

United Nations GENERAL ASSEMBLY

EIGHTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



1240th
PLENARY MEETING

Monday, 14 October 1963,
at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

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President: Mr. Carlos SOSA RODRIGUEZ
(Venezuela).

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (concluded)

1. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): The first item on our agenda for this morning is the conclusion of the general debate with the exercise of the right of reply by delegations which have asked to do so. To enable delegations to exercise that right, I shall give them the floor in the order in which they made the request.

2. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq): The representative of Israel at our last meeting said that: "for the United Nations as for us, no such issue"—that is to say, the Palestine issue—"exists at all" [1239th meeting, para. 180]. This confirms what my Foreign Minister, Mr. Shabib, said in his statement at the same meeting: that Israel's call for direct negotiations with the Arab States is no more than a means to induce the Arab States to recognize the disappearance of the Palestine entity and the liquidation of its Arab inhabitants as a separate national community. If there was any further proof that Israel's only aim in these negotiations is the legalization and consolidation of the conquest of Palestine, that proof was provided by the Israel representative himself when he denied the existence of an issue called the Palestine issue.

3. As my colleague from Syria said, the question of Palestine has been before the General Assembly and the Security Council since 1948. In fact, an item on the agenda of this session deals with the report of the High Commissioner of the United Nations Agency for Palestine Refugees; the rights of those refugees is now and has been one of the primary concerns of the General Assembly. It is therefore astonishing, to say the least, that the representative of Israel should come to this rostrum and state before the General Assembly of the United Nations that the Palestine problem no longer exists in the United Nations. It is hard to find any disregard of the truth similar to that which we have seen exhibited by the Israel representative last Friday.

4. The representative of Israel cannot wish the people of Palestine out of existence. They are here and they have not surrendered any of their rights. They have not given up their hopes and aspirations to regain their lost homeland. Contrary to what the Israel representative said, the United Nations did not, and I quote him again, "finally and irrevocably" dispose of the question in 1947. Nothing based on aggression and a total disregard of the principles of justice can ever be final or irrevocable.

5. The problem of Palestine did not begin in this Organization in 1947. It started many years before when the world Zionist movement, claiming that, because of a brief historical connexion which the ancient Hebrews had with Palestine, all people who happened to profess the Jewish faith, whether they be Europeans, Asians or Africans, had a right to go to Palestine and to take over the land from a people who had inhabited that country from time immemorial.

6. Mr. Comay, in his statement on Friday, said that "the United Nations . . . endorsed the right of the Jewish people to independent nationhood in their ancient homeland." [1239th meeting, para. 181.] But the fact is that during a long history of 4,000 years, the ancient Hebrews had independent statehood in Palestine, and only in a small part of Palestine, for periods totalling not more than 450 years. There were other peoples who enjoyed national independence in Palestine, and for much longer periods of time compared with the brief experience of independent Jewish statehood. Thus, historically, the Jewish connexion with Palestine is neither unique nor exclusive. The Jews were in fact just one of numerous peoples who trod upon the soil of Palestine throughout its long and eventual history. Yet on the basis of this brief period of statehood, Zionism claimed a country in which the Jewish inhabitants in 1917 did not exceed 7 per cent—only 7 per cent of the total population.

7. Confronted with this claim, what was the Arab majority in Palestine expected to do? Were they, who constituted over 90 per cent of the population, expected to surrender their homeland and accept the opening of their country to unlimited immigration by aliens from all over the world until such time as those foreign immigrants became the majority of the population?

8. What other people in the world has been asked to accept such a sacrifice? Will any of the nations represented in this Hall doubt even for one moment what their reaction would be to such an outrageous demand?

9. But this is exactly what the Zionist challenge meant to the Arabs of Palestine. Is there any wonder that the people of Palestine should have decided to resist Zionism, to fight it with their limited resources and to try to stem the tide of the alien invaders who descended on their country, backed by formidable financial resources and great political influence in the capitals of most of the major Powers?

10. The Zionist programme in Palestine could not be reconciled with the interests of the people of Palestine because there was no other way for the Zionists to establish a Jewish State in Palestine except at the expense of the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants. It is false, therefore, to pretend that it would have been possible for the Zionists to establish a State in Palestine dominated by them and at the same time protect and maintain the legitimate rights of the overwhelming majority of the population. The interests of this majority of Arabs in Palestine and the interests of Zionism to create a State in that country are, have been and always will be mutually exclusive.

11. When the question of Palestine was brought to the United Nations in 1947, the Arabs demanded that the right of self-determination be given to the people of Palestine and, failing that, that the entire problem be taken to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion on whether the partition of Palestine against the will and desire of the majority of its inhabitants was in conformity with the Charter.

12. It may seem very strange to the majority of new Member States who have been admitted since 1955 that a request for an advisory opinion on a question like this—that the principle of self-determination be exercised by people under international responsibility, with the full guarantees of an international committee—that such a request was turned down because of great Power pressure. I think it would be utterly inconceivable in this day and in this Assembly that a similar request, a similar demand would be turned down in 1963. Yet that is exactly what happened in 1947.

13. Both proposals were rejected under heavy pressure. Finally, the Arabs, during the session, proposed that all countries that had Jewish citizens open their gates to the Jewish refugees in Europe in accordance with their absorptive capacity and their economic capabilities. Again, that proposal was rejected because the Zionists were able to put enough pressure on many Member States. The Zionists were not as interested in alleviating the plight of the Jewish people in Europe as they were in establishing a political bridge-head in Palestine itself.

14. Israel spokesmen often repeat the allegation that it was the Arab States who committed an act of aggression against Israel and launched their armies to destroy the infant State, as they say. But the fact is that even the unjust and arbitrary decision to partition Palestine was considered insufficient by the Zionists. They proceeded to nullify the provisions of that resolution from the very first day. The decision of the British Government to withdraw its troops gradually from Palestine gave the well-prepared Zionist forces inside Palestine their opportunity to put into effect their plan to conquer the whole of Palestine. Thus, the cities of Jaffa and Acre and the whole of Western Galilee, which were included in the Arab area of the partition plan, were occupied by the Zionist forces during the month of April 1948, that is to say before the entry of a single Arab soldier into Palestine. The same fate was reserved for the Arab quarters in the modern part of the city of Jerusalem, which under the partition plan was supposed to be placed under an international régime.

15. All this happened, as I said, before the entry of the armies of the Arab States into Palestine. How

therefore can the representative of Israel come to this rostrum and say that it was the Arabs who committed aggression, when it was the Zionist army which, before one single Arab soldier entered Palestine, went on the offensive against the inhabitants of that country and occupied large parts which were not included in the Jewish State?

16. By the end of April 1948, it became clear that the Arab inhabitants of Palestine were no match for the highly organized, well financed and well armed and equipped Jewish forces. In response to the repeated appeals of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine, the Arab States came to the conclusion that, without outright military intervention, the Arab population of Palestine was threatened with annihilation and the whole of Palestine was in danger of falling under Zionist occupation. The intervention of the Arab forces in Palestine on 15 May 1948 should therefore be looked upon as a salvage operation rather than a military offensive. It helped to stem the tide of Zionist advance in many areas and saved what remained of Palestine. The defensive character of the military operations which were carried out by the forces of the Arab States can be seen from the fact that all these operations took place in the area originally allotted to the Arabs under the partition plan, and they were undertaken solely for the purpose of defending the population of that area from the advancing Zionist armies.

17. What I have just said is borne out by no less an authority than an Israel commander who, during the Palestine war, commanded the shock troops of the Haganah, which are called the Palmach. He is Commander Yigü Alon. I should like to quote a brief statement from a book that he wrote many years ago:

"The stage of the war which was made possible"—and this means the stage before the entry of the Arab armies into Palestine, the stage between 1 April 1948 and 14 May 1948—"by the gradual British evacuation and ended with the invasion of the Arab armies into the country gave Haganah valuable victories. Thanks to the local offensive war, the continuity of the Jewish territories was accomplished and also the penetrating of our forces into Arab areas ...

"If it was not for the Arab invasion"—and I emphasize these words, which are the words of Commander Alon—"there would have been no stop to the expansion of the forces of the Haganah, who could have with the same drive reached the natural borders of western Israel because in this stage most of the local enemy forces were paralysed."

18. He says that they could have reached the western borders of Israel. What does he mean by that? He means that they could have reached the Jordan River and occupied the whole of Palestine, including that part which was allotted to the Arabs under the partition plan—a plan which was formulated and put into execution before one single Arab soldier entered Palestine. And Commander Alon himself says that, "if it was not for the Arab invasion", the Haganah would have been able to drive forward and occupy the whole of Palestine. In other words, was this not a salvage operation in the real sense?

19. I hope that this will dispose once and for all of the fairy tale of the Arab aggression that the representatives of Israel often repeat in this Organization.

20. The representative of Israel also said that the influx of thousands of hostile Palestine Arabs from the neighbouring countries would create a problem of security for Israel. In order to prove the falsity of this claim, I should like to recall that in 1949, when the Jewish population of Israel was not more than 800,000, the Israel Government proposed to the Palestine Conciliation Commission to admit 350,000 Arabs, provided that the Gaza Strip was also annexed to Israel.

21. I should like to quote from the third progress report of the Palestine Conciliation Commission, issued on 21 June 1949:

"In connexion with the subject of repatriation and resettlement of the refugees, two specific proposals, submitted to the Commission by the delegation of Israel and by the Arab delegations, respectively, deserve mention. The delegation of Israel declared that if the Gaza area were incorporated in the State of Israel, its Government would be prepared to accept as citizens of Israel the entire Arab population of the area, both inhabitants and refugees, on the understanding that resettlement of the refugees in Israel territory would be subject to such international aid as would be available for refugee resettlement in general."^{1/}

22. If, in 1949, with a population of 700,000 or perhaps 800,000 Jews in Israel, the Israelis were prepared to take in 350,000 Arabs, provided that in the process they were given a chunk of territory, namely, the Gaza Strip, can we seriously entertain the excuse that now, in 1963, they are against the admission of the Arab refugees into Palestine because that would be a danger to their security? If there were such a fear for security, it would have been much greater in 1949, when there was a smaller Jewish population and a larger percentage of Arab refugees. But the fact is that what Israel is interested in is more territory and more and more conquest.

23. The Israel representative asked the following question: What then is the Israel-Arab problem facing the United Nations in the world of 1963? The answer is very simple; the answer is: the problem of Palestine; the right to national identity of the Palestinian Arabs; the right of those Palestinian Arabs to continue as a community, as they have done for thousands of years.

24. The Israel representative says: We do not come here to discuss whether or not we should exist. I would comment on that that we must discuss whether or not the people of Palestine are to exist. The Israel representative says they should not exist, they should be dispersed all over the world, in the Arab countries especially, and absorbed as individual refugees. We say that the Palestinian community exists and must continue to exist and that there is no one here who can deny the right of any people to continue its national identity and protect its fundamental rights. Even the partition resolution, unjust as it was, guaranteed these rights for the Arab community of Palestine.

25. The representative of Israel said that it would be useless to continue this sterile debate year after year. But our answer is that this is not a sterile debate; it is a debate of the highest importance because it goes to the very core of the most important prin-

ciples enshrined in the Charter: the principle of self-determination, the principle of justice, the principle of the right of a people to go on existing as one national community. To what question could we attach more importance than the question of the right of a people to exercise self-determination? For the United Nations, in this day and age, to turn its back on a people who have lost their country and been denied time and again their inalienable right of self-determination would be an affront to the principles of the Charter and a mockery of the principles of justice.

26. Mr. RIAD (United Arab Republic): At the end of the last plenary meeting, on Friday, 11 October, in view of the lateness of the hour, my delegation agreed to delay the exercise of its right of reply until today. I shall be very brief in my remarks on the statement of the representative of Israel in which he tried once again to mislead the General Assembly by falsifying the facts.

27. The representative of Israel, in a futile attempt, once again described the Palestinian question as a territorial dispute between the Arab States and Israel, while the fact is, as we have repeatedly explained, that it is a conflict between the people of Palestine and the foreign invaders who occupied Palestine and turned the original inhabitants into a nation of refugees in exile.

28. The representative of Israel spoke about the obligations of the Member States under the Charter and referred to the United Nations way of solving a problem through peaceful means, ignoring again the fact that Israel has never respected the provisions of the United Nations Charter. The armistice agreements concluded between Israel and four Arab countries were not respected by Israel. It was the Israel authorities who declared the Egyptian-Israeli Armistice Agreement invalid. Israel is still refusing to implement the United Nations resolutions concerning the Palestinian question.

29. The Foreign Minister of the United Arab Republic, Mr. Fawzi, in his statement to the General Assembly [1236th meeting], addressed certain simple and straightforward questions which define very clearly the Palestine question. The Foreign Minister asked: Does the Arab nation of Palestine have political and human rights to the restoration of all to which it is entitled? Are these rights largely recognized and confirmed by the United Nations resolutions? Are we all, without any distinction, ready eventually to abide by the choice of the Arabs of Palestine to return to their homes and their homeland, a choice to which their title is recognized by the United Nations resolutions and which would be made freely through a plebiscite organized and supervised by this Organization?

30. The representative of Israel, as you may have noted, failed to answer any of these questions and avoided any comments thereon. If this proves anything, it proves the weakness of the Israel claim. It proves that Israel is defying the United Nations and its resolutions, that Israel is still denying the people of Palestine their inherent rights to their homeland and, moreover, that Israel is still, because of its aggressive policy, refusing the implementation of the United Nations resolutions.

31. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): With these two statements the list of speakers who have

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourth Session Ad Hoc Political Committee, Annex, vol. II, 1949, document A/927, para. 16.

asked to exercise the right of reply is exhausted. I therefore declare the general debate concluded.^{2/}

AGENDA ITEM 83

Measures in connexion with the earthquake at Skoplje, Yugoslavia

32. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): In connexion with this item of the agenda, a number of Member States have submitted a draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1]. The first speaker on my list is the representative of Bulgaria and I now give him the floor.

33. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) (translated from French): The question of measures in connexion with the earthquake at Skoplje has come up for discussion in the Assembly at a time when people everywhere have been shocked by the news of other very recent calamities and disasters. A hurricane of extraordinary force has ravaged the coasts and inland areas of Haiti, Cuba, and Trinidad and Tobago for several days, causing enormous material damage and loss of life the exact extent of which is not yet known but which is estimated at several thousands.

34. In another part of the world a great flood has devastated the Piave River valley in Italy following landslides into the reservoir of the Vaiout Dam. This disaster took over 2,000 lives and completely destroyed villages and hamlets in its path.

35. May I, on behalf of the Bulgarian delegation, convey our heart-felt sympathy to the delegations of the countries concerned as also to the latter's Governments and peoples, and assure them that we are ready to associate ourselves with whatever action is necessary to assist the victims of the disasters.

36. In the light and against the background of this series of natural disasters, the question of measures

^{2/} After conclusion of the general debate, the President of the General Assembly received from the Chairman of the delegation of the Philippines the following communication, dated 15 October 1963, which was distributed as document A/5574:

"I would like to refer to the replies of the representative of the United Kingdom at the 1234th plenary meeting, on 8 October, and of the representative of Malaysia at the 1237th plenary meeting, on 10 October, to my statement at the 1233rd plenary meeting of the General Assembly, on 8 October.

"As I had to leave New York immediately after making my statement on 8 October, it was not until my return last night that I was able to read the verbatim record of the British and Malaysian statements. Since the general debate has already been concluded, I have the honor to request, as a matter of privilege, that the following statement be incorporated in the records of the General Assembly and circulated to all delegations:

"It is not the desire of the Philippine delegation to reopen the debate on the question of Malaysia. All interested parties have expressed their views, and our delegation sincerely believes that the time has come when recrimination should end and pave the way for conciliation.

"The Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines is aware that the debate concerning Malaysia has brought out differences of opinion concerning the terms and principles of the Manila agreements. He recognizes that such differences are inherent in the very nature of the dispute itself.

"So far as the facts and citations used in his statement of 8 October are concerned, however, he wishes to state formally for the record that he rejects any attempt to impugn the veracity of these facts and citations, and that he stands by every word of his statement."

(Signed) Salvador P. LOPEZ
Secretary of Foreign Affairs
Chairman of the Philippine Delegation
to the United Nations"

in connexion with the earthquake at Skoplje assumes particular urgency, especially as it will probably prove necessary in the very near future to take measures to provide relief for the victims of the recent disasters in the Caribbean and in Italy.

37. The disaster at Skoplje is a special case by reason of the fact that a large city, the capital of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, has been almost totally destroyed, that nearly all its inhabitants have been rendered homeless and that normal life has come to a standstill. The first measures taken by the Government of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and the assistance provided by several foreign countries, by international organizations and by the United Nations in order to meet the most pressing needs of the inhabitants of the devastated city have been effective and heartening. Further measures on a larger scale and of a long-term nature have subsequently been proposed by various countries and organizations. The Yugoslav Government, for its part, has drawn up long-term programmes and a five-year plan for the reconstruction of the city of Skoplje.

38. Many of the measures been considered—some of which will extend over several years and some of which are already under way—come within the scope of the five-year plan for the reconstruction of Skoplje and might be integrated in it.

39. Various countries and institutions have committed themselves to a more sustained and more concrete participation in the rebuilding of the city. The specific commitments made to build schools, hospitals, dwellings, etc. could give a lasting and even permanent expression to the participation of those countries and institutions in the task of rebuilding Skoplje. The efforts made might thus turn the new city into a monument of international co-operation and solidarity. Such action could and should be encouraged by the United Nations and the specialized agencies. A striking feature of the Skoplje disaster is the fact that experts from a number of countries—the Soviet Union, the United States of America, France, Denmark, the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, Morocco, my own country and many others—and even military units, found themselves working side by side, and joined in giving assistance to the victims of the disaster and coping with its aftermath. This is a fine example of collaboration and co-operation.

40. The draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] on measures in connexion with the earthquake at Skoplje, which is now sponsored by fifty-six countries including my own, is designed precisely to give a new impetus to this effort of international solidarity which came into being immediately after the disaster and to turn it into a long-term and lasting effort. We are convinced that the active participation of all countries in this work of reconstruction will make Skoplje a veritable symbol of the unity and brotherhood of peoples.

41. Furthermore, the draft resolution fully reflects and gives expression to the spirit of the Charter. We are therefore hopeful that it will be adopted unanimously. This will give a new and powerful impetus to the work of reconstruction undertaken by the Yugoslav people with the assistance of the peoples of the whole world and of all institutions and organizations, and, in the first place, of those belonging to the United Nations family.

42. Mr. PAPAGOS (Greece) (translated from French): One's shock is bound to be greater, and one's sympathy more spontaneous when nature's blind forces strike at a neighbouring and friendly country, as is, in our case, Yugoslavia with which we are linked by ties of close friendship and of sincere co-operation for the maintenance of peace and the development of mutually beneficial relations.

43. The disaster which befell the city of Skoplje has profoundly affected the Greek people. As soon as the news became known, the Greek Government conveyed its sympathy and gave tangible proof of its solidarity. In similar circumstances, Yugoslavia, too, has shown solidarity with my country.

44. Tribute must be paid to the courage of the Yugoslav people and its Government who, with the means at their disposal, and even before the arrival of outside help, took immediate measures to provide relief, were successful, thanks to the effectiveness of the health services, in preventing the outbreak of epidemics and have drawn up a long-term reconstruction plan. Such a courageous attitude is deserving not only of universal admiration but also of generous assistance by the international community to speed up the task of reconstruction and to lessen the sacrifices which the Yugoslav people will have to make to erase all traces of the disaster.

45. My delegation welcomed the Economic and Social Council resolution^{3/} which seeks to co-ordinate within the United Nations framework international assistance for the reconstruction of the city of Skoplje; and we have joined in sponsoring the draft resolution now before the General Assembly [A/L.426 and Add.1]. The relief of human suffering and the manifestation of international solidarity are among the noblest activities of the United Nations. Their importance transcends the immediate requirements: they constitute a solemn affirmation of the principle of universality, of interdependence, and of the fact that mankind shares a common fate.

46. In similar circumstances in Chile and in Iran, our Organization did not fail in its duty, and we are certain that the draft resolution before us will be adopted unanimously. We hope that this appeal will meet with an enthusiastic and generous response on the part of all the Members of the United Nations and of the members of its specialized agencies.

47. Mr. MATSCH (Austria): It was with grief and consternation that we all witnessed the series of tragic events which cruelly struck many areas of the world. A few days ago, we were shocked at the devastation wrought to Haiti, Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago by the recent hurricane. At the end of last week, we learned of the devastation that floods brought to our neighbouring country, Italy. Different in nature as these disasters were—floods, earthquakes, hurricanes—the distress and human suffering which they leave behind are invariably alike: hundreds of persons dead, thousands injured, uncounted numbers homeless, material damage of tragic proportions. To the victims of all these calamities goes our deepest sympathy.

48. Naturally all of us are particularly shocked when such disasters strike a neighbouring country. Such is the present case in my country regarding the tragic event which took place in Italy. Such was the case

when we learned of the consequences of the earthquake which struck Yugoslavia in July of this year. The spontaneous action which was taken immediately by organizations and individuals in Austria to bring relief and assistance to the victims of the disaster of Skoplje was a natural outflow of our friendly relations with this neighbouring country.

49. In the same spirit, the Austrian Government encouraged international assistance at the thirty-sixth session of the Economic and Social Council. Together with many other delegations, we hastened to request inscription of an appropriate item on the agenda of this session of the General Assembly, and we have co-sponsored the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] which is now before the Assembly. We sincerely hope that its adoption by the General Assembly will bring further relief and assistance to the people of Skoplje, and that in their distress it will stand as a symbol of mutual help and international solidarity.

50. Mr. MATSUI (Japan): On behalf of the Japanese delegation, I should like to express our deep sorrow and profound sympathy to the delegation and the people of Yugoslavia at the terrible sufferings caused by the recent earthquake in Skoplje. May I also express our heartfelt sympathy to the delegations and the peoples of Cuba, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago, and to all others whose lands were so cruelly devastated by the hurricane last week in the Caribbean.

51. It is also my sad duty to refer to the dreadful flood which in these last days has taken so many lives, destroyed so much property and caused so much suffering to the people of Italy. To the delegation and the people of Italy we offer our most sincere condolences.

52. The Government and people of my country, which is often affected by earthquakes, were profoundly shocked by the sad news of Skoplje. As a token of our sympathy and of our feeling of international fraternity, our Government and philanthropic institutions, along with those of many other countries, have extended assistance in various forms to the people of Skoplje. In addition to monetary donations, my Government has sent to Skoplje three experts on earthquake-proof building to give advice on the work of future reconstruction. The Japan Red Cross Society, as well as the Japan-Yugoslavia Friendship Association, have expressed their sympathy in the form of monetary contributions, and the latter association is continuing its efforts to raise money and other comforts for the distressed people of Skoplje. The Japanese Press is also voluntarily preparing its own programme of relief.

53. We have noted with great sympathy and admiration the exhaustive efforts of the Government and people of Yugoslavia themselves for the rapid and successful relief and rehabilitation of Skoplje. However, in view of the catastrophic damages suffered by that unhappy city, the situation requires urgent help from the outside in order to supplement Yugoslavia's own serious efforts for rehabilitation and to cope with the emergency created by the disaster.

54. My delegation therefore believes it very appropriate for the United Nations to play a key role in formulating appropriate measures for outside help through the organs concerned within the United Nations family and along the same lines as a number of earlier resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council.

^{3/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 1, resolution 970 (XXXVI).

55. In this connexion, I may add that the International Institute of Seismology and Earthquake Engineering, set up in Tokyo in September 1962, with the support of the United Nations Special Fund, last month opened its second course in the series designed to train scientists and engineers, especially from developing countries in earthquake danger zones, in the prevention of earthquake damage. The Government of Japan will be glad to extend its further co-operation to interested countries through the activities of this Institute in the field of the preventive study of earthquakes.

56. In conclusion, as one of the sponsors of Economic and Social Council resolution 970 (XXXVI) and of the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] before us, my delegation sincerely hopes that the latter will be adopted unanimously by the General Assembly.

57. Mr. RIAD (United Arab Republic): I wish to speak on behalf of my own delegation and the other Arab delegations which, together with a number of other countries, are sponsoring the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] before us.

58. The subject under discussion is, to my mind, concerned with a unique problem, different from other questions which are usually debated here in the General Assembly. It is a problem that human endeavour has thus far been unable to control or to handle in such a way as to limit the degree of suffering, loss and damage resulting from such a natural phenomenon.

59. The earthquake which destroyed the city of Skoplje was of such magnitude that the people of the world rallied together spontaneously to extend all possible assistance to the Government and people of Yugoslavia. Fully aware of its responsibility, the Government of Yugoslavia extended its own assistance in every possible way to alleviate the sufferings of the Skoplje citizens. This spontaneous response on the part of the Government was bolstered by international organizations and private institutions.

60. The Government and people of the United Arab Republic were shocked and grieved because of the damage which was done to the city and we share the sorrow of its citizens. I should like to express to the delegation of Yugoslavia and, through it, to the Government and people of Yugoslavia our sincere regret at this unfortunate catastrophe. It is appropriate to acknowledge with particular gratification the plans of the Government of Yugoslavia for a five-year plan for the reconstruction of Skoplje.

61. I am sure that all of us are aware that the help which has been extended and is at present being given to that city is only a part of the real task, which will be a long-term project. The responsibilities are indeed great because they touch upon practically every facet of life, including full economic and social rehabilitation. That is why the sponsors of the draft resolution appeal to all those concerned to extend to the Government of Yugoslavia all possible assistance and to take part in implementing its plans to rebuild Skoplje as a symbol of human solidarity.

62. We are confident also that the Secretary-General, the heads of the specialized agencies, and all those who are able to extend a hand in this direction will do their utmost to make the five-year plan a reality. Help is needed, and needed urgently. Therefore, we are looking forward to the immediate implementation of the provisions of the draft resolution before the Assembly. My delegation is confident that it will be

adopted unanimously, thus demonstrating once again that this Organization is alive to the immediate needs of the people of a country who were the unfortunate victims of such a catastrophe.

63. In conclusion, on behalf of my delegation, I should like to express our sincere sympathy and regret to the Governments and peoples of Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti and Italy for the loss and damage resulting from similar disasters which have recently overtaken their countries.

64. Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): The delegation of the Soviet Union, together with the delegations of fifty-five other countries, has sponsored the draft resolution on measures in connexion with the earthquake at Skoplje, which we are now considering [A/L.426 and Add.1].

65. As we know, at the end of July this year an earthquake occurred in several parts of Yugoslavia, causing serious damage and great loss of life. Particularly serious damage was suffered by Skoplje, the capital of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia.

66. On this occasion the Soviet delegation would like once again to express the sincere regrets and sympathy of the Soviet Government to our brothers, the people of Yugoslavia, and particularly to the inhabitants of the town of Skoplje on account of the natural disaster which has befallen that town and its inhabitants. At the same time, we would like to commend the constructive and timely measures taken by the Government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in providing effective relief to the inhabitants of the distress areas.

67. Moved by the traditional ties of friendship between the peoples of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the Soviet Government came to the assistance of the unfortunate people of Skoplje, providing the Yugoslav Government with a supply of various needed materials, such as cement, timber, medicine and food. Many countries, as well as the United Nations and its organs, have provided relief to Yugoslavia.

68. As the reconstruction and recovery of the town of Skoplje will require immense efforts and vast material resources, the Soviet Government has signed an agreement whereby the Soviet Union will set up a factory for the construction of prefabricated houses, as a gift to the Yugoslav nation, in order to assist in the recovery of the devastated town of Skoplje. We hope that this will prove a significant contribution to the fulfilment of the five-year plan for the reconstruction of Skoplje that has been drawn up by the Yugoslav Government.

69. It is the duty of the United Nations and its specialized agencies to furnish all possible assistance to the people of Yugoslavia so as to eliminate the consequences of this natural disaster as soon as possible. In our view such assistance could be provided out of the funds of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the United Nations Special Fund, with the active participation of the United Nations specialized agencies. UNESCO, for example, could help Yugoslavia to restore the art treasures and historical monuments in the devastated areas.

70. The Soviet delegation trusts that the measures provided for in the draft resolution will be carried out effectively and promptly. We also hope that the

draft resolution which is now before the General Assembly will be unanimously adopted by that body.

71. Allow me, Mr. President, to take this opportunity to express our deep sympathy and grief over the disasters that have afflicted the countries of Cuba, Italy and Haiti, and to express also the hope that the United Nations, as well as individual nations and countries, will respond to these situations and come to the aid of the distressed peoples.

72. Mr. THOMAS (United Kingdom): Inco-sponsoring the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] before us, I would once again like to express the sympathy of my Government and the British people to the people of Skoplje and Yugoslavia on the terrible losses they have suffered. In the draft resolution we are considering measures to deal with a great natural disaster in Yugoslavia in which the material destruction was severe. But as has been mentioned by previous speakers, while this draft resolution was being prepared, there have been other natural disasters in which the material destruction has been probably as great and the destruction of human life even greater.

73. I should like, therefore, to join previous speakers and extend the deep sympathy of the United Kingdom delegation to those countries which have been the victims of the recent hurricane: Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago and others, as well as to our other close friend and ally, Italy, which has suffered such serious loss of life from the catastrophe in the Piave Valley.

74. I do not want to dwell on the tragic results of the catastrophe at Skoplje, but rather to mention three positive aspects of the world's response to it. First, let me say how impressed we in Britain have been by the courage and determination with which the Government and people of Yugoslavia have set about reconstructing the city. Hardly had the fires been put out and the people trapped by the debris rescued, than the people of Skoplje and from all over Yugoslavia started to remove the debris, clear the roads, recreate the basic amenities and start the process of reconstructing the city. This was certainly a most inspiring example to us all.

75. The second heartening feature is the response which came from all the nations of the world. In a matter of hours, offers of assistance and gifts of food, clothes, medical supplies, housing and other basic necessities came pouring in from every corner of the world. This universal response underlined the principles of unity and co-operation for which this Organization stands.

76. Thirdly, we should recall that a great deal of the assistance came not from Governments but, spontaneously, from individual citizens and non-governmental voluntary organizations. For instance, in the case of my own country, an appeal on television by a voluntary organization called "War on Want" led to gifts of more than \$1 million, which are now being used to provide prefabricated houses, water pipes, an excavator, a bulldozer and other items. In addition, people have been sending contributions, small and great, to the Yugoslav Embassy in London, and to such appeals as that launched by the Mayor of Bradford.

77. These examples are typical of the response of individual citizens in other countries. I should add that my Government has offered the Yugoslav Government a reconstruction loan of about \$1,300,000 and has also provided other assistance such as Nissen huts which will be used as schools in the new suburban

settlement of Skoplje and which are being assembled with the assistance of a team of the Royal Engineers.

78. I am confident that the combined efforts and determination of the people of Yugoslavia, particularly those of Skoplje, and of the United Nations family of organizations and the peoples and Governments of other countries will ensure that a new and greater city will soon emerge from the ruins caused by the earthquake.

79. Mr. COMAY (Israel): My delegation informed the sponsors and the Secretariat that we wish to be included in the list of sponsors of the present draft resolution [A/L. 426 and Add.1], and I would like to confirm here our unreserved and sincere association with its terms. As a friendly neighbour in the Eastern Mediterranean area, the people of Israel were deeply shocked at this calamity. The representative of Bulgaria has mentioned Israel as amongst countries which immediately rushed assistance to Yugoslavia in various forms, and we shall continue to do whatever lies in our modest capacity to assist in rehabilitation plans.

80. We have similarly been moved and saddened by the natural disasters which have occurred in Italy and as a result of the hurricane which smote Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti and Cuba. Our most heartfelt sympathy goes out to all the victims. We have already flown aid to the Caribbean area.

81. Mr. KURAL (Turkey) (translated from French): The disaster which has befallen the Yugoslav people, devastating the city of Skoplje and causing the loss of thousands of lives has shocked us profoundly, and I should like once again to convey our sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims and to the grievously stricken people of a friendly and neighbouring country.

82. My delegation has watched with deep admiration both the efforts made by the Yugoslav Government to deal with the situation and the influx from all parts of the world of assistance to the victims at Skoplje, in which my country was one of the first to participate, lending such aid as it could provide.

83. My delegation was also glad to note the urgency with which the Economic and Social Council, at its thirty-sixth session, adopted a resolution [970 (XXXVI)] inviting Member States as also the United Nations and its various organs to extend the further assistance needed for the relief of the victims of the disaster.

84. Actuated by feelings of solidarity, as also by feelings of friendship and good-neighbourliness, my delegation became a signatory to the letter [A/5552 and Add.1-3] proposing the addition to the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly of an item concerning the measures to be taken to assist the stricken people of Skoplje. In the same spirit my delegation has joined the sponsors of the draft resolution now before the Assembly [A/L.426 and Add.1]. It hopes that this draft resolution may be adopted unanimously and that the action to be taken pursuant to its provisions will bring all possible relief to the victims of the earthquake.

85. I should also like to take this opportunity to express our sympathy to our friend Italy, and also to Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago and Cuba in connexion with the devastation and losses inflicted upon them by a natural disaster, and to convey to them our sorrow and shock at that occurrence.

86. Mr. SEYDOUX (France) (translated from French): The great natural disasters which from time to time

strike, as if at random, different cities and countries throughout the world do not leave only ruins and death in their wake. There is also some compensation—a slender one, I grant you—in that they arouse such sympathy throughout the world that they quicken truly brotherly feelings in the hearts of men and engender or revive precious ties of solidarity among peoples. This was true of the recent earthquakes in Iran, Chile and Morocco and, in the last few days, of the disasters in the Caribbean area which struck, after my fellow-countrymen in Martinique, the people of Haiti, Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago, to whom I wish here to convey my sympathy, as also of last week's dreadful calamity which has plunged our Italian friends into mourning. A further example has been the case of the earthquake at Skoplje with which the General Assembly is specifically concerned today.

87. France's ties of friendship with the Yugoslav people antedate by far the long-awaited birth of united and independent Yugoslavia. They have been further strengthened in the battles in which our armies have fought shoulder to shoulder, especially in this very valley of the Vardar which has just been so cruelly devastated. The reason why the French, year after year, constitute the largest group of foreign visitors to Macedonia, the reason why scores of my fellow-countrymen were at Skoplje on the dreadful night of 26 July 1963, must be sought not only in the fact that they are drawn there by the beauties of the landscape or by the great interest presented by the local monuments, but also in the fact that many of us have relatives buried in the immense military cemeteries there, and it is their pious memory that impels us to undertake the pilgrimage. The ordeal that has befallen the Macedonian capital and, through it, Yugoslavia as a whole has therefore been felt in France with particular sadness and heart-felt sympathy, and I have come to this rostrum to convey a friendly and sincere expression of those feelings to that gallant country's representatives.

88. This is not the place for describing in detail either the steps taken by my Government with the help of a spontaneous movement of public generosity to provide all possible assistance to the Yugoslav authorities, of the further measures it plans to take in order to help them in their very long and very arduous task of rebuilding the ruins and restoring normal living conditions at Skoplje, without however slowing the pace of their great national effort of economic development.

89. It is meet and proper, however, to pay tribute here to the energy and effectiveness with which our Yugoslav friends immediately began to help themselves. We may also state that the international community as a whole—and, in the first place, the competent organs of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies—are in duty bound to make a contribution commensurate with Yugoslavia's own immense efforts and which will also be an expression of the sympathy aroused both by its ordeal and by its traditional courage in dealing with it.

90. May I add that the Belgian, Luxembourg and Netherlands delegations have asked me to say that they associate themselves with the feelings which I have just expressed.

91. Mr. YOST (United States of America): My Government considers it an honour to be numbered among the sponsors of this draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] which expresses the united feeling of sympathy

of this Assembly towards the people of Skoplje and the Government of Yugoslavia. The large number of these sponsors indeed testifies to the widespread feeling of sympathy among the States Members of the United Nations for a fellow Member and its people in the face of the great disaster which struck them last July. The list of sponsors has cut across lines of political, economic and sociological differences to combine together widely diverse nations in a common group supporting a fellow Member in distress.

92. We know that the Secretary-General and the heads of the appropriate United Nations bodies will respond both quickly and generously to operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution which calls on them to help in meeting the immediate and long-term needs of the Yugoslav Government arising from the earthquake.

93. As soon as the news of this tragic event was received, on 26 July, President Kennedy sent the following message to President Tito:

"I have learned with sorrow and concern of the earthquake disaster in the city of Skoplje and the tragic loss of life that has occurred. The sympathies of the American people go out to those who have suffered this catastrophe. The American Government and people stand ready to help. I have accordingly instructed our Ambassador to establish close communication with the Yugoslav authorities in order that every appropriate means of assistance from this country may be utilized to alleviate the suffering and hardship in Skoplje. I have also asked the Secretary of Defense to notify our military authorities in Europe to offer whatever assistance is possible and practicable."

Immediately thereafter, United States Government units furnished aid and assistance to the victims of the disaster.

94. A major contribution was the prompt dispatch of a fully equipped military field hospital. Simultaneously, United States private voluntary organizations, including CARE and the Lutheran World Relief and Church World Service in Yugoslavia, Greece and Italy immediately diverted to the Skoplje area foodstuffs normally used in other programmes supported by the United States Food for Peace Programme. At the same time, private relief and charitable organizations of the United States also responded generously and promptly with assistance. In addition to this aid, United States business firms provided air transportation, medical supplies and other gifts in kind, and both business and private United States citizens contributed several tens of thousand of dollars for the relief of the earthquake victims.

95. Finally, we are at present actively co-operating with the Yugoslav Government in the task of rebuilding and renewing the city of Skoplje. The United States was but one of the many nations that responded to the needs of the people of Skoplje. In the spirit of this draft resolution, we give our whole-hearted support to the continuing assistance the United Nations and its subsidiary organs can make to the victims of this truly national disaster.

96. May I also express our profound sympathy, as so many other speakers have done, for those stricken peoples who have suffered such heavy loss in the recent disasters in the Caribbean and in Italy.

97. Mrs. ROSSEL (Sweden): Sweden, together with Denmark, Finland and Norway, is among the sponsors

of the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] now before the Assembly. The wide range of delegations joining in actively supporting this draft resolution testifies both to the uncontroversial nature of the matter and to the great importance that Member nations give to international action in alleviating the plight of the victims of the Skoplje disaster.

98. We are, of course, aware of the rapid and energetic action taken to provide relief, primarily by the Yugoslav Government itself, but also by different foreign Governments, by international organizations such as the International Red Cross, by voluntary associations and, not least, by private individuals. The disastrous consequences of the earthquake that erupted in Skoplje will, however, necessitate long, laborious and expensive reconstruction work. It is to this fact that the sponsors have wanted to draw the attention of the Assembly. We see in this initiative a way to keep alive constructive interest in the needs of the Skoplje population, in the hope that still further assistance might then be offered to Yugoslavia in its efforts to repair the damage.

99. We have also wanted, as is stated in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, that the assisting authorities in the United Nations should not, in the co-ordination of their efforts, be unmindful of the needs of the Yugoslav Government. Speaking also for the other Nordic countries, I believe and hope that the Assembly will give its unanimous support to the draft resolution.

100. It was also with grief and concern that we learnt about the hurricane which struck Cuba, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago and also about the flooding of a wide area in Italy. The deaths that resulted from these catastrophes are indeed lamentable. The human suffering and the material damage which these disasters have caused call for immediate action of a wide range and scope. Our deepest sympathy goes to the peoples and Governments of these countries. If, in these cases, similar proposals of aid are presented to us here, my Government will certainly add its voice in support of them.

101. Mr. ZOPPI (Italy): When, last July, the earthquake occurred at Skoplje, the Italian Government expressed its deep sympathy to the Government and people of Yugoslavia. At the same time, the Italian Government shared in the first relief contributions in various forms. In now recommending the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] which, with several other delegations, we have submitted, my delegation feels that it is joining in an endeavour of international co-operation, in accordance with the ideals of human solidarity, to alleviate suffering and to redress disasters caused by nature and, above all, to show brotherhood from all the people of the world to those who are more in need. We are doing so most earnestly and willingly, not only because a friendly and neighbouring people are involved, as is the case of Yugoslavia, but also in the knowledge that international co-operation must be evinced by deeds and through solidarity. We are confident that the General Assembly fully shares our feelings in this respect and will give unanimous support to these proposals.

102. We all know that nature, with its strength and, indeed, at times mysterious forces, can cause calamities of untold magnitude to people everywhere. We need only to recall the havoc and destruction recently wrought by the hurricane in the Caribbean, which

claimed a heavy toll of human lives, suffering and damage in Haiti, Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago. To those delegations, I should like to convey the deep sympathy of my Government and of the Italian people.

103. Equally, I take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation for the kind words which have been spoken in this very hall, as well as in several committees of the General Assembly, regarding the disaster which occurred in Northern Italy when a landslide of unprecedented proportions, about 42,000 million cubic feet of rocks, caused the waters of the Vaiont reservoir to spill over one of the tallest and most ingenious dams engineered by the skill of man. Although the dam was able to resist this tremendous onslaught of the waters, disaster occurred, causing very many casualties. I wish warmly and deeply to thank the delegations who have spoken with sympathy of our tragic loss in human life.

104. Mr. HAY (Australia): In assuring our Yugoslav colleague of the support of my delegation for the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] that is now under consideration, may I extend, on behalf of our delegation, our very deep sympathy to him and to his people, especially the people of Skoplje, in the disaster that overtook them. I add our sympathy to that which has already been expressed on behalf of the Australian Government and people by our Minister for External Affairs. The disaster was brought home to us in Australia the more because of the number of people of Yugoslav origin and their families who have made their homes in Australia.

105. As a practical expression of the sympathy felt by all Australians for the friends and relatives of those who suffered in this disaster, the Australian Government, on 29 July last, gave £10,000 through the Red Cross for the relief of the victims in Skoplje. In addition to that, very substantial private donations were made, some through the Red Cross and some directly.

106. May I, in conclusion, extend the deepest sympathy of my delegation to the victims of the more recent natural disasters in the Caribbean and in Italy.

107. Mr. BOSSAY (Chile) (translated from Spanish): The Latin American countries wish me to say, on their behalf, that they share the grief of the Yugoslav people at this tragedy but that they also share the pride which the Yugoslav people must feel over the work of reconstruction that has been undertaken.

108. The Chilean delegation is one of the sponsors of the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1]. Most of the measures so far adopted have been in the nature of first aid, but we must go much further. This was how the Yugoslav Government regarded the matter when it undertook the immediate and long-term measures which the reconstruction of the city requires and this was the understanding of the Yugoslav people in making special efforts to carry out this task. Nevertheless, we should all regard it as an elementary duty of human solidarity not to abandon those who are struggling to overcome adversity but to contribute to the utmost to the common effort in order that the aid and sympathy given in those first moments may assume a more permanent character. We feel that some of the relief measures will be more effective if the United Nations participates in some way in providing the necessary assistance and gives Skoplje's reconstruction needs sympathetic and priority consideration.

109. My delegation and those of the other Latin American nations consider that the adoption of the draft resolution we are sponsoring should have a much wider beneficial effect. In fact, nothing links humanity more than a commonly shared tragedy and a commonly felt sorrow. The flow of our aid to the devastated city will create a moral bond between all the participants and will show once again that the United Nations is sensitive to human sorrow and suffering.

110. In view of the tragedy which has befallen Cuba, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, Chile wanted to submit a draft resolution in which the United Nations would also express sympathy over the human tragedy and the great economic disaster which the recent hurricane has caused to these nations.

111. My country knows what these tragedies are. When Chile was devastated by an earthquake, the United Nations hastened to our assistance—and I should like once again to express our gratitude for that—and friendly hands reached out to us from all over the world bringing a message of sympathy, alleviating the immediate distress and assisting us in the reconstruction that must follow such a calamity. Yugoslavia was one of those to offer a friendly hand. There are many Yugoslavs living in my country; some of them take an active part in the public life and professional activities of the country. We know their spirit and we therefore know that the Yugoslav people more than deserve the assistance offered them.

112. I ask for unanimous approval of this draft resolution because I am convinced that the Members of the United Nations will understand that we are all called upon to fulfil this most elementary requirement of human solidarity.

113. Mr. HAKIM (Lebanon): On behalf of the delegation of Lebanon, I wish to associate myself with the representative of the United Arab Republic and with other representatives in expressing our feelings of deep sympathy with the Government and people of Yugoslavia on the occasion of the terrible catastrophe caused by the earthquake which destroyed the city of Skoplje. The Government of Lebanon has already extended assistance to the extent of its ability for the relief of the victims of the earthquake. Lebanon will now support any further assistance through the United Nations, as well as directly, which may be required in connexion with the execution of the five-year plan for the reconstruction of Skoplje. Lebanon is all the more sensitive to this kind of disaster, as it suffered some seven years ago the tragic consequences of an earthquake which caused hundreds of deaths and destroyed scores of villages in southern Lebanon. Just as other countries gave aid to our country then, we feel it an obligation to come to the assistance of other peoples who suffer similar disasters.

114. We likewise feel deep sympathy for the peoples of Haiti, Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago and Italy who recently suffered great losses from the natural disasters which befell them. We are ready to support any action by which the General Assembly may wish to extend assistance to these countries.

115. Of the many natural disasters, earthquakes have been the most destructive. Many countries have been struck in the past by terrible earthquakes, among them Chile, Greece, Turkey, Iran and Morocco. The people of Lebanon felt a sense of solidarity and sympathy with all these countries.

116. Human solidarity knows no boundaries, and when nature strikes any country and causes suffering to any people, all other peoples feel a sense of brotherhood and of common loss. Man is a brother to other men, bound to them by a common humanity. Even more than the sense of justice, the sense of brotherhood compels us to come to the aid of our brothers in Yugoslavia who have suffered the tragic consequences of the earthquake at Skoplje. The Yugoslav people are bravely labouring for the reconstruction of the city of Skoplje. We support them in their efforts and we will vote for the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] before the General Assembly, which we hope will be adopted unanimously.

117. Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India): As the explanatory memorandum [A/5552] indicates, more than one thousand people died as a result of the earthquake in Skoplje in July 1963; more than two thousand people were severely injured; 80 per cent of the buildings in the city, including 34,000 apartments, were completely destroyed, and practically the entire population of this city of 200,000 was left homeless.

118. At the time that the earthquake took place, the Economic and Social Council was holding its thirty-sixth session in Geneva. In the Council, my delegation had the privilege of requesting the inscription of an additional item, "Measures to be adopted in connexion with the earthquake at Skoplje, Yugoslavia".

119. On 31 July 1963, a resolution sponsored by Argentina, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, India, Italy, Jordan and Senegal was adopted. It is therefore fitting and proper that the General Assembly should endorse the recommendations contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 970 (XXXVI) of 31 July 1963.

120. The Government of Yugoslavia has naturally undertaken the task of rehabilitation and reconstruction with its own resources. However, it is the duty of the international community to render whatever assistance possible. Many countries have gone to the aid of the people of Skoplje. The Government and people of India also made their humble contributions by sending relief supplies.

121. We hope that the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] of which India is a sponsor, will be adopted unanimously to show our complete solidarity with the people of Yugoslavia in their hour of tragedy and need.

122. Before concluding, may I express our deep sorrow and sympathy for the suffering caused recently by natural disasters to the peoples of Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, Haiti and Italy.

123. Mr. BARNES (Liberia): When the sad and distressing news was received in Liberia of the great affliction and tragedy that had befallen Yugoslavia by the severe earthquake which destroyed the city of Skoplje, resulting in great loss of life and in destruction and damage of property on a very large scale, the President of Liberia, Mr. Tubman, immediately expressed the deep regret of the Government and people of my country in the following message to President Tito:

"The people of Liberia, Mrs. Tubman and I, are greatly distressed by the tragic and devastating disaster that has befallen your Excellency's nation as a result of the violent earthquake that shook the Macedonian area.

"We associate ourselves with you, Mrs. Tito and the people of Yugoslavia in these hours of heart-rending distress and regret with tender emotions and tremendous loss of lives and property which has cast a great pall over your nation, and the loss of the lives of so many of your fellow citizens and property.

"The Government of Liberia donates \$15,000 to your relief fund, and Mrs. Tubman and I, \$5,000 making a total of \$20,000.

"Again, I assure Your Excellency of our profound regrets and association with you in your distress."

124. The large number of delegations who have sponsored the draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] now before the Assembly is symptomatic of the sympathy and interest felt by the international community in this unfortunate matter. My delegation is a co-sponsor of this draft resolution, which I trust will receive the unanimous support of the Assembly, thus fully associating ourselves with the grief of the courageous people of Yugoslavia and the Herculean task undertaken by them to reconstruct the city of Skoplje.

125. I now avail myself of this opportunity to record, on behalf of my delegation, our profound sympathy and regret to the Government and people of Italy, Haiti, Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago for the great loss of lives and property caused by the catastrophe which befell their countries. We fully associate ourselves with their grief and sufferings and I hope that the international community will not be failing in its clear duty to render the necessary assistance to these Members of our Organization.

126. Mr. QUIROGA GALDO (Bolivia) (translated from Spanish): Voltaire wrote unforgettable words about the Lisbon earthquake, which shook the Europe of the eighteenth century. The means of communication were so slow at the time, however, that the impact of the terrible event was blunted, and news of it reached the peoples of other continents merely as a faint echo.

127. Today, however, the improved means of communication enable us to see the tragedy of the Yugoslav earthquake in its true dimensions, and this is why all the countries of the world have hastened to help the friendly people of Yugoslavia. The spirit of solidarity which characterizes the international community of today must show itself once again in effective co-operation, through the competent bodies of the United Nations, to stanch the wounds of the Yugoslav people in fulfilment of our unavoidable duty.

128. My country, which recently had the honour of a visit from Marshal Tito, the distinguished President of Yugoslavia, expresses, through me, its wholehearted endorsement of the statement by the Latin American group in support of any measures that may be adopted by the General Assembly. My delegation will therefore be happy to vote in favour of the relevant draft resolution.

129. The Bolivian delegation also wishes to express its profound grief at the disasters recently suffered by the beloved people of Cuba, by Italy and by other brother countries of the Caribbean. We strongly urge that the United Nations should extend to those nations the assistance and co-operation which we are today requesting for Yugoslavia.

130. Mrs. GROZA (Romania) (translated from French): As my delegation has already had the opportunity of saying at this session of the General Assem-

bly in the General Committee [155th meeting], and as I should like again to state from this rostrum, the Romanian people sympathize with the people of Skoplje in their suffering caused by last summer's dreadful earthquake.

131. In a cable addressed to the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on that sad occasion, Mr. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Chairman of the State Council of the Romanian People's Republic, conveyed the Romanian people's profound and sincere condolences to the people of Yugoslavia and to the families of those who lost their lives in this dreadful disaster.

132. Showing its heart-felt sympathy for the Yugoslav people thus so cruelly stricken, the Romanian Government added its efforts to those of the Yugoslav State and of the Governments of other countries in coming to the assistance of the victims and in rebuilding the city of Skoplje.

133. Assistance to the victims of the disaster is a fundamentally humanitarian act to which the international community cannot fail to subscribe fully. The draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] submitted to the General Assembly by fifty-six countries including the Romanian People's Republic expresses this international solidarity in the face of a tragic situation. We consider it encouraging therefore that, in addition to the specific steps normally taken in such circumstances, the United Nations should also concern itself with seeking the ways and means of international co-operation for the study of the origins and mechanics of earthquakes in order to see how the impact of such disasters can be reduced.

134. On behalf of the Romanian delegation, I should like to express our belief that the draft resolution before the Assembly will be adopted unanimously.

135. The disasters which, in recent days, have wrought havoc in parts of Cuba, the Republic of Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago and Italy, and in which thousands of persons lost their lives, thousands of others were left homeless and many localities have been destroyed or severely damaged have aroused the heartfelt sympathy of the Romanian people.

136. May I, speaking on behalf of the Romanian delegation, express our profound and sincere sympathy to the delegations of Cuba, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago and Italy.

137. Mr. OKILO (Nigeria): On behalf of my delegation, I wish to express deep sympathy to the Government and people of Yugoslavia in connexion with the disaster which occurred at Skoplje and which resulted in extensive destruction of property and loss of life.

138. It is heartening indeed to note the spontaneous offers of assistance which various countries have extended to the victims of the earthquake at Skoplje. The response augurs well for international co-operation. But I hope that it will not take disasters such as this to make us all more conscious of our interdependence and of the bonds of friendship and brotherhood which bind us all together.

139. I hope that the relevant agencies of the United Nations and every country that is in a position to do so will continue to give assistance generously. The work of reconstruction at Skoplje is enormous, and no assistance should be considered too great.

140. My delegation is co-sponsoring this draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1], and my Government is willing to give every possible assistance to the inhabitants of Skoplje. I hope that the draft resolution will receive the unanimous support of this Assembly.

141. May I also express the heartfelt sympathy of my delegation to the peoples of Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti and Italy in connexion with the disasters that have recently struck their countries.

142. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): On behalf of the Government and people of Cyprus, I wish to express the deep concern and sorrow felt throughout our island regarding the great disaster that befell the city of Skoplje and its brave people, as well as the Yugoslav nation as a whole, for which my country has particular feelings of friendship and admiration because of their love of freedom and their spirit of independence. My delegation wishes to convey to the Yugoslav Government and people its profound and sincere sympathy.

143. We shall support all measures for assistance and shall whole-heartedly participate in them. The spirit of solidarity that so spontaneously and promptly has been forthcoming from all parts of the world is one more evidence of the growing realization of the common destiny of all people and of re-emphasis on the emerging spirit of human brotherhood. It has been said, I believe this morning, that nothing unites humanity more than tragedy. The spirit of unity, however, should prevail not only in facing an existing tragedy but also a threatened tragedy. We hope that this spirit of the common destiny of man will guide humanity in facing the common enemy of war and nuclear weapons in a comparable spirit of solidarity and co-operation.

144. We wish also to express our deep sympathy to the peoples of Italy, Cuba, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago, who have suffered great losses from natural disasters in the same way.

145. We are ready to support any action which this Assembly may deem it necessary to take, and to participate in the measures adopted.

146. Mr. ALVAREZ (El Salvador) (translated from Spanish): In the General Committee I warmly supported the inclusion of item 83 in the agenda of this session, and now, as chairman of the Latin American group and on my own behalf, I wish to give warm and sympathetic support to the draft resolution for the assistance of the noble Yugoslav people and to say that we are also prepared to endorse any resolution designed to grant assistance to Cuba, Haiti and Italy.

147. Mr. GEBRE-EGZY (Ethiopia): On behalf of the delegations of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, Sudan, Togo and Tunisia, as well as my own, I wish to express to the delegation and people of Yugoslavia our deep sympathy and condolences for the tragedy which took place in Skoplje. The United Nations has given assistance in similar tragedies to many Member countries. The assistance given by the United Nations is really supplementary, but it has always been given spontaneously as a humanitarian necessity and a demonstration of the solidarity of the human race. The draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1] which we and many others have the honour to sponsor keeps up that tradition and requires that assistance be extended to the Government of Yugoslavia. It is quite clear that the Government of Yugoslavia itself has exerted great efforts to meet the challenge of the tragedy, and what

the United Nations is called upon to do by this draft resolution is really supplementary.

148. We hope that the draft resolution will be adopted unanimously, as indeed similar resolutions have been adopted by this Assembly in the past, and we hope that every delegation will vote for it.

149. Finally, I wish to extend the sympathy and condolences of my delegation and Government to the peoples of Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti and Italy.

150. I hope, once more, that this draft resolution will receive the unanimous vote of all delegations.

151. Mr. AUGUSTE (Haiti) (translated from French): I should like to tell the representatives who have spoken in succession from this rostrum how much I have been touched by their gesture which is more than a mere expression of sympathy. It is in fact a manifestation of the solidarity of men, a solidarity which adds so much to the stature of those who are guided by it in their social policies whenever occurrences such as those that have inflicted so much suffering on my country take place.

152. On behalf of the Haitian people, of my Government, and in my personal capacity, I should like to let them know how grateful we are.

153. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I call on the General Assembly to vote on the fifty-six-Power draft resolution [A/L.426 and Add.1]. In the absence of any objection or any comments, I understand that the General Assembly unanimously approves the draft resolution.

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

154. Mr. POPOVIC (Yugoslavia): The Yugoslav delegation takes this opportunity to express its feelings of profound gratitude and appreciation to the delegations who were the initiators in placing on the agenda of this session the question of the measures to be taken with regard to the catastrophic earthquake which recently destroyed the city of Skoplje. My delegation also expresses its gratitude to the sponsors of the resolution, to all the distinguished representatives, for their friendly expression of solidarity, and to the whole Assembly for its unanimous adoption of the resolution.

155. We value this action as a new proof of friendship and as a striking manifestation of international solidarity and sympathy with the peoples of Yugoslavia on the part of the world community, which was so powerfully expressed at the time of the Skoplje catastrophe and has continued ever since. The adoption of this resolution will instil in the stricken population of Skoplje, in its efforts to rebuild its city, fresh hopes that it will, together with the unlimited support of all the Yugoslav peoples, also enjoy the support and sympathy of the whole family of nations.

156. As the previous speakers have pointed out, the aftermath of the Skoplje disaster is tragic and sombre. The Yugoslav Government at once undertook the most urgent measures to alleviate the immediate consequences of the earthquake, including temporary accommodation for the stricken population, food, health protection and all vital services, as well as long-term measures with a view to the reconstruction of the city.

157. All the peoples of Yugoslavia gave moving examples of exceptional efforts, self-sacrifice and readiness to extend whole-hearted assistance to the population of the Macedonian capital. In the Skoplje tragedy were also expressed the strong ties and the solidarity

linking the peoples of the world in their efforts to cope with natural catastrophes which can bring so much suffering upon nations. The speedy, varied and invaluable aid from all parts of the world, from all the continents, from governments, organizations and individuals began arriving on the very day of the tragedy. Solidarity in human misfortune and the horror of destruction obliterate the frontiers between States and the barriers of ideological and political differences. In addition to contributions in the form of medicaments, food and other goods, the representatives and members of groups of workers and experts, as well as specialized military units from various countries, met in Skoplje while they were engaged in the task of relief. Skoplje thus became a place where nations were able to display their mutual solidarity and their common solidarity towards Yugoslavia.

158. The measures taken so far have made it possible for life to return gradually, although under the most arduous conditions, to this ravaged city. Skoplje has become Yugoslavia's largest construction site, where the efforts and thoughts of the entire country are concentrated. But the nature and scope of the damage are so great that the establishment of the most elementary prerequisites for a normal existence of the people

and for the revival of social, political, educational, cultural, scientific and other activities in the city will require truly enormous efforts over many years on the part of the whole country. We do not doubt that, in these great efforts, the Yugoslav peoples will meet with the understanding and support of the world community, just as they have done so far.

159. Before concluding, it is my sad duty to convey, on behalf of the Yugoslav delegation and in my own name, our deepest sympathy to the delegations and peoples of Cuba, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago at the calamities which have befallen these countries and in which several thousand persons have met their deaths. I wish also to extend expressions of deepest sympathy to the delegation and people of Italy, our neighbour, at the Piave River valley disaster.

160. Allow me to say once again from this rostrum how profoundly grateful are the Yugoslav Government and the peoples of my country to all the Governments, and peoples, to the United Nations and its specialized agencies, to all humanitarian organizations and to the individuals—to all those who joined in helping us at a time of great distress.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.