the current alarming tilt in international developments, to halt the arms race and to set it on a downward spiral, to reduce and then totally eliminate the threat of war. This requires the combined efforts of States, nuclear and non-nuclear, big and small, regardless of their social systems.

183. As Mr. Chernenko has stressed, “the Soviet Union will co-operate fully with all States which are prepared, by practical deeds, to help to ease international tensions and to create an atmosphere of trust in the world—in other words, with all those who genuinely seek to consolidate the foundations of peace and not to prepare for war.”

184. The future of mankind is the common responsibility of all countries and all peoples, and the peoples of the world are entitled to expect that the United Nations and all its activities will be imbued with a sense of that responsibility.

185. Mr. MIRDHA (India): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the presidency of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We are particularly gratified to see you, a distinguished son of Africa and an eminent representative of a country with which India has traditionally close and cordial relations, preside over the proceedings of this Assembly. We are confident that under your able stewardship we shall be able to deal effectively with the many important questions on our agenda.

186. I should like to take this opportunity also to place on record our appreciation of the effective and statesmanlike leadership provided to the Assembly's thirty-eighth session by your distinguished predecessor, Mr. Illueca, of Panama.

187. I wish to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General for the indefatigable energy and quiet competence he has displayed in his stewardship of the United Nations during the past year. His patience and perseverance are characteristic of a style of functioning that has added much prestige and honour to the office of the Secretary-General. He has won our admiration for his skilful handling of several crisis situations. We wish him every success in the future.

188. We welcome to the United Nations family its newest member, Brunei Darussalam. Its admission as the 159th Member is a reaffirmation of the principle of universality of membership of the Organization. We look forward to working in close co-operation with that country's delegation in the United Nations.

189. We are at the threshold of the fifth decade of the United Nations. As the United Nations approaches its fortieth anniversary it is but appropriate that we pause to review the historic role the Organization has been playing. This is also a time for introspection and reflection so that we can improve our own performance and make the Organization more effective.

190. In November 1948, the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing the General Assembly¹⁰ on behalf of newly independent India, stated that the Charter of the United Nations, in noble language, had laid down the principles and purposes of that great Organization, and he thought it would not be possible to improve upon that language. The objectives were clear, he said, and yet it had often happened that the main objectives had been lost sight of amid matters of secondary importance. He further stated that he was convinced that the best of objectives could not be reached if men's eyes were bloodshot and men's minds clouded with passion. The lesson of history, he noted, and more especially the lesson of the last two great wars, which had devastated humanity, was that out of hatred and violence could come only hatred and violence. The Assembly was in the midst of a cycle of hatred and violence, he said, and it was obvious that if that cycle persisted and war, which the Assembly was specially intended to prevent, broke out, not only would there be tremendous devastation all over the world, but no individual Power or group of Powers would achieve its objective.

191. The words of Jawaharlal Nehru are valid even today. The optimism that was generated in the early years of the United Nations has in recent years been sadly dissipated. We are facing not only an acute and troubled international situation but, more important, a period when faith in the world Organization appears to be weakening. There is today in some quarters a cynical disregard of the role and contribution of the United Nations, as, indeed, a profound suspicion of all multilateral approaches where these do not coincide with or directly promote the interests of these countries. We are facing the danger of a retreat from multilateralism which can only adversely affect the prospects of international peace and security and undermine the very foundations of this unique Organization. India and other non-aligned countries are determined to reverse this trend. As India did at the outset of the establishment of the United Nations, I would like now once again to reaffirm, on behalf of the Government and people of India, our undiminished faith in the United Nations and our continued commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter.

192. In his thought-provoking report on the work of the Organization [A/39/I], the Secretary-General has reiterated the need to preserve and strengthen the Organization for harmonizing the actions of nations and to enhance the concept of multilateralism, which is a basic premise of our activity in the United Nations. He has rightly asserted that the realization of the full potential of the United Nations depends upon a willingness to take active steps to experiment with new approaches on the assumption that our common and agreed objective is human survival in reasonably decent conditions. We need to ponder over this issue. The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations should provide us with a unique opportunity for rededication, but also for a reassessment, some soul-searching and, above all, concrete remedial action. Our commitment to the multilateral approach is important and must be strengthened if we want the vision of the founding fathers to be realized.

193. Throughout the years of our freedom struggle, India's leaders viewed independence not merely in national terms but as a part of the struggle of

oppressed peoples everywhere for justice—political, economic and social. In the course of its transformation, India has built up a vast industrial infrastructure which has enabled it to keep pace with the scientific and technological advancements taking place in the world. Our democratic institutions, evolved over the years, have given the people of India a deep sense of participation and commitment in determining the nation's economic, social and political priorities. India's economy envisages a predominant role for the public sector in areas of basic industry as well as a flourishing private sector consistent with our socio-economic philosophy, which aims at prosperity and growth with social justice. The planning process adopted by India as an indispensable instrument for the development of all sectors of our economy involves the full participation of our people.

194. In our international relationships, adherence to the policy of non-alignment has been both instinctive and inevitable. Even before the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held its first summit in 1961, the essential principles of non-alignment had become the basis for the conduct of our foreign policy.

195. Today the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, with its membership of 101 countries, constitutes the vast majority of the membership of the United Nations. It is an indication of the intrinsic appeal and relevance of this Movement, as well as its significance and its achievements to date, that almost every newly independent nation seeks membership.

196. As Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said in her address¹¹ to the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983:

"Its significance is not to be measured by the number of divisions or the megatons of destructive power we command, but by the intensity with which we desire peace and freedom, development and international justice.

"Other Governments may have conflicting opinions on right and wrong. We the non-aligned have chosen peace, which surely is the right and inevitable choice. We have sought and continue to seek friendship with all, except Governments which are racist or threaten the hard-earned freedom of others. Non-alignment is not vague, not negative, not neutral.

"Non-alignment is national independence and freedom. It stands for peace and the avoidance of confrontation. It aims at keeping away from military alliances. It means equality among nations and the democratization of international relations, economic and political. It wants global co-operation for development on the basis of mutual benefit. It is a strategy for the recognition and preservation of the world's diversity."

197. The question of disarmament has always remained a basic concern of India and other countries of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Governments and peoples all over the world are becoming increasingly aware of the grave threat posed to the very survival of mankind by the development, accumulation and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. Two special sessions of the General Assembly have been devoted exclusively to this question. Yet new weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems are continuously being researched, tested, produced and deployed. A new

arms race has begun in the chemical weapons field. New technologies are being developed which would make space, which has hitherto remained largely peaceful, a dangerous arena of military confrontation. Striking advances are also being made in conventional weaponry, giving it a versatility and lethal quality unknown in previous years.

198. The escalating arms race, the rise in international tensions and the absence of willingness for constructive dialogue among the major nuclear-weapon Powers have increased the risks of the outbreak of a nuclear war. Clearly, the dangers of the total annihilation of mankind, indeed, of any life on this planet, are so great and increasing with such inexorable rapidity that we cannot permit ourselves the luxury of either indifference or despair. Dangerous doctrines, such as those of nuclear deterrence and of limited nuclear warfare, are being propounded. No country will remain unaffected by the horror of nuclear conflict once it is unleashed. By the same token, none of us can remain indifferent to the need to speed up disarmament negotiations. It is ironical that the principal justification for adding new and costly weapon systems to the arsenals of the great Powers has been that it provides better negotiating positions for those countries in any arms limitation talks. The logic of this position is that disarmament can commence only after countries have armed themselves fully. Such bizarre logic cannot be expected to serve as a basis for any serious arms limitation exercise.

199. A fresh and concerted world-wide effort must therefore be made to halt the arms race. Nuclear-weapon States bear the greatest responsibility and must adopt urgent, practical measures to prevent a nuclear war. Specific proposals have been made by India and other non-aligned countries for a convention under United Nations aegis prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. The idea of a freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons is gaining popular support and needs to be given a practical shape in order to break the present impasse in arms negotiations. Efforts for a comprehensive nuclear-weapons-test-ban treaty must be expedited. Existing arms limitation agreements must be observed and new ones negotiated. At the same time, a concerted effort ought to be made to prevent a new and potentially more dangerous and destabilizing round of the arms race in the area of space-based systems. Diplomats and experts engaged in arms limitation and disarmament negotiations must now take due note of the mass popular upsurge in the world against nuclear weapons.

200. A major peace initiative in this regard was taken recently by the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, together with the Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania. This five-continent initiative, launched on 22 May 1984, states, *inter alia*, in the Joint Declaration [A/39/277]:

"As leaders of nations, States Members of the United Nations, we have a commitment to take constructive action towards halting and reversing the nuclear-arms race. The people we represent are no less threatened by nuclear war than the citizens of the nuclear-weapons States. It is primarily the responsibility of the nuclear-weapons States to prevent a nuclear catastrophe, but this problem is too important to be left to those States alone."

201. The Joint Declaration urges, as a necessary first step, the five nuclear-weapon States to halt all testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, to be immediately followed by a substantial reduction in nuclear forces. This first step must be followed by a continuing programme of arms reduction leading to general and complete disarmament, accompanied by measures to strengthen the United Nations system and to ensure an urgently needed transfer of substantial resources from the arms race into social and economic development. The essential goal must be to reduce and then eliminate the risk of war between nations. The six-Power peace appeal has received the overwhelming support of the international community. People all over the world have an overriding interest in collective security and the avoidance of nuclear war. The appeal represents a significant step in mobilizing wider world support for the objectives of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on disarmament, as set out by the New Delhi Conference.

202. Non-aligned and like-minded nations must now think of other forms of action. The bulk of the global military expenditure of \$1 trillion a year is accounted for by a handful of industrialized countries. A significant reduction in this enormously wasteful expenditure would not only help ease tensions the world over but also contribute to recovery and growth in the world economy and could be used to augment the currently decreasing levels of assistance to developing nations. The proposal for a world conference on disarmament and development deserves to be taken up seriously by Member States.

203. India attaches great importance to general and complete disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and the prevention of nuclear war. A number of proposals submitted by my delegation to begin a serious nuclear disarmament programme are already before the General Assembly. It is our earnest hope that during this session our proposals, as well as others in this field, will be considered in all seriousness and that meaningful decisions will be taken.

204. In our own neighbourhood, the Indian Ocean continues to be an area of competitive attention and mounting great-Power military presence, posing a direct threat to the security and integrity of the littoral and hinterland States. The increasing militarization of the Indian Ocean and its use as an arena for strategic power-play is a matter of immense concern to us. The establishment of new command structures has been accompanied by the introduction of sophisticated weaponry into the area. The 1971 Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace [resolution 2832 (XXVI)] remains unimplemented.

205. Ever since the expansion of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean in 1979, it has been the earnest hope of the littoral and hinterland States that the permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean would contribute towards the early convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean and to the early realization of the objectives of the 1971 Declaration. The evidence of the last few years has belied this expectation. On the contrary, efforts are afoot to distort the fundamental structure and elements of the 1971 Declaration. We believe that the Conference, to be held at Colombo, should be convened urgently to begin the process of elimination of great-Power military presence from the Indian Ocean in realization of the objectives of the Declaration. During the

current year, the non-aligned countries have made serious efforts to complete necessary preparatory work for the Conference and have submitted a framework for its agenda. We hope all members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee will display the necessary political will and address themselves to this question in a constructive manner.

206. The countries of South Asia are currently engaged in an active search for regional co-operation on the basis of mutual benefit. This is in consonance with our own policies over the years of reinforcing the fabric of understanding and co-operation among the countries of the region. At the South Asian Regional Co-operation Meeting of Foreign Ministers, held at Male on 10 and 11 July of this year, a detailed review of the implementation of programmes was undertaken. We recognize that this will be a long process and will call for much patience and perseverance. Even now the induction of sophisticated arms in our neighborhood serves external strategic interests and is complicating the task of peaceful co-operation in our region. Notwithstanding that, we have no doubt that the process of regional co-operation will continue to gain strength in the months and years ahead and will not only assist the economic and social development of the countries of South Asia but also ultimately promote good-neighbourliness and harmony in the whole area.

207. While on the subject of South Asia, it is with considerable regret that I find it necessary to refer to recent developments in Sri Lanka which have taken a turn for the worse, have caused us deep anguish and have aroused global concern. There has been a recrudescence of indiscriminate violence and killing by the armed forces on a scale which recalls the tragedy of July 1983. Reports indicate that the armed forces in that country have conducted large-scale operations in areas where the Tamils constitute the overwhelming majority of the population, resulting in heavy loss of life and property of the innocent Tamil population. If the spate of violence in the northern province continues, it is bound to have serious repercussions in other parts of Sri Lanka and precipitate an influx of refugees into our country. We already have 40,000 Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu.

208. The ethnic problem in Sri Lanka cannot be solved by military action. It is a political problem involving the just rights of the Tamil minority, and only the determined pursuit of the political process of consultation and mutual accommodation can lead to a constructive way out.

209. After the communal violence of 1983, the Prime Minister of India offered her good offices to help find a political solution to the problem. President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka accepted that offer, and the efforts of our special envoy to promote the process of dialogue have been undertaken with the full concurrence of the Government of Sri Lanka. While talks within the framework of the All Party Conference are continuing, innuendos and insinuations are repeatedly being made against India.

210. We have reaffirmed our stand in favour of Sri Lanka's integrity and unity and have expressed opposition to all forms of violence and separatism. Because of the large number of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and because of the many age-old links between the Tamil populations of the two countries, the repression and

denial of human and political rights of the Tamils in Sri Lanka give rise to repercussions in our country with which we are trying to deal as best we can. But it is a travesty of facts to suggest that we are in any way responsible for Sri Lanka's problems. The problem exists right there in Sri Lanka and it has to be resolved there. For our part, we do not and will not permit any activities directed against Sri Lanka from our soil. It is therefore regrettable that leaders of Sri Lanka continue to make baseless allegations against India that it is providing sanctuary and support to Tamil militants. India is doing no such thing. I should like to reiterate that such false and unfounded allegations can only create unnecessary and avoidable difficulties and misunderstanding in the relations between the two countries.

211. The Prime Minister of India has categorically stated that India does not intervene in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka or, indeed, of any other country. India does not support any separatist movement; it does not support or condone resort to violence of any kind. It is our sincere hope that, through consultations, a viable political solution will soon be found assuring the safety and legitimate rights of the Tamils as full and equal citizens, so that the people of Sri Lanka can live together in peace and harmony.

212. I cannot over-emphasize the necessity for the utmost restraint on the part of all concerned and a determined pursuit of the political process to find a viable and acceptable solution in which the fundamental human and civic rights of the Tamil population of Sri Lanka will be safeguarded.

213. The efforts for a political settlement in Afghanistan are continuing, though progress has been slow. While there is universal reaffirmation of the inadmissibility of interference in the internal affairs of States, as also of the induction of foreign troops in any country, there is no doubt that the situation in South-West Asia can be resolved only through an overall political settlement based on principles set out in the Political Declaration adopted at the New Delhi Conference.¹¹ The efforts of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General in past months have sought to impart momentum to this process and deserve our support.

214. Of equal concern to us are the continuing difficulties that have come in the way of peace in South-East Asia. The events of the past year have made us only more conscious of the opportunities, as well as the pitfalls, that lie in the search for a solution of the problems afflicting that region. India is convinced that there can be no military solution to this question. What is needed is a balanced approach that takes into account the security and other considerations of all the countries in the region and eliminates outside interference. We are hopeful that the new processes of dialogue opening up between the countries of Indo-China and ASEAN will yield positive results in coming months and make for a much-needed sense of trust and reconciliation among the countries of the region.

215. The futility of war as a means of settling disputes has been highlighted in the tragic fratricidal conflict between Iran and Iraq. The continuing war has involved great sacrifices by both sides, resulting in enormous losses not only of material wealth but also of precious and irreplaceable human lives. The critical situation in the region threatens not only the security of the Gulf but also the safety and economic

well-being of much of the world. As Chairman of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries, India has remained in touch with both sides to bring an end to this conflict which weakens the Movement's unity and solidarity. We are heartened that the Secretary-General's call for a halt to bombings in the civilian areas has met with a positive response from both sides. We hope that the two sides will continue to show restraint and see the inevitability of getting down to negotiations for the settlement of their differences. We are convinced that there can be no victor or vanquished in a conflict of this nature. Its continuation will only weaken the ability of the two countries to meet the challenges that face them as developing countries.

216. The events in West Asia continue to arouse our anguish and indignation. The continued denial to the Palestinian people of their basic and inherent right to self-determination and nationhood, Israel's arrogant defiance of the will of the international community, the critical situation in Lebanon, the consolidation by Israel of its stranglehold over the occupied territories, including its settlements policy—all constitute sordid chapters in a seemingly endless tragedy.

217. The turmoil in West Asia remains a most serious threat to world peace today. Recent months have witnessed a deterioration in the situation, resulting in further acts of aggression and intimidation by Israel against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. We remain firm in our support for the brave, homeless and harassed Palestinian people, led by the PLO as their sole authentic representative. Occupation of the territory of neighboring States will not guarantee Israel security; it can, if anything, only have the opposite effect. A comprehensive solution comprising the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national and human rights, including the right to establish an independent State in their homeland, and mutual guarantees of security among States of the region must be achieved.

218. We support the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices for finding a comprehensive, just and lasting solution in accordance with well-established principles laid down in United Nations resolutions. The situation in the region does not brook any delay, and urgent preparatory measures should be undertaken so that the conference can be convened at the earliest possible time. In this context, India is appreciative of the efforts being made by the Secretary-General towards the convening of the conference and the process of consultations initiated by him with the parties concerned to find a comprehensive solution. We stand ready to extend our full support and co-operation in this connection.

219. It is now a century since Namibia fell prey to colonialism at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. For the larger part of the period and up to the present day, this Territory and this valiant people have suffered a particularly brutal and repressive colonial presence, an extension of the abhorrent system of *apartheid*. Eighteen years of direct United Nations jurisdiction over Namibia have brought the Territory closer to independence only in theory, as the United Nations plan for Namibian independence remains unimplemented in spite of its universal acceptance as

the basis for a peaceful settlement. Sadly, the question of Namibia has become embroiled in the web of East-West tensions, with entirely irrelevant and extraneous considerations being introduced into what is, and must essentially remain, a question of decolonization. The South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO], the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people, has shown admirable restraint, flexibility and statesmanship. South Africa's answer has always been characterized by arrogance, defiance of world opinion, and prevarication. The non-aligned believe that only sanctions can force Pretoria to pay heed.

220. We believe that Security Council resolution 435 (1978) remains the only basis for a peaceful settlement of the Namibian question. India, along with other non-aligned countries, rejects any kind of linkage or parallelism in regard to the implementation of this resolution. The Security Council must consider more resolute action in the exercise of United Nations responsibility over Namibia to ensure the implementation of its own resolutions. Meanwhile, we remain steadfast in our support for the Namibian people under the leadership of SWAPO, their sole and authentic representative, and in our resolve to assist them in all possible ways in their valiant struggle for liberation.

221. We are being increasingly confronted with the proposition that racist South Africa is moving towards reform of its policy of *apartheid*. Mr. Botha found platforms to proclaim this to the world during his visits to several Western European countries, visits that should never have been permitted to take place and have had the effect of undermining the international campaign to isolate Pretoria. The charade of elections on the basis of a "new dispensation" was organized in an attempt to confirm this impression. A country known for its indiscriminate and repeated acts of aggression against neighbouring independent States is projecting itself as a votary of peaceful coexistence. This propaganda, which emanates from Pretoria and finds an echo in capitals of some of South Africa's powerful friends and allies, will deceive no one. South Africa's attempts to hoodwink the world will not succeed.

222. The root cause of all the problems in southern Africa is the policy and practice of *apartheid*. The international community must not let flag its vigilance against *apartheid* or its efforts to counter it by every possible means. In this context, we are happy to note the clear-sightedness shown by the Coloured and Asian communities in rejecting, despite pressures of all kinds, the so-called constitutional reforms mooted by the racist régime. As the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, stated in a recent message: "*Apartheid* cannot be reformed; it must be ended."

223. The front-line States of southern Africa have long been a bastion of resistance against racist South Africa, though it has meant great suffering and sacrifice on the part of the peoples of those countries. The world must take urgent and resolute action to fortify the front-line States and strengthen the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference so that those States could better withstand Pretoria's repeated acts of aggression and destabilization and its threats and blandishments.

224. The adoption of a resolution on Central America by consensus in the Assembly last year

[resolution 38/10] augured well for peace and reconciliation in that troubled region. So also have the untiring endeavours of the Contadora Group of nations. The non-aligned countries have pledged full support to the Contadora exercise. We commend the Contadora countries for their perseverance and dedication and for the progress so far achieved.

225. Nevertheless, the situation in Central America remains tense and delicate, capable of explosion at the next spark. Again this year, Nicaragua felt compelled to take recourse to the Security Council following continuing hostile acts directed against it, in particular the mining of its ports and harbours. We would like to see the endemic problem of the region resolved by its own peoples without meddling from outside quarters. We hope that accord will be achieved before long on a comprehensive agreement along the lines contained in the draft Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [see A/39/562].

226. Efforts to resolve the vexed question of Cyprus have received a serious set-back in the last year following the proclamation of a so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and subsequent steps taken with a view to consolidating that unilateral declaration of independence. The Government and people of India have deplored the unilateral declaration of independence and firmly support the unity, territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence and non-alignment of Cyprus, a country with which we have traditionally had friendly and co-operative relations. We believe that the unilateral declaration of independence must be rescinded and intercommunal talks resumed under the auspices of the Secretary-General with a view to arriving at a lasting settlement, taking due account of the rights and aspirations of both the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot communities. In this context, we welcome the steps recently taken by the Secretary-General aimed at a resumption of the intercommunal dialogue as well as the positive response of both sides to the call of the Secretary-General.

227. The international economic situation continues to cause great concern. When we met here in 1983 there were claims that respite from the severest recession in post-war history was in sight. The industrialized countries may be experiencing some recovery, but it remains uneven in its spread and there are doubts about its durability. The vast majority of the developing countries have not experienced any improvement. As a group, their gross national product has remained stagnant and many of them have experienced declining growth rates. Falling commodity prices, adverse terms of trade, rising debt burdens, barriers to trade and declining financial flows continue to affect them adversely.

228. These conditions have resulted in sharp reductions in imports and postponement of investment in projects and human resources development programmes which may have set back their growth prospects for years to come. Austerity measures compelled by circumstances over which they have had little control have precipitated social disruption and political instability in a number of countries. The net effect of these measures has been to attract a transfer of resources from these countries to the financial institutions of the developed countries. The appalling costs in terms of human misery and destitution that these measures have implied are not brought out in the adjustment figures put out by

international agencies. These adjustments, as the Committee for Development Planning has put it, have taken place "at the margin of life and death".

229. The gravity of the economic situation in Africa is a cause of particular concern to the international community. The critical conditions there have been further aggravated by adverse climatic factors leading to widespread hunger and malnutrition. In the clearest sense, this represents a test of the will and ability of the international community to meet this challenge through international co-operative endeavour and to make it a part of the overall struggle of developing countries against hunger and poverty.

230. It is common wisdom to say today that, in an interdependent world, the progress of the rich cannot be achieved at the cost of the poor. This interdependence was again acknowledged and emphasized at the London Economic Summit of the industrialized countries in June this year.

231. The test of the faith in interdependence lies in the willingness to take co-operative action. As a group, developing countries are larger markets of the European Economic Community, the United States and Japan than each of these three is for the other two. When import volumes have had to be reduced by as much as 50 per cent in many developing countries, its dampening effect on recovery in some industrialized countries should be evident. Sustained economic recovery of the developed countries is dependent on the reactivation of the economic development of the developing countries. But the actual policies pursued by many developed countries seem frequently to reflect a rejection of the concept of interdependence and the policy measures that this would entail.

232. At a time when financial resources for development are needed by developing countries, net private flows of resources to them have in several cases become negative. Official development assistance has declined in real terms, as is evident from the fact that, in the case of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, aid as a share of their gross national product has fallen from an average of 0.38 per cent to 0.36 per cent in 1983. Multilateral financial institutions are facing the worst crisis of resources since they were created. A case in point is the IDA, which is of paramount importance to the poorest countries. The level at which it has been possible to agree on its seventh replenishment is 20 per cent less in nominal terms and 40 per cent lower in real terms over that of its sixth replenishment.

233. Protectionism is steadily on the increase. The United Nations *World Economic Survey 1984*¹² estimates that over half of world trade is now subject to some form of non-tariff barrier. The practical effect of protectionist measures is particularly intense in sectors like textiles, in which developing countries are the most efficient producers. We are thus blamed for our alleged inefficiency and penalized when we are efficient.

234. We cannot but express our disappointment at the attitude demonstrated by some developed countries during meetings of the Economic and Social Council and at the Fourth General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, held at Vienna from 2 to 19 August 1984, in their approach both to substantive issues and to the conduct of negotiations. It is difficult to avoid the

impression that this was part of the systematic and persistent efforts by certain countries to make the United Nations system the scapegoat for their lack of political will. We strongly urge the developed countries to reconsider their positions and to work to restore the norms and consensus on the basis of which the United Nations system can continue to play its rightful role as a central forum for joint action for mutual benefit.

235. It is legitimate to expect that now that recovery in developed countries has started, even though in an uneven and limited way, Governments in developed countries will deal in a more comprehensive and co-operative manner with the deeper structural problems of the world economy. It is necessary to adopt and implement a comprehensive set of measures for reactivating growth in developing countries. We must recognize the realities of the situation and work towards the establishment of a real dialogue between the North and the South. Policies which are recognized to stand in the way of the resumption of the development momentum in the developing countries need to be rectified. The ultimate objective of any good policy must be the contribution it can make towards the removal of existing inequalities and in achieving better growth rates for all.

236. Deliberate measures have to be taken now to attain more normal levels of growth. This cannot be achieved merely by the trickle-down effect. The agenda for global economic recovery and development suggested in the Economic Declaration of the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries¹¹ provides a balanced set of actions. Intensive consultations have taken place on the two-phase approach towards global negotiations put forward by the non-aligned and developing countries, but agreement on its launching has been impossible to obtain. While this matter is being pursued, we propose in the meantime that at this session of the General Assembly serious negotiations take place to provide action-oriented content to the Programme of Immediate Measures contained in the Declaration. Particular attention would have to be given to an improvement in the terms of trade of the developing countries and to a roll-back of protectionism. We have to tackle the crushing debt burden of developing countries in its global context and in a comprehensive manner, dealing with both the financial and the developmental aspects. Agreement needs to be reached for a substantial increase in the net flow of financial resources, particularly official development assistance, to developing countries. The resource position of multilateral development institutions would need to be considerably strengthened to meet the growing needs of developing countries.

237. This session of the General Assembly has several other important tasks ahead of it. In its most fundamental sense, development has to be achieved in human terms. The prevailing imbalance in which 47 per cent of the world's population has only 5 per cent of the world's share of resources has grave implications for the future of humanity. The close link between population policies and economic and social development has been long recognized. The International Conference on Population, held at Mexico City from 6 to 14 August 1984, adopted useful recommendations for the further implementation of the World Population Plan of Action.¹³ My

delegation attaches great importance to its quick and effective implementation, and we urge the international community to give full support to the national efforts of the countries in attaining its objectives. Similarly, in a related field, we welcome the support extended by the child survival and development strategy of UNICEF to national efforts, including those of my own country.

238. Access and acquisition of modern scientific and technological knowledge is essential to carry out the economic and social transformation of developing countries. Because of our colonial past, many of our countries missed out on the industrial revolution. We have no intention of being left out of the technological revolution. We think that the area of science and technology is particularly suitable to devise new and imaginative mechanisms of international co-operation for mutual benefit. In this respect, we attach great importance to the establishment of the long-term financing system for science and technology for development. My own country is fully prepared to meet its responsibilities in this regard, and we urge all other countries, particularly the developed countries, urgently to finalize the financial arrangements which would enable the launching of the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development.

239. It is more than a year and a half since the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries, at their New Delhi Conference, called for the convening of an international conference on money and finance for development. Since then, the idea has gathered further momentum and gained wider support. It has been pursued in a number of forums both within and outside the United Nations system, such as the Economic and Social Council; the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its sixth session, held at Belgrade from 6 June to 2 July 1983; the General Assembly; the Conference of the Heads of Government of Commonwealth Countries, held at New Delhi in November 1983; and the Williamsburg and London Economic Summit Conferences of the major industrial countries, held in May 1983 and June 1984. Recently, a group of five eminent experts appointed by the Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, completed a detailed study of the substantive and procedural issues that would arise in the context of convening such a conference. This report has been made available to the member Governments of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as those of other countries. The need for improvement in the system, whether it be described as evolution or adaptation, reform or restructuring, is now widely recognized. It is now time to set in motion the preparatory process, with the participation of all interested parties, for moving towards serious negotiations on the subject. We sincerely hope that a consensus in this direction will soon evolve. It would be in keeping with the urgency of the situation and the international community's commitment to the multilateral process for these consultations to conclude in a preparatory process to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations.

240. India's commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations is firmly grounded in the traditions of our foreign policy. As the Prime Minister of India said at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly on behalf of the non-aligned

countries: "Firm faith in the United Nations is central to the non-aligned" [9th meeting, para. 5]. The observance of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations next year should provide us all with an opportunity for rededication to the ideals that have animated the founders of this Organization.

241. The non-aligned countries will be in the forefront of preparations for the commemoration of that anniversary. It would be fitting if participation in the commemorative session by Member States was at the highest level, in order to enhance the significance of the occasion.

242. The non-aligned countries also suggested at the New Delhi Conference that 1985 should be observed as the Year of the United Nations. Such an anniversary should not become an occasion for mere celebration. Member countries and their peoples need to consider carefully the contribution of the United Nations system over the past four decades, its continuing relevance in the current international situation, and the ways and means by which the Organization can be strengthened in order to meet more effectively the challenges facing contemporary society. Its procedures and methods of work should be improved in order to enhance its overall performance.

243. Human institutions may and do face temporary set-backs. Rather than give way to despair and allow things to drift, we should make relentless efforts to reinvigorate the United Nations. In this endeavour, the abiding faith in it of the peoples of the world remains its strongest support, and we should do all we can to mobilize it.

244. The year 1985 will also mark the silver jubilee of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, enshrined in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). That the membership of the United Nations has grown so impressively in recent decades is due in no small measure to the endeavours of the Organization in the field of decolonization. We hope that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration will be appropriately observed. As a country with a deep and abiding commitment to decolonization, India looks forward to participating in that exercise.

245. The year 1985 will also be observed as International Youth Year. Youth, which constitutes a crucial segment of the population, can make a valuable contribution to the development process and to the promotion of international understanding, co-operation and peace. It is therefore imperative that the younger generation be provided with all the necessary conditions for participating in national development activities and in the study and resolution of major national, regional and international problems. The observance in 1985 of International Youth Year is indeed timely, as it will serve to draw attention to the specific needs and aspirations of the future generation.

246. In her address to the General Assembly last year, at its thirty-eighth session, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi referred to a new order struggling to be born amidst the upheavals of the present-day world:

"For us, the non-aligned, and for all who are deeply concerned with the future of humanity, the question is whether we help the birth of this new creation or throttle it before it can draw breath. The matter is not simple, because history has

proved time and again that ideas and movements can be obstructed, but not stopped. How long can a few pockets of affluence continue to exert influence on the large populations, the natural resources, the cultural strength of the others? How long can allies and supporters, who may not have a base in their own countries and who are not in tune with the changing times, be perpetuated? You cannot kill an idea by killing its adherents. The newborn will not die; the birth can be delayed but the cost will be much higher and the affluent will have to pay. When peaceful change is thwarted, violent upheaval occurs. Previously, the end of a civilization brought destruction and trauma in its trail. If we keep to past trends, we too will be engulfed by circumstances. But today we have the opportunity, which may well be the first in human history, for humankind to bridge the transition from the old to the new in a conscious way, to build a new era, to move together to a new future." [*Ibid.*, para. 28.]

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

NOTES

¹Panama Canal Treaty and Treaty concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal, signed in Wash-

ington on 7 September 1977 (*The Department of State Bulletin*, vol. LXXVII, No. 1999, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1977).

²See A/38/68, annex.

³See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1983*, document S/15877, annex.

⁴*Ibid.*, Supplement for October, November and December 1983, document S/16041, annex.

⁵*Ibid.*, Supplement for January, February and March 1983, document S/15556.

⁶United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 944, No. 13445.

⁷*Ibid.*, No. 13446.

⁸Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (see CD/53/Appendix III/Vol. I, document CD/28).

⁹See CD/335/Appendix II/Vol. III, document CD/294.

¹⁰*Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Part I, Plenary Meetings*, 154th meeting, para. 49.

¹¹See A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex.

¹²United Nations publication, Sales No.E.84.II.C.1.

¹³See *Report of the International Conference on Population, 1984* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.XIII.8 and corrigenda), chap. I, sect. B.