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**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records



**108th
PLENARY MEETING**

Monday, 16 September 1985,
at 3.35 p.m.

NEW YORK

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

Resumption of the session

1. The PRESIDENT: I declare the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly resumed, in accordance with decision 39/456 of 18 December 1984.

Tribute to the memory of a head of State and former Presidents of the General Assembly

2. The PRESIDENT: Before we consider the items on the agenda for this afternoon, it is my sad duty to recall to the General Assembly the deaths of Mr. Linden Forbes Burnham, President of the Republic of Guyana; Mr. Luis Padilla Nervo, President of the sixth session of the General Assembly, former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico and former Judge of the International Court of Justice; and Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, President of the seventeenth session of the General Assembly and first Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, which have occurred since the suspension of the thirty-ninth session of the Assembly on 12 April 1985.

3. I invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to their memory.

The members of the Assembly observed a minute of silence.

4. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Guyana.

5. Mr. KARRAN (Guyana): I make this statement with mixed feelings. It is very kind of you, Mr. President, and the General Assembly to express your sympathy in the way you have. Comrade Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham guided the destiny of the Guyanese people for 21 years. During that period he saw Guyana move from colonialism to independence—independence which he cherished dearly. He brought our small nation out of obscurity, and through his foreign policy Guyana became known and respected internationally. I speak in particular of Guyana's commitment to and involvement in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, its involvement in issues of the third world and its involvement in the councils of the United Nations. Under his presidency, Guyana dedicated itself to the development of regional integration and was a driving force in the process which culminated in the establishment of the Caribbean Community [CARICOM].

6. By his death, the national liberation movements throughout the world have lost a committed friend and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has

lost a true friend. He felt deeply for the oppressed peoples of the world.

7. The Commonwealth countries have lost a friend and so has CARICOM. It was with great shock and deep sadness that the Guyanese community learned of his sudden death. However, he has laid a foundation for development within our national boundaries. He believed in multilateral institutions and he was committed to the Organization—the United Nations—and its workings. It had his unswerving support.

8. On behalf of the Government and the people of Guyana and the bereaved family of the late President Burnham, I should like to extend my warmest and sincerest thanks for the sentiments expressed here this afternoon.

9. Mr. MUÑOZ LEDO (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Luis Padilla Nervo, a distinguished Mexican and an eminent internationalist, passed away on 9 September at the age of 87. A career diplomat and a government official for over half a century, he gave service to the international community.

10. He was President of the General Assembly at its sixth session and Judge of the International Court of Justice from 1964 to 1973. Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country from 1952 to 1958, Padilla Nervo was twice representative of Mexico to the United Nations and, together with Brazil, was one of the first Latin American members on the Security Council.

11. Throughout his long career, he distinguished himself as one of the most faithful interpreters of my country's foreign policy and of the deeply nationalist feelings of our people, firmly expressed in the Mexican revolution of 1910 and of which our own diplomatic action has been both the reflection and the spearhead.

12. Padilla Nervo carried out that policy in an exemplary way, a policy which has always been based on principles. Since the days of San Francisco when the United Nations was being formed, he accomplished his work and he can therefore quite rightly be considered one who fashioned our contemporary multilateral diplomacy and one of the steadfast champions of decolonization, disarmament and international co-operation. He always sought harmony among States, but he also stood firmly against the excesses of the mighty.

13. May his work be a lesson to everyone as well as encouragement to all. May the sovereignty of Mexico, vigorously reaffirmed in this forum, continue to strengthen equality among nations and the dignity of the Organization. That, Mr. President, is my hope as I thank you, on behalf of my country and on that of Mr. Padilla Nervo's family, for your generous words.

14. I also wish to thank the General Assembly for the tribute that it has paid to the memory of my outstanding fellow countryman on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and on the day when, by a significant coincidence, Mexico is celebrating the one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of its own independence.

15. Mr. Shah NAWAZ (Pakistan): It is a sad day for me to make this brief statement on the passing of one of the most brilliant statesmen of our time, Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, who died only a few days ago at the age of 92. He was a well-known internationalist and has been greatly respected and admired by the world community for a number of years. His life span covered practically a whole century of our time. During his long and fruitful career, he served the international community in many diverse ways.

16. First, he began his great career in Pakistan and, with the coming of Pakistan's independence, he had already played a very important role in the freedom movement. Soon afterwards he became the first Minister for Foreign Affairs of the free country of Pakistan.

17. During his time as Foreign Minister, he served the cause of Islam and of the Arab world in particular, as well as the cause of all liberation movements, during a fruitful and brilliant career. A number of nations that are free today and are Members of the United Nations must surely remember the sterling part that he played in their freedom movements.

18. Later on, he had a great career in the field of law, in which he excelled as a brilliant lawyer. Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan was recognized by the international community and he became a Judge of the International Court of Justice, where he had a long and fruitful career. His name is still remembered and highly respected.

19. Thereafter he retired to private life, but he continued his interest in international affairs and was the author of a number of books in which his great experience of world affairs was richly reflected.

20. I knew him personally over a long period and I had the greatest admiration and affection for him. It is really a sad occasion for me today to make this statement on the occasion of his demise.

21. Mr. President, I am most grateful to you and to the international community represented in this hall for the honour that has been done to us and to his memory. I am most grateful for the words of praise and the message of condolence that were read out, and I wish to thank you.

AGENDA ITEM 115

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions (concluded)

22. The PRESIDENT: I should now like to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/39/883/Add.2, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General informing me that, since the issuance of his last communication [A/39/883/Add.1] dated 11 April 1985, Chad, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Paraguay, Romania and Zaire have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in

Article 19 of the Charter. May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 17

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments (concluded):*

(i) **Confirmation of the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

23. The PRESIDENT: The Secretary-General has informed me that he is continuing his consultations in regard to this matter and that he hopes to be in a position to present a name during the fortieth session of the General Assembly. In the interim period, the senior Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD will continue to act as its officer-in-charge.

24. May I take it that the Assembly takes note of this information and wishes to include sub-item 17 (i) in the draft agenda of the fortieth session?

It was so decided (decision 39/324 B).

25. Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): On behalf of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, I should like to make the following statement.

26. The socialist countries, which have participated very actively in the creation of UNCTAD, are aware of the great importance of that organization, whose contribution in the preparation of new ideas and concepts dealing with radical changes in international economic relations on a just and democratic basis is widely recognized. The role of UNCTAD at the present time is even greater, since it is a forum where it is possible to discuss and adopt decisions on a wide range of topical economic, financial and trade issues that are more urgent than ever for the international community, and above all for the developing countries.

27. At the present time, as we are approaching the seventh session of the Conference, we must once again draw attention to an abnormal situation. For almost a year now, that important organization has been working without a Secretary-General. In the joint statement of our delegations to the General Assembly on 18 December last [105th meeting, para. 79], we indicated our hope that the question of the appointment of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD would be resolved as soon as possible, to make it possible for that organization to accomplish its work under normal conditions.

28. We now ask once again that there be no delay in resolving this problem, because UNCTAD's continued success requires that it have at its head a leader with authority who enjoys the broad support of Member States.

*Resumed from the 106th meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 25

The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives: report of the Secretary-General (*concluded*)*

29. The PRESIDENT: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include this item in the draft agenda of the fortieth session?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 38

Launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development (*concluded*)

30. The PRESIDENT: In my statement on 12 April 1985, at the resumed session, I proposed, and the Assembly agreed, in regard to agenda item 38, to "keep the . . . item open in order to allow time for further informal, but intensive, consultations after the suspension of the session and to reconvene on short notice to consider any decisions or agreements that might emerge from the consultations" [107th meeting, para. 9]. Regrettably, no substantive progress has emerged since that time to allow the launching of global negotiations by the General Assembly.

31. As I, as well as my predecessors, have stated on various occasions, the concept of global negotiations, as initiated in Assembly resolution 34/138 and as it has evolved subsequently in the last few years, continues to be valid. It is in the interest of all States to concert their efforts in promoting international co-operation for economic development, one of the essential prerequisites for the maintenance of international peace and security.

32. In my last statement, I went to the extent of suggesting that "it would be an abrogation of Article 1, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Charter, especially during this year of the fortieth anniversary—a time for recommitment—if we were to abandon the search for the consensus required to launch the global negotiations" [*ibid.*, para. 8]. This remains my conviction today, and I believe that efforts should continue to be made to achieve this common objective of ours.

33. On the course of action to be followed by the General Assembly at the closure of this session, I would propose, on the basis of informal consultations, that the Assembly include in the draft agenda of its fortieth session the item entitled "Launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development". If there is no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided (decision 39/454C).

34. The PRESIDENT: I wish once again to address a plea to all Member States seriously to take stock of the current situation and to renew their efforts and commitment to co-operate in a spirit of mutual understanding and flexibility, and in the interest of the international community as a whole, in our common pursuit of solutions to the economic problems which confront all of us today.

35. I now call on the representative of Egypt, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 77.

36. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt): One more session of the General Assembly is drawing to a close with nothing to show on a very important issue, namely the launching of global negotiations on international co-operation for development.

37. For its part, the Group of 77 has, I hope it will be conceded, spared no effort to create conditions in which the international community could find ways and means to reactivate the stalled North-South dialogue. Unfortunately, these efforts to obtain a favourable response to global negotiations from our partners to the north continue to meet with a deafening silence.

38. Some quarters may wish to see the concept of global negotiations abandoned. Allow me to stress that these voices do not deter us, for we in the developing world believe that the concept of global negotiations basically reflects a sincere call for international co-operation. Interdependence is a reality, and hence we continue to uphold multilateralism and to reject a return to narrow nationalistic approaches with their negative consequences for the international economic system as a whole.

39. It was the inequity and inadequacy of the present international economic system in the first place that prompted the Group of 77 to initiate the idea of global negotiations, and it is the crises which clearly continue to plague the world economy that demonstrate the continuing validity of that idea in bringing about an orderly restructuring of international economic relations.

40. The Group of 77 has consistently reaffirmed its full commitment to global negotiations in accordance with General Assembly resolution 34/138, and we have maintained a flexible approach in our endeavours to bring about an early launching of those negotiations. We continue to believe that if that spirit is to be genuinely reciprocated by our partners, any approach to the subject from a narrow perspective of short-term loss and benefit should be discarded, for it negates the fact of interdependence and ignores the realities of the present world economy.

41. That is why we believe that lasting solutions to the inherent structural imbalances besetting the world economy will be attained only through a process of constructive dialogue that recognizes the global character of the problems involved. That approach is certainly better than the sectorally compartmentalized approach that has characterized past efforts, which are still deadlocked. That fact in itself provides further proof of the continuing relevance of the global negotiations. That concept, as is well known, is predicated upon the need for an integrated and simultaneous approach that addresses the full range of issues in the major spheres of international economic relations in terms of their interrelationship. We believe that that basic concept bears repetition. It is our considered opinion that that concept, which draws its support from the principles of mutual benefit, solidarity and interdependence, offers a coherent response to the growing complexity of international economic relations.

42. At the close of the thirty-ninth session, we in the Group of 77 wish to express anew our deep concern that 11 years after the unanimous adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 202 (S-VI) on the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International

*Resumed from the 105th meeting.

Economic Order, there has been no significant progress in their implementation.

43. We are all, North and South, in the same boat; we all run a risk and face a challenge that must be met with all the resolve and foresight that we can muster. Forty years after the inception of the United Nations, we are still facing the challenge of realizing the full potential of international co-operation.

44. We in the Group of 77 are and always will be in the forefront in defending the role and objectives of the United Nations system, which we believe is uniquely capable of devising formulas that can translate interdependence into concrete steps that can progressively achieve prosperity, stability and peace for all mankind. That is our message to our partners.

45. Allow me also, Mr. President, to express appreciation of your efforts and assure you that the Group of 77 will continue to maintain its constructive approach. We are legitimately seeking greater international economic co-operation and development. That for us will remain in the centre of the global agenda. We shall continue to urge the international community to move towards attaining an international economic order based upon the principles of justice, equality and mutual benefit.

46. We also consider that the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations could provide a valuable opportunity for reaffirmation by the international community of the goals and objectives of international economic co-operation and for strengthening the multilateral economic system. You were kind enough, Sir, to remind us a few moments ago again of one of the basic principles expressed in the opening words of the Charter. We hope and believe that the participation of an impressive number of heads of State or Government will prove a propitious occasion for individually and collectively providing the political impetus for a renewed dialogue between the developed and the developing countries.

47. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Luxembourg, who will speak on behalf of the States members of the European Community.

48. Mr. PHILIPPE (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): The European Community and its member countries, on whose behalf it is my honour to speak, have on many occasions in the past indicated the reasons why they continue to participate actively and, we believe constructively in the various bodies in which the North-South dialogue is taking place. We are more than ever convinced that the growing interdependence of economies makes it all the more important to narrow the differences between the views of the interested parties, in terms of both the objectives of the dialogue and the identification of ways and means. It is in that spirit that we will persist in our efforts to bring about a greater convergence of views on a basis that makes it possible to achieve negotiated agreements at the various levels of international co-operation.

49. The European Community and its member States consider the objective of launching global negotiations in the light of that overall concept of the North-South dialogue.

50. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

51. Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): The delegations of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic wish to state that the socialist countries supported General Assembly resolution 34/138, on the question of global negotiations relating to international economic co-operation for development and continue to support the early implementation of that resolution. That position has been repeatedly confirmed at the highest Party, State and governmental levels of our countries in documents of the Warsaw Treaty and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

52. The Declaration on the Preservation of Peace and International Economic Co-operation adopted on 14 June 1984 at the high-level Economic Conference of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance held in Moscow states:

"The participants in the Conference reaffirm the need to expand the role of the United Nations and its organizations as important forums for harnessing the efforts of States in order to strengthen peace and international security and help to solve urgent world problems. To achieve that end, the member countries of CMEA are prepared to continue to participate actively in their work. They favour the earliest possible start of global negotiations within the United Nations on the most important international economic problems in accordance with the decisions of the Organization, with the participation of all States and with regard for their legitimate interests." [See A/39/323, annex II.]

53. On the basis of this position of principle, the socialist States on whose behalf I am speaking wish to express their high appreciation of the efforts by you, Sir, in order to accelerate the beginning of global negotiations as provided for in General Assembly resolution 34/138. We agree with your proposal to refer the question of global negotiations for inclusion on the agenda of the fortieth session of the General Assembly. The delegations of the socialist countries wish to express the hope that discussion of this question at the fortieth anniversary session of the General Assembly will make it possible to break the cycle of procedural debate and to embark on the actual work of preparing for global negotiations, in the interests of equitable economic co-operation and the carrying out of United Nations decisions on the restructuring of international economic relations and the establishment of a new international economic order.

54. Mr. WANG Baoli (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Mr. President, first of all I wish to express our appreciation to you for your efforts during the past year on this item. Since the adoption of resolution 34/138 by the General Assembly on the basis of consensus, six years have passed. In spite of the positive and constructive efforts made by the Group of 77 and a number of delegations, the launching of global negotiations has been delayed year after year. Consultations conducted since April this year have not yielded any concrete result. People cannot but feel regret.

55. In recent years, the structural flaws of the world economy and the harm they have done to the economies of the developing countries have increasingly demonstrated the need to conduct global negotiations so as to deal comprehensively with the global economic issues, to establish a new system of international economic relations and to revitalize the world economy, in particular the economies of the developing countries.

56. Therefore it is correct for you to remind all Member States of the continuing validity of the concept of the commitment by the General Assembly to global negotiations as embodied in resolution 34/138. Although our path may be arduous and difficult, we should not give up our efforts to seek ways and means to launch global negotiations. We support your proposal to include this item in the draft agenda of the fortieth session of the General Assembly.

57. China will continue to participate actively in the work on this item. It is our hope that all sides will make further efforts and strengthen international economic co-operation for development. In particular, the parties concerned should give serious consideration to the reality of increasing the interrelatedness of the economies of various countries and to the overall interest of the international community and adopt a flexible and constructive attitude so as to facilitate an early agreement on the launching of global negotiations.

58. Mr. IMMERMANN (United States of America): Mr. President, the United States delegation would like to thank you for your efforts in this area. The Government of the United States, together with a great many others represented here, has devoted a considerable amount of time and effort attempting to achieve agreement on the matter subsumed under agenda item 38. We will maintain our constructive and co-operative interest in this item and we will continue to play a full and active role in this process.

AGENDA ITEM 41

Observance of the quincentenary of the discovery of America (*concluded*)*

59. The PRESIDENT: In connection with this item, representatives will recall that on 21 September 1984 the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the thirty-ninth session [3rd meeting]. May I take it that it is now the Assembly's wish to defer its consideration and to include this item in the draft agenda of the fortieth session?

It was so decided (decision 39/463).

AGENDA ITEM 42

Question of Cyprus: report of the Secretary-General (*concluded*)*

60. The PRESIDENT: Members will recall that on 21 September 1984 the Assembly decided to include this item in the agenda of the present session [3rd meeting], but deferred a decision on the allocation of the item to an appropriate time in the future. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the fortieth session of

the General Assembly. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of the item and to include it in the draft agenda of the fortieth session?

It was so decided (decision 39/464).

AGENDA ITEM 43

Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations (*concluded*)*

61. The PRESIDENT: In connection with this item, I have received a letter from the representative of Cyprus requesting that the item be included in the draft agenda of the fortieth session. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to include the item in the draft agenda of the fortieth session?

It was so decided (decision 39/465).

AGENDA ITEM 44

Consequences of the prolongation of the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq (*concluded*)*

62. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly decided on 21 September 1984 [3rd meeting] to include this item in the agenda of the thirty-ninth session. It is my understanding that it would be desirable to defer consideration of this item to the fortieth session of the General Assembly. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of the item and to include it in the draft agenda of the fortieth session?

It was so decided (decision 39/466).

AGENDA ITEM 140

Celebration of the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the emancipation of slaves in the British Empire (*concluded*)*

63. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly decided on 21 September 1984 [3rd meeting] to include this item in the agenda of the thirty-ninth session. May I take it that it is now the wish of the Assembly to defer consideration of the item and to include it in the draft agenda of the fortieth session?

It was so decided (decision 39/467).

Statement by the President

64. The PRESIDENT: Nine months ago, when we suspended the work of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly [105th meeting], I pointed out that at that stage each one of us in this Hall would assess the work of the session on the basis of our respective national policies and perceptions of the Organization, as well as from the perspective of successes and failures.

65. Today as we formally conclude our work and as we make our final assessment or stock-taking, I should like to suggest once again that the correct yardstick of any objective evaluation should be based on the Charter of the United Nations, and that we ask ourselves whether the thirty-ninth session has

*Resumed from the 105th meeting.

achieved any of the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world, which, after all, we represent.

66. When we consider the number of items on our agenda—143 in all—when we consider the magnitude and complexity of the problems which confront us at all levels, and judging from the international climate in the past 21 months, I strongly believe that the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly did advance the cause of international peace—and here I mean all aspects of peace.

67. Some of the problems with which we had to deal with were deep-rooted. Many of them had even preceded the founding of the United Nations. Others were complicated and aggravated, not so much by the so-called acrimonious debates, if any, within these walls, but perhaps more so by human and natural forces external to the Organization—forces such as narrow nationalism, misguided policies, political intransigence, delaying tactics, short-sightedness, honest mistakes and, I should add, the vagaries of the weather—that is, floods, hurricanes and drought. Allow me to mention that much of what is painstakingly accomplished within the walls of this building is often undone or destroyed outside the Organization.

68. What others may describe as the failures of this session of the General Assembly should, in my view, be regarded as unfinished business. The pursuit of peace—peace at home and peace in the world—is an ongoing process. Despite the obstacles and despite the disappointments, we cannot abandon the pursuit of peace.

69. In view of the importance which previous sessions attached to it, and based on my own conviction that economic self-sufficiency is one of the most effective instruments for achieving the goals and objectives of the Charter, I was particularly interested in the agenda item entitled “Launching of global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development”. Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to reach the stage where we can say with confidence that those negotiations will be launched on a specific date.

70. Granted that the Assembly did not solve the serious debt and foreign exchange problems which are crippling the economies of a large number of States represented here; granted that the threat of nuclear weapons still hangs ominously over mankind; granted that the inhuman policy of *apartheid*—a subject which has been on the agenda of the United Nations for over three decades—has not been eliminated; granted that the questions of Palestine, Namibia, Kampuchea and the Middle East, and the situations in Afghanistan and Central America, and others, were not completely resolved during this session; and granted that many of the resolutions and recommendations which were adopted by the thirty-ninth session of the Assembly appear to have fallen on partially deaf ears, we should at the same time realize that the Assembly did provide a meeting place for friend and foe alike. In the midst of what some may describe as rhetoric, there were genuine words of commitment and hope. We have already seen some positive results from our deliberations and from the political atmosphere which the thirty-ninth session created.

71. The seeds of co-operation and consensus which we planted on 3 December 1984 have already borne fruit. I refer to the adoption of a comprehensive Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in

Africa [*resolution 39/29, annex*]. Directly and indirectly, the Declaration and the spirit behind it have already saved the lives of millions of our fellow human beings. Here I should like to state that the efforts of the Secretary-General, through the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, and all other United Nations agencies and those of individual Governments and non-governmental organizations—including those in the entertainment field—deserve our deep appreciation. Unfortunately, thousands of our brothers and sisters did not benefit from these efforts. Assistance came too late. Their world did not heed in time the signals of alarm—and, by the way, the alarm is still on.

72. I wish to mention further that, as a result of our deliberations, the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women did take place, to the surprise of sceptics who had predicted its doom. As a result of perseverance over the years, and the spirit of accommodation which prevailed in many areas during the session, we were able to complete a new symbol of comfort and protection for the victims of torture and other cruel and degrading treatment or punishment.

73. The Secretary-General's profound and timely statement at the present session, on 12 December 1984 [*97th meeting, paras. 292 to 307*] on the question of disarmament complemented the record number of resolutions which the Assembly adopted on that subject. At least the session placed all aspects of the arms race and the threat posed by nuclear weapons in their true perspective. The new dimensions of the nuclear age were analysed. The Assembly, through its candid debate, set an example in international behaviour—an example which underlines the view that channels of communication should be constantly kept open if we are to move forward in the area of disarmament. We are therefore encouraged by the prospects for high-level dialogue on arms control between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

74. I still maintain the position which I advanced last December that, in spite of its unresolved and unfinished business, the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly has fulfilled some of the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world. As I mentioned earlier, we have already seen some of the results of the work of the session; it is my earnest hope that others will be forthcoming. It will obviously take some time for some of the seedlings which we have planted to grow and bear fruit. They will need attention, care and nurturing.

75. This is the end of an Assembly session; it is also the beginning of the next step ahead on the long and often hazardous road towards the ultimate goal of universal peace. If we do not get there, we should at least be able to say that we have tried and that along the way we made the world a better place—better than we had found it.

76. Finally, I take this opportunity to express once again my sincere thanks to delegations, to the Secretary-General, to the Bureau, to the Chairmen of the regional groups, to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs and to other members of the Secretariat for their co-operation and assistance, without which I would have found it extremely difficult to preside over the Assembly. I should also like to express my appreciation to the representatives of non-governmental

organizations and members of the media, who in their own way have contributed to the work of the session.

The members of the Assembly observed a minute of silence.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

77. The PRESIDENT: We are now coming to the end of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

Closure of the session

78. The PRESIDENT: I declare closed the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.
