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AGENDA ITEM 8

Adoption of the agenda (*continued*)

1. The PRESIDENT: Before I call on today's first speaker in the general debate, I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the items which it included in its agenda yesterday afternoon [1764th meeting] namely, the items under the title "Question of general and complete disarmament" and "Question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons". The Assembly decided that those items should be numbered 29 and 30 respectively, and that all items after item 30 should be renumbered. However, in the official allocation of the various items to the Main Committees after the adoption of the agenda on 20 September [1758th meeting], and in a number of documents already issued, the existing item numbers have been used. For these technical reasons, a renumbering of the items would be inexpedient. The Assembly may wish, therefore, to list the item "Question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons" as item 104. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly approves this technical change.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (*continued*)

2. Sir Seewoosagur RAMGOOLAM (Mauritius): Madam President, first let me join with other delegations and offer you my warmest congratulations on your election to the high office of President. I can say with pride that this is a tribute to you, to your country and to the whole of Africa which you have served with so much distinction and devotion, without being unmindful of other nations of the world. You are the second distinguished lady to assume this high office and I am confident that your experience in public affairs and your loyalty to the cause of freedom,

justice and world peace will be an asset in the deliberations of this Assembly.

3. I should also like to express my grief and sorrow at the death of the former President of this Assembly, Mr. Emilio Arenales, to whom we will all remain indebted.

4. In a world of so much goodwill and understanding where people can live in freedom, peace and plenty, it is a paradox that in the Middle East, in Viet-Nam and in Africa there are interminable conflicts bringing ruin and misery in their trail to millions of innocent human beings. It is in the interest of all nations that these conflicts come to a speedy end. On the war in the Middle East my country abides by the resolution of the Security Council, which provides a sufficient basis for negotiations for an honourable settlement between the United Arab Republic and Israel. As to Viet-Nam, let us all hope and pray that better counsels will prevail, putting an end to a most bitter and fratricidal war. But peace in those regions cannot come by itself and the big Powers like the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America should make fresh attempts towards peace.

5. Mauritius, which has been a Member of the United Nations for only about eighteen months, has pledged its unreserved support to this world Organization in its efforts to bring about freedom and justice among all nations.

6. It is felt at times that the United Nations is not doing enough towards peace in the world or that it is moving too slowly in that direction. No human venture can be faultless, and one must not be over-critical. In all fairness, it would be no exaggeration to say that if there had been no United Nations twenty-four years ago the whole world might well have been plunged into chaos.

7. I should like here to place on record the magnificent work done by the Secretary-General, U Thant, who has unceasingly striven to end all racial and political conflicts.

8. The Charter of the United Nations will stand in history as a great monument of human endeavour. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations next year should project the message enshrined in the Charter and make more widely known, especially to the younger generation, the numerous activities of the United Nations and its family. All efforts in that direction have been warmly supported in my country, and it is our earnest hope that this increase of knowledge everywhere will serve to open the eyes of many in this era where interdependence is no longer a metaphysical concept, but a reality. The objective of universality which is one of the main goals of the Charter must not be overlooked, and in the case of China, for instance, my delegation is of the view that the Chinese mainland, represented by Peking,

should take its rightful place as a Member of the United Nations, but not to the exclusion of Formosa, which also has a right to life as an independent nation. That is why Mauritius abstained on that issue at the twenty-third session of the General Assembly [1724th meeting]. We feel that both the mainland and Taiwan should be represented in the United Nations. It is our hope that a solution will soon emerge.

9. Madam President, the name of your country suggests freedom and liberty. It is therefore fitting that you should be in the chair at a time when we are preparing to celebrate the tenth anniversary of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) embodying the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Without being over-critical of our friends who have been great colonial Powers, we regret that there are many nations in the world still under colonial rule with its degradation and economic and social backwardness. Colonialism has always been tied up with social injustice and racial discrimination, which today has come to endanger world peace. The concept of coexistence which in our country is a reality, and which we have always advocated, does not seem to have a place among many nations.

10. The *apartheid* régime of South Africa, for instance, is repugnant to human dignity and can only foster hatred and unrest. Man must be free and my country unreservedly condemns any form of society that denies human beings their basic rights. The illegal régime of Southern Rhodesia is another glaring example which has deeply aroused the conscience of the civilized world. Mandatory sanctions which have been applied have not been encouraging because the colonial Powers in the immediate neighbourhood have refused to co-operate.

11. The case of the Territories under Portuguese administration is another grave concern to Africa and there will always be misery and loss of human lives as long as colonial rule persists.

12. Still, in that same area where colonialism is fighting its last stand, we have the case of Namibia, which used to be called South West Africa. The responsibility of the United Nations as a successor to the League of Nations cannot be evaded, but it is also the duty of all of us here to lend our support to end this trespass by South Africa so that Namibians may finally breathe in freedom and peace.

13. These to my mind are the main currents of colonial policies adopted by many Powers. Why do they not want to withdraw gracefully from the territories they have occupied for centuries? At times it was advanced by them that the peoples of those territories were not ready to assume independence; at other times it was said that those territories were economically backward and not viable. On either ground, they have forfeited their right to continue to maintain their rule because after centuries of colonial rule they have failed on all counts.

14. Colonial Powers should no longer invoke the principle that the affairs of Territories under their rule are purely their internal affairs. The time has passed for such a concept; and they should voluntarily divest themselves of their political rule without necessarily impairing their cultural links.

15. It is our belief that the United Nations machinery could help towards a smooth transition to freedom in those countries, but new ways and means of doing so will have to be found.

16. It might be suggested, for example, that the Trusteeship Council, over which you have so ably presided, Madam President, could be given a new form of life and invigoration. Bringing these colonial Territories under the protective wings of the Council and preparing them for their independence would give to one of the principal organs of the United Nations a new *raison d'être*.

17. We have always adhered to the principle of self-determination, but we must not overlook the basic fact that the exercise of this fundamental right must be free to be effective and fruitful; for it is almost impossible for a slave to vote for his own freedom. Colonial Powers, for the preservation of their rule, divide the countries under their jurisdiction horizontally and vertically, thus making a free choice by the people a farce. Freedom is indivisible, to my mind, and one does not vote for one's freedom with a rope around one's neck. A nation should assume freedom without any limitation.

18. I shall now turn to another subject which is of the highest importance in this century, and we are grateful to the delegation of Malta, an island like Mauritius, for raising this question of the sea-bed and the ocean floor. The ocean is a vast expanse and great patience and perseverance are needed, since so many nations seem to have different views on the subject: for instance, views range from 3 miles to 200 miles on the exact line of the ocean floor which lies beyond the limits of territorial jurisdiction. The immense potential of cheap nutritious food should be made available to all nations in order to supplement their requirements. The vast ocean bed should be exploited for the benefit of all mankind, and not merely for the benefit of those Powers that are in a position, either technologically or economically, to exploit its abundant mineral, animal and vegetable resources. It is also to be remembered that the exploitation of the sea-bed must be essentially for peaceful purposes, and is not to be put to military purposes by great Powers. I therefore appeal in a most earnest manner to the industrialized Powers to lend their most co-operative support to the progress of the work of the sea-bed Committee.¹

19. Linked with that is the question of human environment. We are very grateful to Sweden for having brought that very important problem into the limelight.

20. I now come to the problem of economic and social development, which is preoccupying the minds of all nations. The First United Nations Development Decade is now almost over, and preparations for the second one are under way. Mauritius welcomed the idea of last year's session of the General Assembly to set up a Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade [resolution 2411 (XXIII)] to elaborate a strategy of development for that Decade, to be launched at the end of next year. As a member of that Committee, Mauritius has participated actively in its work, and very soon the first interim report will be presented to the Assembly.

¹ Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction.

21. The First Decade has not fulfilled everyone's aspirations and it is to be hoped that the second one will bring us nearer to the goal we all have in view. Otherwise, the divisions between the third world, to which we belong, and the rich countries will continue to increase. The gap between the developed and the developing countries must therefore be bridged at all costs, or at least considerably reduced to avoid further frustration.

22. This is neither the place nor the moment to be technical, but it might still be helpful at this stage to remind the Assembly of a few basic problems facing the developing countries. First of all, most of our economies are based on trade in primary products. In the case of Mauritius, it is cane sugar, of which we are one of the oldest producers. Unless we obtain a better quota and a remunerative price for our product, we cannot hope to survive. This is also true of many other countries in many other spheres. The need for commodity agreements therefore made itself felt a few years ago, and developing nations will welcome a stabilization of prices in order to plan their economies ahead instead of relying on aids which at times are not forthcoming.

23. Another serious problem confronting developing countries like Mauritius is the demographic explosion, with which is also associated large-scale unemployment. We believe that the doors of countries which do not have over-population problems and which, on the contrary, lack manpower should be opened to emigrants from the over-populated areas of the world. Population mobility should be increased and must not be confined to a particular race or colour.

24. Another need of the day is intensive diversification of agriculture to provide additional employment to people seeking work. The United Nations must undertake proper economic and social surveys in order to determine the available potential resources, both human and material; and economic organizations such as the World Bank should finance the implementation of such findings, for the developing countries themselves are not in a position to provide all the funds essential for their development. We all know that developing countries, in their economic and social development, find themselves in great difficulties in the financing of their projects.

25. The World Bank is doing fine work, but its loans cover only certain projects which it considers viable and which would give sufficient returns; developmental projects therefore become restricted because of the high rates of interest. More soft loans are required to build up the infrastructures or to carry out projects which can be productive only on a long-term basis. It is unfortunate, however, that this kind of financing suffers from a paucity of available funds. Richer countries should therefore contribute more towards such organizations as the International Development Association so that more financial resources may be made available for that category of projects.

26. On the whole, therefore, in the decade to come we should expect from the developed countries more commitments derived from a political will; in return, the developing countries, including Mauritius, will be in a better planning position to obtain the optimum results from their

natural resources. In this connexion we welcome the statement made here by Mr. Maurice Schumann, Foreign Minister of France [1763rd meeting], to the effect that the percentage of the gross national product that the developed countries have been devoting to development aid remains insufficient.

27. There is another matter, relating to the younger generation, which I feel it my duty to mention here. The state of unrest among today's youth is symptomatic of a sense of frustration. During the twenty-third session of the Assembly, Mauritius was one of the co-sponsors of a resolution [2447 (XXIII)] requesting a study of the education of youth, and recalling the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples [resolution 2037 (XX)]. The youth of today will be the leaders of tomorrow. It is therefore the duty of all the States of the world to help towards a fuller participation of young people in the different spheres of society.

28. Those are some of the points which have occurred to us and which we submit for consideration by the United Nations. I am confident that in an atmosphere of better understanding there will emerge more friendliness among nations. We all, as Members of the United Nations, have a duty to perform and we must all participate so as to demonstrate clearly that human brotherhood is not a mere phrase. The whole United Nations family, working in a better spirit of co-operation, may then fulfil our most earnest hope that the day will come when man will be one and peace will prevail.

29. Mr. MARTIN (Argentina) (*translated from Spanish*): Madam President, it is a matter of particular satisfaction to my delegation that our deliberations are being presided over today by a woman of such outstanding merits and one who, at the same time, represents Africa, whose new States have contributed so much to the present shape of this Organization. On behalf of the Argentine Government, and personally, I wish first of all to congratulate you on your election to the highest office in the General Assembly. We are confident that you will carry out this difficult task successfully, for we are aware of your background and your vast experience of the United Nations.

30. I wish also to pay a tribute to the memory of Dr. Emilio Arenales Catalan, a Latin American who, while still young, had attained the highest posts both in his own country and on the international stage, and who presided over the work of General Assembly at its last session with so much tact and impartiality. His premature death has deprived the international community of one of its most outstanding figures.

31. The Argentine Republic wishes once again to reaffirm its deep faith in the principles which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The sovereign equality of States, the self-determination of peoples, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without racial, religious or any other form of distinction, respect for the territorial integrity of States, non-intervention and international co-operation constitute the basic rules of an international order designed to ensure peace among nations. My own

country bases its international conduct on these principles, for it believes that unqualified observance of them by all Members of this Organization is the sole guarantee for lasting peace and international harmony.

32. The United Nations has played a key role in preventing, thus far, the outbreak of a generalized war. The process of decolonization—an achievement of the Organization—which has given to the quarter-century following the Second World War one of its most outstanding features, has been carried out in accordance with the Charter and with the determined co-operation of the majority of Member States. I feel it my duty to stress the constant support given to this process by the Latin American countries.

33. The programmes of technical and educational assistance, the studies sponsored by the Organization and the international co-operation which it promotes through an extensive system of specialized agencies are also achievements which justify the faith placed in the United Nations by countries, such as my own, whose will to co-operate in the common task remains intact. However, the world situation this year does not seem any more encouraging than it was at the previous session. In the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General paints an alarming picture, and opens with a sentence which sums up the gravity of the present moment: "During the past twelve months, the deterioration of the international situation, which I noted in the introduction to the annual report last year, has continued." [A/7601/Add.1, para. 1.]

34. Argentina is following with deep concern the deterioration of the situation in the Near East, where present tensions could at any moment unleash a war with major and irreparable consequences. This disturbing situation, with its successive crises, affects the authority of the United Nations and, in particular, of the Security Council.

35. We are aware of the complexity of the problem; we know what legacies of the past and passions of the present are constantly weighing upon the populations concerned and their leaders. We are, however, convinced that nothing can be gained unless the facts are faced; we are absolutely convinced that only a true act of political will can open up prospects of peace for the Middle East, and this act must be strict compliance with Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967. Argentina, then a member of the Security Council, worked with zeal and hope, first to achieve a cease-fire and then in the drafting of a resolution that might make it possible to eliminate the real and deep-seated causes that had led to the conflict.

36. The situation in Viet-Nam, where the glimmerings of peace have been extinguished by the recrudescence of the struggle, shows no signs of improvement either. The Paris talks go on without apparent progress or prospects of change. Yet we must emphasize that the measures recently adopted by the Government of the United States increase our hopes that the atmosphere of negotiation can be improved, and that seems to be the only possible way of solving this tragic conflict.

37. Although the problems I have mentioned are allegedly localized, they are involving powers from outside the region and are endangering the security of all States.

38. In Latin America we witnessed very recently the development of a situation which brought two neighbouring countries into confrontation. Fortunately, as happens in our region, which has always been noted for the exemplary way in which it has been able to settle disputes, the rule of law and the spirit of the inter-American agreements drawn up in OAS ultimately prevailed.

39. Through the frank and determined co-operation of the Governments concerned, peace and harmony were restored, although economic problems still remain which not only affect the countries directly involved in the dispute, but, because of their nature and extent, also concern and affect Latin America as a whole. We shall have to spend some time on these problems because of their implications for our people and for the world. We trust that what has been achieved so far in dealing with this dispute will provide the basis for a final settlement. However, we are aware that if this problem is to be completely solved, methods of improving the economic situation of these countries must be devised.

40. I should like to sound another note of hope in my review of international affairs. The untiring efforts of His Holiness Pope Paul VI for peace, his dramatic and fervent championing of the equality of men—the essence of Christianity—and his condemnation of discrimination and prejudice on account of differences in race, belief and wealth, give invaluable support to the Organization's efforts.

41. Of the Supreme Pontiff's many activities, I must stress the importance of his historic visit to Africa. In that continent the Holy Father's message met with a wide response and symbolically affirmed the universal brotherhood of man. But we deplore the fact that in part of that same continent a pitiless struggle still rages which has claimed thousands of victims through military action or hunger. My Government fervently hopes that wisdom will prevail in this conflict between brothers and will bring about the peace and progress the continent deserves.

42. Unsettled regional disputes, ideological strife and frustration all give rise to acts which affect the entire international community. We observe with increasing anxiety the commission of acts which threaten the safety of air transport and gravely compromise world public order. I refer to the frequent hijacking of aircraft by violent means and to other forms of illegal interference with international civil aviation.

43. Argentina was a sponsor of a proposal in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which culminated in a weaker resolution than it had in mind. That recommendation and the provisions of the Tokyo Convention,² which will come into force on 4 December this year, are the only instruments available for combating what has come to be known as "air piracy". For this reason, my delegation will support any proposal for a study of this problem that may be put before the General Assembly.

44. Argentina accepted the invitation to become a member of the enlarged Committee on Disarmament with

² Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, signed at Tokyo on 14 September 1963.

the firm intention of collaborating in the search for substantive agreements on one of the gravest problems of our time. I wish to take this opportunity of expressing our thanks to His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Brazil for his remarks regarding our admission to that Committee. We hope to continue to work as closely with his country there as is the tradition in all international bodies of which Brazil and Argentina are members.

45. It is no exaggeration to say that the Committee has before it, in the form of the technical reports and studies already prepared, alarming evidence of the destructive capacity man has created. Since the scientific and technological progress cannot be checked and since the adoption of real disarmament measures has not yet begun, it is not difficult to see that this same reality will worsen in the near future with the development of new and still more powerful weapons and means of destruction.

46. In this connexion, it is only necessary to read the Secretary-General's report on chemical and bacteriological weapons³ to appreciate how terrifying the prospects are. My country repudiates the use of such weapons in any circumstances whatsoever.

47. The Committee is, therefore, faced with two equally urgent problems: one is to slow down the arms race and prevent the appearance of complex arms systems which can only make the "balance of terror" more precarious, and the other is the pressing need to go beyond such "non-armament" measures and to promote really meaningful agreements with a view to securing substantial and general arms reductions.

48. My Government welcomes the efforts so far made by the Committee on Disarmament, but of course realizes that the progress made has been on collateral matters which have only an indirect bearing on this basic issue. We must not lose sight of the fact that the Committee's goal is general and complete disarmament under strict international control. The recent increase in its membership will undoubtedly give a new impetus to the search for suitable ways of achieving that objective.

49. During the last two years, the General Assembly has been dealing with the question of the sea-bed and the ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. My country attaches particular importance to this subject and intends to continue participating in the work of the competent bodies in order to contribute to the establishment of an international régime which, while duly respecting the legitimate rights of the coastal States, will ensure a rapid expansion of scientific research in the areas outside national jurisdiction, the use of those areas for exclusively peaceful purposes and the exploitation of their resources for the benefit of mankind as a whole, bearing in mind particularly the needs of the developing countries.

50. I have already spoken of the Organization's work in the field of decolonization. Although it was on the African continent that its most resounding successes were achieved, it is also on that same continent that it is now being

threatened with its greatest failures. The case of Namibia not only attests to the persistence of an intolerable colonial situation, but is also a threat to the authority of the whole Organization. I do not need to list the resolutions subsequent to General Assembly resolution 2145 (XXI) which have gone unheeded. The latest development is that the resolution adopted this year by the Security Council [*resolution 264 (1969)*] seems also to have fallen on deaf ears. My country contends that the resolutions of the Security Council cannot be disregarded by signatories to the Charter.

51. The situation in Southern Rhodesia has been aggravated by the adoption by the illegal régime of a constitution based on the principle of racial inequality. I wish, incidentally, to reiterate our categorical condemnation of all forms of racial discrimination, which we regard as a retrogressive manifestation without whose elimination no attempt at peaceful international coexistence can succeed.

52. Since 1966 my country has strictly implemented the sanctions imposed on Rhodesia by Security Council resolutions 232 (1966) and 254 (1968). We realize that the effect of the sanctions which have been applied has not been as rapid as could have been wished, but we are confident of their final success and consequently welcome the activities of the Committee set up under Security Council resolution 253 (1968).

53. In this case—and this has been reiterated in a number of resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council—we consider that the responsibility for resolving the colonial situation rests first and foremost with the administering Power. Year after year, we have expressed our concern, and do so again, at the lack of change in the decolonization process in Angola, Mozambique and so-called Portuguese Guinea.

54. Almost ten years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [*resolution 1514 (XV)*], we reaffirm our conviction that the process of decolonization must be fully and inexorably implemented. It is for this reason that my country is following the work of the Special Committee of Twenty-Four very closely and is giving this Committee its firm support.

55. In the introduction to his annual report, the Secretary-General refers to colonial problems involving conflicting claims to sovereignty. He states:

"Here, too, the United Nations can play an important role in helping to achieve the objectives laid down in the Declaration, but only if it receives the full co-operation of the Governments concerned." [*A/7601/Add.1, para. 172.*]

56. In the three cases of this kind which have been discussed in the United Nations, the questions of the *Islas Malvinas*, Gibraltar and Belize, there are two similarities: the administering Power is the same, and the other States involved have expressed their willingness to negotiate. Although the approach to negotiation has differed in each case, we regret to say that in none does a final solution seem very close.

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

57. Every year from this rostrum my country repeats that it is a primary objective of its foreign policy to ensure the full exercise of its sovereignty over the Islas Malvinas, a sovereignty based on legitimate rights with which this Assembly is fully familiar.

58. Operative paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) reaffirms the principle of territorial integrity. Argentina has advocated, and will continue to advocate, full compliance with that principle.

59. We repeat what we have already said many times before, namely, that if we treat our dispute strictly in accordance with the terms of resolution 2065 (XX) and if the United Kingdom agrees to consider this question without prejudice, taking full account of the material conditions prevailing in the Islas Malvinas, it will be easy to find a definitive solution which will also satisfy the population of the islands and safeguard their interests. As the Assembly is aware, my country has continued the negotiations which were initiated with the United Kingdom following the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 2065 (XX) concerning the question of the Islas Malvinas, and it hopes to be able to report to the Assembly on the progress of these negotiations during the present session.

60. One of the characteristics of our time is the sincere desire of men and peoples to reach a social and economic level which would fully meet their needs and open up new prospects of material and cultural progress, free of individual restrictions or privileges.

61. It is well known that the last few decades have seen a rapid widening of the gap between the advanced and the less developed countries. Despite the impressive scientific and technical progress which we have witnessed during these years, it can be established that two thirds of the human race have remained untouched by its benefits and are struggling with illiteracy, hunger and disease. It is one of the moral and social obligations of our time to rectify this deficiency by legal and economic measures leading to a better distribution of the fruits of technical civilization among individuals and peoples.

62. Argentina is gratified that the United Nations, through some of its organs and specialized agencies, has already considered this problem of the transfer of scientific and technical knowledge from the more advanced to the less advanced countries. As we are well aware of the vital importance of this development for harmonious economic and social growth, we have established bodies at the national level to co-ordinate all activities in science and technology, administration and policy-making being centralized in the recently established National Council for Science and Technology.

63. Despite the efforts being made both nationally and internationally to close the gap which technological progress has created between the highly developed and the developing countries, we must emphasize, as before, that no positive results can be achieved unless a solution is first found to the problem of the economic dependence of the latter countries on the former.

64. It is well known that a common characteristic of developing nations is their heavy dependence on other

countries. Latin America, for example, has to finance its industrial and technical development from the sale of a small number of raw materials which constitute the bulk of its exports and which are purchased by a small group of buyers. It is these buyers who are ultimately in a position to establish prices and methods of payment, and their action therefore has a decisive influence on the possibilities of growth throughout the continent.

65. This vulnerability and external dependence of the developing countries' economies have, as their logical consequence, the need for international co-operation in the regulation of foreign trade and the responsibility of those countries and regions which exert a greater influence on account of their larger share of world trade. Unfortunately, international trade is passing through a critical period as a result of restrictive trends in the policies of the developed States and their regional organizations. The progress of the developing countries is being unjustly delayed as a result of high customs duties, prohibitive import surcharges, quotas and other non-tariff and para-tariff barriers, overt and covert export subsidies, purported health regulations which do not always correspond to scientific standards and are not objectively applied, and the permanent threat of new restrictions.

66. Facts of this kind, which are difficult to refute, make it clear that an improvement in trading conditions is more important to these countries than the receipt of assistance, necessary though this may be as a complementary factor. The improvement in these conditions should take two forms, firstly, remunerative prices and access to markets for commodities, and secondly, opportunities for imports of manufactures from developing countries. This is the only way in which we can break the vicious circle and finance the industrial development of our countries from our own resources.

67. The experience gained during the First United Nations Development Decade shows that the modest objectives established in General Assembly resolution 1710 (XVI) have not been achieved. Argentina is aware of the complexities of the problems which will have to be faced in the next ten years and has therefore participated actively, and intends to continue to do so in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade on the preparation of a global development strategy, a task which is now in progress and on whose satisfactory accomplishment the success of the decade of the seventies must largely depend.

68. My Government informed the Secretary-General of its views at the beginning of this year, and at the three previous sessions it expressed its opinions very clearly on the establishment of global and sectoral objectives and on the policy measures which it considered necessary for their attainment. It is important that the Preparatory Committee should not slacken the efforts it has been making. We consider, indeed, that the time for statements has now passed in the Committee's work and that it should now embark on the stage of negotiations on policy measures.

69. With respect to financial co-operation, we think that it is necessary to modernize the concepts and methods hitherto used. The flow of public and private international

resources to the developing countries is not sufficient to supplement the domestic investment designed to reduce the income differences between the different groups of countries which make up the world community. Arrangements must be found which will ensure the continuation of aid and compensatory financing, but on terms compatible with the payment capacity of each country. This will avoid the paradox of the need to finance external financing.

70. We contend that aid should not be subject to political conditions, since this accentuates inequalities and discrimination. We also believe that the steps taken by the large countries to improve their balance of payments position should not be to the detriment of the less developed countries.

71. In granting loans to developing countries, the international financial bodies should adopt a more flexible attitude with regard to the use of such funds for the purchase of local industrial products, since the price margin for the granting of preference to such products is very small. It would be desirable for the World Bank to increase the margins for these countries, since this would have the result of increasing their industrial capacity.

72. Compensatory financing and the flow of private capital are additional means of expansion which benefit all the parties concerned. Recognizing the reciprocal benefits, we support the idea that, as part of a new policy of co-operation, the developing countries should, in their turn, assist the least developed countries among them. To the extent of its possibilities and in a wide range of fields, the Argentine Republic constantly practises this type of co-operation.

73. As the Assembly is well aware, there is another subject to which our Government attaches high priority, namely, multilateral aid. The Argentine Republic has submitted a proposal to convert the present World Food Programme into a truly effective instrument for the elimination of hunger through the establishment of a world food fund. Changes in current bilateral programmes and the World Food Programme should be largely based on multilateral solutions that will not damage the trade of the efficient exporting countries.

74. Men cannot be subordinated to things. For that reason, recalling the words of His Holiness Pope Paul VI, we should not reduce the number of guests at the banquet of life but rather increase the food on the table. Today, given technological progress and the resources of economic organization, man has it within his power to eliminate malnutrition for once and for all. Instead of using the negative approach of birth control, we advocate the positive approach of increasing production.

75. I am certain that all the Governments represented here are aware of the need for a change in the standards that govern political, economic and financial relations among States, a change which should be carried out jointly and peacefully and should meet the imperative need for the economic and social transformation of the modern world. Only thus will we be able to achieve the aims of the Charter drawn up at San Francisco.

76. Consequently, my Government attaches particular importance to the Draft Declaration on Social Progress and

Development [A/7643]. Our purpose in taking this initiative was to contribute to international co-operation in the social sphere. We regret the various amendments submitted to the original draft, particularly in matters relating to social policy, since they are not in keeping with the spirit of the proposal and are not universally accepted.

77. So far as the Argentine Government is concerned, it has embarked on a process of change with a view to promoting the welfare and security of its people, a process being brought about by methods adopted in the belief that domestic effort is the key to the achievement of these goals. Much hard work has been directed to this end with the result that there has been a substantial increase in the gross national product, an equally significant increase in domestic investment, a better distribution of income, and a monetary stability which led to the application to Argentina of Article VII of the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund and to the initiation of some major public and social projects. During this period our educational, health, social welfare and housing facilities have been considerably improved.

78. At the regional level, Argentina continues to play an active role in implementing the principles that led to the foundation of the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA) and in drawing up new instruments for mutual assistance and co-operation in the region.

79. On 23 April 1969, the River Plate Basin Treaty was signed in the city of Brasilia to record the determination of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay to co-ordinate their efforts to achieve the physical integration and the harmonious and balanced development of one of the potentially richest regions in the world. The Argentine Republic, in whose capital this process was initiated, pledges its full support for the attainment of the goals of the Treaty.

80. The River Plate Basin Programme has many aspects, all of the utmost importance for the future of the region. Among these the Argentine Government attaches particular importance, together with the study of technical problems, to the conclusion of a legal instrument to govern the rational and equitable use of water resources. Since the rivers form the backbone of a water basin such as that of the River Plate, it is essential that their waters should be used for the benefit of all the riparian countries in accordance with a policy of regional solidarity.

81. The United Nations was founded in the last days of the Second World War to safeguard international peace. After nearly twenty-five years of rapid change and historic achievements, our faith in the Organization has not faltered. But if we genuinely wish to perfect the institution which brings us together, it is necessary to be completely frank. I must therefore say that certain practices must be changed, if we are to prevent the United Nations from being relegated to second place in the interplay of the major political and economic factors of today's world.

82. In the political field, we feel obliged to point out that the principles underlying and inspiring the Charter of the United Nations are sometimes forgotten, and that some resolutions of the Organization are not implemented. We

have only to study the agenda of the present session to realize that some of the most important issues in the world today are not being submitted for our consideration.

83. The United Nations can be only what its members decide that it should be. The great Powers bear the heaviest burden in this respect because of the responsibilities devolving on them as a result of their vast resources and political influence. But agreements between them will not suffice unless they serve as a foundation for erecting a structure of peaceful coexistence which must take the interests and opinions of the smaller countries into account. If we do not view the problem in this light, there is a risk that those very foundations of peace so far achieved, foundations which we believe to be solid, will be undermined and endangered.

84. From its beginnings in 1945, the Organization has grown into a large administrative machine, entrusted with a programme in which important questions are too often combined with others that are less important or that do not require the dedicated attention of an Organization of this calibre. An analysis of the programmes and projects in progress justifies our concern: we find matters that have dragged on from session to session, having been taken up and shelved owing to lack of interest or the impossibility of finding a solution, others that are of a purely academic character with no apparent practical prospects; the duplication of activities with other international organizations in spheres in which they possess specific competence; important questions left in abeyance through lack of agreement between the blocs and spheres of influence which are notoriously active in this field.

85. In this attempt at constructive criticism, we wish to express our concern at the increase in the Organization's budget in the last few years, which does not seem to have led to a corresponding improvement in international co-operation or to concrete results of benefit to Member States. We are also concerned that organizations set up to deal with important problems are on the verge of financial collapse.

86. My country will not support the establishment of new international bodies unless there is evidence that they are useful for the purposes of co-operation and necessary as a means of directing the efforts of members of the international community. Nor shall we support any programme that does not hold out definite promise or that does not faithfully reflect the spirit and stature of the United Nations.

87. We consider that a careful review of the budget is both necessary and urgent in order to reduce its total, not only through the cancellation of programmes that are not demonstrably practical and appropriate, but also through an overhaul of the actual machinery of the United Nations.

88. The smaller Powers have to make very heavy outlays in relation to their financial capacity both for the payment of contributions to international bodies and for other forms of co-operation.

89. We are all certain that the headlong speed of scientific and technological progress will be maintained during the

next few years. It is difficult to foresee the precise form of its enormous impact on social and political structures, both domestic and international, but easy to appreciate its magnitude. For the moment, what is clear is that the technological revolution of our times faces us with the imperative need to extend its benefits to the vast masses living on the margin of that revolution and also to enable the developing countries to share in the wealth and to utilize the resources of this science and technology that we consider revolutionary.

90. This is the only orderly, progressive and fruitful way to modernize our structures effectively. If we are not prepared to adopt this course, we shall have to face the possibility of violence, with the frustration, suffering and failures it entails.

91. The United Nations is confronted with a vital task: that of establishing conditions to ensure that the impending change can take place peacefully through close international co-operation. Unless the United Nations appreciates the scope of the responsibility involved in this task, the fate of mankind may pass all too soon into the hands of those who are more impatient and less mature. In the light of the guiding principles that inspired its foundation and which are expressed in the admirable Preamble to the Charter, we reiterate our faith in the fundamental values of man and in his transcendent destiny.

92. Mr. HARMEL (Belgium) (*translated from French*): Madam President, may I mention first the generosity of a life which, for the good of all, culminated and was consummated here during the last session of the General Assembly, that of our deceased President, Mr. Arenales.

93. To console his family, the people of Guatemala and all those who knew him, his successor in the presidential chair had to offer new hope. That is what you bring to us, Madam President, by illustrating at one and the same time the eminent role which so many women can play in public life and the substantial contribution of Africa to our Organization.

94. This session of the Assembly is to be the last before the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Charter at San Francisco. That celebration next year either will be marked by ceremonies, recollections and the exaltation of our ideals—and this will already be valuable—or will be a truly fruitful event because we shall have used it as an occasion for reflection, resolution and progress. In that case, we must start preparations immediately and must take advantage of our present session not only to speak frankly but also to act.

95. We are all struck by an indisputable fact which has been mentioned by several previous speakers: the twenty-five years which will soon have elapsed will have witnessed an advancement of mankind accompanied by more changes than occurred throughout several earlier centuries. Like my colleague, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina, we feel that the twenty-five years or so that still separate us from the third millenium of our era will witness the same acceleration of history.

96. Thus the universe changes its dimensions. Thanks to men of science and courage, from this year onwards the

earth will no longer be isolated from the other planets, and on our planet all peoples will live a little closer to each other with each succeeding day. They have the feeling of their interdependence before even gaining an abstract awareness of it. Henceforth we shall live in conditions of ever more intense intermingling of interests, races, religions and political and social systems, thus progressing towards new oecumenical developments. That is why the approach of the twenty-fifth anniversary must find us convinced that the United Nations is more necessary than ever. The question we must ask, however, is whether our Organization, which was conceived twenty-five years ago and built for a world which has undergone considerable changes, is itself changing. Are we really assuming leadership in the movement of the earth towards unity?

97. The continuing evolution of the world should lead us, therefore, to mark this twenty-fifth anniversary by an effort designed to give the United Nations an image in keeping with events. This is equally necessary in the political field, where we must ensure peace by preventing conflict, and in the economic and social fields, where the differences in the human condition between the northern and southern hemispheres are intolerable.

98. In the political field, Belgium sees five kinds of progress which we hope will be achieved in 1970 and to which my country is ready to contribute.

99. The first type of progress that our institution should achieve, of which we are mindful because today it seems more within our reach than before, concerns the regional arrangements and agencies that are mentioned in Chapter VIII of the Charter.

100. At the time the Charter was drafted, every State in Europe was dressing its wounds and was not yet able to think of taking part in regional arrangements. In Africa, Asia and Oceania, most territories either had not achieved independence or else were in a special situation vis-à-vis a European country. Only America already had its present political configuration. At that time, therefore, it was difficult to conceive of the establishment of regional organizations within the United Nations.

101. The founding Members of the United Nations, however, already thought that regional agreements would serve as useful relay points for our world institution and that they could play an essential part in the maintenance of security by guaranteeing peace to each State, by assuming special responsibility for the prevention of conflicts and the reduction of tension, and by offering assistance in situations where internal conflicts arose and where our world Organization would therefore find it difficult to take action. It was thought at the time that such agreements could be applied not only to whole continents but also to smaller regions determined in accordance with the needs. It was thought, too, that, even when the philosophies of the States were different on many points, regional political organizations could effectively solve common problems, beginning with those to which natural configurations and physical interdependence gave rise. Finally, in the last resort, it was thought that such agreements, because of their flexibility, could go so far as to associate in specific actions countries which were not yet Members of the United Nations with those which were.

102. Twenty-four years later, all of that has become more obvious and, consequently, more desirable today when, at least in theory, the States of all continents are equal but are also more aware of their physical and economic interdependence.

103. In this connexion I should like to point to, and commend, the experience of the Organization of American States, the first such organization, which recently was able to settle the armed conflict between Honduras and El Salvador.

104. The same is or will be true with respect to the Organization of African Unity in Africa. A few days ago, the Secretary-General underlined the importance of that organization by taking part in its work. We, for our part, have already, on various occasions, noted how useful the interventions of the Organization of African Unity have been and there is no reason why it should not become an institution that can prevent conflicts in Africa. I should like to point out that it was at OAU's request that the United Nations refrained from taking a position on the tragic conflict in Nigeria. But it would not be possible for the United Nations not to help to remove the obstacles in the way of providing effective help to the civilian population. Solutions must be found to that humanitarian problem during this session. I shall return to this point.

105. On the basis of these two regional experiments, from which, of course, one cannot expect everything, and whose development depends on the political will of the Member States, we are thinking more actively of the possibility of similar experiments for Asia and Europe. In Asia, as Mr. Aichi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, pointed out in his statement [1756th meeting], the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East and the Asian Development Bank are already functioning, but many people are suggesting that there should be arrangements of a more political nature.

106. In this connexion it seems to us significant that both Mr. Brezhnev, in June, and Mr. Rogers, in August, emphasized the value of a collective security system for that part of the world.

107. But be that as it may, stability in South-East Asia, as we have been saying here for four years, requires that the treaty that will put an end to the conflict in Viet-Nam should be accompanied, as in 1954 and 1962, by a regional agreement to which the great Powers and the Asian Powers would accede. Would this not present an opportunity for those same States to undertake to respect the independence and integrity of other States and to renounce the use of force for settling possible disputes?

108. This, of course, raises the problem of continental China; would it take part in such a regional agreement? We must hope so. This might result in progress in another question, namely, whether mainland China will one day become a Member of the United Nations. I should now like to say a few words on that matter. My Government regrets that it is not possible to place the question squarely before the General Assembly, in clear terms. For several years we have spared no effort to attain that goal, but we have not been able to persuade the Assembly of the value of our suggestions and we shall not put them forward again.

109. With regard to the substance of the problem, we continue to think and to act in the conviction that the interests of peace require the adherence of mainland China to our Charter and its presence here as a permanent member of the Security Council. But if the price for the participation of mainland China in our work is the exclusion from the United Nations of another State, a legitimate Member of our Organization, we shall never cease to oppose so unacceptable a requirement, which would do an injustice to a State that we recognize and respect.

110. As far as procedure is concerned, we profoundly regret that during this session we shall once again have to vote on a draft resolution which, in our view, presents the problem wrongly and therefore makes it impossible for our vote to reflect the position of our Government correctly.

111. To revert to the question of regional arrangements, which have already proved their usefulness for three continents, why should we not consider the same question with regard to Europe, which in this century has known so many internal conflicts, has given rise to two world conflagrations and is still the dangerous focus of the opposition between parliamentary democracy and the communist system?

112. We know what has already been accomplished in Europe, however incomplete it may be; we know about our Economic Commission for Europe, the Council of Europe, and the economic organizations such as the Common Market, the European Free Trade Association and the Council for Mutual Economic Aid. On this subject the Foreign Minister of France spoke yesterday [1763rd meeting] about the dynamism of these regional organizations in Western Europe.

113. Can we now go further? Should all Europe seek among all its peoples, whatever their régimes or alliances, regional agreements to reduce tension, limit armaments, increase economic and technical co-operation, and, after a quarter of a century, clear up the problems of Germany and of Berlin?

114. We for our part think that the effort should be made, despite all that has happened in Czechoslovakia to darken the horizon during the past year. There is no shortage of proposals for the reduction of tension in Europe; they come from all sides. For this reason, the Western countries are endeavouring to draw up lists of matters of common interest on which such agreement could be rapidly sought. It is of little consequence that these lists are limited to start with, so long as the political content of the resulting agreements gives concrete evidence of a common will for multilateral co-operation and if we can thus translate into deeds the spirit of Chapter VIII of our Charter.

115. It is along these lines that our efforts will have to be unremittingly directed in 1970, and it is on this condition that the convening of the necessary conferences for the conclusion of such regional agreements can be expedited. We are convinced that such agreements will strengthen the United Nations.

116. The second type of political progress which our Organization can and should achieve concerns the Security

Council and the role of the great countries in it. The example which I shall choose to illustrate this point is the dangerous continuing crisis in the Middle East.

117. I prefer to say nothing about all the acute and disappointing aspects of that conflict; too many incidents, already serious in themselves, are all the more dangerous because of the spirit they reveal and the obstacles that they place along the road to any political settlement.

118. For us, the only hope for peace in the Middle East lies in global negotiation, with the Security Council in the pivotal role. Only the Council is capable of leading the belligerents towards peace.

119. The resolution of 22 November 1967 [242 (1967)] was indeed a remarkable and exceptional event, for by it the Security Council succeeded, unanimously, in laying down the general conditions for an equitable political settlement. Nearly two years have passed since that time, but the Security Council has not been able to work out a programme under which any belligerent that took a first step towards the restoration of peace would have the assurance that the other party would, in turn, take a similar step, and so on, step by step, until all the goals set by the resolution of November 1967 were attained.

120. To this end, the four-Power negotiations suggested by France and, more recently, the conversations between the United States and the Soviet Union constitute, in our view, the only approach by which the Security Council will at last be able to propose to the belligerents the outlines of a fair settlement.

121. Not only is the Security Council in duty bound to prevent the spread of conflicts; it also bears the responsibility for eliminating their causes. Action by the permanent members in this regard is, in our opinion, the counterpart of the specific powers entrusted to them by our peoples.

122. At San Francisco we recognized their power, but we asked them to place that power at the service of peace. If we in the United Nations agreed to States not being given equal treatment, it was not for the purpose of dividing the world into spheres of influence, much less to enable certain States to practise a policy of hegemony with respect to territories beyond their borders.

123. What we all wanted, and what we are banking on in the Middle East crisis and other crises, is that the very large States will propose to the non-permanent members of the Security Council and to the States at the centre of the crisis concrete terms for fundamental agreements that will restore peace to the areas devastated by war and political strife. This, we know, is something they can do; furthermore, in our view, there is no other possibility, no alternative.

124. This is not to deny the specific responsibility of the belligerent States or of the other Members of the United Nations. I wish merely to stress the fact that the responsibilities conferred on the Security Council by all the Members of the United Nations have their natural counterpart in the obligation to support the Council's action.

125. What we expect from the very great countries is that they should show the initiative, imagination, perseverance

and authority without which we should become here a sort of tower of Babel. Today, at the time when the very great States have undertaken essential action, I wish to state that if that action fails, a fatal blow will be dealt to the United Nations, but that if it succeeds the Middle East will not be alone in benefiting from it. By following the only possible direction, the direction indicated by the Charter, we shall be strengthening our Organization to a considerable degree.

126. I should not be frank if I did not say how disappointed I was to note how little convergence there was in the statements made here by President Nixon [1755th meeting] and Mr. Gromyko [1756th meeting]. How can we explain the fact that, forty-eight hours after Mr. Nixon had formally announced the intention of the United States to withdraw all its forces from South Viet-Nam on the sole condition—a legitimate one—that the South Viet-Nameese people retained the fundamental right to determine their future without any foreign interference, Mr. Gromyko could affirm that the aim of the United States is to establish itself politically and strategically in Viet-Nam?

127. We find such statements which cast doubt on intentions disquieting. For how can we believe in the possibility of peace if the protagonists themselves continue to show their lack of understanding of each other?

128. For a long time the United Nations has been convening the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva. We shall certainly not make ironic comments on the slowness of its progress when we remember the important agreements it has drawn up or is preparing. But how are we to explain all these efforts to bring about a reduction of armaments in time of peace if we find it quite natural that no action should be taken to slow down or control deliveries of weapons or ammunition to the opposing parties once conflicts have broken out?

129. We know that this is a difficult problem because clandestine arms traffic is harder to control than deliveries made from State to State; we realize, moreover, that countries that have no arms factories must be able to acquire what they need for their defence.

130. This is nevertheless a real problem which, in the end, can change the dimensions of a conflict. How can we preserve the fiction of the internal nature of conflicts such as that between Nigeria and Biafra when such a war cannot continue or be supplied except through foreign intervention and when, in fact, we are witnesses of a transfer of responsibility at the international level? We have often spoken about this general problem with various European and African colleagues in the light of present examples, and we have become convinced that the United Nations must examine it in all its aspects. Rules and procedures should be laid down enabling the Security Council to decide to control all deliveries of weapons, and especially clandestine traffic, in areas of conflict.

131. Belgium asks the Secretary-General to think about this matter during the present session and to tell us which United Nations bodies would be in the best position to examine it. Belgium, for its part, is ready to subscribe to any international undertaking which might result from such a study.

132. A fourth type of progress, in our opinion, would concern the reprobation and prohibition of everything leading to total war where civilian, non-combatant inhabitants, who often have nothing whatever to do with the conflict, become the victims of war through being starved, prevented from receiving the necessary care or from being evacuated, through being the victims of attacks or of the hijacking or destruction of aircraft, or because bacteriological or chemical weapons are used against them.

133. On several occasions, my Government, like many others, has expressed its concern for the fate of victims of internal conflicts such as the one in Nigeria that I have already mentioned. It notes that, despite the efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross, there is still no agreement making it possible to ensure, in acceptable conditions, the dispatch of help to the civilian inhabitants.

134. Undoubtedly, the difficulties would be more easily overcome if the international conventions were more explicit. The Belgian Government hopes that the studies that the International Committee of the Red Cross will undertake as the result of the resolutions adopted at the Conference at Istanbul⁴ will make it possible to afford to the victims of non-international conflicts the humanitarian protection to which they are entitled.

135. Confronted with two serious and urgent legal problems—assistance to civilian populations in case of internal conflict and the hijacking of aircraft—the Belgian Government will undertake consultations with other Governments, members of all the groups in the United Nations, in order to determine whether the Assembly should not take up these matters forthwith with a view to formulating recommendations. We are also ready to take part in a convention on the cessation of underground nuclear tests, as also a treaty supplementing the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibiting the use of bacteriological and chemical weapons.

136. Lastly, my country thinks that the United Nations could give a fifth proof of its determination not to neglect any possibility for progress. This is in regard to a problem we have already raised here, namely, the relations—at present non-existent except in the case of UNESCO—between our Organization and the hundred or so scientific institutions all over the world that devote themselves to research on the problems of peace.

137. No endeavour in the world, in any field, can make any progress without resorting to research institutions. Why should the United Nations be an exception to that rule? On the one hand, we, the politicians, have been trying for twenty-five years, often by empirical means, to settle conflicts as they occur. Sometimes the United Nations brings about peace, sometimes it does not. There would be much food for thought on the subject of our successes and our failures, but nobody draws lessons from this already considerable experience.

138. On the other hand, many scientists are engaged mainly in two kinds of research: how, by what methods, to prevent conflicts, and how to stop them. They approach these problems, as is right, in a hundred different ways. I

⁴ Twenty-first International Conference of the Red Cross, Istanbul, 6-13 September 1969.

cannot believe that scientific research of such vital interest to us should not claim our Organization's attention.

139. My Government thinks that we would be acting wisely if we asked the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly, every two years, a report summarizing the scientific research programmes that are of interest to the United Nations. The discussion of this report would enable our States to indicate the subjects which are not being dealt with and which they consider essential.

140. If that practice were to be inaugurated on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, we should furnish one more proof—perhaps not a decisive but a characteristic one—of the fact that we do not wish to miss any opportunity to establish a system of relations among States that may prevent conflicts and protect us from them.

141. I should like, Mr. Secretary-General, to avail myself of this opportunity to say once again how impressed we were by the far-sightedness with which you expressed yourself in the introduction to your annual report [A/7651/Add.1]. I do not wish to go into details about your suggestions, but I hope that in our statement today you will find support for the appeal that you addressed to the two largest Members of our Organization for the speedy opening of negotiations on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons, as also for your efforts to promote disarmament and respect for human rights, two subjects to which my country attaches particular importance.

142. So far I have spoken only of the political progress made necessary by the changed dimensions of the world in the past twenty-five years. What can I say about economic and social solidarity among all the regions of the world, and the progress that can be achieved in that respect only by a true world authority that cannot be found anywhere except here?

143. I must first declare with the most ardent conviction, on behalf of my country, that the restoration of a better balance between the wealth of a few countries and the poverty of most of the others is not a problem of generosity but of social justice—that is to say, an absolute duty. The moral and spiritual forces in the world can do much to develop an awareness of this new duty, but we also believe that, in order to solve problems of such tremendous complexity, the bodies responsible for the regulation and distribution of resources will have to come more and more within the orbit of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. It must be recognized that world-wide co-operation in the two inseparable fields of social and economic development will doubtless remain the best fruit of the twenty years of its existence.

144. I should like to say how happy and proud I am that my colleague and friend Mr. Raymond Scheyven, the Belgian Minister for Development Co-operation, has for the second time been elected President of the Economic and Social Council. In his closing statement to the Council [1637th meeting], Mr. Scheyven stated that it seemed to him an excellent thing that that body—and the same is true of the other international organizations—should be alert to new problems such as the human environment, the sea-bed,

pollution, urbanization, demography, technology and science. It is of the very essence of the economic and social role of our Organization that it should progress, not by spectacular initiatives, but by the accumulation of a multitude of modest and patient efforts. Only concerted and creative action can bring about balanced progress.

145. This, unfortunately, is not the place in which to enlarge upon the reflections which this essential chapter of our activities inspires in us. The representative of my country will revert to the subject in the Second Committee, to which the Belgian Government intends to submit two specific proposals: one concerning the action to be undertaken to foster co-ordination at the regional level of the various plans and projects for development and assistance to the developing countries; the other on the need to give greater emphasis in those plans to the processing and marketing of raw materials in the places where they are produced.

146. I have expressed today our opinion about the measures that would give our twenty-fifth anniversary a true significance for the future. I am encouraged in this by the memory of something that happened twenty years ago. It was at Lake Success, during the fourth session of the General Assembly, of which Mr. Romulo, the then President, reminded us from this rostrum this week [1760th meeting]. The dark years of 1948 and 1949 had destroyed most of the dreams of an easy peace and of a harmonious functioning of the United Nations; on the contrary, the tensions and tragedies in Europe and Asia were already leading to intensified rearmament and were so many indications of the crisis which was to culminate in 1950. We were deeply worried, but we went on preparing the future of the United Nations and its further development. It was the time when, twenty years ago almost to a day, we were present at this very spot, but on the naked earth where only bulldozers were in command, for the laying of the foundation stone of the building in which we are now meeting. The plans for this site were on too vast a scale then for the fifty-six Members, but already there were indications of the forthcoming emergence of new independent States and of the progress of the United Nations towards universality. Despite the uncertainties and anxieties, we were building for and looking towards the future.

147. Today, twenty years later, we are in a very different situation: while major catastrophes have been averted, never has the world been in such an explosive state, for never has there been such an accumulation of means for its destruction. Never has the world been in so unstable a situation because of the increasing gap between the resources of the northern and the southern hemispheres; never has the world been more a prey to a kind of universal doubt, which is the superficial result of the fortunate event of the intermingling of peoples who, once they have listened to one another, are no longer to believe that they alone possess the truth.

148. We must dispel these nightmares of fear, poverty and doubt. It is here, not elsewhere, that the earthly hope of a more united mankind must be nourished by deeds: putting an end to the stockpiling of weapons one upon the other and simultaneously reducing part of the atomic arsenals;

developing new regulations on trade and the sharing of resources; and improving, in all parts of the world and in the Security Council, our procedures for the prevention and settlement of conflicts.

149. Thus, modestly but with deep conviction, Belgium is ready to play a practical part in the common effort for what we hope will be a fruitful twenty-fifth anniversary.

150. Mr. WALDHEIM (Austria): Madam President, it is a privilege to convey to you our sincere congratulations upon your election to the highest office of this Assembly. In our forthcoming deliberations we will be fortunate indeed to be guided by a President who, through her long association with the United Nations and international relations, has acquired great experience and a deep insight into the problems and procedures of our Organization.

151. It is also a great personal pleasure for me to express once again the sincere appreciation of my Government to our distinguished Secretary-General, U Thant, for the outstanding devotion and ability with which he has continued to work for the community of nations and the cause of world peace.

152. At the same time, it is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of our past president, the late Mr. Arenales, the Foreign Minister of Guatemala. Like other speakers who have preceded me on this rostrum, I wish to express not only our feelings of mourning but also our high esteem for a man who served the United Nations with such distinction and courage.

153. The establishment of the United Nations coincided with an event of far-reaching consequences: the inauguration of the nuclear age. Ever since, atomic energy, in the form of nuclear weapons, has presented the greatest danger to mankind, and, in the shape of nuclear power for peaceful purposes, has represented mankind's major hope for development and prosperity.

154. When we celebrate the Organization's twenty-fifth anniversary next year we will have witnessed another scientific and technical event of the highest magnitude: man's entry into outer space. The landing of the American astronauts on the moon was indeed an achievement of outstanding significance, not only in the exploration of outer space but in the entire history of mankind. It has won universal admiration.

155. This age which those events have inaugurated—the bridling of nuclear energy and the conquest of outer space—will have to be one of co-operation. It is to the credit of our Organization that it has already focused much of its attention on long-term problems requiring such co-operation—problems which at this time may perhaps not be of an immediately explosive character but which represent potential dangers for the future, unless we succeed now in agreeing on appropriate rules and regulations to forestall such a development.

156. If we look at the agenda of the General Assembly, we detect a considerable number of such items—disarmament, the peaceful uses of outer space and the ocean floor, the problems of human environment, the programmes of economic development, such as the First and Second

Development Decades, with their decisive influence on future economic and political relations, the elaboration of international agreements in the field of human rights.

157. The accent of the General Assembly's work has thus shifted to a certain degree from the old issues of confrontation to items requiring at least co-ordination of policy. From this co-ordination we must now advance to real co-operation—and this I firmly believe will be the central point on which the efforts of this Organization will have to focus during the years to come.

158. In that context the problem of disarmament assumes particular importance. There have been few questions which over so many years have been marked by so much hope and such deep disillusionment, by such devoted effort and by such limited concrete results. Last year, at long last, we were able to achieve a significant breakthrough with the elaboration and endorsement by the General Assembly of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII)*]. From the beginning we supported the conclusion of such a Treaty. Austria has signed and ratified it. Although we recognize that the Treaty is by no means perfect and does not as yet establish a true balance of obligations between the nuclear and the non-nuclear countries, it is our conviction that its conclusion was in the interest of all nations. It is therefore a matter of real regret to us that the Treaty has not yet entered into force. We are disappointed that the two major nuclear Powers, which were so active in its final elaboration, have so far not ratified it.

159. To accelerate further progress in the field of disarmament, the General Assembly last year urged the Governments of the USSR and the United States to enter, at an early date, into bilateral discussions on the limitation of strategic weapons. We regret that these negotiations have so far not taken place. Perhaps our present session will provide a suitable opportunity of initiating these long-delayed conversations and thus, at long last, give impetus to a de-escalation of the armaments race.

160. There are other issues of the disarmament problem which are no less urgent than the ones I have already referred to. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva is continuing its efforts to elaborate a treaty banning underground nuclear-weapon tests, as well as its work on the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons and the demilitarization of the sea-bed. Various proposals have been submitted to the Conference and to this Assembly. We consider an early solution of those problems to be of particular importance.

161. Interrelated with the problem of disarmament is the problem of security. Far-reaching proposals on this question have been made to this Assembly by the Foreign Minister of the USSR [*1756th meeting*]. We shall study them with great care and attention.

162. The increasing international co-operation manifested on a number of long-term questions is unfortunately violently contradicted by the continued existence of open confrontations in many regions of the world.

163. The war in Viet-Nam is continuing. In past years we have expressed from this rostrum our grave preoccupation

with this military confrontation. Time and again we have urged the cessation of the hostilities and a political settlement of the conflict through negotiation. In the light of those considerations we welcomed the fact that both sides to the conflict agreed to meet in Paris for negotiations to end the war. We also welcome the decision of the Government of the United States to discontinue the bombing of North Viet-Nam and to reduce the number of its forces in Viet-Nam as encouraging steps. We hope that all parties will take further measures to de-escalate the war and that the process of military de-escalation will gradually lead to a complete cessation of hostilities and to the restoration of peace.

164. The conflict in Viet-Nam thus shows at least some elements which entitle us to have some hope. But at this time we can, unfortunately, see no encouraging development in the Middle East. On the contrary, it appears that over the past year the positions of both sides have only become more inflexible.

165. In my speech to the General Assembly last year [1692nd meeting] I expressed the concern of the Australian Government that belligerency had not come to an end and that tension along precarious cease-fire lines persisted. We must note today that, as our Secretary-General remarked only recently in the introduction to his annual report [A/7601/Add.1], a virtual state of active war now exists along much of these cease-fire lines. We had hoped that the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967 [242 (1967)] would bring about within a reasonable period a generally acceptable and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis. Unfortunately, those hopes have not been realized. All endeavours inside and outside the United Nations to produce a settlement have so far failed.

166. Austria, which like other Member States provides military observers for the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, will continue to support all United Nations efforts to facilitate a peaceful solution. We support the continuation of the mission entrusted to Ambassador Jarring. We welcome the efforts by the major Powers and hope that they will find an appropriate basis on which Ambassador Jarring's mission can be successfully completed. At the same time, however, we must be aware of the realities of the situation. A lasting solution, we are convinced, can be achieved only if the nations of the area have the wisdom and determination to agree to a settlement of their deep-rooted differences by peaceful means, and if they have the political will to implement it.

167. The two conflicts which I have mentioned are no doubt the two most dangerous conflicts at this time. They are, unfortunately, not the only ones. In several areas of the world, situations of strife and tension persist and new ones are constantly coming into existence. Some of these conflicts may at this time appear less explosive. Yet they all represent potentially hazardous situations which at any time could develop into larger confrontations. There is hardly a major region of the world where unrest and conflict have not flared up.

168. The civil war in Nigeria is continuing into its third year. We know how much suffering has already been caused by this unfortunate conflict. We must feel involved in the

humanitarian aspects of the tragedy. We appeal to both sides to remove all obstacles in the path of international efforts to bring relief and aid to the starving and wounded, regardless of the side to which they belong. We hope that the latest appeal of the Organization of African Unity will have positive results and that its conciliatory efforts to bring about an end to the hostilities will be continued.

169. With regard to the problems of southern Africa, we can only express our distress that since last year's session of the General Assembly this complex and difficult issue has not come any nearer to a solution.

170. The course taken by Southern Rhodesia will lead almost certainly to a further aggravation of the confrontation between world opinion, as represented by this Organization, and the régime in the Territory, which persists in depriving the majority of the population of their inalienable political rights. We support the decisions which the Security Council has taken on the subject and note that the problem is still before the Council.

171. In Namibia the South African authorities continue to refuse to implement the decisions of the United Nations. We cannot but deplore this. Like any other nation, the people of Namibia must be given the right freely to determine their own future.

172. In South Africa the Government, ignoring the relevant resolutions of the United Nations concerning its policy of *apartheid*, has shown no sign of compromise and continues its discriminatory policies. The Austrian Government has time and again expressed its rejection of the concept of *apartheid*—as indeed its rejection of any political concept based on racial, religious or ethnic discrimination. I wish to reiterate this position now in the strongest possible terms.

173. Thus there exists a striking discrepancy between the purposes and goals of the United Nations and the present international situation. This situation, as our Secretary-General stressed recently in the introduction to his annual report [A/7601/Add.1], has deteriorated further during the past year. We can regret this fact, but we must recognize it. In our opinion, it underlines the imperative need for co-operation between all nations, irrespective of their political and social systems; it is necessary on all levels, world-wide, regional and bilateral.

174. To foster such co-operation is indeed in line with the policy of a neutral country. Austria, ever since it re-entered the international scene in 1955 as a fully sovereign and permanently neutral State, has considered—as it will continue to consider—as one of the main objectives of its foreign policy the active promotion of peace, stability and co-operation, particularly in Central Europe, of which it is a part.

175. We have made continuous efforts to settle all problems with all our neighbouring countries through negotiations. In this connexion I should like to report to the Assembly on the developments in the question of South Tyrol during the past year. The Assembly will recall that the question was dealt with in resolutions 1497 (XV) and 1661 (XVI). In those resolutions the General Assembly at

the time urged Austria and Italy to resume negotiations with a view to finding a solution to all differences relating to the implementation of the Paris Agreement of 5 September 1946. The Agreement deals, as is well known, with the status of the German-speaking population of the Province of Bozen.

176. Last year I reported to the General Assembly on the two principal aspects of the problem [1692nd meeting]. The substantive aspect concerns the content of the legislative and administrative measures to be taken by Italy for the purpose of granting to the German-speaking population of the Province that amount of autonomous authority necessary to safeguard the ethnical, economic and cultural development of the South Tyrolean ethnic group. The procedural aspect consists in the necessity of finding a system which will ensure the effective implementation of the above-mentioned measures for South Tyrol. In a series of meetings, at the expert level, it was possible to reach an understanding on a procedure designed to ensure the implementation of the measures envisaged, without prejudice to the respective juridical positions of the two countries.

177. As to the substantive aspect of the problem, I declared at last year's session of the General Assembly that there existed basic agreement on the content of the envisaged autonomy. Differences of opinion have emerged, however, with regard to a number of specific provisions of the measures to be taken for South Tyrol. Thorough efforts have been required to arrive at the necessary interpretations and precise definitions of these differences.

178. The Italian side has now formally made known its position on these unresolved questions. It will be the subject of careful examination, in view of the decisions to be taken on the political level. Obviously the solution as now envisaged can be acceptable to the Austrian Government only if the elected representatives of the minority, in their competent political organs, regard the proposed new autonomy as sufficient and if they accept the substance as well as the procedure of the settlement.

179. For the further development of the problem a constructive approach by all the parties concerned will be of decisive importance. Austria surely will not fail to do its part in this respect. We trust that the Italian Government will also make the contribution necessary for the termination of the dispute between our two countries.

180. Equally, it has been our consistent policy to resolve through negotiations all problems between Austria and its Eastern European neighbours and to achieve and maintain friendly relations with all of them. Let me emphasize, however, that the peaceful co-operation for which, despite recent setbacks, we are all striving can be achieved only if all States respect the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the rule of international law, and the sovereignty, integrity and independence of all nations. Only if all States adhere to those principles can there be hope for a new era of international co-operation.

181. In that connexion the idea of holding a conference on questions of security problems affecting the whole of Europe could become of great importance. My Government has therefore given a favourable reply to the recent initiative taken by the Government of Finland.

182. Europe has suffered throughout history from the lack of unity between its nations and the unending conflicts resulting from it. The challenge of our time and of our future is indeed great. The technical revolution in the age of nuclear energy and the exploration of outer space, the economic and social evolution of the vast developing areas of our world, the maintenance of peace and security in the age of nuclear weapons are tasks which will require the full contribution of all nations, and not least the nations of Europe.

183. I should like to voice the hope that at this hour the nations of Europe will be aware of their responsibilities and opportunities, that they will be able to overcome the barriers of ideology and different political systems and find the common ground on which a policy of co-operation can be based. It is our firm conviction that this will not only be in the interest of the peoples of Europe, but indeed serve the interests of all nations and further the purposes for which this world Organization was created. Austria pledged its full contribution to that effort.

184. The PRESIDENT: I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the representatives of Mauritius, Argentina, Belgium and Austria for the compliments they have paid to me.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.