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*President:* Miss Angie E. BROOKS (Liberia).

**AGENDA ITEM 9**

**General debate (*continued*)**

1. Mr. FLORES (Uruguay) (*translated from Spanish*): Madam President, I congratulate you, and through you, your great country, on the unanimous election which entrusted to you the task of guiding the debates of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its twenty-fourth session.

2. We welcome this election because it underlines your outstanding qualifications and also because it is proof of the growing participation in the world community of a great continent, which strongly reflects the deep-rooted aspirations of the peoples gathered here: to be free, to live in peace and to have productive relationships that will promote the spiritual and material development of mankind.

3. Still fresh in our minds is the vivid memory of Mr. Emilio Arenales, our brother from Guatemala, whose achievement during the twenty-third session of the General Assembly provides a message that is relevant to our work—that is, that we must all make the same controlled and silent sacrifice so that in times of trial we may overcome the obstacles, both personal and collective, to the attainment of the goals we have set ourselves, however difficult and arduous the road may be. Having said this, I should now like to touch on the matter which is of deepest concern to us.

4. Many voices are being raised, both within and outside this forum, to express scepticism about the work of the United Nations. A pessimistic attitude is now being adopted towards the destiny of our Organization. We must react energetically against this unhealthy trend, which could destroy the world community and involve us in the uncertainty of an international policy dictated by events, outside the framework of the agreed and freely accepted law.

5. On behalf of Uruguay, I must make it plain that I have not come to this Assembly to attend the funeral of the

United Nations. On the contrary, we have come here to make a healthily realistic examination of the growing difficulties that affect the Organization's effective functioning, with the firm and unwavering intention of finding solutions that will strengthen the Organization and increase its competence and suitability as an instrument in the service of the lofty ideals for which it was established in San Francisco.

6. But I wish to make it very clear that Uruguay stands within the Organization, not outside it. I now propose to enlarge upon this statement. The policy of balance of power, which took the form of alliances and covenants, led to the First World War.

7. In the light of previous experience, the League of Nations advocated and formulated the system of the legal equality of States. Yet it failed to achieve its peace objectives because, outside and apart from the League, the same fatal system of balance of power continued in force and finally led to the most recent world war.

8. The horrors of that terrible war brought forth a new policy, which Uruguay described at the time as a potential risk to the nascent Organization established in San Francisco: unity of power to preserve peace. Unity of power implied—as events later proved—that it is effective for that purpose as long as unity exists; but when unity is broken, the policy of balance of power reappears, today in the form of antagonistic blocs.

9. This is the picture we have before our eyes. Outside the Organization, or at least beyond its framework, the force of events determines the fate of this world community, which today appears to be merely a forum for denunciation and protest and no longer a tool for the preservation of peace, our common and indispensable task. This is why, at the very beginning of this Assembly session, we wish on behalf of Uruguay to put forward a different view and to do something constructive to strengthen the United Nations. That is why we have come here.

10. I should like to repeat today what the Chairman of the Uruguayan delegation, Mr. Secco Garcia, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, said at the twenty-third session of the General Assembly:

“We are happy to say that in international law there has been steady even if slow and difficult progress.” [*1686th meeting, para. 5.*]

He added:

“This parliament seems to us slow to establish the rule of law in practice and to create awareness of its benefits.

We know that there are factors beyond its control, but we have a common duty to correct them, because they not only endanger freedom and justice, but also raise problems which affect intelligence itself." [Ibid.]

Nevertheless, and in spite of these difficulties, we trust in the instruments offered to us by the present Charter of the United Nations.

11. The conflicts that exist in the Far East and the Near East, and the painful problems affecting parts of the African continent can and must find a solution within the framework of the Organization that unites us. However disquieting and ominous the symptoms may be in those regions, there is still time to face them with resolution and vigour, with the indispensable goodwill, in order to achieve honourable agreements that will build a stable and lasting peace.

12. Uruguay condemns the use of force and terrorism, recourse to reprisals and, in short, any act of violence. We believe that our Organization, through its competent organs, is still able to arbitrate and find solutions that are acceptable to the parties in conflict and that will lead to future co-operation and harmony.

13. In this connexion, my delegation feels compelled to mention the regional policy of the inter-American system. The inter-American Pact, inspired by genuine regional solidarity and strengthened by long years of existence, has recently proved its effectiveness. A policy of promoting and implementing the law, with a brotherly and friendly understanding of the factors of a dispute, is, in the long run, the best policy.

14. We hope the world Organization will realize that, as the provisions of the Charter indicate, might does not make right or place anyone in a better position to negotiate peace, and that peace is based on justice and justice on international morality, and ultimately the conduct of States must be adapted, not to the prevailing interests of the hour, but to the permanent values of law, because law, regulating peaceful coexistence, is the only instrument capable of diminishing the policy of balance of power and restoring the legal equality of those same States.

15. As a small State, but one inspired by its devotion to international law, Uruguay comes to the work of this Assembly with faith and hope in the Organization and in the solution that may stem from it. The success of our meetings rests on the contribution of all to the supreme blessing of world peace. By using our energies, our co-operation and all the other means at our disposal, by supporting the existing organs and means in order to overcome the grave problems of the world, and by co-operating with the family of nations on a regional and world-wide scale, we must make the utmost effort to sweep away the tight barriers that prevent us from reaching the common goals which unite us.

16. We are not unaware of the fact that an appropriate amendment of the Charter which governs our work may be the most feasible means of achieving these objectives, but we must not await that event. In the meantime we must make the best of the imperfections of the existing system,

and work with confidence and faith to maintain peace, which all mankind needs and is asking of us.

17. But peace cannot be achieved without an appropriate hierarchy of values. International social justice requires an equitable balance and a better distribution of wealth. The specialized agencies of the United Nations are useful channels for contributing to this vital equalization between the rich and the poor countries.

18. At present the unstable and precarious peace in which we live appears to be the result of our fear of a nuclear war. But the strategic recourses for war include a weapon more dangerous than this terrible power, and that is the power of hunger, the power of the dispossessed, the power of those who have been insulted and injured by the mighty of the earth.

19. History teaches us that all empires pass away. No matter how vast their material resources, how immense their technological capacity, they will fall because of the violence unleashed by injustice and because of the despair generated by hunger. And hunger does exist on earth. Therefore, it is for their own good and for the good of all mankind that those who possess such power should realize that power implies not privilege, but service, and that this same power imposes greater responsibilities upon them in these anxious times in which mankind is living.

20. I shall leave the specific items on the agenda for discussion in the Committees. The particular instructions given to the delegation of Uruguay with respect to those items will be made known at that time, and we shall then indicate the responsibilities of those who can and should act, and offer our co-operation in seeking possible solutions.

21. I should now like to invoke the protagonist of our endeavours. States and frontiers do not exist for the States themselves, nor for the frontiers themselves; they exist for man.

*Mr. Piñera (Chile), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

22. At a time when the substance and realm of the atom have been laid bare by human intelligence, at a time when man, following the plan of creation, has walked on the moon and achieved mastery of outer space, at a time when our entire technology indicates that man himself is capable of achieving what he was created for, namely, of governing the earth, at this very time man seems unable to govern his own passions.

23. Acting through nations or communities, man seems to stand in opposition and contradiction to his fellow man. Invisible but no less real, the man from all latitudes is nevertheless present in this Assembly, calling upon States and Governments not to forget his real existence, his anguish and his fear, his hope and his faith, his ultimate destiny.

24. Therefore, the primacy of spiritual values over the material contingencies of the moment must govern our work. The words of the Old Testament make themselves heard among us today as they did at the time of the landing

on the moon: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? "

25. The Assembly's answer to the question that has been asked since the beginning of time must be the one given us by that same Old Testament: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it".

26. On behalf of Uruguay, I express the hope that these permanent spiritual values will guide our work, and that when we return to our countries the common man who suffers and hopes and has his eyes fixed upon us will know that we have not laboured in vain because we have built on the solid rock of ultimate values: law based on justice, justice based on morality, and peace as the fruit of international social justice uniting all men in a single people, a single family, and abolishing all frontiers, so that we may be bound together by brotherhood and love based on a profound faith.

27. Mr. RIFA'I (Jordan): The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, on behalf of which I have the honour of addressing this distinguished gathering today, sincerely welcomes the election of the President of this General Assembly. Her election demonstrates the Assembly's confidence in her high qualities as well as its regard for her country, Liberia.

28. I would also take this occasion to pay a special tribute to the late President, His Excellency, Mr. Emilio Arenales, for the ability and consummate skill with which he presided over the deliberations of the General Assembly at its twenty-third session.

29. I should also like to acknowledge the valuable service of our excellent and highly distinguished Secretary-General and his associates in the cause of the United Nations and its accomplishments. His record has been one of able leadership and dedication.

30. This year witnessed a culmination of the technological revolution. Man's eternal quest for the new and unknown has led him to the highest mountains and the deepest ocean trenches. This year it has led him across the vacuum of space to another world. The universe has become more than ever one unit, and for a moment all mankind were kin. We must pay the highest tribute to all those brave and creative people who made this remarkable achievement possible, and congratulate the countries which invested enormous human and material resources in this greatest of accomplishments.

31. Notwithstanding man's remarkable achievements on his own planet in the fields of technology, education, communication, science and industry, man has done much to despoil his own world. Injustices on earth, whether in the political, economic or social realm, are still widespread. The gap between the poor and the rich and between comfort and misery continues to widen. Basic human rights continue to be violated. People yearning for freedom have not been enabled to practice their right of self-determination. Colonial policies, military conquest and occupation are still practiced. On the part of the international community a climate of indifference seems to prevail. But the oppressed cannot be indifferent to wrong. Liberation movements, particularly in Asia and Africa, have polarized

the masses in their struggle for freedom, independence and progress. The gallant people of Viet-Nam have paid every price and made every sacrifice to attain their freedom and to achieve a unity which would be universally recognized. It is time they were given that right.

32. For over twenty years the problem of Korea has been before the United Nations General Assembly. We believe that more serious consideration should be given to this important problem. Both parties should be given an equal hearing, which may contribute to the reunification of that divided land.

33. The present régime in Rhodesia continues to defy all General Assembly and Security Council injunctions. We believe that more effective measures under Chapter VII of the Charter have to be invoked.

34. One other disturbing question is racial discrimination in the Republic of South Africa. It goes against human dignity to look on at the people of South Africa continuing to suffer as victims of the most inhuman practices.

35. On the soil of the African continent the great nation of Nigeria is still struggling to defend its unity and territorial integrity. We hope that the people of Nigeria will overcome their present difficulties and resume their march towards progress.

36. The problems and conflicts in which man is involved are ideological, economic, political and moral. There is, however, a basic conflict in our present-day world which is continuous and unending. It is that between man and the forces of injustice and oppression. Every day men all over the world sacrifice their lives combating those forces in the cause of justice. It is tragic that in most conflicts of this nature the highest body of human organization has found itself indifferent or impotent to stand on the side of right.

37. The Middle East is one such case. There, certainly as a result of twenty-one years of indifference, the United Nations finds itself today more impotent, more entangled, and more than ever tragically remote from ensuring justice and peace. For over two years now, the United Nations has been witnessing an unveiled and ruthless foreign occupation of the national soil of three Member States of the United Nations, the result of premeditated armed aggression. For over two years, substantial parts of Jordan, the United Arab Republic and Syria have been under occupation. The occupied areas, including the holiest spot where the world's most cherished shrines are located, have undergone physical destruction and change. Villages in the occupied areas have been bulldozed and obliterated by the occupying forces. Masses of people have been dispossessed, expelled from their homes, arrested, insulted, tortured or terrorized. The social, cultural and economic life of the civilian population under occupation has been disrupted and shattered. Israeli military arrogance has expressed itself in daily shelling and bombardment against the civilian population beyond the cease-fire areas. The Israeli authorities have deliberately defied all efforts of the United Nations to intervene effectively or usefully on behalf of justice and peace. The mission of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, empowered and authorized by Security Council resolution 242 (1967), was obstructed by Israeli intransigence. This

Security Council resolution attempting to outline a balanced solution to the problem was ignored and flouted. The attempt of the permanent members of the Security Council to study the problem and prevent further deterioration into all-out war, was bitterly opposed. The rapid escalation of Israeli demands went along with the escalating expressions of their determination to retain the occupied areas and to finalize their annexation. Continuing measures with the aim of absorbing or "de-Arabizing" the areas occupied proved beyond any doubt that Israel wanted the Jarring mission and the procedural dialectic it continued to propose to be a mere umbrella behind which expansion and annexation could be conveniently achieved. Professing peace verbally for propaganda purposes, Israel continued to sabotage peace on the ground.

38. In the meantime, a part of the international community has, unfortunately, fallen into the serious error of concentrating on trying to work out a method for a political settlement between the Arab States and Israel, but forgetting the fundamental issue, which violates the Charter and all rules and norms of present international life. The issue—the real issue—in the present Middle East crisis is Israel's military occupation of the national soil of three Member States and the Israeli armed aggression which continues to exist in defiance of world demands and pronouncements. To insist that the problem lies in the difficulty of finding a way towards an agreement between Israel and the Arab States is indeed a grave error which amounts to an endorsement of the state of aggression which continues to exist.

39. Yet, on our part, we have not been unaware of the sad facts in today's international life. We have also been fully conscious of our own responsibility towards peace in our own region. We have, therefore, respected the decision of the international community and accepted Security Council resolution [242 (1967)] of 22 November 1967 on the problem, and sincerely co-operated in the efforts for its implementation. We have understood it as it was intended to be: a resolution providing for ending the occupation, ensuring withdrawal of the occupying forces, and establishing a just and lasting peace. Israel, on its part, has made every effort to distort the intent of the resolution and obstruct its implementation. Allow me to give you some instances of such attempts.

40. Israel has taken the position of conditioning withdrawal upon the establishment of so-called agreed boundaries, thus completely violating the terms and the spirit of the resolution, and suggesting clearly that it is attempting to gain Arab territory beyond the lines of 4 June 1967. What the Foreign Minister of Israel said in this regard in this hall on 8 October 1968 [1686th meeting], and repeated several times thereafter, represented a policy destructive to the hopes of reaching a peaceful settlement. His theory about withdrawal—a word he never utters—shows clearly that an establishment of the lines to which withdrawal may take place is subject to the agreement of Israel, or indeed to its veto. Since Israel is an occupying force, this means that it can stay in occupation in the event any proposed boundaries do not satisfy its territorial designs. This Israeli position, which is a basic impediment to the achievement of any progress in the efforts towards peace, has repeatedly been emphasized and affirmed by Israeli official spokesmen.

41. In this connexion, let me stress that any interpretation of the November 1967 resolution which confines Israeli withdrawal to boundaries to be established by an agreement of the parties introduces language and a meaning alien to the resolution. It serves to undermine the basic principle of non-acquisition of territory by armed force. As long as this position is taken, there is no hope of success in achieving a peaceful settlement. Likewise, a clear commitment on complete withdrawal is an essential and indispensable prerequisite for any constructive future steps on the road to peace. It is unfortunate that the Israeli position has found acceptance by some others. The attitude of the United States, as far as we know, on this most important point has not made it possible for the talks of the four Powers to bear fruitful results.

42. I feel I should explain our position, compared with that of Israel, on one or two other subjects in order to show how positive our position has been, and how negative and obstructive has been the Israeli stand. On 24 March 1969 I sent to Ambassador Gunnar Jarring my written answers to his questions of 8 March on certain specific matters. Regarding his question whether Jordan would accept the establishment of demilitarized zones as a guarantee of the territorial inviolability and political independence of the States in the area, I gave the following reply on behalf of my Government:

"We do not believe that the establishment of demilitarized zones is a necessity. However, Jordan will not oppose the establishment of such zones if they are astride the boundaries."

And I added:

"In case demilitarized zones are established, Jordan accepts that such zones be supervised and maintained by the United Nations."

43. Against this clear written reply, the answer of 2 April by the Israeli Foreign Minister, which was then made known, was vague and evasive. Mr. Eban said:

"The effective guarantee for the territorial inviolability and political independence of States lies in the strict observance by the Governments of their treaty obligations. In the context of peace providing for full respect for the sovereignty of States and the establishment of agreed boundaries, other security measures may be discussed by the contracting Governments."

44. Here again, on this point, the position of the United States lacked objectivity. It offered a proposal to establish exclusively on the Arab side the demilitarized zones envisaged by the resolution. It suggested that demilitarized zones should be established consisting of the territory from which Israel withdrew. If this means anything, it means that military occupation is to be rewarded.

45. On the question of the "refugees", the people who own nearly every bit of the soil on which Israel itself has been established, and who were driven out by force of arms, Jordan took a very natural and reasonable position. We made it clear that a just settlement of the refugee problem was embodied in paragraph 11 of General Assem-

bly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, which, since its adoption, has been reaffirmed repeatedly at each and every session of the Assembly. Every year the General Assembly has emphasized the right of the Palestinian Arabs to repatriation and compensation. In our reply to Mr. Jarring we added that if a plan on the basis of that paragraph were presented to the parties concerned, its acceptance by the parties and the declaration of their intention to implement it in good faith, with adequate guarantees for its full implementation, would make possible the implementation of the other provisions of resolution of 22 November 1967.

46. Israel's position was, in effect, that the successive and repeated United Nations resolutions on the Palestinian refugees should be disregarded and the problem reduced to one of international charity.

47. We accepted each and every provision of the Security Council resolution of 22 November. We agreed to end the state of belligerency in return for complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from all territories occupied since 5 June 1967. And in view of our past experience with Israel, and its renunciation of the Protocol of Lausanne of 12 May 1949 and the four Armistice Agreements it signed the same year with the Arab States directly concerned, we maintain that the Security Council should be the guarantor of any instruments defining the obligations of the parties under the Security Council resolution. In view of our past experience with Israel, only such commitments as are guaranteed by the Security Council can be binding and irrevocable.

48. So far, all our peaceful efforts have been wasted. That is because Israel does not seem to be after peace, but after territory. Every day it becomes clearer that Israel is after Arab Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Syrian Heights and substantial parts of the West Bank and Sinai.

49. Jerusalem is the best illustration of this fact. As early as 4 July 1967 [*resolution 2253 (ES-V)*] the General Assembly declared invalid all measures taken by Israel to annex the Holy City and called upon Israel to rescind them and to desist forthwith from taking any action which would alter the status of Jerusalem. This was emphasized time and again by the General Assembly and the Security Council. Both organs reaffirmed the principle of the inadmissibility of territorial acquisition by military force.

50. However, Israel chose to disregard all those resolutions. It razed to the ground whole quarters in the Holy City. It expelled secular as well as religious leaders. It forcibly evicted hundreds of Arabs to make room for Israeli immigrants. It established Israeli settlements on Arab lands. It took further legislative measures to complete its unilateral and illegal annexation of Jerusalem.

51. The Security Council, in resolution 267 (1969) of 3 July 1969, again censured all those measures in the strongest terms. But Israel's attitude did not change. It continued to disregard the will of the international community and to defy the authority of the United Nations.

52. On 21 August 1969 the Arabs and Moslems, and the world at large, were shocked by the news of the burning of

Al Aqsa mosque. The Moslem world reacted with outrage, pain and indignation. Voices within Israel called for the rebuilding of the Temple in place of Al Aqsa. The world today is witnessing a threat to the Holy Places in Jerusalem; a threat to an historical and cultural heritage; a threat to monuments of tolerance and faith and to international peace and security.

53. It was against that background that twenty-five Moslem countries, Members of the United Nations, asked for an urgent meeting of the Security Council which last week adopted another strongly worded resolution [*271 (1969)*] against Israel. The twenty-five countries are meeting today in Morocco at the highest level to consider the situation.

54. Jordan, with the international community on its side, considers all Israeli measures in Jerusalem invalid and illegal. Jerusalem is an integral part of my country. It is part of the occupied territory from which Israel has been called upon to withdraw. For many centuries our people have protected and preserved, with tolerance and the utmost veneration, the Holy City and its Holy Places. Christians, Moslems and Jews enjoyed free access to and free worship in the city of peace. Conflict and prejudice are new to Jerusalem. Israel has come with an invading and racist ideology which has disrupted the peace and tolerance of all the Holy Land in recent decades, in the name of religion, although completely alien to the noble spirit of all universal religions. When Israeli withdrawal has been affected, Jerusalem should regain its peace and tolerance. And we in Jordan will continue to make every effort to ensure freedom of access and freedom of worship to all religions and to all believers in God.

55. It may be asked: what are the motives for Israel's present policy? What is Israel's present strategy designed to achieve? One can define two main features of Israel's present military and political strategy. The first is to oppose any United Nations or big-Power intervention in the problem while trying to keep the attention of the United Nations and world public opinion on a game of deceptive slogans, procedural tactics and pretensions of readiness to work for peace without any genuine commitment to the requirements of peace. In the meantime, while Israel continues to engage the United Nations in those prolonged delaying tactics, it moves on as rapidly as it can in changing the situation on the ground, absorbing the areas under occupation and preparing to face the world with a new *fait accompli*, a new expansion.

56. That is why Israel has systematically avoided commitment on the substance of the Security Council resolution [*242 (1967)*] on complete withdrawal and on the recognition of the Arab people of Palestine. That is also why, in the meantime, it has annexed Jordanian Arab Jerusalem, planted its settlements throughout the occupied areas and gradually made public its claims to territorial expansion. With the situation as it is, the slogan of negotiations advanced by Israel is clearly meaningless.

57. Secondly, Israel's strategy has been to keep up continuous daily military attacks against the Arab countries on the other side of the cease-fire line, making no distinction between military and civilian targets. Israel has

conducted daily heavy aerial and ground shelling against densely inhabited towns and villages in various parts of Jordan, killing civilians, including women and children, using napalm and other destructive weapons. It has destroyed vital economic installations, irrigation projects, canals, bridges and highways in a systematic and vicious way. The same tactics are applied against the other Arab countries directly adjacent to the occupied areas. The goal of these tactics is to put the greatest possible pressure on those Arab countries in order to force them to surrender their rights.

58. There can be no other analysis of Israel's strategy and policy in the past two years or more. We have ample evidence of this in what we see now. We have ample evidence in Israel's record in the area from the days when the Zionist nucleus in Palestine was the embryo of the would-be Israel up to this day. The present policies of Israel in the existing crisis have to be examined in the context of years of similar tactics of phased expansion and of diverting attention within the United Nations while establishing one *fait accompli* after another by the use of force and at the expense of justice and the rights of the people of the area.

59. Futile and unrealistic as this Israeli strategy may be, even in achieving Israel's own goals, it is only to be expected. It is not understandable, however, that some big Powers, with primary responsibility for international peace and with vast interests in our area, should support this Israeli strategy or find themselves powerless before it. Instead of bringing peace closer, this policy has driven peace farther away than at any time in the past. I must refer, in this regard, to the recent delivery by the United States to Israel of the heaviest types of destructive weapons, the F-4 Phantom jets after the Skyhawk fighter-bombers, at a time when Israel occupies vast regions of the Arab countries, at a time when Israel enjoys superiority in the air and at a time when its air raids have become the order of the day. I must say that this measure on the part of the United States can in no way be justified.

60. Instead of bringing about acquiescence on the part of the Arabs—surrender of their rights under pressure—this policy has bred resistance, resentment and a revolutionary spirit engulfing the whole Arab world. Resistance within the occupied areas and around them is vigorously growing and will not end short of restoring the rights of the people hit by aggression and occupation. The young men and women in the occupied areas who are offering their lives every day in resistance are young patriots who love their country and are willing to die for it. They have decided their ultimate destination; and, in their march to seek life through death, no authority can prevent them from reaching their destination. These gallant young men represent the spirit of the young in all the Arab countries. Occupation, injustice and outside encouragement to both do not breed surrender under the guise of realism but revolution. The popular explosions in the area and the increasing identification in the public eye of United States interests with Israeli aggression reflect that fact.

*Miss Brooks (Liberia) resumed the Chair.*

61. The outcome of the deliberations on the crisis of the Middle East during this General Assembly session may

determine the future course of events in the Middle East. No one would claim that the Middle East nowadays enjoys a peaceful life; yet war has been averted so far only by the hope that the decisions of the United Nations will be effective and that the Powers primarily responsible for the maintenance of peace and security will see to it that a just and peaceful settlement is reached. Once those two factors collapse war becomes inevitable. It may possibly be one war or a series of wars—wars of devastation. The area needs peace and construction, not war and destruction.

62. The Israeli air raids being daily launched successively against Arab positions, towns and inhabited areas are becoming a source of pride to Israel. My country and my people, partly occupied and partly a target for daily Israeli shelling and air attacks, are determined not to yield in the defence of their right. Moreover, a new-born nation is emerging. It is emerging from amidst the ruins of the past, from the darkness of the refuge and the exile and from the ashes in which a few sparks have been left and may cause a blasting fire. I speak of the children of Palestine.

63. In keeping up their air raids against our lands and our people, the Israelis declare that they want to give the Arabs a "lesson". Indeed, the lessons which may be useful to Israel, and not to anybody else, should be those given by similar people in similar conditions where might is dying every day on the soil of freedom. After all, one eternal fact remains: it is not force of arms which will determine the issue, as an Israeli leader once put it, but force of right. The lesson which Israel, and nobody else, must learn is that its grasp on the occupied Arab territories will one day fail. One day its reliance on its armed superiority will prove useless. One day it will wake up to see that the chance of peace it was given at a certain stage may not be given again.

64. Mr. STEWART (United Kingdom): Madam President, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your election. Your experience and personal charm will ensure that we shall get on with our work in an atmosphere of confidence and good humour. Relations between my country and yours have always been of the happiest, and the United Kingdom was the first country in the world to recognize the new State of Liberia in 1848.

65. I must also express my sorrow at the untimely death of the last President of the General Assembly, Mr. Emilio Arenales. None of us will forget the skill and the courage with which he conducted the proceedings of the Assembly at its twenty-third session while he was already in the grip of a fatal disease.

66. To my regret, Madam President, I was not able to be here to listen to your opening speech, but I have read it since with close interest. May I quote one passage. You said:

"... many of us tend to go happily from one agenda item to the next without seriously considering the possibility or even probability that the resolution adopted will not be implemented." [1753rd meeting, para. 54.]

67. With this my Government warmly concurs. We ought not to use words unless we believe they will produce actions, and unless we believe that the result of those

actions will be practical and in accordance with our clear capacity. It is all the more important to remember this in view of the vast number of problems which surround the United Nations—so many of them still unsolved and, in consequence, causing those who observe the work of the United Nations to fear that the Organization may become impotent. Of these problems I shall deal with some in my speech; time forbids that I should try to deal with them all, but if I select some as examples, I trust it will not be supposed that I underrate the importance, both in politics and morality, of those which I cannot mention today.

68. We are surrounded by a jungle of problems. What must we do to cut a path for mankind through that jungle? First, we must make our procedure more businesslike. How can we do our work with an agenda as congested as that which now lies before us? Next, in deciding what we should discuss we must exercise foresight; that is to say, we must be ready to concentrate on new problems, such as outer space, the human environment, and the peaceful uses of the sea-bed. There are also new aspects of old problems: for example, the present state of the discussion over disarmament in the realm of chemical and biological warfare.

69. As to the sea-bed, the complexity of this issue, apparent in the light of the work already done, increases the need for Member States to formulate their policies. This is particularly true for the questions of the limits of national jurisdiction and the nature of the régime to govern activities beyond those limits. For our part, we believe that the best way to provide a firm legal basis for exploitation of the sea-bed would be to set up a régime by international agreement. This should offer advantages to all, giving effective protection to the interests both of the signatories and of those engaged in exploiting the natural resources of the sea-bed. It should encourage full use of the potential of that area of the globe. United Kingdom representatives, both in this Assembly and on the sea-bed Committee, will do all they can to speed agreements to this end.

70. As to chemical and biological warfare, the United Kingdom has submitted during the present session of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament a practical draft convention prohibiting biological methods of warfare. We see this as a first move towards dealing with biological and chemical weapons, and we shall study with close interest the proposals put forward by my colleague Mr. Gromyko in the statement he made to this Assembly [1756th meeting].

71. Let me pursue this subject of disarmament in the spirit of UThant's call for a Disarmament Decade. The Secretary-General, in the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization [A/7601/Add.1], made it clear that the most urgent problem facing the world, and particularly facing the Governments of the United States of America and the Soviet Union, is to find some way of halting the nuclear arms race. I was glad to hear Mr. Gromyko say that his Government attached great importance to restraining a strategic arms race; I hope that very shortly we shall hear that a date has been fixed for opening discussions on this subject between the Governments of the United States and the USSR. We have recently seen how much good can be achieved when agreement is

reached between these two, the most powerful countries in the world; I am referring to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII)], in the drafting of which the United Kingdom can also claim to have played a creditable part. The United Kingdom has signed and ratified this Treaty. We hope that signatures and ratifications of one nation after another will proceed rapidly.

72. Mr. Gromyko also pointed out the mutual relationship between disarmament and security. Every agreement on disarmament reduces the suspicions that torment the world and makes further progress to peace easier. Any arrangements which can be made to increase security make every nation more willing to consider disarmament. We must not therefore say that we cannot proceed on one of these problems until the other is solved. We have to make progress concurrently on them both.

73. I have said that, first, we must make our procedure more businesslike and second, we must exercise foresight. The third requirement is that we must resolve to show in our actions respect for resolutions adopted by the Security Council. I say this having in mind two problems which are not problems for the future but which hang round us today, unsolved and threatening. These are Rhodesia and the Middle East.

74. In Rhodesia, the illegal régime remains in power, having rejected the repeated offers made by Britain of terms designed to secure an honourable settlement. It remains in power, a tyranny, unashamedly based on racial doctrines. All tyrannies are odious, but at the present point in history those based on racial doctrines are the most odious and the most dangerous. Mankind is distinguished from the brutes by his capacity for compassion, for justice and for reason. To tyrannize over anyone is to depart from compassion. To deny anyone his political rights is to depart from justice. But to do these things on the basis of bogus theories of racial supremacy is to depart from reason as well.

75. But although this régime remains at present in power, it lives in isolation from the world, earning the detestation of the world and cut off by the operation of sanctions from the bright economic future which should be the birthright of its peoples but which is denied to them by the operation of racial doctrines. We in the United Kingdom have made very clear the legal and diplomatic nature of this isolation. The Governor, Sir Humphrey Gibbs, having served most valiantly, has now rightly resigned his Office. We have recalled our mission from Salisbury. Rhodesia House in London stands empty. These were right and necessary measures. What more needs to be done? I know there is a body of opinion in this Assembly which believes that the United Kingdom should use force to bring down this régime. But to light the torch of war in southern Africa would lead to every kind of terrible consequence without any guarantee whatever that the outcome would be swifter or politically more desirable than could be achieved by the present course of action, that is to say, the steady and resolute application of sanctions. This is why I have spoken of the importance of observing Security Council resolutions. There stands on our records resolution 253 (1968) of 29 May 1968. From that resolution sprang a Committee

charged with the supervision of sanctions. All Member States should do everything in their power to co-operate with that Committee. The Government of the United Kingdom, mindful of its special responsibility, has given maximum assistance. We have so far submitted over fifty reports of cases of suspected sanctions' breaking. The action taken by the Committee on these reports has been encouraging and in an increasing number of cases has frustrated Rhodesian exports. It is on these lines we must proceed. To pass resolutions demanding the use of force, or demanding a total economic confrontation with other States in southern Africa, is to commit the error against which you, Madam President, warned us in the passage of your speech which I quoted earlier. It would be particularly foolish to commit this error when we have near to our hands a practical and effective way of proceeding, which is to see that the important resolution 253 (1968) is rigorously observed both in letter and in spirit.

76. I turn now to another and even more urgent problem, that of the Middle East. Since we all discussed it a year ago, there has been much diplomatic activity and unhappily little progress. And meanwhile there has been continuing violence. The cease-fire has in fact broken down. There have been many acts of violence in which hundreds of lives have been lost and thousands of lives have been disrupted and distorted. All this violence makes future settlement even more difficult to obtain. Yet a comprehensive political settlement is essential.

77. Let me say something about the method, the form and the content of a settlement. As to method, we had hoped that the patient work of Mr. Jarring would succeed. Certainly through no fault of his, it has not brought success. So when early in this year it was proposed that the representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union, France and the United Kingdom should meet, we gladly accepted that proposal. Since then, there have been discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union. Now the view of my Government is that we should not be dogmatic as to the method of settlement. Consultations of four Powers or of two Powers, the work, in co-operation with them of Mr. Jarring, may all be helpful—and if at any stage with the help of Mr. Jarring the parties to the dispute could get into discussion, so much the better. In our view nobody ought to say, "We rule out any particular method", and nobody ought to say, "We insist on one method and one method alone". If at any time one method proves impossible, we must all be prepared to try others.

78. Next, as to the form of the settlement: this must place inescapable obligations on all the parties to live at peace with each other and to respect each other's frontiers, and to these obligations all parties must be manifestly and irrevocably committed.

79. Third, the content of a settlement: here again, we must remember the importance of respecting Security Council resolutions. The content of the settlement must put into effect all the provisions of the important resolution [242 (1967)] passed in November 1967—withdrawal, just and lasting peace, and indeed everything in that resolution. The problem has been to fashion from that resolution a workable package, or programme or list of parallel actions to be performed by

the parties—use whatever term you please—which would ensure that all the provisions of the resolution would be carried out. Now surely respect for the resolution means this; that when anyone, any nation, is attempting to frame such a package he must say to himself, "I will not reject any particular proposal merely because I think it would be distasteful to any party to the dispute to whom I may be favourably disposed. I will rather ask myself about any proposal these questions: 'Is it fair, is it workable, will it be durable, is it in conformity with the Security Council resolution?'" This is the spirit in which anyone who attempts to play any part in solving the problem must urgently approach his task. And the parties concerned must realize that this is so; they must not expect any nation whether in four-Power or two-Power talks, or any other forum, to act merely as an advocate. They must act more constructively than that.

80. I have mentioned two problems with which the United Nations is vitally concerned. There are other problems to which unhappily the skill and experience of the United Nations have not been applied. Viet-Nam is one of these. On this let me say at once how much I welcomed President Nixon's statement to the Assembly [1755th meeting]. He made it clear that as part of a final and fair settlement the United States would withdraw all its troops and that meanwhile the United States was making an immediate withdrawal of some of them. It would be a blow to peace and to all the purposes for which the United Nations stands if such constructive gestures by the United States were ignored or misunderstood. We must, therefore, ask for equal statesmanship from those on the other side.

81. But, as President Nixon further pointed out, it is not only on the battlefield that violence and cruelty occur. We have now throughout the world piracy in the air, bomb outrages, arson, kidnapping and other acts of reckless cruelty. The world is in danger of reaching that condition which Shakespeare described:

Blood and destruction shall be so in use  
And dreadful objects so familiar  
That mothers shall but smile when they behold  
Their infants quartered with the hands of war,  
All pity choked with custom of fell deeds.<sup>1</sup>

82. Is not that how so many of us feel when we read the news from so many parts of the world morning after morning; is not that the condition to which we all fear we may be coming?

83. If any person or any nation imagines that any cause in which they believe can be forwarded by acts of this kind, then let them take note that lawless violence is a wolf that can come to every door. There are many grievances in the world; there are many causes in which men and nations believe; but if everyone who has a grievance to proclaim or a cause to promote assumes that he can do so by piracy and murder, then no nation and no individual are safe. We must, therefore, have international action to deal with this menace.

84. But if part of our work is to try to end conflict and to restrain violence, another and more hopeful part of our work is to develop the possibilities of peace. I want

<sup>1</sup> *Julius Caesar*, Act 3, Sc. 1, l. 265.

therefore to say something about the problem of world poverty.

85. First, let us not despair. This is a terrible problem, but we have made progress. The First Development Decade, which lasts until the end of 1970, has the target of a 5 per cent growth rate of gross national product for the developing countries. By 1968, two years before the end of the Decade, that growth was, on the average, 4.7 per cent. We cannot say therefore that the Decade has been a failure. Yet, although we must not despair, neither must we be complacent. That average growth rate which I mentioned conceals, as all averages do, wide ranges. In some countries the growth has been so devoured by population increase that the average man in those countries will feel that no progress has been made. Next, let us realize that the struggle against world poverty must be a joint effort by the richer and more fortunate countries and by the developing countries. For example, it is for the developing countries to mobilize the domestic savings which must finance the greater part of their development. It is for them to ensure the efficient and equitable collection of taxes. It is for them to pursue proper policies in the field of population.

86. These are the things which nations must do for themselves. But the international part of the job remains vital. All of us must ensure that the methods of the international Organization are efficient and economical. We await with interest the reports of Mr. Lester Pearson on development aid and of Sir Robert Jackson on the capacity of the United Nations development system. I hope we can all agree that those reports should be thoroughly and urgently discussed and necessary changes introduced without delay.

87. But there is no good in talking about reports and policies unless we are prepared—particularly those of us in the richer countries of the world—to do something practical. The United Kingdom Prime Minister gave a pledge very recently that our Government would not reduce its development aid programme. As our resources permit, we shall try to raise the already substantial level of our voluntary contributions to the development assistance which is provided through United Nations channels. Last year I said here that we were increasing our contribution to the United Nations Development Programme in 1969. We shall make a further increase of half a million pounds in our pledge for 1970, bringing our total contribution to nearly £6 million. We also propose to increase our contribution to the United Nations Children's Fund. Taxpayers in the richer countries of the world sometimes complain about contributions of this kind, and of course they are entitled to claim that those contributions should be efficiently used. But we must all be prepared to say to those who doubt the wisdom or the necessity of aid: "Do you want to live in a peaceful, civilized world?" Everyone who is asked this question answers yes. What we all have to understand is that if we want to live in a peaceful, civilized world, we must be prepared to pay a fair rent for it; and the fair rent for living in a peaceful, civilized world is a sustained, informed and practical concern for the welfare of mankind and, in particular, for those who have so far lived in the degradation of poverty.

88. One thing remains to be said. I have spoken of the need to make our procedure businesslike, to exercise

foresight, to respect Security Council resolutions, to apply ourselves generously and imaginatively to the problem of poverty. The thing that remains and that gives life and spirit to all this is respect for human rights. The Charter requires this; we all believe or profess to believe in human rights. First, these rights are important to the individual; a man is not completely a man if he cannot think as he pleases, speak his mind, organize peacefully for the ideas in which he believes. But these human rights are not only something which the individual ought to have; they are essential for the progress of the human race. Mr. Gromyko referred to the tremendous and beneficial impact on mankind of the ideas of Copernicus, Galileo and Einstein. Fortunately for Copernicus he lived at a time and in a place where new thought, challenging accepted philosophy, could be published and discussed. Even poor Galileo, despite his sufferings, lived in a world where his ideas could be proclaimed and not suppressed. Fortunately for Einstein he was able to escape from the tyranny of the Nazis to the freedom, first of Britain and later of America. For us in Britain, as for so many countries in the Commonwealth, freedom and democracy are not a mere mechanical process of votes and elections; they are an assertion of human rights. In Britain we do not claim to have a philosophy which provides, with blind, dogmatic certainty, all the answers to all the problems. On the contrary, we assert that no one knows yet what the right answers are to all the problems. Therefore it is important to keep the doors open to new ideas, the windows open to the fresh air of new thought. Only by such tolerance and freedom can mankind hope to advance. Further, we do not claim that there are no defects in our country, that there are no matters about which people may not justifiably complain. What we do claim is that every dissatisfaction, every grievance, can be the subject of free discussion and, finally, of democratic decision.

89. Give me your indulgence if, in this connexion, I mention one particular British problem, that of Gibraltar: small on the map, small in its population, but of great importance for the principles involved. The people of Gibraltar have the right to say what they think, to agree or disagree with each other as they see fit, and to choose for themselves whether they will live under British sovereignty or under that of another. This is right; this is in accordance with the Charter. It is this which it is Britain's duty to defend.

90. But the main issue of human rights goes far beyond this particular problem. I have referred to some of the problems which threaten mankind. To each of them we must try to apply the resources of diplomacy and the techniques of the United Nations. But on the great scale, mankind will not solve its problems unless the human spirit is left free. I have described how deeply we in Britain are committed to that principle. I know very well that this is not true of us alone: that many other nations, in many times and places, have defended this principle. But my country, often at great risk, has done its best to hold the door open for freedom of thought and the entry of new ideas. Unless that door remains open, the United Nations can not fulfil its purposes.

91. Mr. FREETH (Australia): Madam President, I begin my speech with the very pleasant act of congratulating you on your election as President of the General Assembly at

this session. It is not only a tribute to your country—which was one of the Founding Members of the United Nations, and also a Member of the League of Nations—but it is a tribute to you personally. You have for many years played a prominent and constructive part in the work of this Organization, particularly in relation to dependent Territories. Australian representatives have enjoyed the most friendly relations with you and have benefited from your counsel and advice on a number of occasions. We have had the pleasure of welcoming you in Australia, and we hope that you will visit us again.

92. I turn now to the business before the General Assembly, set out formally in the agenda. One's heart sinks when one reads through the list of items—not simply because of the large number of them, but because many have been before this body for a long time and show every sign of being there before us for years to come. But we must remember that some of them represent problems that are not in themselves readily soluble and, indeed, are often matters which are never going to be wound up once and for all. Sometimes what we have to aim at is to help establish and maintain conditions under which neighbouring countries can jog along together, taking account of the facts of geography and history and relative strengths and interests, without coming to blows.

93. Sometimes the discussions in the United Nations, unproductive as they might seem, are an alternative to more violent acts. Sometimes, too, though the movement might seem to be at the speed of a glacier, there is undoubted movement. Disarmament and arms control provide an example. On disarmament the international community moves by fits and starts, rather than by steady advance; but there is indeed movement, and it is vital for the future of mankind that it should continue.

94. Some problems are particularly intractable. In this regard one thinks particularly of the Middle East, where armed warfare has been waged twice in the last fifteen years, and where sporadic guerilla fighting, infiltration, and acts of sabotage and violence have taken place over many years. A settlement will have to provide for the acceptance, in some way, of territorial boundaries, an agreed understanding about the rights and future of refugees, recognition of rights through waterways, and protection of areas of deeper concern to three of the world's great religions.

95. Everyone is concerned about regional hostilities endangering world peace and leading to wider conflict. We deplore the violent interference with civil aviation which is endangering the lives of persons in no way involved in the Middle East strife. But, as Foreign Ministers and diplomats, we must never forget, too, that human beings in the countries of the region are suffering: farmers and other civilians in several countries threatened by raids and by infiltrators—refugees who have long been homeless, and who face an unknown future with either resignation or desperation.

96. A number of items on the agenda relate to Africa. Whatever directly concerns so many of our Members must also concern other countries, even those remote from that continent. There are still questions relating to Territories not yet independent. Other items illustrate that indepen-

dence in itself does not solve all problems. Tasks of economic development and political conciliation and adaptation still face the peoples of the countries concerned; and in facing and grappling with them, those countries rightly look to the United Nations for understanding. Australia regards with sympathy the efforts which are being made in a number of instances to find peaceful solutions, in accordance with United Nations principles, to situations which are of such concern to so many Members. We shall continue to do what we can to assist the United Nations to attain its objectives in Africa, but we doubt that there are any short-cuts, and we reject solutions that would involve violent means.

97. Faced with all the items on the agenda, some of them long-standing and persistent because they are so difficult, we must nevertheless press on and refuse to throw in our hand. Sometimes—if I might speak with brutal frankness—the Assembly will seem merely to go through the motions of handling the items. Speeches will be made along the pattern of earlier years, and resolutions will be adopted that do little more than repeat what has been said before. This in itself is not necessarily a bad thing, if it helps to gain time or to damp down passions and keep open the way to solutions. Sometimes, with the passage of time, solutions do become possible, as new generations emerge, or as relationships among the great Powers or other countries change, or as technical progress alters the significance of factors which have dominated particular problems. But we must guard against getting automatically into a rut or rejecting an idea or proposal simply because it is novel.

98. We must also guard against the temptation to adopt resolutions which might command a majority in the General Assembly but prove an impediment to solutions. It is not only the size of the majority that counts, but the composition of that majority. If that majority does not include the countries most directly concerned or the countries whose co-operation is needful, then the resolution might prove to be an actual impediment to a settlement. It might discourage some of the parties concerned from looking for constructive compromises. It might inflame opinion, or create political and other rigidities back home. We must never lose sight of the fact that our objective here is not a resolution as an end in itself; a resolution is a means to an end. Our objective here is to widen areas of agreement, to establish conditions where conciliation can be pursued, and to encourage the economic and social progress that in the long run will be the basis for the sort of world which the Charter envisages.

99. I shall now say something about the region of which Australia is a part—Asia and the Pacific—whose stability, security and progress will help to determine the future of the whole world and not simply of the peoples of that region. There are 600 million people in the Indian sub-continent; there are 250 million people in South-East Asia; there are 700 million people in China; and there are 130 million in Japan and Korea. In numbers alone this is a great proportion of the world's population. Compared with North America and Europe, their standards of living are, for the most part, low. It is essential that more of the resources of developed countries should be directed to this region so that, in self-interest no less than in recognition of our common humanity and the principles of the Charter, the

weight of the international community is drawn into the task of economic betterment in Asia.

100. One of the most cheering features in the situation, despite all the problems and, in some cases, conflicts, is the steady development of regional co-operation and the growth of self-confidence and self-reliance among the countries of South-East Asia. Australia is an active member of many of the regional bodies—some of them part of, or linked with the United Nations, such as the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East or the Asian Development Bank, which held its annual meeting in Sydney earlier this year—and some of them regional associations outside the United Nations but in the spirit of its Charter, such as the Asian and Pacific Council. Some of the co-operation is within formal bodies or treaties, some of it is carried out informally. The countries of the region look to the rest of the world to show sympathy and understanding for all that we in the region are doing, and we hope it will be recognized that if South-East Asia and its neighbours have sound and developing economies and administrations then this will help the emergence of world security and prosperity and deserves the support of all the great Powers.

101. A big question mark in the region is posed by the mainland of China. By its very size and the impact of its ancient civilization—and its geographical position, the mainland of China must always be a major factor to be taken into account by all its neighbours, whatever their politics, race, or culture.

102. As my predecessor has said from this rostrum on more than one occasion, perhaps the biggest question facing us all today is how to fit the mainland of China into the international community. This is not a question to be solved by a single simple action such as admission to the United Nations or recognition of the régime of Mao Tse-tung. It is not something that is to be solved by handing over the 14 million people on Formosa to a régime which they do not want. That would be neither morally right nor would it effectively end the difficulties the rest of the world has with Peking. What is needed is an accommodation, which it is not easy to see being quickly achieved, to which the mainland of China itself must make some contribution. In particular, it needs to let its neighbours be assured that they will not be threatened or harassed or subjected to armed attacks. Peking is seen by many of its neighbours as a menace, either actual or potential. If its neighbours no longer see it in that light—and Peking itself has opportunities to indicate that it is not a menace—then we will all be on the way to a new and fruitful stage in relations with China.

103. In South-East Asia there is at present armed conflict on a quite significant scale in Viet-Nam. This has occurred because a *modus vivendi*, springing from the Geneva Agreements of 1954 in the form of a *de facto* division of Viet-Nam between two governments, was challenged by resort to force. North Viet-Nam attacked South Viet-Nam with its regular armed forces and with infiltrators trained, equipped, and directed from Hanoi. The South Viet-Nameese Government, faced with this outside aggression, sought and obtained assistance from other countries including Australia, and including also the United States,

Thailand, New Zealand, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea. Our objective in the hostilities is the limited one of repulsing the aggressor. The objective does not include the destruction or the replacement of the régime in North Viet-Nam. If the people of North Viet-Nam and the people of South Viet-Nam should eventually wish to be unified, that is something that should be worked out and decided, in their own time and by peaceful means, by each of those peoples acting separately and without being subjected to force or the threat of force. In all this it is, in the opinion of the Australian Government, basic that the people of South Viet-Nam should be free to choose their government.

104. The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam and its allies have made many moves in the past to increase the opportunities for achieving a settlement. All the hostilities inside North Viet-Nam have ceased, despite the fact that North Viet-Nam continues to wage war inside the territory of the South and to kill and destroy there. The United States has reduced its forces in Viet-Nam during this year, and last week President Nixon announced another reduction in American forces there. This has not so far been matched by the other side. The peace talks in Paris are making no progress. Fortunately, inside South Viet-Nam itself, considerable progress has been made in many directions. There is an active and genuine political life in the Parliament and in municipal institutions, which is in striking contrast to the authoritarian régime in the North. I pay tribute to the people of South Viet-Nam who, despite the assaults upon them from the North, persist in trying to build their economy and develop their political institutions. Many of us can count ourselves fortunate that our own political life has not been subjected to such stresses.

105. I turn now to an item on the agenda of this session of the General Assembly which is of interest to all Member nations whatever their political complexion or state of economic development or geographical position: namely, the problems of the human environment. This question was first brought formally before the General Assembly by the Government of Sweden. It has been reported on this year by the Secretary-General and considered by the Economic and Social Council. The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment to be held in 1972 will have the support and participation of Australia. We also support the Conference's meeting in Sweden, in recognition of that country's initiative in this field.

106. The aspects of the human environment receiving greatest attention internationally are the problems of water and air pollution. It might be thought that problems of pollution are not as great in Australia as in some other parts of the world, because of our distance from other countries and from the big industrial complexes. Nevertheless, Australia does have some immediate problems—for example, in relation to insecticides—and has many more potential problems. The Australian Senate has established two committees on pollution, one relating to air and one to water. By taking early action now, it may be possible to prevent Australia from suffering some of the more extreme afflictions that have already hit certain other countries.

107. Although problems of pollution are extremely important and are of a kind calling for international action, we must not overlook other ways in which man is making an

impact on his own environment. I refer particularly to his use of the natural resources, both exploitable and self-regenerating. As far as the exploitable resources are concerned, we need to do much more to avoid wasteful uses and to look for alternative substances to conserve those which are limited. In the use of the self-regenerating resources, where man's impact has been particularly significant, we should not overlook the positive gains that have been made in many areas. On the one hand, there are practices degrading those resources by over-grazing, over-fishing, unwise destruction of forests, and soil erosion, but there are also many examples of positive successful actions which have made natural environments more productive and of greater value as human habitats. I refer among others to the more successful agricultural production systems, pasture improvements and forest management. It is equally important that notice should be taken of those achievements and that lessons from them be put to wider application. I hope that the Conference will be broad enough to consider ways in which those positive gains and the conditions under which they have been made can be identified so that the information will be available for immediate use in similar circumstances elsewhere.

108. I do not need today to outline to this Assembly details of these problems of the human environment—pollution of the air and water, degradation of productive resources, noise and other contaminations and assaults—nor do I need to stress their importance. These things are well known. I shall limit myself to outlining what I believe should be attempted internationally, and particularly in the United Nations. Probably most of the action in this field has to be taken by national governments and other domestic authorities, but some matters need international initiative, study or co-ordination. The following are the types of things that can be attempted internationally in this field: first, helping to make mankind generally aware of what is at stake and of some of the practical problems; secondly, helping to stimulate international research and assistance into channels which will make the most needed and urgent practical contributions; thirdly, taking steps to see that the results of this research and technical application are known to all countries and available for application by them; fourthly, helping to establish international guidelines for minimum standards to be followed.

109. Those are matters that affect all mankind and all nations—the highly developed countries and the developing countries, the great industrial countries and others more remote and less industrialized. The impact of particular problems and programmes of action will vary and sometimes require different approaches according to the country or form of society involved. I have referred to the desirability of establishing international guidelines, or in some cases even international standards, that various parts of our communities should live up to. Such guidelines could relate, for example, to fertilizers and insecticides, so that they do not contain harmful ingredients with lasting ill-effects, or so as to guard against their improper use. There might also be guidelines relating to the discharge from chimneys of factories and power stations and even from domestic appliances and automobiles. Such guidelines would represent desirable rather than enforceable criteria on an international basis, but in certain cases it might be possible to go further and secure government agreement to

require observance of standards or criteria accepted by them. These matters are of interest to all countries, not simply those that manufacture any articles in question but also those that use them. Manufacturers and other producers who observed such guidelines might find their international markets wider than if they did not observe them. The sooner we tackle those problems the better.

110. As I envisage it, the United Nations itself would not be directly involved in research, but it could help to see that the relevant international agencies and other bodies—international, governmental and private—fulfilled their opportunities and duties. Several of the specialized agencies are directly involved. The United Nations Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development, of which an Australian, Sir Ronald Walker, is Vice-Chairman, has already been active in this field and will have a continuing interest. Australia takes a particular interest in the work of that Committee, which largely originated in an initiative by Australia in the General Assembly in 1959, in which we were associated with Romania.

111. Australia continues to place great emphasis on the scope of the Committee—on the need to ensure that the attention and resources of the world scientific community are directed more than in the past to the needs and problems of developing countries, and the need also to reduce the time lag in the application of scientific discovery and technical developments to the needs of mankind and particularly the needs of those countries whose own scientific communities are not large enough or do not have enough resources to do the work adequately for themselves.

112. Australia attaches great importance also to the work of the United Nations in defining and regulating the needs of the international community in relation to new fields of activity which are being forced on us as a result of the startling advances of science and technology. I refer especially to the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction, as well as to the control of pollution and the preservation of a livable human environment which I have just been discussing.

113. These new developments in science and in technology have added new and vastly extended dimensions to man's activities, as well as to his knowledge. One recalls exciting historical parallels in the great terrestrial discoveries of the past. To make accessible to man the vast potential resources of space and on the floor of the deep oceans is to create opportunities, in the conditions of today, for an unrestrained scramble for possession, with its attendant dangers. The dangers will exist whether the exploitation of the new resources is by Governments or by private enterprise. These disturbing potentialities present to the United Nations a challenge in one of the constructive functions and duties imposed on the General Assembly by the Charter. I refer to the progressive development of international law.

114. Traditional international law, created as it was in such large part by the practice of States and coming down to us from practice established in the era of the great

geographical discoveries of the past, contains well-known doctrines of sovereignty, of the acquisition of territory by occupation and of the appropriation of resources. In the common interest of the international community as a whole, these doctrines may require revision or even in some respects exclusion, in relation to outer space and the celestial bodies, and in relation to the deep ocean bed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

115. New legal concepts, and new legal rules, have already been forthcoming in respect of man's activities in outer space, though important problems have still to be solved—in relation, for example, to liability for damage arising from space activities. There seems to be a possibility that this gap could be filled even during the course of the present session of the General Assembly.

116. Important work is also in progress with regard to the legal problems created by the impending accessibility to man, through the rapid advance of technology, of great resources on the deep sea-bed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Resolutions of the General Assembly have already envisaged the possibility of establishing an international régime, under which all would benefit from the exploration and exploitation of these resources.

117. I wonder how many of the millions all over the world who watched the Apollo moonshot with such anxiety and admiration realized how extensively the legal background of that great undertaking had already been filled in by the outer space Treaty<sup>2</sup> which the General Assembly unanimously adopted on 19 December 1966. That question in its turn prompts the reflection how different might have been the world's history in this period of revolutionary discoveries in science and technology, if the United Nations had not existed.

118. I have not attempted today to touch on all the subjects that will be before this session of the General Assembly. Some of them will be the subject of statements by the Australian representatives in the relevant Committee—for example, the Second Development Decade. The Second Development Decade must succeed. The Australian Government has again, this financial year, increased its own contributions to international aid programmes, and would view with alarm and distress any diminution in the total flow of international aid. Equally do we urge the need for expanding world trade. A healthy political system requires a healthy economic system.

119. In all the items which come up for consideration we look to the purposes and principles of the Charter. When

<sup>2</sup> Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (resolution 2222 (XXI)).

the Organization departs from the Charter there is danger. When it sticks to the Charter—and when the individual members stick to the Charter—there is hope.

120. THE PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Spain in exercise of his right of reply.

121. Mr. PINIES (Spain) (*translated from Spanish*): Mr. Stewart, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom, made a brief reference to Gibraltar a few minutes ago, and said that, in his opinion, the Gibraltarians have the right to choose for themselves whether they will live under British or some other sovereignty. In this regard I wish to draw the General Assembly's attention to the statement I made on 18 December 1968:

“I also wish to remind you that the Spanish Government itself has repeatedly declared, and continues to do so, that it does not have the slightest desire either to destroy or to absorb that population. As far as we are concerned, it can continue to be British if it so wishes.

“We have offered to sign a treaty which would embody all the safeguards and rights that those individuals might wish and which would be registered with the United Nations and jointly guaranteed by the United Kingdom and Spanish Governments.” [1747th meeting, paras. 122 and 123.]

122. On this occasion, I should in fact also remind Mr. Stewart, the United Kingdom representative, of the thousands of British subjects who are living in Spain. However, this is not the problem. The problem now is whether the United Kingdom is or is not prepared to comply with the General Assembly resolutions. What does resolution 2429 (XXIII) say among other things? Operative paragraph 3 reads as follows:

“Requests the Administering Power to terminate the colonial situation in Gibraltar not later than 1 October 1969.”

123. Today is 22 September and the deadline of 1 October is very close, so we shall postpone any further comment for the time being. We wish to give every opportunity and, although the date is near, we hope that the United Kingdom will live up to its responsibilities as a founding Member of the United Nations and will comply with the resolutions of the Organization it helped to create. If it were to refuse even to negotiate, we believe that this Organization might be doomed.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*