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Fortieth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 8 October 1985, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. DE PINIES (Spain)
later: Mr. AL-KAWARI (Vice President) (Qatar)
later: Mr. DE PINIES (Spain)

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Jarrett (Liberia)
Mr. Gurinovich (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic)
Mr. Tjon Kie Sim (Suriname)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. JARRETT (Liberia): The Government and the people of Liberia extend profound sympathy to the Government and the people of Mexico on the devastating earthquake which caused the loss of thousands of lives and the destruction of property. We pray that God will strengthen and comfort the bereaved families, provide shelter and assistance to the homeless and heal the injured.

I bring warm greetings from the Head of State of Liberia, His Excellency Samuel Kanyon Doe, and from the Government and the people of Liberia.

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you, Sir, the sincere congratulations of the Liberian delegation on your election as President of the General Assembly at its fortieth session. Your unanimous election, at the time of the observance of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, is a well-deserved tribute to you as a statesman and as an eminent diplomat and scholar who has contributed enormously to a better understanding of the United Nations.

It is an equal privilege for me to pay a tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Paul J.F. Lusaka of Zambia, whose election as President of the Assembly at its thirty-ninth session was a credit to our Organization and an honour to the entire African continent. The success which attended our last session was attributable in no small measure to his able and astute leadership.

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

The energy of the Secretary-General in the service of the United Nations, as well as his constant dedication to the cause of international peace and co-operation, continue to command and merit our respect and admiration. We have listened to his views, comments and suggestions over the past months. We compliment him for his mature and balanced utterances and urge him to continue to discharge his duties with the courage and the conviction of his conscience.

It was the assignment of my Minister of Foreign Affairs to up-date at our thirty-ninth session the progress which had been made by my Government in its process of returning our country to civilian rule. Within the next week, Liberians will go to the polls in fulfilment of the solemn promise which the Head of State made to the Liberian people - a promise induced by no external influence - to return the country to civilian democratic rule. That transition is nearing completion with four political parties currently campaigning for the elections which will be held on 15 October 1985.

The Liberian people are excited by the prospect of participating in a free election for the first time in almost 100 years, and look forward to the institution of a civilian Government based on the principles of democracy and equal participation of all the Liberian people in peace, unity and progress.

Forty years have elapsed since the birth of our United Nations and throughout those years, it has gone through bitter trials and tribulations. This fortieth anniversary is therefore a milestone which merits special recognition. That the Organization has come this far is a tribute to the vision of those who drew the founding plans, and a testimonial to the soundness of the guiding principles upon which it was built.

Equally important over the past four decades is the realization and recognition by all nations that, although our Organization has not lived up to our expectation, yet it represents the best hope for the survival of our world community.

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

The United Nations has proved to be an incomparable force and an indispensable factor in international relations over the past 40 years. The principles it embodies, the forum it provides for the expression and harmonization of conflicting views and the multiple services it renders humanity testify to its competence and the useful role it plays as a human and political Organization.

The United Nations is the ideal Organization to cope with the type of problems that face humanity. Its uniqueness lies in its special role in enabling us to obtain a defined image of the world, its resources and needs, its attitudes and problems, its opportunities and challenges and, at the same time, in helping us to develop new patterns of action while there is still time to do so. Whatever it may be - the atmosphere, or the sea, over-population or food shortages, the United Nations will bring to us a recognition of the problems and an awareness of what needs to be done.

In spite of the fact that the United Nations has become a permanent factor in international life, it has its troubles. From its very existence, it has been encumbered by great-Power rivalry and conflicts. Its efforts to promote social progress have often been hampered by discord and strife. It has been called upon to keep the peace where there was no peace in the hearts of men. It has been buffeted by nationalism as the new nations of former colonial Powers have moved to rule themselves in freedom and to assert their rights to speak and act as equals in the forums of nations. It has been confronted with the problems of racism, apartheid and other forms of degradation and suppression which are yet unresolved. It has been beset by financial and constitutional crises threatening to bring its operations to a standstill and ultimately to tear it apart.

Thus, the Organization is powerless even when its basic principles are violated, its authority challenged and its very survival threatened. The mounting agenda of unresolved issues is a clear reflection of this impotence.

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

Apartheid has been, and continues to be, a perennial item on the agenda of the Assembly. In the early 1960s following the setting up of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), passive national organizations emerged in South Africa. The peaceful Sharpeville protest, members may recall, was met by military police repression, violence and terror and the intensification of social oppression.

The OAU forced the question of apartheid upon the agenda of the international community. What was the response from South Africa? More repression, more violence, more terror. And today, we listen to Mr. Botha's pronouncement that there can be no official change in South Africa until those who over the years have sought violent change, give up violence. Who has been violent?

The insincerity of the régime is clear. The demonstration of anger is the outpouring of a people whose patience has reached the limits of its endurance.

Is South Africa interested in peace and freedom? No; its interest is solely in the perpetration of apartheid - and to do so it kills indiscriminately, it arrests almost everyone. It invades the territory of adjacent States and constantly proclaims its intention to repeat acts of aggression in utter contempt of the international community.

We strongly believe that the United Nations will understand Africa when it says that the struggle against apartheid is an African struggle and not just for the indigenous people of South Africa. It is a struggle for the dignity of the people of Africa, and the freedom of African States to which we committed ourselves when the OAU was created.

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

The foreign policy which certain nations friendly to the Verwoerd, Vorster and Botha régimes have evolved over the past three decades have seemingly been centred on the narrow national interests of those States. How any country could have fashioned a network of co-operation with a Government whose economic, cultural, political and social system is based on man's unkindness and cruelty to man, without a modicum of consideration of morality or ethics, baffles the imagination, and this is an international political affront. In the system of apartheid there has never been any attempt to hide its method of operation, camouflage its designs or blur its wickedness.

It is pathetic that a system that sets apart the races of mankind which constitute the family of man, totally ignoring humanity, love, justice, fairness and mercy, should still find acceptance by some States, as it has over the last decades. This is why Africans have always questioned, and will continue to question, the motives and true interest of those countries which give comfort to South Africa. On the one hand they pontificate about human rights and on the other they indulge South Africa in its crimes against the rights of the majority.

My Government believes that the world community is not easily taken in by this rush of activities. We will not confuse activity with action. The latest events in South Africa that we now behold, including Mr. Botha's proposed cosmetic changes, are not occurring purely because of recent international developments or international pronouncements.

We believe that the forces inducing those changes had their origin more than three decades ago. Today's reality goes back, far back, to the birth of the Organization of African Unity, on 25 May 1963. On that historic day, the last resolution that the Assembly of Heads of State or Government adopted empowered the Foreign Ministers of Liberia, Madagascar, Sierra Leone, and Tunisia to make

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

representation to the Security Council about the foul actions of the South African régime, led by Vorster, against the authentic African inhabitants of the country, as well as the status of Namibia, the Trust Territory of the League of Nations, which had been transferred to the United Nations. During that Security Council debate, we heard, as we should hear so often later, pious utterances about the repugnance of apartheid. When the Council proceeded to vote, South Africa escaped indictment because of the use of the veto by those whose policy today remain virtually unchanged.

Following that historic session, Liberia and Ethiopia brought contentious proceedings before the International Court of Justice against South Africa as regards its continued illegal occupation of Namibia. All but one of the Judges of the Court who supported South Africa in its illegal occupation were from the same States as continue to drag their feet 24 years later on the South African policy of apartheid and the independence of Namibia.

Let me solemnly declare from this rostrum that the progress made over the past three decades on the matter of South Africa, apartheid and the independence of Namibia has been the result, on the one hand, of sustained and determined efforts by the OAU, the non-aligned States and a few other friendly Governments and, on the other, of the determined resolve of the leaders of the legitimate indigenous people of those two countries who, by the sacrifice of their lives, ensured that they would not cease their effort or abandon their resolve until they achieved freedom and independence.

The question of Namibia has been before this Assembly in one form or another for many years. Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which was unanimously adopted in 1978, set out the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia.

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

That document also identified all those involved in that process: the Government of South Africa, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the Western contact group and the front-line States. It is now seven years since the acceptance of that document, but Namibia continues to be subjugated instead of independent, and a bogus interim Government has been created possessing no international standing and commanding no internal support.

Except for a warning by the Security Council of future consideration of mandatory sanctions and a mild interest on the part of those countries which might be willing to impose limited unilateral sanctions, South Africa is permitted to remain confident in its defiance of international opinion on Namibian independence. Why must this be so?

The linkage between the independence of Namibia in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and the withdrawal of troops from Angola, we should remember, was not put forward by South Africa until 1981, at a time, we should also remember, when all obstacles to implementing resolution 435 (1978) had been overcome by all participants, including South Africa. Why then this linkage? All that the United Nations has sought by its resolution 435 (1978) is the peaceful transfer of power to the indigenous Namibian people. Is this not one of the solemn purposes of the United Nations? How long can we, as members of this international community permit this obstruction?

We must remember also that the people of Namibia resorted to armed struggle many years ago only because there was no peaceful alternative. Are we to remain passive and thus force the implementation of that resolution by SWAPO's intensifying its armed struggle?

The Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East and its key issue, the Palestinian problem, have remained unresolved despite intensive efforts undertaken by the United Nations during the past 38 years. Each war fought in the region

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

has become more destructive because of the employment of new and more sophisticated weapons. The destruction of life and property has not resolved old issues but created new ones and widened the scope of resentment and mistrust among opposing parties.

The Government of Liberia believes that a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East will have to meet the following conditions: the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all occupied Arab territories; respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from threats or acts of force; and a just settlement of the Palestinian problem based on recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of self-determination.

The support of the major Powers, especially the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, is essential for achieving any settlement in the Middle East under some form of United Nations auspices. In this connection, Liberia will continue to support the efforts of the Secretary-General to find the means by which we can move forward to a negotiated peace in the Middle East.

The preservation of Afghanistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character is essential to a peaceful solution of the Afghanistan problem. Foreign troops should be withdrawn from the Territory and all the parties concerned should work together for the urgent achievement of a political solution and the creation of conditions to enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homes in safety and honour.

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

The Kampuchean situation has created a climate of instability and insecurity in South-East Asia. The withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchea and non-interference in the internal affairs of the Kampuchean people constitute an indispensable starting point for peace, stability and co-operation among South-East Asian countries on the basis of mutual trust, confidence and goodwill.

The question of Korea remains a dangerous threat to international peace and security. The unity of the two Koreas must be restored through dialogue and negotiations between the two countries, without outside interference. The good offices of the Secretary-General should be encouraged to help facilitate the settlement of the Korean question, especially in easing the sufferings of millions of separated families.

Admission of the two Koreas to membership of the United Nations could contribute greatly to the reduction of tension on the Korean peninsula and thus the promotion of international peace and security. Both Koreas are members of a number of specialized agencies and should be allowed to share in United Nations responsibilities and obligations through their membership.

The Falkland Islands (Malvinas) conflict between the United Kingdom and Argentina has not been resolved in spite of the commitment of both sides to peace and a negotiated settlement. We call on the United Kingdom and Argentina to resume negotiations in order to find a peaceful solution to the sovereignty dispute and their remaining differences relating to the question.

The Contadora process in Central America seeks to restore peace in the region through commitment to the suspension of the arms race and to the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. The Contadora initiative deserves support from the international community as it demonstrates the Latin American will to find solutions to the regional problems.

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

The cessation of the nuclear arms race is now imperative. It should not only be an end in itself but should be followed immediately by a substantial reduction in nuclear forces, leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and the final goal of general and complete disarmament. In parallel with this process, it is urgently necessary to transfer the precious resources currently wasted on military expenditure to social and economic development.

The nuclear-weapon States have particular responsibility for the dangerous state of the arms race. We urge them to join in the search for a new direction, and welcome the Geneva agreement reached earlier this year between the Soviet Union and the United States that led to the current negotiations dealing with complex questions concerning space and nuclear arms, both strategic and intermediate range. Liberia attaches great importance to the proclaimed objective of these negotiations, namely, to prevent an arms race in space and to terminate the arms race on earth. We expect the two major nuclear-weapon Powers to implement in good faith their undertaking to produce, at an early date, significant results from their negotiations.

My Government reaffirms its belief in the commitment to multilateral economic co-operation, as well as its recognition of the important role that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations agencies play in this meaningful process. We appeal to the donor countries to increase substantially their contributions to UNDP above and beyond the agreed 8 per cent of gross national product so that UNDP may continue its development projects.

The economic situation in the African region continues to be dismal, owing to drought, desertification, famine and the heavy debt burden. We express profound appreciation to the Secretary-General for sensitizing the international community

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

to the plight of the affected countries and mobilizing international assistance to complement the national efforts of African Governments.

We welcome the recent United States proposal for a joint facility of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to ease the debt crisis and improve the economic performance of poor African and other developing countries. The proposal is timely and we trust that practical and positive steps will be taken on the third-world countries' debt crisis and the economic recovery of our respective regions.

We believe that the convening in early 1986 of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to the critical economic situation in Africa, as proposed by the 21st Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), is appropriate, important and necessary to address the critical economic situation of the region.

The United Nations remains the only global instrument for establishing international order and maintaining peace and security. It has saved us over the past decade from the "scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind". It has succeeded in many parts of the globe in obtaining equal rights for men and women of nations large and small. It has made significant headway in establishing conditions in which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be ensured and maintained. It has promoted social progress and a better standard of life in larger freedom.

None the less, there is need for a new concept of allegiance to the United Nations as the principal authority of the world community. That concept should begin with the application of the Charter principles as an irreplaceable instrument in the struggle for the independence and equality of States and peoples; for the realization of human rights and man's freedom; to rid the world of war, aggression

(Mr. Jarrett, Liberia)

and every form of oppression; to eradicate economic and social backwardness and to liquidate colonialism, racism, apartheid, and other forms of human servitude.

There is a basic need to preserve the Organization and turn it into an effective instrument for freedom, peace and justice, which can be realized only if its Members are prepared to rededicate themselves to implementing its decisions.

We should not forget that we have much in common, a great sharing of interests and much that we can lose together, for ourselves and for succeeding generations. Let us therefore redouble our efforts to retain the simple human values which are our common heritage and build a firm foundation on which we can unite our strengths and live together in peace and with faith in the United Nations.

Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic): Sir, please accept our congratulations on the occasion of your election to the responsible post of President of the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly as well as our wishes for the success of this session in achieving substantial results so that the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter may triumph.

The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR extends its deepest condolences to the delegation of Mexico in connection with the misfortune that has befallen that country and its people, namely, the recent earthquakes which have resulted in many victims and widespread devastation.

The fortieth anniversary of the victory over Hitlerite fascism and Japanese militarism in the Second World War and of the emergence in its wake of the United Nations confers particular importance on the current session of the United Nations General Assembly which should become not only a commemorative but also a substantive session, and a significant landmark in all the activities of our Organization.

Being one of the founding Members of the United Nations, the Byelorussian SSR has from the very beginning consistently and diligently worked to make the United Nations Charter a real instrument of peace and co-operation among nations so that the practical activities of the United Nations might contribute to the achievement of that lofty goal. This was what we strived for at the San Francisco Conference, and during the first post-war years when co-operation among the founders of the United Nations, born during the Second World War, still existed, in the "cold war" years and in the period of détente, which has recently given way to a sharp exacerbation of the international situation, the responsibility for which rests with the forces of imperialism and reaction. In following this reliable and time-tested peace-loving Leninist path of the Soviet Union's foreign policy, it has

(Mr. Gurinovich,
Byelorussian SSR)

always been - and continues to be - our conviction that one should fight against war before it begins and that this requires the concerted and active efforts of all nations and peace-loving States.

It is appropriate on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, to recall that, as far back as October 1943, the Moscow Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America and Great Britain recognized, on the initiative of the Soviet Union, the need to establish a universal international organization to maintain world peace and security, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving States.

The founding of the United Nations was one of the results of the great victory of freedom-loving nations over the forces of fascism, reaction and militarism. The Soviet Union made a decisive contribution to that victory. We are also proud of the fact that more than 1,100,000 people of Byelorussia fought selflessly on the fronts of the great patriotic war to defeat the common enemy. The fascist invaders were dealt heavy blows by Byelorussian partisans and underground fighters who put 500,000 Hitlerite troops out of action.

The Soviet people paid an enormous price in defending the freedom, honour and independence of their country. Twenty million people perished in the flames of the war. Their memory is sacred. In the year of the fortieth anniversary of the great victory we also pay tribute to the post-war exploits of those who rebuilt the devastated national economy from ruins and ashes and increased the industrial potential of the Byelorussian SSR to its present level which is 35 times greater

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

than before the war, despite the fact that one-fourth of its population died in the war and over one-half of its national wealth was destroyed.

In analysing the activities of the United Nations in the past 40 years, we have every reason to emphasize that the Organization's Charter has successfully stood the test of time, despite some sharp turnabouts in the international situation. As we all know, 159 countries of the world have assumed their obligations under the United Nations Charter. Unfortunately, not all of them have been following the course mapped out in the Charter. The Organization has, undoubtedly, some achievements to its credit. However, its work is not free from shortcomings. A number of questions still await a final solution on the basis of resolutions adopted on the initiative of the States of the socialist community and the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement, which has become an influential force in the world today. Unfortunately, attempts are still being made to use the United Nations to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States or to impose decisions which do not take into account the legitimate interests of all groups of the Organization's Member States, despite the fact that all this is in flagrant violation of the Charter.

In the present complicated and dangerous international situation all States should abide by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, that is unite the efforts and actions of all States, large or small, with or without major military potential, developed or developing. By consolidating what has been achieved, preventing existing progressive decisions from being undermined and isolating aggressive and militaristic circles - the instigators of the arms race - all of us should, by our deeds rather than our words, act to promote peace and co-operation.

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

As for the countries of the socialist community, this is precisely the way they have always acted. In this we were not deterred by the fact that our activities in the Organization on the basis of its Charter were sometimes described by the imperialist forces as "bad behaviour in the United Nations". Experience demonstrates that the same course is followed by the overwhelming majority of the Organization's Member States which respect the United Nations Charter and are not trading away their principles or their positions. The purposes and principles of the United Nations are not being devalued. They have not been and will not be put on sale.

In the 40 years of its membership in the United Nations the Byelorussian SSR has always set forth its position on all questions under discussion in precise and clear terms. Every word we have said and all our votes have always been guided by the interests of peace, the prevention of nuclear war, disarmament, the just and peaceful settlement of conflicts, speeding up the process of decolonization and the eradication of nazism, racism and apartheid, fighting against injustice and violations of the United Nations Charter and developing co-operation for the benefit of economic and social progress, ensuring respect for human rights and developing and consolidating the rules of international law.

In the current general political debate most speakers have pointed to tensions in the present international situation and to the importance of stabilizing it and putting it back on the track of détente and respect for the United Nations Charter. All this is indisputable. But it is also necessary to understand correctly what are the causes of this situation and what specific action should be taken to remedy it.

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

The most important task in our time is to eliminate the threat of nuclear war, which requires preventing an arms race in space and putting an end to it on Earth. Not only the destinies of nations and States, but the fate of all mankind depends on finding a solution to this problem. There is no safe place on our planet whereone could wait it out in case of a nuclear conflict, for such a conflict would destroy life itself on Earth. This should be borne in mind when dealing with such current problems as overcoming the economic backwardness of a large group of young independent States, fighting hunger and disease, and other questions; it is important to see the main problem on whose solution everything else hinges, namely, the problem of averting the nuclear threat, of doing everything to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", as required by the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Gurinovich,
Byelorussian SSR)

The fact that there has not been a world war for four decades and that the use of nuclear weapons has been prevented is mankind's greatest achievement. It is the result of the efforts of the Soviet Union, all countries of the socialist community, non-aligned States and other countries whose positions are based on responsibility for the destinies of their own and other nations. However, the threat of nuclear war, rather than decreasing, is growing as a result of the activities of militaristic forces which are eroding the foundations of peace.

Let us look at the facts.

Even at the first session of the United Nations General Assembly the Soviet Union proposed that nuclear weapons should be banned for all time and destroyed. What was the response of the United States? It continued to accumulate and upgrade its nuclear potential. The result was the appearance of other nuclear Powers. Strategic stability was ensured, but at a higher level of weapons and with a greater risk of war.

The Soviet Union has unilaterally pledged not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. The Chinese People's Republic has assumed the same obligation. What was the response of the other nuclear Powers? They refused to follow this good example. They are also ignoring the United Nations appeal to this effect. NATO's military doctrine allows members of that bloc to be the first to use nuclear weapons even in a conflict involving conventional weapons.

As is known, the Soviet Union has unilaterally pledged not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries which do not have such weapons on their territories. What was the response of the Western nuclear Powers? Vague statements which, incidentally, do not rule out the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States in some circumstances.

(Mr. Gurinovich,
Byelorussian SSR)

The Soviet Union has pledged not to place anti-satellite weapons in space so long as other States act in a similar manner. What was the response of the United States? It has just carried out a test of an anti-satellite weapon against a target in space as part of its notorious "star wars" programme.

The Soviet Union has temporarily suspended the deployment of medium-range missiles and the implementation of other countermeasures in Europe. What was the response of the United States? It has continued to increase the number of Pershing-2 and cruise missiles in Western Europe.

The Soviet Union has stopped all nuclear explosions as of 6 August until the end of this year and has stated that this unilateral moratorium could continue beyond that date if the United States does not carry out nuclear tests. What was the response of the United States? After this it has already carried out two tests of nuclear weapons.

It is also known to all what kind of attitude this or that country adopts towards the United Nations resolutions on the prevention of nuclear war and militarization of space, on disarmament and strengthening international security. The Soviet Union has been putting forward such proposals; it supports the initiatives of the non-aligned countries and insists on their realization, while the United States has been voting against them, often finding itself in complete isolation, and, wherever possible, has been sabotaging work in this area.

Such actions of the United States and of its closest allies give rise to justifiable alarm and should be countered with even stronger efforts. The international community, concerned with preserving life on our planet, should resolutely oppose the American "star wars" plans, which are directed against peace on Earth under the guise of propaganda rhetoric about their allegedly defensive nature, and support the new Soviet initiative on international co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space in conditions of its non-militarization.

(Mr. Gurinovich,
Byelorussian SSR)

The new Soviet proposal is based on the idea of uniting the efforts of States for the sake of preventing the militarization of space and reserving it for peaceful activities for the benefit of all countries. Joint exploration of space and the use of the results of space-related research for the benefit of all is quite a realistic possibility, if all channels for militarizing near-Earth space are blocked off. Detailed concrete proposals to this effect are contained in the document submitted by the Soviet Union at the current session of the General Assembly, entitled "Main lines and principles of international co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization", and in the corresponding draft resolution on this question. I draw the attention of representatives to document A/40/192.

In conditions of non-militarization of space and of "star peace" the Soviet union is proposing a qualitatively new stage of international co-operation in space exploration. There is now a possibility of using the enormous scientific-technological and production potential for the solution of global problems facing mankind, including the developing countries. For these purposes it is proposed that an international conference should be convened in 1987 at the latest, with the participation of States having major space potential and other interested countries, to discuss in its entirety the question of international co-operation in the peaceful exploitation and use of outer space in conditions of its non-militarization and to follow it up with the establishment of a world space organization. We hope that having carefully considered the proposal put forward by the Soviet Union, the participants in the current session of the United Nations General Assembly will support it.

Work should also continue to unite the efforts of States for the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests by all countries everywhere, for freezing the existing

(Mr. Gurinovich,
Byelorussian SSR)

nuclear potentials and starting their reduction, eventually leading to their complete elimination, for renouncing chemical warfare arsenals, and, naturally, for preventing the appearance of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction and resolving other issues of disarmament, having in mind, as the final objective, general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

One might ask whether a solution to all these problems can be found. We believe that this is certainly so. This is confirmed by past experience and by the approach outlined in the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. Is it not a fact that the countries of the anti-Hitlerite coalition were able to work together, fight for victory and lay the foundation of the post-war world which retains significance to this day? The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe also offers convincing proof that, given good will and desire to come to agreement and take into consideration the legitimate interests of all and everyone, it is possible to resolve the most complex problems and to accomplish that within a short time. United Nations Member States have to their credit a number of well-known multilateral and bilateral treaties and agreements aimed at limiting the nuclear-arms race, including a race in outer space, and at avoiding a nuclear conflict. Common efforts have made it possible to put an end to a number of conflicts and eliminate some hotbeds of tension.

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

It is important, while fulfilling all obligations, to move forward and strive for better results. It would then be possible to expect success at the Geneva negotiations on space and nuclear weapons, both medium-range and strategic, taking into account their interrelationship. The new Soviet proposals also open the way to that goal. Success could then be expected at the Stockholm Conference in the form of a treaty on the mutual non-use of military force, the maintenance of peaceful relations and the adoption of confidence-building measures equally applicable to all participants. It would then be possible to break the deadlock in the Vienna negotiations and to reduce armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. Then it would be possible to hope for the implementation of United Nations resolutions on preventing a nuclear catastrophe, strengthening international security, disarmament, restructuring international economic relations, and solving other problems facing all mankind.

What is necessary to achieve all that is above all joint, active efforts against the intention of certain circles in the United States to achieve military superiority and impose their will on others. The time has long come to realize that malicious rhetoric about "communist danger" and "Soviet threat" is not really convincing. Socialism, with its ideals and their practical realization, has provided impressive proof of its devotion to the cause of peace and the peaceful coexistence of States with different social systems and of its capacity to accomplish the tasks of economic and social progress in the interest and for the benefit of man.

Whatever problem we look at, it is perfectly clear that the States of the socialist community offer constructive solutions, based exclusively on the common interest, and seek no unilateral advantages or special benefits for themselves.

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This attitude is also clearly seen in our position on the issue of a just and comprehensive settlement of the situation in the Middle East and the problem of Palestine. This position is well known and has been repeatedly reflected in resolutions of the United Nations, which still await practical implementation. I wish to emphasize in this regard that we shall continue to oppose firmly all attempts to undermine the decisions of the United Nations on this question, to impose on the Arab peoples separate capitulationist deals, or to bar the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from participating in the Middle East settlement.

The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR resolutely condemns Israel's barbarous bombing of the territory of Tunisia and the PLO headquarters.

The situation in Central America and the Caribbean continues to move in a dangerous direction. The constructive proposals put forward by Nicaragua, Cuba, the countries of the Contadora Group and other States, which could lead to a normalization of the situation, are being ignored and undermined by the United States and its partners - again in open contradiction with the requirement of the United Nations Charter "to live together in peace as good neighbours". The resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on the situation in Central America, which was adopted unanimously, also remains unimplemented. Additional steps in must therefore be taken with urgency to safeguard the independence and sovereignty of the countries of Central America and to make it possible for them to live as their peoples choose and desire rather than under orders from outside.

Also necessary are determined effort in defence of the legitimate rights and interests of the people of Afghanistan and Kampuchea, who have opted for a new life and embarked firmly upon the path of independent development, resolutely

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rejecting imperialist interference in their internal affairs and stoutly rebuffing the subversive actions of the armed mercenaries of imperialism and reaction.

A general improvement in the situation in Asia and the Pacific would be facilitated by a positive response by the States of the region to the proposals of the USSR for examination of the whole complex of issues pertaining to the strengthening of security and the development of equitable co-operation among the States of Asia and the proposals of the Mongolian People's Republic and the States of Indo-China to make Asia a continent of peace, stability, good-neighbourliness and co-operation. This would also be facilitated by the implementation of the United Nations decisions on the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean and on the withdrawal of foreign troops from South Korea. We support the proposals of the Korean People's Democratic Republic aimed at the peaceful reunification of Korea and the conversion of the Korean Peninsula into a nuclear-free zone.

In concluding this part of my statement, I wish to point out that, in the present international situation, the Assembly must insist on the full implementation of its resolution, adopted last year, on the inadmissibility of the policy of State terrorism and any actions by States aimed at undermining the socio-political system in other sovereign States.

We cannot but speak with satisfaction about the collapse of colonial domination in the world, a result of the impact of the ideas of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia and of the defeat of the forces of fascism and militarism in the Second World War, which gave new strength to the fighters for peace and independence in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The United Nations, too, has played a positive role in the process of decolonization, especially since the

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adoption, following the initiative of the Soviet Union, of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of that historic document by the United Nations must be observed appropriately. Of course, the best way to do this would be to adopt measures immediately to ensure the independence of Namibia and other colonial Territories and to abolish the Trusteeship System completely. For there remains today only one Trust Territory, Micronesia, whose self-determination and independence are opposed by the United States, which so ostentatiously vaunts its freedom-loving and democratic ways.

The Assembly must also give its close attention to the question of the struggle against manifestations of neo-nazism, fascism and revanchism.

It is necessary to redouble the efforts in the struggle against the remaining hotbeds of racism and apartheid, those festering and disgraceful wounds of the 20th century. In this regard more determined actions than those so far taken are required. Specifically, a full boycott and comprehensive sanctions in accordance with Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter should be imposed against the South African racists, who have unleashed mass terror against the indigenous population of the country vigorously fighting for its freedom.

The participants in this session of the General Assembly are giving much attention to economic problems. Young States continue to seek ways of extricating themselves from various forms of dependence, both those inherited from the former colonial system of imperialism and those being imposed on them by the neo-colonialists. They are justifiably critical of the policy of Western financial and economic institutions, which has brought the developing countries to the brink of economic catastrophe.

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Throughout the entire history of the United Nations the socialist countries have repeatedly put forward their proposals and supported proposals by other countries aimed at improving international economic relations, safeguarding the interests of the developing countries and ensuring the economic security of all States. Much has been accomplished. However, not all progressive recommendations of the United Nations are being implemented.*

* Mr. Al-Kawani (Qatar), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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In addition, the major Western Powers, resorting to various methods and tactics, have often succeeded in spreading hostility, in misleading the developing countries and in dividing them. The West is constantly flaunting the idea that only private capital and the private economy can solve all problems, that if one opens the way to foreign private capital everything will be fine. At the same time it cannot refrain from boasting and displaying its wealth - concealing, of course, the fact that all that wealth has been acquired as a result of the unashamed plundering of the natural and human resources of other peoples and the exploitation of its own working people without a fair solution to social problems.

Just remember the praise lavished on the four points of the Truman programme, the Alliance for Progress in Latin America and the economic policies of the present United States Administration. What are the results? The developing world has found itself chained in new shackles, the shackles of financial debt to its "benefactors", and is in fact deprived of the possibility of solving the existing economic and social problems in the interests of the peoples of the developing countries.

It is time to dismantle the barriers and remove the obstacles and difficulties created by the Western Powers and get down to the business of the genuine restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis.

Speaking of human rights and fundamental freedoms, I wish to underscore the point that the socialist countries have in actual deed demonstrated to the whole world the validity of the ideas put forward by the founder of the Soviet State, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, who said that without socialist transformation of society it was impossible to speak about true freedom for the individual rather than for proprietors, about genuine equality of men in the socio-political sense rather than about hypocritical equality between the haves and the have-nots, the sated and the hungry, the exploiters and the exploited.

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Our achievements in the genuine realization of a broad range of political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights of the individual are well known. They are recorded, in particular, in many United Nations documents, including those that deal with the implementation of the international legal instruments in this field, in which our Republic participates in good faith. That is why we reject the hypocrisy and demagoguery of those who represent a country which does not show the slightest desire to become a party to the international covenants on human rights and other international documents relating to that subject widely recognized and used by the world community. They apparently believe that by employing those methods they can hide or camouflage a rather poor state of affairs in their own house.

I should like to say a few words about the methods of our work at the present session. Our delegation, like many others, is in favour of the adoption of concrete agreed decisions and of their subsequent universal implementation. This, unfortunately, is not always possible, because a number of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries show a tendency to empty some issues of substance under the pretence of seeking consensus. Reasonable and mutually acceptable compromises are indispensable. However, we cannot agree that the purposes and principles of our Organization should be jeopardized under any pretext whatever. That is why we are also in favour of adopting decisions by voting, so as not to allow the forces of imperialism, aggression and militarism, the instigators of the arms race, colonialists and racists to obstruct the adoption of United Nations resolutions aimed at attaining the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter.

The tasks confronting the United Nations and its members are numerous; they are complex and urgent. But all those problems can undoubtedly be solved. The main prerequisite is that every State should comply with, rather than undermine,

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the Charter, and manifest genuine political will to solve the existing problems on the basis of equality, with due regard for common interests, without prejudice to the security of each other, and to the mutual advantage of everyone.

As stated by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Mikhail S. Gorbachev,

"The only sensible way out today is to develop active co-operation among all States in the interest of a common peaceful future, to create, use and develop international mechanisms and institutions which would make it possible to find the optimum balance between national and State interests and the interests of mankind."

The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, like other socialist countries, considers the United Nations to be an important and effective instrument of peace and equitable co-operation between States. We shall continue to work for the practical implementation in international relations of the just and democratic principles on which the United Nations was founded 40 years ago. The United Nations must become a true embodiment of the collective wisdom of States. At the current jubilee session of the General Assembly the delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is prepared, as before, together with all interested countries, to make every effort to accomplish the main task of the United Nations under the Charter, that of maintaining and strengthening peace, and to deal with all other problems on that basis.

Mr. TJON KIE SIM (Suriname): Allow me at the outset to congratulate Ambassador de Piniés on his election to preside over the General Assembly at its fortieth session. At the same time, I wish him much strength, for the tense and dangerous world situation requires a serious discussion at this forum. I also pay

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tribute to his predecessor, Ambassador Paul Lusaka, for the skill and dedication with which he guided the proceedings of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm to Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar the appreciation and support of the Government of Suriname for his contribution to international peace, security and co-operation.

We express our sincere sympathy to the Government and the people of Mexico, which suffered so much during the recent earthquakes. We support the resolution which calls upon the international community to render generous assistance to alleviate the suffering of that people.

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When the United Nations was founded, in the aftermath of the Second World War, its main objectives were international peace and co-operation and the preservation of the human species. There was a belief, a willingness and a common spirit throughout the world to join the march of mankind towards achieving the objectives to which we had solemnly committed ourselves.

In the past 40 years the United Nations has made invaluable contributions to the process of decolonization by actively opposing neo-colonialism and racism and by endeavouring to establish a new international economic order. The specialized agencies of this world body have made great contributions to the improvement of humanity and to the alleviation of global problems. But the United Nations has also known failures and shortcomings which require that certain measures be taken, measures to develop this world Organization further and strengthen multilateralism. We therefore cannot go along with those who use the shortcomings of the United Nations as a pretext to weaken multilateralism and to opt for bilateral relations.

We welcome the decision to commemorate this fortieth anniversary, which will provide us with the opportunity to elaborate further on the role of the United Nations.

The current world economic crisis, which originated in some of the major industrialized countries, has now become truly global in nature and scope. The seriousness and the acute character of the crisis which we are experiencing, and of which the third-world countries are the worst victims, require the re-evaluation of the role of this multilateral Organization in international economic relations and in the fostering of solutions to these problems.

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When certain financial and other institutions were established, problems were not considered comprehensively, nor was the changing world political situation taken into account. At that time the majority of today's developing countries were not independent. The mechanisms of these institutions and the economic system of which they were a reflection were actually designed to protect the interests of the developed countries. The contradictions inherent in this system became apparent in the sixties, shortly after many third-world countries had gained their independence. This economic system has proved to be unsuitable not only for the developmental needs of the third-world countries, but for the peoples of the countries which initiated it as well.

The current economic order has left the developing countries with continuously declining growth rates. Terms of trade have deteriorated and have further been affected by exchange-rate fluctuations, while the prices of raw materials are continually falling. High interest rates, protectionist measures and rising debt burdens have heavily undermined the economies of the developing countries. This poses a serious threat to their economic, social and political stability, and hence to international peace and security.

There seems to be an unwillingness among certain developed countries to engage in serious and meaningful negotiations to bring an end to the inequalities and injustices in international relations. My Government is of the opinion that the developed countries have to demonstrate their political will by considering the world economic problems in their totality. The current situation has abundantly demonstrated that the interests of the developed countries and those of the developing countries can no longer be treated separately.

The interdependent nature of the international situation, the increasing interrelationship of problems and the interconnection of their solutions must be

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an incentive and reason for dialogue and co-operation between the developing and the developed world. Global economic growth can be achieved and sustained by the co-operation of developed and developing countries in a partnership that is mutually beneficial.

The North-South dialogue can yield positive results only if South-South co-operation is strengthened. Suriname will actively promote this form of co-operation, which, contrary to North-South relations, is not affected by the burden of inequalities inherited from colonialism and neo-colonialism. The relations between the third-world countries can be more genuine and sound and mutually beneficial, and can allow us to enjoy profits and benefits which were previously drained from our societies.

Peace and development are interrelated. Hence, the international community cannot be assured of durable peace so long as the economic disparities between nations keep widening. Political instability, resulting from armed conflicts, intervention and interference and the dangerous arms race, is hampering global development and the establishment of a viable economic order, since political freedom and economic progress are inseparable.

Given the present international situation, it is the inalienable right and the desire of the peoples of the third-world countries to liberate themselves from economic dependence and to build a strong national economy for their own interest and prosperity. Yet this uncontested truth is often denied and is sometimes even met by economic, political or military aggression.

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We condemn the use of economic measures by some developed countries as a means of exerting political coercion, and we urge Member States to develop effective ways to prevent embargoes, sanctions or any other coercive actions incompatible with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. We express the hope that this Organization will take effective measures to put an end to such practices, as they reflect the objectionable attitude of the right of the strongest.*

* The President returned to the Chair.

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Suriname is deeply concerned about the aggression and repression carried out against peoples struggling for their national liberation. Our position is based on the fundamental principles of respect for the national sovereignty of States, the right of self-determination, the principles of non-intervention and non-interference, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, and the establishment of relations based on mutual benefit. These are founding principles of the Non-Aligned Movement, of which my country is an active member. There is an immense task to be carried out by that Movement as it continues the work begun by its leaders, such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Soekarno, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Julius Nyerere, Fidel Castro, Josip Broz Tito and Indira Gandhi. The Non-Aligned Movement, which expresses the interests of the third-world countries, has an enormous task to perform in the creation of a new international economic order.

Suriname deplores the fact that on this fortieth anniversary of the United Nations we still cannot welcome to our midst a free South Africa liberated from apartheid. That despicable régime, which reminds us of the most savage and cruel period of colonial times, stands out in sharp contrast to the civilized world. The apartheid régime is now using new, refined forms of oppression to thwart the struggle for freedom of the vast majority of the people, while polarization in the country is growing. But nothing - not even the countless deaths among the black people - can stunt their growing awareness or quell their desire for freedom. The apartheid régime will not last; it is doomed to be buried in the dark pages of the history of mankind.

Our Government is of the opinion that, since the United Nations has qualified apartheid as a crime against humanity and since Pretoria neither accepts nor allows any form of dialogue on a basis of equality, the people of South Africa have the legitimate right to carry out armed insurrection against that form of modern slavery. Suriname condemns the complicity of a number of Western countries that

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maintain economic, commercial and military relations with the racist régime, thus violating United Nations resolutions. By doing so they artificially sustain a régime which is incapable of sustaining itself by its own force.

Given the policies of the apartheid régime, slow and gradual change in South Africa can no longer be accepted as an alternative, for the toll the oppressed people of South Africa would have to pay would be unacceptably high. Moreover, the world community cannot tolerate the genocide of the black people, which seems to be the only option for the racist régime.

The régime of South Africa does not confine its deplorable actions to its own territory, but continues illegally to occupy Namibia through a modern form of colonialism and to impose there the inhumane rules of apartheid. My Government calls for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all South African troops from Namibia and for an end to all the influence being exercised there. We demand the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), without qualification, amendment or the introduction of extraneous and irrelevant issues of linkage, parallelism or reciprocity. Suriname supports the struggle of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) for an independent and free Namibia, as we stressed at the special ministerial conference on Namibia held by the Co-ordinating Bureau of the non-aligned countries in New Delhi in April this year.

We also condemn all acts of aggression committed by South Africa against neighbouring countries and give our full support to the struggle of the front-line and other neighbouring States to defend their national sovereignty.

The African continent, with its enormous natural and human resources, remains one of the least developed parts of the world. Because of the vulnerable economic situation of the African countries, it has been impossible to do anything to counter the worsening climatic conditions which plague those countries and threaten the very survival of their people.

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The tragedy we have been witnessing for decades in the Middle East has not permitted a single ray of hope throughout all those years. The deteriorating situation since the invasion of Lebanon is a matter of deep concern to my Government. We condemn Israel for its aggressive and expansionist policy towards neighbouring countries, its indiscriminate and hasty resort to violence, its disregard of United Nations resolutions and its total lack of will to co-operate in the search for a lasting settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. We also condemn Israel for its recent brutal military attack on Tunisia, in flagrant violation of that country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, in a vain attempt to destroy the heroic Palestinian resistance. We affirm our support for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people struggling for national liberation. It is the opinion of my Government that the Palestinian question cannot be solved without the participation of the PLO.

An unfortunate conflict between Iran and Iraq has escalated into a bloody and tragic war, threatening peace and security in that region. We appeal to those brother nations to cease their hostilities and engage in meaningful dialogue, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations and of the Non-Aligned Movement, and to reach a political settlement of the war.

With respect to the situation on the Korean peninsula, my Government supports the efforts of both parties to bring about reconciliation between the north and the south. The peaceful reunification of the Korean people would be an invaluable contribution to their future and prosperity.

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We are deeply concerned about the tense situation in Central America. The people of that region have the right to determine their own future without any external political, economic or military interference. We therefore condemn the economic embargo against Nicaragua, the officially approved military aid to counter-revolutionary groups, and the so-called humanitarian aid that is, paradoxically, given to inhumane forces.

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We categorically reject all plans for or threats of a military invasion of Nicaragua or El Salvador as a flagrant violation of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We fully support the untiring efforts of the Contadora group to achieve a peaceful solution to this conflict. The Contadora countries are fulfilling an important task in this hemisphere and are proving that the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean are able to solve their own problems by peaceful means without external interference.

The tense and dangerous situation, which can easily escalate into a total Central American war, has awakened the Latin American consciousness that a peaceful solution to the Central American conflict is possible. This has resulted in growing support for the efforts of the Contadora group.

In the Caribbean, with its numerous small countries seeking viable development strategies, the existing socio-economic and political conditions are of great concern. Only the consolidation of Caribbean unity, based on the genuine interests of the people concerned, can solve the deep and prolonged crisis created by structural factors.

We are of the opinion that our region is basically confronted with problems which are caused by socio-economic stagnation. We therefore stress that solutions have to be found in the socio-economic field. We have noticed and we deplore the tendency to interpret these problems in the context of East-West tensions which, inter alia, has resulted in the military invasion of Grenada. We consider this tendency to be a policy to distract attention from the real causes.

We reiterate our call that the Caribbean and Central American region should be declared a zone of peace, which will lay the basis for stability and economic development in this region.

In the southern zone the repeated initiatives of the Government of Argentina with regard to the Malvinas Islands have not yet resulted in the reopening of

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negotiations. We wish to reaffirm our support for Argentina's claim to sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands and we support all peaceful initiatives designed to settle the dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom.

My delegation considers the successful conclusion in 1982 of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea as a historical achievement. This convention established a new legal order for the rational use of the seas and oceans as an instrument for peace, development and international co-operation, which will contribute to the achievement of a new international economic order.

The resources of the international area of the sea-bed can only be explored and exploited lawfully within the scope and under the international régime of the convention. We are of the opinion that no unilateral action by any State or group of States, through a separate mini-convention or parallel régime, will have any validity.

In the past decade the world community has been confronted with the question of refugees, which is a consequence of internal political developments or armed conflicts between States.

It is the responsibility of the international community and the parties concerned to find primarily political solutions to these problems.

We reiterate our support for the drafting of an international convention prohibiting the recruitment, financing, training and use of mercenaries. We would request Member States to co-operate in order to finalize the work of the United Nations in this respect.

The fact that Suriname only recently gained independence had several disadvantages for the country. At the same time, it provided us with the opportunity to learn from the sad and painful post-colonial experiences of so many countries in Asia, Africa and our own region, which became independent since the 1940s. Their experience taught us that the process of decolonization did not put

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an end to colonialism, but revived it in the disguised form of neo-colonialism.

The high toll that the peoples of the third world have paid during the past decades has taught us another important lesson, namely, that after a colony gains formal political independence, it sooner or later becomes necessary to establish genuine independence. The 25 February 1980 was the beginning of this real independence of Suriname, when State power was seized by young patriots and new prospects were opened up of building a strong national economy for the benefit of the people. Several obstacles had to be faced when problems arose as a reaction to this policy. On the national scene we have been able to safeguard the unity of the people, to establish stability and to defend our sovereignty in the political and economic field.

In this respect, we welcome the solidarity of the Non-Aligned Movement with the ongoing process in Suriname, expressed at the Seventh Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, recently held in Luanda, Angola, as follows:

"The Ministers reiterated their support for and solidarity with the people and the Government of the Republic of Suriname in their efforts aimed at preserving the independence and sovereignty of Suriname. They expressed their deep concern at measures taken and continuing attempts of certain Governments to exert pressures, which have an adverse effect on the political, economic and social development of Suriname and express the hope that the Governments concerned will engage in a frank, fair and meaningful dialogue, without coercion or any other form of interference, in order to arrive at a solution on the basis of mutual respect and in the interest and well-being of the people of Suriname."

Since the people are the architects of their own future, we stand resolute in our conviction to continue the democratization process that has already begun. This will enable our people fully to participate and exercise political power in our society.

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In the process of authentic democratization, based on the reality in Suriname and the aspirations of our people, a National Assembly has been installed in which representatives of trade unions, national entrepreneurs and the revolutionary movement are participating.

A national dialogue has been started in an effort to incorporate all national forces in our endeavours to realize a just and equitable society for the entire people.

At the same time, an independent national institute for human rights was established in accordance with recommendations of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. This institute, which is already functioning, has established close relations with relevant international organizations.

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Today, Suriname forms an integral part of both the Caribbean and Latin America and we actively encourage the integration of the region. We believe that the integration of our region is an indispensable condition for the solution of the fundamental problems confronting us.

The astronomical Latin American debt forces our countries into concerted action to find solutions for this grave economic problem, which has already developed into a major political issue in the region. The debt cannot be repaid without bringing about the misery of the peoples of this continent. Therefore, repayment must be related to the export earnings and the repayment capacity of the debtor countries. The debt problem once more proves the need for a concerted effort by the countries in the region to find solutions to common problems. Suriname will actively support every initiative which consolidates the integration and unity of the region.

Suriname has welcomed the decision of the General Assembly to declare 1986 the International Year of Peace. We consider this decision primarily as timely support for the growing desire of the peoples of the world to put an end to the use of force in relations among States. At the same time, any indication of a continued arms race causes great anxiety.

We oppose the continued production of nuclear arms, the creation of nuclear arms systems, the tendency for monopolisation of nuclear technology and the "star wars" programme. The arms race brings economic development to a halt, creates unstable political situations and poses a threat to peace and security and to the future of humanity. We urge that nuclear technology should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the development of mankind, and we advocate a complete ban on nuclear arms.

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Many valuable resources, including huge sums of money, manpower and the intellect of many of the most talented and gifted men, which are now being wasted, should be utilized for the benefit of mankind.

It is therefore the sincere hope of my Government that, in the coming year which will be devoted to the cause of peace, the Member States of this Organization will find solutions which will guarantee a future for humanity. We urge the countries concerned to negotiate seriously the urgent problem of arms limitation.

My country gained its independence in November 1975. We became a Member of the United Nations in the same year. Despite the shortcomings of this Organization, its principles provide us with the most effective instruments to regulate international relations in this divided contemporary world. On this tenth anniversary of the membership of the Republic of Suriname, we therefore renew our commitment to the principles of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.