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AGENDA ITEM 9

Opening of the general debate

1. Mr. MAGALHÃES PINTO (Brazil):¹ Madam President, first of all I should like to extend to you my heartiest congratulations for the unanimity of choice which singled you out to preside over the proceedings of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

2. That inspired choice was made in recognition of your great personal and professional qualifications, as well as in testimony of appreciation and admiration for your country, placed, since its founding, under the aegis of liberty. Your election as President is, moreover, a tribute to the African nations which so often in this forum have joined the Latin American delegations in defence of the principles of the United Nations Charter, in affirmation of the freedom of man, and in furtherance of the great causes of economic development and social progress. Let us express our earnest hope that this General Assembly, under your guidance, will represent a step ahead towards freedom, justice and the sovereign equality of all nations.

3. After extending our good wishes to you, my delegation cannot fail to render tribute to the memory of Emilio Arenales, who presided over the work of the General Assembly at its twenty-third session with unquestioned political and diplomatic leadership, under circumstances which exacted from him the greatest personal sacrifice. To the delegation of the sister Republic of Guatemala we are moved to express our deep sorrow at his early demise, which has deprived Latin America of a most effective spokesman and of one of our greatest statesmen.

4. At the same time, allow me to recall a colleague who for twenty-three years placed his wisdom at the service of this Organization, in the cause of law. The delegation of Brazil mourns his loss; and here today, among friends to

whom he was so deeply attached, the outstanding personality of Gilberto Amado is very vivid in my mind.

5. I should also like to acknowledge with deep appreciation the honour shown my country in the election of a member of my delegation to the chairmanship of one of the Main Committees of the General Assembly.

6. When each year, on the third Tuesday of September, we gather here in order to resume our great dialogue, it is the custom, and a most opportune one, to look around us in order to ascertain whether we are moving towards peace or towards war. In doing so, on this occasion, we are forced to conclude that we are not living in a time of peace, for we still see the use of force in the settlement of controversies. Instead of building a world of solid peace and lasting security, we have to content ourselves with cease-fire agreements, truces and armistices.

7. We are going through what is a clear and avowed cycle of power politics, which expresses itself not only in military force, but also through a whole range of pressures—political, economic, financial, commercial and technological. This regrettable trend towards the unilateral resort to force has severely put to test the principles contained in Article 2 of the United Nations Charter, which has been covertly or overtly disrespected.

8. Notwithstanding progress in certain areas and a combined effort to reach understanding, which, for lack of a better name, we might call "agreements for survival", the confrontation between the two super-Powers had not yet given way to the desired phase of negotiation. The arms race continues unimpeded, unchecked and more foreboding than ever. The vertical proliferation of nuclear armaments tends to become more complex because of the development of more and more sophisticated weapons. The destructive power of these weapons now encompasses the whole environment which sustains human life, and may even lead to the elimination of all animal and vegetable life on our planet.

9. Meanwhile the term "disarmament" is gradually being superseded in the lexicon of the great Powers by the concept of "arms control". It is worthy of note that in Geneva the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament seems to have virtually abandoned its attempts to negotiate a treaty for general and complete disarmament, the final objective assigned to it eight years ago by the General Assembly and by the very terms of the Zorin-Stevenson Agreement.² It might be said that the matter has been shelved as a utopian and unattainable objective. The shift in

¹ Mr. Magalhães Pinto spoke in Portuguese. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.

² Joint statement of agreed principles of disarmament negotiations (see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 19, document A/4879).

emphasis from the concept of "disarmament" to that of "limitation of armaments" means a step backwards politically far beyond the range and scope of a mere variation in semantics.

10. Also in regard to disarmament, there is another element we cannot ignore. I refer to the question of chemical and bacteriological weapons. One needs only to peruse the conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General.³ It constitutes an impressive and sobering document, depicting a strange and irrational world, which goes so far as to admit that the mobilization of germs, bacteria and viruses can be instrumental in handling frictions and dissensions among human beings.

11. It might not be inappropriate to recall in this connexion that, while a terrifying arsenal of weapons is continually being increased and refined, some scientists, encouraged by Governments and international agencies, insist upon trying to dramatize the dangers of the population explosion, drawing alarming generalizations, without regard for the specific situation of each country or region. It is my opinion that there is much more cause for alarm in a graver, more ominous problem—that of the possibility of the disappearance of man from the face of the earth. Brazil is determined to resist any pressure directed against its demographic growth. As far as we are concerned, life is entitled to take precedence over death.

12. Sometimes one cannot avoid the feeling that the United Nations, which will shortly celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary, is being put aside, as though its purposes and principles were cumbersome and its machinery and procedures inadequate.

13. There is a loss of confidence in the organized action of the international community and an abusive and unwarranted return to unilateral action, to intervention, open or disguised. Even more serious, there have been attempts to justify some interventions by the invocation of concepts which are diametrically opposed to those which inspired the United Nations. There is no way to dismiss what happened in Czechoslovakia last year. In truth, if there were many who deplored and denounced the invasion and occupation of that country, there were few—and these not necessarily the most powerful—who impugned the barbarous and uncouth doctrine of limited sovereignty on which the act of aggression was based. It is as if an attempt were being made to return to the situation which existed prior to the founding of this Organization, in conditions still less favourable to peace and security, since there is a rejection of the traditional principles of international law, arising from the sovereignty and equality of States.

14. Our agenda is comprehensive and covers a large number of questions, but in vain would we seek to discover in it any reference to some of the more serious problems which weigh heavily upon us. There even seems to prevail a curious tacit understanding to the effect that a debate in the United Nations on a given matter could poison the atmosphere to such a point that the question would thus become insoluble. It is difficult for us to accept this

concept, lest we condemn the United Nations to silence, inaction and impotence.

15. The same distrust concerning an open and frank debate seems to motivate the tendency, which my delegation deplores, to deal with certain questions in narrow and ever-dwindling circles. Quite often, without any plausible reason being adduced, a transfer of forum has been favoured from a General Assembly of one hundred and twenty-six Members to a Security Council of only fifteen, on the argument that it would be unrealistic to try to reach or even undertake a solution of a matter in a body so broad in scope and so numerous in membership. Once on the Council level, the idea is advanced that it might perhaps be more practical and more convenient to avoid discussion by a body consisting of fifteen members, which at this juncture likewise appears to be cumbersome. So we fall back on the five permanent members; and, in a very short lapse of time, the five are reduced to four. Then the idea prevails that, in the final analysis, after duly weighing and measuring the realities of power, it might be more advisable, more realistic, to set the matter aside in order to leave it to the discretion of the super-Powers, as if a new world directorate had already been established. This is exactly what has happened in the case of the Middle East, and of other world problems as well, such as disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Such a final stage of negotiation actually has little or nothing to do with the United Nations. It seems to be inspired, in fact, by notions of spheres of influence and of balance of power which, in themselves, are the very rejection of the principles and purposes of our Charter.

16. Formerly, the argument went that the United Nations, while in a position to play a part in solving conflicts between small nations, could not interfere effectively in conflicts involving any of the major Powers. Now the theory seems to have been polished up so as to extend it to conflicts between small countries as well since, it would seem, such conflicts always involve the interests of the major Powers. Actually, it is an extremely dangerous delusion to attempt to draw a sharp dividing line between "big conflicts" and "small conflicts". In a world continually drawn between the opposing forces of policentrism and bipolarization, the so-called small conflicts tend to insert themselves into the context of larger and more complex ones affecting the whole international community. The Brazilian delegation called the attention of the Security Council to this point when we emphasized some time ago in that forum that the problem of the Middle East, difficult enough to settle on its own terms, could become downright impossible to solve if allowed to move in the direction it is even now taking, of becoming one more chapter in the long history of confrontations between the great Powers.

17. If we cease to apply the Charter and if we no longer avail ourselves of the Organization to deal with the larger world problems, with the questions of peace and war, disarmament and collective security, we shall end up with either a useless Charter or a pointless Organization, or both, incapable of settling any conflicts whatsoever. Furthermore, if we abandon the principles of the United Nations and procedures through which it acts, both of which are the very *raison d'être* of this Organization, then we shall end by drawing the logical conclusion that dialogue even between

³ *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24).

two parties, is futile and that international negotiation has become purposeless.

18. Here we feel bound to stress a point: no one can have any reasonable or valid objection to the super-Powers continuing their attempts to bring about a harmonization of their interests and responsibilities. The hopes for peace in the world rest on the assumption of a *détente* in the antagonism and rivalry between the two super-Powers.

19. Many times, in different forums, Brazil had insisted upon the need for a permanent understanding between the United States and the USSR in order to lay the groundwork for nuclear disarmament, or at least for a diplomatic process that would lessen the risks involved in the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. And, more than once in the debates held in the Security Council on the question of the Middle East, Brazil had the opportunity of stressing and emphasizing the special responsibilities of the major Powers, to which we have addressed an appeal—which has so far been ignored and unheeded—for a reduction or balance in the supply of armaments and war material to the parties in the dispute. In all these matters, agreement between the super-Powers is of the essence.

20. But such an agreement can contribute to a true and lasting peace and to the progress of mankind only if fully consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, which means that due attention should be paid to the legitimate rights and aspirations of the non-nuclear, non-developed countries. Unfortunately, we could allude to some questions in respect of which this has not occurred.

21. We could mention, for instance, the bilateral talks which led to the conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII)]. We could mention the fact that at the twenty-third session of the General Assembly the nuclear Powers opposed the establishment of an *ad hoc* committee to co-ordinate the implementation of the results and conclusions of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, held in Geneva from 29 August to 28 September 1968. We could also mention the fact that the super-Powers could not set a deadline for the resumption of the talks in the United Nations Disarmament Commission in order to consider, *inter alia*, the question of co-operation of States in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, two inseparable aspects of the same fundamental problem. In this case, however, since the arguments then put forth have lost much of their validity and cogency, we are hopeful that the question may now receive adequate and constructive consideration.

22. Before leaving the question of disarmament, I wish to point out that this might be the appropriate opportunity to refer to the decision taken by the two co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to enlarge its membership. We do not wish to question the legality of the decision, nor have we any objection to the choice of the new members. On the contrary, we are gratified by the admission of the eight new members, including another Latin-American country, Argentina, which I am sure will be a valuable addition to the Committee. We do hold, however, that the procedure

followed by the co-Chairmen was politically ill-advised, since the normal method would have been to bring the matter to the attention of the General Assembly as it was the Assembly which endorsed the Zorin-Stevenson Agreement and which, since 1961, has annually assigned specific terms of reference to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. Jackman (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

23. On another important matter, the attitude of the major Powers would not appear to take into account the most legitimate aspirations of the international community. I am referring to the problem of the peaceful uses of the sea-bed and the ocean floor. As far as the developing countries are concerned, this area constitutes the common heritage of mankind and, as such, cannot be the object of claims of sovereignty or of appropriation. It must be regulated and administered by the members of the international community, which should be entitled to share in the benefits obtained from the exploration and exploitation of the resources of the sea-bed.

24. It is equally indispensable that the sea-bed and the ocean floor be reserved exclusively for peaceful purposes, preventing an arms race from developing in the area to the prejudice not only of the exploitation of the sea-bed resources but also of the traditional activities on the high seas, such as navigation and fishing. It is difficult to accept the position taken by the great Powers, or by the technologically advanced countries, in favour of a *laissez-faire* régime of unqualified and indiscriminate freedom. Such a régime would be potentially anarchic and dangerous and would result, above all, in widening the gap which already prevails between those who possess an advanced technology and those who are striving to develop one. We should then see a small number of nations with full access to the riches of the marine environment, enjoying all its advantages, while the majority of nations would helplessly witness the utilization, by that privileged minority, of resources which belong to all.

25. All these positions add up to an open rejection of the commitments undertaken in other organs of the United Nations, and the over-all philosophy of our Organization, aimed at narrowing down the economic disparities among nations. Let us hope that an objective examination of the problem will bring about fair and reasonable solutions.

26. I have just referred to economic disparities: no examination of the present world scene could fail to include those questions which refer to economic development and one of the means of achieving it—international trade.

27. The balance of the last decade—the United Nations Development Decade—is conclusive: the relative underdevelopment of the developing countries has clearly increased. And it is against this sobering background that the programme for the next Development Decade will have to be examined, making full use of the lessons we have learned from our experience in the last ten years. If we really wish to do so, this is the way to avoid incurring the same mistakes. The errors of the past are linked to some facts which it might be pertinent to recall.

28. As a matter of fact, we have roughly three quarters of mankind simultaneously attempting to accelerate their development. To a large extent this effort is an internal one, and finds expression in an increase in production and in a reduction in consumption so as to liberate resources for investment. However, a substantial portion of the resources created and not consumed are channeled to the developed countries—a quarter of mankind—to serve as payment for goods essential to the development process. When primary goods are involved in the transaction, there is a constant deterioration in the terms of trade of the underdeveloped countries; when the export of industrial goods is involved, quantitative restrictions have been established, in a more or less disguised fashion, so that the end result prevents the essential rise in value of the exports of the underdeveloped countries.

29. Efforts by the developing countries to improve the commercial rules of the game have been frustrated by the lack of understanding on the part of the developed countries. Under present conditions, a good part of the exports of the underdeveloped countries are dashed against the barrier raised by import quotas, or have a part of their value transferred to the developed countries, in the form of unfair prices.

Miss Brooks (Liberia) resumed the Chair.

30. If this state of affairs is allowed to prevail, development can expect little from external incentives and will have to turn inwards. Some countries will have to resort to a policy of full employment and protectionism, others will have to do the same by way of regional arrangements, likely to secure them adequate economic dimensions. But then we shall have to conclude that international co-operation in this field makes no practical sense, and its usefulness is a fallacy.

31. It is indispensable that plans for the Second United Nations Development Decade should be conditioned to the need for accelerating development by having the underdeveloped countries use their own resources; they should foresee the maximum of assistance compatible with the balance of payment of the recipients and above all, the restrictions imposed on exports from developing countries must be reduced to a minimum. It is pointless to attempt development with resources that simply do not exist. The goals must be realistic and attainable by procedures linked to the social, political and economic realities of the developing nations.

32. Economic domination and technological monopoly are not conducive to peace and the same should be said of the balance of arms. What we seek is the participation of all the members of the international community in peace, progress and development.

33. A joint participation in which all voices can make themselves heard is just as necessary in connexion with problems such as that of the Middle East. Security Council resolution 242 (1967) in our view still provides us with the best basis for a constructive and enduring political settlement. It is regrettable that more effective action on the part of the Security Council has been thwarted by the fact that its individual members, including the permanent ones, each

give a different interpretation to a text which was unanimously adopted. We urge a renewed effort to achieve in interpretation the same unanimity accorded the enunciation of principles. It is urgent that a permanent political solution should be arrived at, lest we move inexorably into a new cycle of "open warfare", to quote the expression used by Secretary-General U Thant. Brazil continues to place great hopes in the mission entrusted to Ambassador Gunnar Jarring and appeals once again to the parties directly involved not to permit isolated incidents, condemnable as they may be, to aggravate a situation which is already pregnant with danger.

34. As one of the largest Catholic communities in the world, Brazil attaches particular importance to the question of the Holy Places. We continue to maintain the necessity of implementing Security Council resolution 267 (1969), unanimously adopted on 3 July 1969, and we cannot remain indifferent to the measures, unilaterally adopted, which aim at altering the status of the City of Jerusalem.

35. The basic concept of the United Nations is a primary concern with the condition of man and with social progress. The premise of our activities, the central idea of our efforts in all fields, the reasoning behind the decisions we take, is the desire for justice, freedom, social welfare and the betterment of all peoples. On several occasions we have explicitly reaffirmed this concept, and we have adopted many declarations, conventions and resolutions to implement it. However, we must recognize that the progress made in certain areas, such as the affirmation of the rights of women, the protection of the rights of children and the eradication of slavery, have not found their counterpart in efforts to meet the insolent challenge of the odious practice of racial discrimination.

36. Brazil—a country in which inequality and hatred between races are unknown—would not be true to itself if it were not always in the forefront of the fight against discrimination. As the spokesman of a people who have equal respect for all others, the Brazilian Government cannot fail to fight, wherever the opportunity arises, the policies and practices of discrimination which lead to *apartheid*, the object of our formal condemnation and abhorrence.

37. As we gather here today we have before us the prospect of the tenth anniversary of the Declaration of the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. As we look around this chamber, we can see how great has been the contribution of the United Nations to building a new world. Offsetting the undeniable difficulties faced by this Organization, and lightening the pessimism induced in us by the prevalence of power politics, we have the reassuring reality of the presence at our debates of some fifty States awakened to sovereign life since the creation of the United Nations, in many cases with the encouragement and support of our Organization. The contribution we have made to the process of decolonization will be inscribed with special distinction among our more positive achievements. I am particularly pleased to point out the consistent participation of Brazil in all the diplomatic and parliamentary phases of the moral and political action of the United Nations on behalf of the self-determination of peoples. The valuable contribution the new States—African, Asian and

American—have made to our work is proof of their political maturity and of their noble purpose in the cause of peace and international co-operation.

38. A year from now we will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, which will give us a good opportunity of taking stock of our achievements and planning our future. The world of today, in which the boldness of science and of the human spirit has carried man beyond the limits of our own planet, is very different from the world of a quarter of a century ago. The Charter of the United Nations is a document of the year 1945. But the purposes and principles enshrined in it have not lost their validity and continue to represent a clear expression of the ideals which should guide international life.

39. The sovereign equality of States, good faith in international relations, the use of peaceful means for the settlement of disputes, the abandonment of the use of force, strict adherence to obligations arising from treaties and other international agreements, co-operation to maintain peace as well as to achieve economic, social and cultural progress, non-discrimination, respect for the self-determination of peoples, non-intervention—these make an impressive programme, to which we can still today give our most conscientious and firm support, as we did twenty-five years ago.

40. This continued adherence to basic principles does not prevent us from recognizing that it is possible to improve the structure and machinery of co-operation at our disposal. As soon as possible, it would be well to revise our Charter so as to consolidate and reinforce the ideas crystallized over the last quarter of a century, particularly in regard to defence against the new insidious forms of pressure and intervention, and co-operation on behalf of peace and the enunciation of a universal obligation for solidarity in development.

41. The Charter is a document that signalled the close of a war. By revising it and adapting it to the needs of our times and, whatever happens, faithfully applying it, it is incumbent upon us to make of it a document signalling the beginning of an enduring peace.

*Address by Mr. Richard M. Nixon, President of
the United States of America*

42. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour of welcoming His Excellency Mr. Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States of America, and I invite him to address the General Assembly.

43. Mr. NIXON (President of the United States of America): Madam President, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers and representatives—my fellow citizens of the world community.

44. I first wish to express my deep appreciation of the honour of addressing this Organization for the first time and also to take this opportunity of welcoming all those from 126 countries who are here at the United Nations General Assembly session. Particularly, on a personal note, I appreciate the opportunity of having been welcomed today by the Secretary-General. It is hard to realize—and

we were reminiscing about this—that just sixteen years ago he welcomed me to Burma when he was Chief of Protocol and I was Vice-President. Since then we have both come up in the world to a certain extent.

45. I think we would all agree that there is no nobler destiny, nor any greater gift that one age could make to the ages that follow, than to forge the key to a lasting peace. And in this great Assembly the desirability of peace needs no affirmation. The methods of achieving it are what so greatly challenge our courage, our intelligence and our discernment. Surely, if one lesson above all rings resoundingly among the many shattered hopes in this world, it is that good words are not a substitute for hard deeds, and noble rhetoric is no guarantee of noble results.

46. We might describe peace as a process embodied in a structure. For centuries peace was the absence of war and stability was the absence of change. But in today's world there can be no stability without change—so that peace becomes a continuing process of creative evolution. It is no longer enough to restrain war. Peace must also embrace progress both in satisfying man's material needs and in fulfilling his spiritual needs.

47. The text of the structure of peace is that it ensure for the people of each nation the integrity of their borders, their right to develop in peace and safety and their right to determine their own destiny without outside interference. As long as we live with the threat of aggression, we need physical restraints to contain it. But the truest peace is based on self-restraint—on the voluntary acceptance of those basic rules of behaviour that are rooted in mutual respect and demonstrated in mutual forbearance. The more closely the world community adheres to a single standard in judging international behaviour, the less likely that standard is to be violated.

48. I am well aware that many nations have questions about the world role of the United States in the years ahead, about the nature and extent of our future contribution to the structure of peace. Let me address those doubts—and let me address them quite candidly—before this Organization.

49. In recent years there has been mounting criticism here in the United States of the scope and the results of our international commitments. This trend, however, has not been confined to the United States alone. In many countries we find a tendency to withdraw from responsibilities, to leave the world's often frustrating problems to the other fellow and just to hope for the best. As for the United States, I can state here today without qualification: we have not turned away from the world. We know that with power goes responsibility. We are neither boastful of our power nor apologetic about it. We recognize that it exists; and that, as well as conferring certain advantages, it also imposes upon us certain obligations.

50. As the world changes, the pattern of those obligations and responsibilities changes. At the end of the Second World War, the United States for the first time in history assumed the major responsibility for world peace. We were left in 1945 as the one nation with sufficient strength to contain the new threats of aggression and with sufficient

wealth to help the injured nations back onto their feet. For much of the world, those first difficult post-war years were a time of dependency. The next step was towards independence, as new nations were born and old nations revived. Now we are maturing together into a new pattern of interdependence.

51. It is against this background that we have been urging other nations to assume a greater share of responsibility for their own security, both individually and together with their neighbours. The great challenge now is to enlist the co-operation of many nations in preserving peace and in enriching life. This cannot be done by American edict or by the edict of any other nation. It must reflect the concepts and the wishes of the people of those nations themselves.

52. The history of the post-war period teaches that nationalism can be dangerously disruptive—or powerfully creative. Our aim is to encourage the creative forms of nationalism; to join as partners where our partnership is appropriate and where it is wanted, but not to let a United States presence substitute for independent national effort or infringe on national dignity and national pride.

53. It is not my belief that the way to peace is by giving up our friends or letting down our allies. On the contrary, our aim is to place America's international commitments on a sustainable long-term basis, to encourage local and regional initiatives, to foster national independence and self-sufficiency, and by so doing to strengthen the total fabric of peace. It would be dishonest, particularly before this sophisticated audience, to pretend that the United States has no national interests of its own or no special concern for its own interests. However, our most fundamental national interest is in maintaining that structure of international stability on which peace depends and which makes orderly progress possible.

54. Since I took office as President, no single question has occupied so much of my time and energy as the search for an end to the war in Viet-Nam—an end fair to the people of South Viet-Nam, fair to the people of North Viet-Nam, and fair to those others who would be affected by the outcome. We in the United States want to end this war, and we are ready to take every reasonable step to achieve that goal. But let there be no question on this one fundamental point: in good conscience we cannot, in the long-term interests of peace we will not, accept a settlement that would arbitrarily dictate the political future of South Viet-Nam and deny the people of South Viet-Nam the basic right to determine their own future free from any outside interference.

55. As I put it in my address to the American people last May:

“What the United States wants for South Viet-Nam is not the important thing. What North Viet-Nam wants for South Viet-Nam is not the important thing. What is important is what the people of South Viet-Nam want for South Viet-Nam.”

To secure this right, and to secure this principle, is our one limited but fundamental objective.

56. Both in public and at the Paris talks, we have offered a number of proposals which would bring peace and provide

self-determination. And we are ready to consider any other proposals that have the same objective. The missing ingredient so far has been the willingness of the other side to talk on any terms other than those that would predetermine the result and deny the right of self-determination to the people of South Viet-Nam. Once that willingness exists, and once there is a genuine willingness by the other side to reach agreement, the practical solutions can readily be found.

57. This makes it urgent that the Members of the United Nations—those in this room—who have long taken an active interest in peace in Viet-Nam now take an active hand in achieving it. Many urged that if only we halted our bombing of the North, peace would follow. Nearly a year has passed since the bombing of the North was halted. Three months have passed since we began the process of troop replacement, signalling both our own genuine desire for a settlement and the increased readiness of the South Viet-Nameese to manage their own defence.

58. As I announced on Tuesday, 18 September 1969, by 15 December our troop strength in Viet-Nam will have been reduced by a minimum of 60,000 men. On 2 September, North Viet-Nam's chief negotiator in Paris said that if the United States committed itself to the principle of totally withdrawing its forces from South Viet-Nam, and if it withdrew a significant number of troops, Hanoi would take this into account.

59. I repeat here today what I said in my speech on 14 May, that we are prepared to withdraw all our forces from South Viet-Nam; and the replacement of 60,000 troops is a significant step. The time has come for the other side to respond to these initiatives. The time has come for peace.

60. In the name of peace I urge all of you here—representing 126 nations—to use your best diplomatic efforts to persuade Hanoi to move seriously into the negotiations which could end this war. The steps we have taken have been responsive to views expressed in this room. And we hope that views from this Organization may also be influential in Hanoi. If these efforts are successful, this war can end.

61. The people of Viet-Nam, North and South alike, have demonstrated heroism enough to last a century—and I speak from personal observation. I have been to North Viet-Nam, to Hanoi, in 1953, and all over South Viet-Nam. I have seen the people of the North and the people of the South. The people of Viet-Nam, North and South, have endured an unspeakable weight of suffering for a generation, and they deserve a better future. When the war ends, the United States will stand ready to help the people of Viet-Nam—all of them—in their tasks of renewal and reconstruction. And when peace comes at last to Viet-Nam, it can truly come with healing in its wings.

62. In relations between the United States and the various Communist Powers, I have said that we should move from an era of confrontation to an era of negotiation.

63. I believe our relations with the Soviet Union can be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, recognizing our differences and also our right to differ; recognizing our

divergent interests, and also our common interests; recognizing the interests of our respective allies, as well as our own. Now, it would be idle to pretend that there are not major problems between us, and conflicting interests. The tensions of the past thirty years have not been caused by mere personal misunderstandings. This is why we have indicated the need for extended negotiations on a broad front of issues.

64. Already, as you know, we have had extensive consultations with the Soviet Union as well as with others about the Middle East, where events of the past few days point up anew the urgency of a stable peace. The United States continues to believe that the United Nations cease-fire resolutions define the minimal conditions that must prevail on the ground if settlement is to be achieved in the Middle East. We believe the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967 [242 (1967)] charts the way to that settlement. A peace, to be lasting, must leave no seed of a future war. It must rest on a settlement which both sides have a vested interest in maintaining.

65. We seek a settlement based on respect for the sovereign right of each nation in the area to exist within secure and recognized boundaries. We are convinced that peace cannot be achieved on the basis of substantial alterations in the map of the Middle East. We are equally convinced that peace cannot be achieved on the basis of anything less than a binding, irrevocable commitment by the parties to live together in peace.

66. Failing a settlement, an agreement on the limitation of the shipment of arms to the Middle East might help to stabilize the situation. We have indicated to the Soviet Union, without result, our willingness to enter such discussions.

67. In addition to our talks on the Middle East we hope soon to begin talks with the Soviet Union on the limitation of strategic arms. There is no more important task before us. The date we propose for the opening of talks has passed for lack of response. We remain ready to enter negotiations. Since the United States first proposed strategic arms talks three years ago, the task of devising an effective agreement has become more difficult. The Soviet Union has been vigorously expanding its strategic forces; weapons systems themselves have become more sophisticated, more destructive. But as the difficulty of the talks increases, so too does their importance. Though the issues are complex, we are prepared to deal with them seriously, concretely and purposefully—and to make a determined effort not only to limit the build-up of strategic arms, but to reverse it.

68. Meanwhile, I want to affirm our support for arms control proposals which we hope the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament will place before this Assembly with regard to the sea-bed and to chemical and bacteriological warfare. We hope also that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII)] will soon enter into force. We should be under no illusion, however, that arms control will itself bring peace. Wars are fought by soldiers, but they are declared by politicians. Peace also requires progress on those stubbornly persistent political questions, questions that are considered in this room, questions that still divide

the world; and it requires other exchanges, not only of words but of deeds, that can gradually weave a fabric of mutual trust among the nations and the peoples of the world.

69. We intend to conduct our negotiations with the Soviet Union soberly and seriously, neither encumbered by prejudice nor blinded by sentimentality, seeking to reach agreements rather than to make propaganda.

70. Whenever the leaders of Communist China choose to abandon their self-imposed isolation, we are ready to talk with them in the same frank and serious spirit.

71. For nearly a quarter of a century the United Nations has struggled with the often thankless task of peace-keeping. As we look to the future, however, keeping the peace is only part of our task. We also must concentrate on building the peace.

72. Let us be candid. There are many differences among the great Powers, and among other Powers, which as realists we know cannot be resolved quickly, cannot be resolved even by this Organization. But we also know that there are at least five areas in particular of great concern to everyone here, with regard to which there should be no national differences, in which our interests are common and on which there should be unanimity. They are these: securing the safety of international air travel; encouraging international voluntary service; fostering economic development and population control; protecting our threatened environment; exploring the frontiers of space.

73. By any standards, aircraft hijackings are morally, politically and legally indefensible. The Tokyo Convention⁴ has now been brought into force, providing for prompt release of passengers, crew and aircraft. Along with other nations, we also are working on a new convention for the punishment of hijackers, but neither of these conventions can be fully effective without co-operation. Sky piracy cannot be ended as long as the pirates receive asylum.

74. Consequently, I urge the United Nations to give high priority to this matter. This is an issue that transcends politics. There is no need for it to become the subject of polemics or a focus of political differences. It involves the interests of every nation, the safety of every air passenger and the integrity of that structure of order on which a world community depends.

75. The creative, dynamic kind of peace I have spoken of, of course, requires more than such basic protections as the one I have just described. To build this kind of peace, we must join together in building our societies—in raising a great cathedral of the spirit, which celebrates the infinite possibilities of man himself.

76. Such a peace requires a fuller enlistment not only of Government resources and of private enterprise resources, but also of the dedication and skill of those thousands of people all over the world who are ready to volunteer in the cause of human achievement. Our own Peace Corps has helped in many countries. I especially welcome the con-

⁴ Convention on offences and certain other acts committed on board aircraft signed at Tokyo on 14 September 1963.

sideration which the United Nations itself is now giving to the establishment of an international volunteer corps. We stand ready to give this exciting new venture our full and enthusiastic co-operation.

77. As the United Nations looks toward the beginning of its Second Development Decade, it faces a time of enormous challenge but enormous opportunity. We can only guess at the new scientific discoveries that the 1970s may bring, but we can see with chilling clarity the gap that already exists between the developed economies and the economies of the developing countries, and the urgent need for international co-operation in spurring economic development.

78. If in the course of that Second United Nations Development Decade we can make both significant gains in food production and significant reductions in the rate of population growth, we shall have opened the way to a new era of splendid prosperity. If we do only one without the other, we shall be standing still. And if we fail in both, great areas of the world will face human disaster.

79. Increasingly, the task of protecting man's environment is a matter of international concern. Pollution of air and water, upsetting the balance of nature—these are not only local problems and not only national problems, but matters that affect the basic relationships of man to his planet. The United Nations already is planning a conference on the human environment in 1972, and I pledge the strongest support of the United States for that effort. I hope that even before then we can launch new national and international initiatives toward restoring the balance of nature and maintaining our world as a healthy and hospitable place for man.

80. Of all man's great enterprises, none lends itself more logically or more compellingly to international co-operation than the venture into space. Here, truly, mankind is as one, as fellow creatures from the planet Earth exploring the heavens that all of us enjoy.

81. The journey of Apollo 11 to the moon and back was not an end, but the beginning. There will be new journeys of discovery, and beyond this we are just beginning to comprehend the benefits that space technology can yield here on earth. But the potential is enormous. For example, we now are developing earth resource survey satellites, with the first experimental satellite to be launched some time early in the decade of the 1970s. Present indications are that these satellites should be capable of yielding data which could assist in as widely varied tasks as these: the location of schools of fish in the oceans, the location of mineral deposits on land, the health of agricultural crops.

82. I feel it is only right that we should share both the adventures and the benefits of space. As an example of our plans, we have determined to take actions with regard to earth resource satellites, as this programme proceeds and fulfils its promise. The purpose of those actions is that this programme would be dedicated to produce information not only for the United States, but also for the world community. We shall be putting several proposals in this respect before the United Nations. These are among the positive, concrete steps we intend to take towards internationalizing man's epic venture into space—an adventure that

belongs not to one nation, but to all mankind, and one that should be marked not by rivalry, but by the same spirit of fraternal co-operation that so long has been the hallmark of the international community of science.

83. And now, Madam President and Mr. Secretary-General, may I speak a personal word to the representatives gathered in this hall. I recognize that those here are dedicating their lives to the cause of peace and that what is done in this hall will have an enormous effect on the future of peace. I have had the great privilege over the past twenty-three years of travelling to most of the countries represented in this hall. I have met most of the leaders of the nations represented in this hall, and I have seen literally thousands of people in most of the countries represented in this hall. There are differences between the nations and differences between the leaders and differences between the peoples in this world. But based on my own experience, of this one thing I am sure: the people of the world, wherever they are, want peace. And those of us who have the responsibilities for leadership in the world have an overwhelming world mandate from the people of the nations we represent to bring peace, to keep the peace and to build the peace.

84. I realize that a survey of history might discourage those who seek to establish peace. But we have entered a new age, different not only in degree but in kind from any that has gone before. For the first time ever, we have truly become a single world community. For the first time ever, we have seen the staggering fury of the power of the universe unleashed, and we know that we hold that power in a very precarious balance. For the first time ever, technological advance has brought within reach what once was only a poignant dream for hundreds of millions: freedom from hunger and freedom from want—want and hunger that I have personally seen in nation after nation all over this world. For the first time ever, we have seen changes in a single lifetime—in our lifetime—that dwarf the achievements of centuries before; and those changes continue to accelerate. And for the first time ever, man has stepped beyond his planet, and revealed us to ourselves as “riders on the Earth together”, bound inseparably on this one bright, beautiful speck in the heavens, so tiny in the universe and so incomparably welcoming as a home for man.

85. In this new age of “firsts”, even the goal of a just and lasting peace is a “first” we can dare to strive for. We must achieve it. And I believe we can achieve it.

86. In that spirit, then, let us press towards an open world—a world of open doors, open hearts, open minds; a world open to the exchange of ideas and of people, and open to the reach of the human spirit; a world open in the search for truth and unconcerned with the fate of old dogmas and old isms; a world open at last to the light of justice and the light of reason, and to the achievement of that true peace which the people of every land carry in their hearts and celebrate in their hopes.

87. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United States of America for the important address he has just made.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.