

United Nations GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records



**1783rd
PLENARY MEETING**

Wednesday, 8 October 1969,
at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

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AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (*continued*)

1. Mr. MORO (Italy):¹ Madam President, allow me first of all to express to you the satisfaction of the Italian delegation at seeing you preside over this Assembly. In you we welcome the representative of a republic of ancient traditions, the interpreter of the will and aspirations of a continent, rich in youthful energies, destined to give new impetus to the development of the international community—a continent with which Italy feels itself linked by ties of friendship and co-operation. To you personally I wish to convey the sincere congratulations of the Italian delegation on your election to the high office entrusted to you. Your profound culture, your vast experience and your great human sensitivity are a guarantee of the success of the Assembly's work.

2. I should also like to pay a sincere tribute to the memory of your illustrious predecessor, Emilio Arenales, who presided over the twenty-third session with such skill and dedication. His passing has left within the great family of the United Nations a sense of deep regret for his exceptional qualities as a politician, diplomat and human being.

3. In the debate which is concluding today there has been a recurring theme: a profound desire for peace, a general longing for just and lasting solutions to the crises which beset the international order. We also share those aspirations. If we are to realize them, we must above all initiate a new and more human system of international relations. In other words, we must solve in an open spirit those problems which for years have caused divisions and disputes, and we must build the future on mutual respect, trust and co-operation among peoples.

4. I have just come from Yugoslavia, where I had the honour of accompanying the President of the Italian

¹ Mr. Moro spoke in Italian. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.

Republic on a State visit to President Tito. That visit represented the culmination of the excellent relations which have developed since the war between two neighbouring countries, between two peoples which, having succeeded in making their real interests prevail over the resentments and the rancours provoked by past conflicts, are now enjoying the fruits of trustful co-operation. Between Yugoslavia and Italy there is practically no frontier. Every day it is open to goods, people and ideas crossing by the thousands in one direction or another. Peace reigns on both shores of the Adriatic.

5. We are acting in the same way with Austria. Indeed, we believe that a solution of the Alto Adige problem is at hand—a solution to which we have devoted all our efforts for years in pursuance of United Nations resolutions. To this end we have also established opportune contacts with the intention of sounding out the reaction of the Austrian Government to the measures to be adopted internally by the Italian Government, on the basis of suggestions of the special committee composed of 19 members established in 1961, under the circumstances and for the purposes mentioned at that time in the General Assembly. Once the dispute has been settled, it will be possible to proceed toward forms of economic and cultural integration also between Italy and Austria.

6. I have referred to the spirit underlying the relations between Italy and these two neighbouring countries simply in order to express the hope that the same desire for peace, the same awareness of the genuine interest of peoples will guide Governments in Europe, the Near East, South-East Asia, Africa, Latin America, wherever conflicts, often bloody, are taking place among and within States.

7. The Italian Government shares the profound anxieties which have been repeatedly expressed from this rostrum, in the face of the dramatic events from which no continent appears, in one way or another, to be immune. Since disorder is so widespread, we must begin the task of building world peace as rapidly and as concretely as possible. In my opinion, this objective must be pursued, in its entirety, with a "global" vision of its multiple ramifications because on this depends not only the balanced development of the international community, but also perhaps the survival of human society itself.

8. In the first place, the development of political relationships, economic life and trade, the growth of communications and of human contacts, the movement of history itself, are bringing out more and more clearly the interdependence of peoples. At the same time the danger is growing of the propagation from one region to another, and from one continent to another, of tensions and conflicts which are exacerbated not only by political and military

interests, but also by racial hatred, hunger, poverty and persistent economic and social injustices. Hence, war cannot be considered solely as the result of a lack of military equilibrium. It is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes which often have not yet been fully explored. A remedy, therefore, which would defend us from the dissemination of weapons, would certainly be very useful but would not be enough. We must therefore identify and eliminate the root causes of war.

9. In the second place, the splitting of the atom, the exploits in space and our great scientific and technological conquests have enormously increased the power of man over nature. We are about to enter a new phase of history. We feel that we must make a great effort to adapt our institutions, our spirits, our concept of international relations to the immeasurable possibilities which today are offered to us by science and technology. Yet we find difficulty in freeing ourselves from the old schemes of power politics and in accepting not only justice, but also disarmament as a requirement of progress itself.

10. The obvious conclusion which is now forced upon us is that, in the face of the threat of a nuclear holocaust, we have only one choice: to create the permanent conditions for peace—in other words, to achieve a peace in which not only military and political crises, but also all the basic problems of the modern world, can gradually find their solutions.

11. Peace-building must therefore acquire new dimensions. This task cannot be reduced to preventing armed conflicts and overcoming the political disputes likely to provoke such conflicts. It involves much more: the gradual reduction of all social, economic and technological “gaps” which operate as factors creating instability and disorder in international life; the conversion of the forces which today threaten us with destruction into instruments of creation, progress and well-being. In short, we must fill the technological and economic gap among and within States and between scientific-technological development and political concepts which are now worn out.

12. It is this integral conception of peace that I should like to suggest as a subject for reflection to the Assembly. This conception embraces the many fields in which the United Nations system is already operating; but it requires a comprehensive design, a more precise awareness of the interdependence which exists among the various tasks of the Organization and therefore new policies and new methods.

13. In this over-all perspective, I should like to explore the general lines along which, to our way of thinking, action for peace should be developed.

14. The first objective is to ensure, in any situation, respect for international legality and for statutory obligations, which consist in the prohibition of the use of force, the safeguarding of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States and the upholding of fundamental human rights.

15. The defence and the consolidation of international legality as a preliminary basis for peace involve two requirements.

16. The first requirement is to have efficient machinery for peace-keeping and security operations available, on the organizational and financial level. I should therefore like to stress the need to give to the work of the Committee of Thirty-Three² the necessary impulse so that constructive conclusions may rapidly be achieved according to the realistic proposals repeatedly put forward by the Italian representative.

17. The second requirement is to ensure, by deepening and clarifying the principles, that the rule of law is upheld in the international order. The Italian Government is therefore fully aware of the importance of a declaration such as that which is being worked out by the Committee entrusted with the study of principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation.³ We are convinced that such a declaration, if it is drafted in unequivocal terms and accepted by all Member States, or at least by a large majority of them, will respond effectively to the requirements of today's international society.

18. The United Nations Conference on the Law of Treaties, concluded in Vienna last May, has undoubtedly made a substantial contribution to the stability of world order. In particular, it has allowed the newly independent States to participate actively in the codification of legal standards which up to now have been left to customary law.

19. Peace presupposes the abolition of all forms of human discrimination. The foundations of peace will therefore remain fragile as long as the myth of racial superiority prolongs the existence of absurd systems of *apartheid* and of colonial régimes.

20. Italy, which has applied and will continue scrupulously to apply the sanctions ordered by the Security Council against the illegal Salisbury régime, is ready to support all realistic proposals which may rapidly and peacefully bring about the establishment of a new, human and democratic order, in southern Africa. In this connexion, we have read with interest the Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa⁴ which was authoritatively presented by the President of Cameroon [1756th meeting] and which, we hope, will not go unheard. In the same spirit we look forward to the completion, in all parts of the world, of that irreversible historical process which requires the elimination of the political and economic structures of colonialism.

21. The elimination of poverty in all its manifestations, without at the same time sacrificing or repressing specifically human values, is one of the most exacting tasks involved in the building of peace.

22. As we in Italy see it, the problems of the economic and social progress of the poor countries must be tackled in a spirit of freedom and mutual respect, as an international development strategy. This strategy requires, on the one hand, the efficient economic and technical co-operation of industrialized countries, through the completion of a number of well planned stages; on the other hand, the

² Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations.

³ Special Committee on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States.

⁴ Subsequently circulated as document A/7754.

developing countries must undertake to adapt their own structures to the requirements of economic development, taking advantage of the possibilities offered by regional programmes and organizing common economic systems. It should be pointed out that the association of the European Economic Community is already moving in this direction, together with the African countries and Madagascar, Tunisia, Morocco and the independent countries of East Africa, Surinam and the Dutch West Indies. The various groupings formed in Latin America are moving in the same direction, as was confirmed at the recent Viña del Mar meeting.⁵ In doing so, they were encouraged and inspired by the continuing process of European economic integration.

23. Today's experience, furthermore, shows that the gradual reduction and the trend towards elimination of the economic gap between the industrialized countries and the countries of the third world is necessary, but inadequate, for the purposes of peace-building. We must also set in motion economic, social and educational systems which translate into terms of real life the basic principles of human dignity, respect for and free expression of the personality, eliminating the dangers of a society inspired solely by criteria of productivity and giving an ideal content to the life of the new generations.

24. The anxiety which even recently the Supreme Pontiff has shown for this problem confirms that it has today become one of the most essential in the modern world. The United Nations cannot fail to contribute to its solution.

25. Disarmament, as I mentioned, is a compulsory choice, imposed by the nuclear reality in which we live. With this conviction, the Italian Government has made and is continuing tenaciously to make its own contribution to the search for and the conclusion of agreements in this sector.

26. In our opinion, collateral measures, such as the Treaty on the partial cessation of nuclear tests,⁶ the space Treaty,⁷ the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of the Nuclear Weapons [*see resolution 2373 (XXII)*] and the drafts of the treaties which are being drawn up concerning the sea-bed and bacteriological and chemical weapons are certainly very important, but they do not yet deal with the crux of the problem, which is the initiation of an effective process of arms reduction. This was clearly seen by the General Assembly which, at its last session [*resolution 2454 B (XXIII)*], recommended the resumption of discussions on programmes of general and complete disarmament.

27. Precisely in response to the General Assembly's appeal, the Italian Government took the initiative at Geneva and, in the form of a specific working document,⁸ submitted a proposal for the discussion of an organic disarmament programme. We aim at the opening of

discussions on a programme which establishes the directives for the inauguration and successive development of the disarmament process. In such a programme, which could form part of a "Disarmament Decade", which the Secretary-General has so brilliantly proposed in the introduction to his annual report [*A/7601/Add.1, para. 42*], we hope to see plans made for the beginning of negotiations on arms reduction, which should constitute the first phase of this process.

28. We are certain that the atmosphere of these discussions will be particularly facilitated by the initiation of talks between the two major nuclear Powers on the limitation of strategic weapons, which could represent the first effective step towards the cessation of the arms race.

29. A determining factor for the continuation of the disarmament negotiations could be the full and complete implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which contains precisely in Article VI an undertaking to conduct such negotiations in good faith and urgently in view of the priority aim of nuclear disarmament.

30. Another important factor which must be considered in the building of peace is the establishment of forms of co-operation which will ensure that all countries benefit from scientific and technological progress in those sectors which open up new and important prospects for the future of mankind—I refer to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, outer space and the sea-bed.

31. I should like to recall that the development of international co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy is a specific objective of the non-proliferation Treaty, an objective on which we are concentrating our efforts since the harmonious co-operation among the nuclear and non-nuclear States will depend on it. The Italian Government has already had an opportunity of expressing its views on this problem during the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States held at Geneva from 29 August to 28 September 1968, whose continuity, we hope, will be assured.

32. With the same aim we have proposed a change in the structure of the executive organ of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is essential if we wish that organization to be able to tackle the new and important tasks which can be entrusted to it in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

33. The utilization of the sea-bed and of outer space must be based on the principles that mankind as a whole must benefit from it and that no exclusive advantage must be appropriated by individual States. Such utilization must, therefore, be regulated by legal institutions which cannot be converted into *de facto* oligarchies and which guarantee all countries equitable conditions of enjoyment.

34. Another aspect of the problem of progress as a factor in peace-building is the protection of the human environment and of basic human resources, particularly in the face of forms of irrational exploitation as a result of technological development and of the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Italy is therefore following with particular

⁵ Meeting of the Special Commission on Latin American Co-ordination, held at Viña del Mar from 15 to 17 May 1969.

⁶ Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water.

⁷ Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies.

⁸ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969, document DC/232, annex C, section 8.*

interest the preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment which, as a result of the Assembly's decision, will be devoted to this problem in 1972 in Stockholm.

35. In submitting my views on ways and means of securing peace I have also, by implication, indicated the programme of action which, I feel, should be followed by our Organization. In order to build peace, it is essential to have a functional United Nations.

36. Unfortunately, the facts still show that our Organization is not yet in a position to fulfil all the hopes that have been placed in it. The system is imperfect, not only because it still lacks the means and the machinery necessary for the constant and vigilant maintenance of peace, and not only because it is passing through a phase of institutional growth, resulting in an inevitable dissipation of effort, but also because it sometimes encounters resistance from Member States which, though often invoking the principles of the Charter, are not always ready to accept them.

37. The Assembly must take appropriate decisions concerning preparations for the twenty-fifth anniversary. Let us seize this opportunity to commit ourselves not only to scrupulous adherence to our statutory principles but also to the quest for more suitable means of attaining the perfection of our system at the institutional, organizational and methodological levels. We now have a chance to evaluate carefully the experience of the past in order to plan for the future and to ensure that the Organization functions more effectively.

38. As regards the second subject for reflection—the strengthening of the United Nations—Italy has contributed some ideas and proposals to the document submitted, in response to the Secretary-General's invitation, in connexion with the preparations for the twenty-fifth anniversary [*see A/7690, annex I*].

39. First of all, we believe that an attempt should be made to ensure close co-ordination of the various activities undertaken throughout the entire United Nations system, applying an over-all plan which takes into account all the objectives entailed in the maintenance of world peace, in such a way that the gradual attainment of goals in one area is reflected in substantial progress in others.

40. A correlation of this kind—which Italy has been urging for some time and which has also been advocated by the Assembly—should be established between disarmament and development. Thus the resources made available by the gradual achievement of disarmament would be spent on economic and technological assistance to the countries of the “third world”.

41. In a broader sense, we believe that the resources released by the disarmament process or by the use of outer space and the sea-bed or by other means should be applied to the progress of the developing countries, to the peace-keeping tasks of the United Nations and to the protection of the human environment and of nature.

42. Secondly, we must consider the problem of adapting the structure and working methods of the main United

Nations organs to the new historical context within which they are required to function. The agencies that were established as a result of the Bretton Woods Agreements are now, after five years of study, embarking on the changes needed to adapt them to present-day requirements. What is possible for the international financial agencies in Washington must surely also be possible for the United Nations.

43. I am aware of the difficulties inherent in a revision of statutory norms. I believe, therefore, that appropriate solutions might already, to some extent, consist in a more functional interpretation and application of the Charter, in its present form, pending an opportunity to undertake the reforms which various other speakers have advocated before me. Thus arrangements could be made for the constant participation in the Security Council of States which are capable of fully discharging the particular responsibilities deriving from membership in that body. This result could be achieved by implementing Article 23 of the Charter forthwith. By applying the same criteria and making a few changes in the rules of procedure, the functioning of this Assembly could be improved in order to ensure that its decisions are practical and effective, as befits the prestige of a body responsible for the democratization of international life.

44. Lastly, the United Nations system needs to be strengthened in the sphere of economic and social development.

45. The preparations for the Second United Nations Development Decade and its realization will surely be a test of the Organization's ability to function adequately as a focal point for the generation of ideas and initiatives, and harmonization of different positions. In this context the United Nations must therefore be able to act with agility, be flexible in structure and have rational co-ordination in its methods. Indeed, the strength of the institution is not to be sought in the multiplicity of its organs or in the complexity of its procedures. It resides instead in the ability to act swiftly, judiciously and in an orderly manner. In this way development assistance will flow more abundantly in the broad multilateral channels of the United Nations system.

46. However, a strengthening of the United Nations, as we see it, cannot come about unless the Organization attains the universality which is appropriate to its institutional responsibilities and to its very purpose and which is the basis of its authority and world-wide influence.

47. The Italian Government therefore trusts that a solution in keeping with this requirement will be reached on the question of the representation of China.

48. We hope that, by following this course, the United Nations may become the effective instrument of peace that we all wish it to be. To achieve that aim the Organization must also secure, within the international framework in which it must operate, political, moral and psychological conditions that will facilitate the progressive development of its activities. The first step, therefore, must be to settle regional crises and conflicts.

49. I am speaking firstly of the crises in the Middle East, a region which Italy, because of its geographical position,

views with particular interest and concern. In that region we have been witnessing for over two years a steady intensification, in gravity and frequency, of incidents which unfortunately are increasingly taking on the aspect of open warfare. We feel that this is the time and place to make a fervent appeal to the parties to refrain from the use of violence and to all countries in the United Nations to act, willingly and effectively, according to their responsibilities and influence, to bring about a peaceful settlement. It is unthinkable, in our view, that a solution could be achieved by means of force; it can only come through a political initiative. We can, therefore, guarantee our support for the efforts that are being made by the permanent members of the Security Council on the basis of the resolution of 22 November 1967 [242 (1967)] to clarify its dispositions and win the consensus of the parties and thus break the present deadlock. We could not conceive of any solution imposed from above upon sovereign countries which are understandably jealous of their independence. We feel that we should, without being discouraged by the complexity of the problems and difficulties involved, embark on a patient search for new formulas and means of contact that would enable the parties to arrive at substantial agreements.

50. To this end, the exploratory talks that are being conducted within the United Nations, the work that is being done by the four permanent members of the Security Council, and the activities of Ambassador Jarring, could prove most valuable because it should be possible, through these channels, to remove the obstacles which are still preventing in the entire area a final settlement based on just, definite and secure boundaries recognized by all. It is generally agreed, we believe, that all States have the right to live in peace, with integrity and independence assured, including the State of Israel, which is a Member of the United Nations and maintains relations with a large number of other countries. The acknowledgement of this enhances the right to autonomy, independence and development of the States in the area of conflict.

51. The tragic events of the past few years, which have caused death, sorrow and waste of valuable efforts, lead us to make an impressive assessment of the points on which there is substantial agreement and to concentrate our attention on those disagreements which can and must be overcome. The just settlement which could thus be envisaged would make it possible to restore peace and remove the conditions and consequences resulting from the war and from a state of insecurity and uncertainty that has lasted for many years. In particular we cannot be insensitive to the unhappy plight of the many Palestine refugees who must be given back their faith in life, and in international justice. The prolonged closure of the Suez Canal has to some extent altered the geography of the world and has made maritime communications between countries, which previously seemed relatively near, more time-consuming and costly. This is one further reason why an equitable and enduring political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is so desirable.

52. For our part, we are ready to support any initiative taken in the United Nations to secure peace in the Middle Eastern region and to contribute to it, if we are requested to do so. We should also like the other Powers to appreciate how necessary it is to halt the rising flow of arms in the

area as a first step, pending a final solution to the problem. We feel we can make this plea in all conscience, as Italy has as a matter of consistent policy refrained from sending military supplies to any country involved in the conflict.

53. I should therefore like to express the wish and the hope that the Mediterranean area, which throughout the world's history has provided a basic channel of communication and a point of encounter for three continents and great civilizations, may become an area of peace, solidarity and progress and fulfil its special function for the benefit of mankind.

54. Italy is also continuing to follow, with keen anxiety, the trend of the war which is causing bereavement and suffering in Viet-Nam. In our view, it is a matter of prime concern that those peoples should be in a position to choose their own destiny freely without outside interference or pressure. Even though the Paris talks do not so far seem to have made satisfactory progress, the slowing down of military operations and the adoption of some de-escalation measures gives cause for hope that the crisis will soon enter the substantive phase of negotiations which we have always advocated and favoured. These remain the only valid means of restoring peace in that part of the world.

55. This tragic chronicle of crises must inevitably include the conflict in Nigeria. Respecting the sovereignty of others and convinced as we are that the solution is only to be found within an African context, we have always refrained from interference of any kind. Nevertheless, the very principles underlying the United Nations and a feeling of human concern prompt us to renew a heartfelt appeal in this forum for a rapid cessation of hostilities, which has now become an undelayable necessity, also for the sake of alleviating the suffering of a defenceless people.

56. As this bloody fratricidal war continues, it is our inescapable duty to ensure the continuity of all humanitarian actions. A speedy and definitive settlement of the graver regional crises is a pre-condition before we can embark on a concrete programme for strengthening the United Nations. But this is not the only requirement. It will also be necessary for all Member States to support this programme with specific political commitments, to renounce from now on the allure of military strength, to set aside racial hatred and national fanaticism and accept the necessity, and also the benefits, of multilateral discipline in international relations.

57. Finally, we must also create the psychological atmosphere for the beginning of a continuous and fruitful collaboration between all the regional groups and, in particular, between the Member States which have the heaviest responsibilities for the maintenance of peace. This can only be the result of the relaxation of tension, which all peoples long for and which is an essential requirement upon which Italy has insisted for so many years.

58. In order to achieve this relaxation of tension, we must solve those problems which, especially as regards Europe, are closely linked with the search for co-operation and security through the efforts of all the interested countries. It is therefore a serious error of perspective to think that

individual acts of force, which violate the very principles of the United Nations, are likely to consolidate the security of individual States to the detriment of the general equilibrium of the freedom of others.

59. For this reason, too, we cannot fail to note how much more difficult the task of building up an atmosphere of trust has become as a result of the grave upheaval in world order caused by the events in Czechoslovakia, and how much discouragement this has brought to those seriously working for a relaxation of tension.

60. Mindful of the tragic experiences of the two world wars, we are seeking to give our contribution towards a system of peace and security in Europe. Indeed, for years we have been working tenaciously for the creation, especially among the countries of Western Europe, of a politically and economically integrated community, open to a fruitful and dignified dialogue with greater Europe and to co-operation with the rest of the world. To be sure, we are still far from that political and economic unification that we seek. Certainly, we shall not give up these our most ambitious objectives. The passage of time and the development of world events will show that our frontiers and our national sovereignties are anachronistic. It is only by advancing in this direction that we can build a Western European group, capable of contributing to a trustworthy collaboration of the whole of Europe and thus constituting a factor for equilibrium, stability and peaceful progress in international life.

61. With respect to the countries of the East, we want to continue to seek points of understanding with a view to achieving equitable solutions to the gravest problems which exist, the essential one being that of friendly Germany. In spite of certain objective uncertainties, we intend to continue our efforts to relax tension, because no other policy is imaginable as long as conditions for real progress exist, even among so many difficulties. The policy of peace today has no alternative.

62. We should like all the countries of our continent to make a similar contribution to the relaxation of tension. We should like them all to understand how sincere is our desire for the achievement in Europe of an exemplary, trustworthy and constructive coexistence. This condition is also necessary if we are all to act together in the United Nations in the service of world peace.

63. In his message on the occasion of the marvellous lunar exploit of last July the Secretary-General stressed that the plaque placed on the surface of the moon by the two United States astronauts bore the inscription "We came in peace for all mankind". In these simple and human terms the Secretary-General expressed the hope that the exploit which has opened the way for the conquest of space will inspire on earth a great upsurge of human solidarity.

64. I believe that the best contribution which the United Nations can make to the realization of this hope is to work with perseverance towards the creation of an international order in which man's growing control over the physical world does not become a means of destruction but solely a factor for progress and peace.

65. I would like therefore, for my own part, to express the hope that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United

Nations may stimulate our efforts and strengthen our determination in the pursuit of the great task. With this hope, Madam President, I confirm to you that the United Nations can always count on the fervent support of the Italian Government.

66. Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*translated from Russian*): Madam President, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly, and to wish you success in guiding the work of the session in the interests of peace and the observance of the United Nations Charter.

67. We should like to express our sincere condolences in connexion with the death of the President of the twenty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. Emilio Arenales.

68. The general debate at the annual sessions of the United Nations General Assembly reflects the approach of States Members of the Organization to the most important international problems, draws attention to them and mobilizes the efforts of the peoples to solve them.

69. All those who speak in the general debate refer to questions such as the need to end the war against the Viet-Nameese people, to eliminate the consequences of Israeli aggression in the Middle East and to bring about a peaceful settlement of all the problems of that region. Attention is still focused on the questions of the consolidation of peace and the relaxation of international tension, on questions of disarmament, the abolition of colonialism and its consequences and the elimination of nazism and racial discrimination, and on problems of economic, scientific and technical co-operation and social progress and many others.

70. The participants in the debate have raised these questions in different ways and have given different explanations of them, but no one denies the overriding need for settling the burning problems of the day. Everyone acknowledges that the United Nations still has a great deal to do to strengthen international security.

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

71. One cannot help wondering, however, why the general debate as a whole gives so little opportunity for reaching practical conclusions, for adopting and implementing agreed decisions. Why do we have to revert again to problems which should long ago have been settled? In answer to this question I would like to quote a statement by the founder of the Soviet State, V. I. Lenin, which is fully applicable to the present international situation and to the activities of certain States both in and outside the Organization. He said:

"It is essential to bear in mind that pacifist phrases, talk and assurances and sometimes even solemn vows against war and for peace are extraordinarily common in all parts of the world, but that in the majority of States—particularly modern civilized States—a genuine readiness to take practical steps for peace—even the most simple ones—is extraordinarily rare." And Lenin went on to say: "But what we should like to see in this and in similar

questions is as few general declarations, solemn promises and high-sounding formulations as possible and as many very simple and clear decisions and measures as possible—measures and decisions which would really lead to peace, not to speak of the total elimination of the danger of war.”⁹

72. The Byelorussian SSR, like the other socialist countries, considers that the purpose of its policy is to ensure peace for its own people and for the peoples of other countries. Our efforts to increase the effectiveness of the Organization are in line with the objectives of the peace-loving Leninist foreign policy. On the initiative of the socialist countries important questions in keeping with the interests of the peoples—such as the strengthening of international security, general and complete disarmament, the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons, the demilitarization of the sea-bed, the withdrawal of United States and all other foreign forces occupying South Korea under the flag of the United Nations, and the dissolution of the so-called United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea—have been included in the agenda of the United Nations.

73. All anti-colonial problems are discussed and settled in the United Nations in the light of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which was adopted on the initiative of the Soviet Union, and in the light of other proposals by the socialist countries.

74. In the sphere of the economic and social activities of the United Nations, as a result of the implementation of proposals put forward by the socialist countries, organs such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization have been created and are now operating; problems of the struggle against nazism, *apartheid* and racial discrimination are being solved; a declaration on social progress and development is being prepared; and principles aimed at protecting the economic interests of the developing countries are being elaborated.

75. Among problems of international law, a place of paramount importance is also occupied by proposals of the socialist countries—such as the proposals for the definition of aggression and the elaboration of principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among States in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

76. On all these and many other questions, the socialist countries have been making concrete proposals on the basis of which constructive decisions have repeatedly been taken. Any objective observer taking stock of the work of the United Nations over the last quarter of a century will undoubtedly come to the conclusion that the countries of the socialist commonwealth have made a great contribution to the activities of the United Nations during that period.

77. While noting the positive results achieved by the United Nations, we must at the same time frankly state that

we are not satisfied by every aspect of its activities, and that it can and must become a more effective instrument of peace and international co-operation. The achievements of the Organization should merely be regarded rather as an indication of its possibilities for fulfilling the purposes for which it was created. And we shall do everything in our power to ensure that the activities of the United Nations are, to the maximum possible extent, directed towards the strengthening of peace and co-operation on a basis of equality, and towards compliance by all Member States with the United Nations Charter.

78. The experience of many years shows that the diplomacy of Western countries resorts to all manner of verbal manoeuvres to force through its bankrupt policy, to invest it with a superficial glitter, to divert the attention of the world public from the criminal acts of imperialism and to bury the essential problems under a heap of questions and proposals of secondary importance. We have been observing this at the present session too. Let us take, for example, the problems of Viet-Nam and the Middle East.

79. The United States of America and its partners in the war against the Viet-Nameese people—which even *The Times*, organ of the British monopolists, recently described as “dirty”—are seeking to paralyse the joint efforts of the anti-imperialist forces in their struggle for the total cessation of the aggression against the Viet-Nameese people. We hear them say that they are “ready to withdraw all their armed forces”, that they are defending the right of the people of South Viet-Nam “to determine its future independently and without foreign interference”—and similar high-sounding phrases. And at the same time war is being waged in Viet-Nam by a United States army of more than half a million men and about 70,000 troops from their partners in aggression. But when it comes to the question of the withdrawal of forces, reference is made only to 60,000 men, and the ambiguous English word “replacement”—which can mean either withdrawal, or substitution or the transfer of troops—is used instead of a plain, clear word meaning unconditional withdrawal of troops. And on the basis of all this, the argument is put forward that everything now depends on the other side. Everybody knows that this war has nothing to do with the interests of the United States soldiers who are dying there and that it has not been engendered by the interests of the security of the United States and its partners in aggression. Unilateral declarations of so-called obligations do not create any basis in international law for intervention in the affairs of other peoples, and cannot deprive the people of Viet-Nam of the right to fight against the aggressors and decide its own destiny as it sees fit.

80. Last year, thanks to the efforts of many countries in the United Nations and elsewhere, it was possible to bring about the cessation of United States air raids on the territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and to begin negotiations in Paris. The time has now come for even greater efforts to achieve the total cessation of the aggression against the Viet-Nameese people, and to demand the unconditional withdrawal of United States forces from Viet-Nam so as genuinely to create conditions in which that long-suffering people can determine its future without outside interference and can engage in peaceful creative work. In view of this, we consider that speakers from this

⁹ V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 45, pp. 240-241.

rostrum who have not taken a clear stand on this question, and have merely talked about the desirability of a peaceful settlement and have expatiated on what they describe as the equal responsibility of both sides, are in actual fact playing into the hands of the aggressor. Such statements give the aggressor an excuse to ignore public opinion, and do not contribute to a settlement of the Viet-Nam problem because they do not contain a condemnation of aggression and do not make a distinction between the aggressor and the victim of aggression.

81. The Byelorussian SSR supports the people of Viet-Nam and is providing assistance to them; it hopes for the triumph of their just struggle and advocates a settlement of the Viet-Nam problem on the basis of the position of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet-Nam—a position which is fully in line with the Geneva Agreements of 1954 and offers a genuine basis for a political settlement.

82. The same thing must be said about the question of the liquidation of Israeli aggression against the Arab States. Here in the United Nations, the sponsors of Israeli aggression advocate in their statements a political settlement and speak of the inadmissibility of sending military supplies to countries of the Middle East; but at the same time, displaying extraordinary liberality, they bow before the aggressor and supply arms to Israel which is continuing its aggressive policy and openly sabotaging the decisions of the United Nations. The only way of contributing to a peaceful political settlement in the Middle East is to adopt a position decisively condemning Israel's aggression, to take concrete measures aimed at the withdrawal of the occupying forces from the Arab territories which have been seized, and to give effect to the other provisions of the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967 [242 (1967)].

83. The United Nations cannot ignore Israel's direct defiance of Security Council resolutions which it is required to comply with in virtue of its obligations under the United Nations Charter. Since the cessation of the war in the Middle East, the Security Council and other United Nations organs have adopted more than a score of resolutions on different aspects of the settlement of the situation in the Middle East. These resolutions have played a positive role, because they have condemned Israel's aggressive acts and have in many cases constituted a barrier to further extremist steps by Israeli ruling circles; they have laid the foundations for a political settlement in the Middle East and have emphasized the concern of the United Nations at the situation of the Arab population in the occupied territories.

84. But the most important thing has not yet been achieved: the aggressor has not yet been ejected from the territories he has seized; he is continuing to disregard the principles of the United Nations Charter, and he is to blame for the fact that the tension in the Middle East persists.

85. We note with satisfaction the constructive position of the Arab States and the ever-increasing support for their just demands by the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations.

86. We note, as a positive aspect of the work of this session of the United Nations General Assembly, the fact that no one has endorsed any of the arguments put forward by Israeli diplomats in favour of continuing the occupation and revising the frontiers. Even the sponsors of Israel's aggression in the Middle East hesitate to defend Israel's position openly. Such ridiculous proposals as that of the Israeli Foreign Minister to proclaim United Nations Day as a "cease-fire day" are regarded by the majority as a mockery of the purposes of the United Nations since nobody can even entertain the idea that Israel, or any other aggressor, will be permitted to commit aggressive acts for 364 days in exchange for a promise to refrain from opening fire on one day in the year.

87. The United Nations can and must do everything in its power to put the aggressor in his place and settle the conflict in the Middle East in accordance with the Security Council's resolution, and not allow it to develop into a new armed clash which would have extremely serious consequences for the cause of universal peace.

88. The Byelorussian SSR is one of the co-sponsors of the items on the agenda concerning the withdrawal of United States and all other foreign forces occupying South Korea under the flag of the United Nations and the dissolution of the so-called United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea. These proposals are designed to eliminate one of the hotbeds of tension in the Far East and to protect the inalienable right of the Korean people to live without foreign occupation and without imperialist intervention in its domestic affairs.

89. Implementation of these proposals will open the way to peaceful unification of the country on a democratic basis and will enable the people of South Korea to decide its destiny for itself, instead of being the instrument of other people's policies. We appeal to all States to approach these proposals with a full sense of responsibility, and to scrap the discriminatory practice whereby, for the benefit of the foreign occupiers of South Korea, the General Assembly is deprived of the right even of hearing the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and is unable to formulate concrete measures in keeping with the interests of the Korean people and the cause of preserving peace in that troubled part of our planet.

90. Actively continuing its struggle for the elimination of hotbeds of tension and settlement of conflicts, the Soviet Union together with the other socialist countries is taking clear-cut and concrete measures to strengthen universal peace. This is indicated by the item proposed by the Soviet Union on the strengthening of international security, and by the text of the appeal to all the States of the world on this question [A/7654]. This document, which we fully support, contains such important measures as:

the withdrawal of troops from territories occupied as a result of action by the armed forces of some States against other States and peoples defending the independence they have won as a result of the collapse of the colonial system, and their territorial integrity;

the cessation of all measures for the suppression of the liberation movements of the peoples still under colonial rule and the granting of independence to all such peoples;

observance by States of the decisions of the Security Council on the withdrawal of occupation troops from foreign territories; and

the study of the question of effective regional security systems in the various parts of the world with a view to adopting measures for their establishment.

91. In the appeal it is proposed that all States of the world in their international relations should strictly abide by the principles of peaceful coexistence of States irrespective of their social systems—the principles of sovereignty, equality and territorial inviolability to each State, non-interference in internal affairs and respect for the rights of all peoples freely to choose their social system. The appeal envisages a number of other important measures which open the way to the adoption of agreed decisions which will contribute to the strengthening of international security.

92. In supporting these proposals, we know that the appeal addressed to all States of the world—both Members of the United Nations and States which are not Members or which, for one reason or another, do not take part in its work—is bound to meet with understanding and support.

93. At the present time, the interests of the cause of peace and the existing situation call for unity of action by all the anti-imperialist forces, whose positions in the United Nations are continually being strengthened. We appeal to all States which support peace, and are striving to enhance the role of the United Nations in questions of international security, actively to join with the socialist countries in working for the adoption of the appeal addressed to all States of the world on the strengthening of international security. Such an appeal, on the eve of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, would enhance the authority of the United Nations in the eyes of the peoples of the world, and provide a good basis for its further activities in accordance with the fundamental purposes and principles of the Charter.

94. A positive solution to this problem would certainly represent an advance from the period of confrontation to a period of negotiation; it would also contribute to a more fruitful consideration of many other questions, including the whole complex of disarmament problems.

95. Questions of disarmament must be given their due place at the present session of the General Assembly. The time has come to move onward from mere verbal support of the idea of disarmament to practical action. Politicians and military figures who refuse to understand the complete senselessness of the continuing arms race which is already swallowing up more than \$200,000 million a year, those who are against the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII)], who are against general and complete disarmament, against the prohibition of the use and production of chemical and bacteriological weapons, are assuming a very heavy responsibility towards mankind.

96. We are all expecting results from the work of the Committee on Disarmament whose membership has been enlarged this year. The Soviet Union in that committee has introduced a number of modified proposals and now we

have a right to expect that, this time, the Western countries will not go back on their word but will open the way for the elaboration and submission of agreed decisions on the cessation of the arms race and on disarmament.

97. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR welcomes the evidence of agreement in the Disarmament Committee concerning a treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof.¹⁰

98. We regard that treaty as an important step towards ensuring that the sea-bed and the ocean floor—which occupy five sevenths of the surface of the planet—are excluded from the arms race, and as a step towards a treaty on general and complete disarmament, and also as the implementation of one of the proposals put forward by the socialist countries in recent years.

99. Tirelessly continuing its efforts in the struggle for disarmament, the group of socialist countries—including the Byelorussian SSR—has submitted for consideration by the present session of the General Assembly an item entitled “Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons”. We note with satisfaction that this new initiative, aimed at excluding these barbaric weapons of mass destruction from the military arsenals of States, finds support among many States Members of the United Nations.

100. The General Assembly has acted wisely in adopting a decision to include the question of chemical and bacteriological weapons as a separate item on the agenda, thus rejecting the attempts of certain Western countries in the General Committee to belittle the importance of this initiative by the socialist countries, which is aimed at the strengthening of peace and the maintenance of the security of peoples.

101. Since its foundation, the Byelorussian SSR has always been and still is on the side of the peoples fighting for their national liberation. This position is determined by the principles of Leninist national policy, and is based on an understanding of the importance of the contribution made by the national liberation movement to the world revolutionary process.

102. Lenin’s prophecy that “. . . the period of the awakening of the East to the revolutionary movement of our time will be followed by the period when all the peoples of the East take part in deciding the fate of the whole world and cease to be merely a means for the enrichment of others”¹¹ is now coming true.

103. The most important result characterizing the success of the anti-imperialist national liberation struggle is the emergence of more than 70 young national States in Asia, Africa and Latin America, on the ruins of tottering colonial empires.

¹⁰ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969*, document DC/232, annex A.

¹¹ V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 39, p. 328.

104. Colonialism, however, has not yet been entirely eliminated and the colonizers still hold some of their overseas possessions. The South African and Southern Rhodesian racists and the Portuguese colonialists are still keeping the indigenous population of the Republic of South Africa, Namibia, Southern Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau) in the chains of colonial slavery. It is perfectly clear that they could not possibly maintain their colonial domination over other peoples were it not for the assistance and support of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany and other Western countries.

105. A consistent stand by all freedom-loving States will contribute to the elimination of the last remnants of colonialism as quickly as possible. For this, however, determined efforts are required, and not pious wishes or hopes that a change of government in the colonial country will change the nature of its colonial policy. What we need are concrete decisions and measures, which are addressed to those who are directly responsible for the maintenance of colonial slavery—the Governments and monopolies of the Western countries—and not general appeals addressed to no one in particular.

106. The General Assembly must demand, from each colonial Power, immediate and unconditional implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and also implementation of United Nations decisions calling for the cessation of the harmful activities of international monopolies in colonial territories and for the elimination of military bases in those territories. Only the unconditional implementation of the Declaration and other anti-colonial decisions of the United Nations will make it possible to celebrate in a worthy manner the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration, which falls in December of next year.

107. In view of the failure of the colonialists to fulfil their obligations under the United Nations Charter concerning the economic and social advancement of Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, and as a result of the neo-colonialist policy of plundering and exploitation, the young developing countries are faced with difficult economic problems. For us, it is fully understandable that these problems are being raised in the United Nations. But they must be closely linked with the basic task of the United Nations—the strengthening of peace and international security. It is no good counting on the possibility of solving problems of economic development without at the same time working for the strengthening of peace and international security and for general and complete disarmament. It is also a mistake to suppose that the United Nations can elaborate effective measures for the elimination of the economic backwardness of the developing countries without taking into account the interests and the position of the socialist countries—the sincere friends of the peoples of the young independent States.

108. Last year, unfortunately, some representatives of the developing countries did not appreciate that fact, with the result that an unpromising committee was set up to prepare a programme for the Second Development Decade¹²—it

was set up with a composition which made it impossible for the socialist countries, including the Byelorussian SSR, to take part within the framework of that committee in the elaboration of a realistic programme for protecting the economic interests of the young independent States, for establishing and practising equitable and mutually advantageous relations in international trade and co-operation, and for providing assistance in the implementation of genuine national development plans in the interests of the people and not for the enrichment of exploiters abroad and at home.

109. Thirty years have elapsed since the beginning of the Second World War, but the years cannot efface the memory of 1 September 1939—that black day in the history of mankind—from the minds of the peoples. Dozens of States and hundreds of millions of people were drawn into the abyss of the Second World War unleashed by German fascism, which had been reared by the forces of imperialism. Many people, and above all those who have directly experienced the dire consequences of Hitlerite invasion, ask themselves how it could happen that fascist Germany should have been able to plunge mankind into a destructive war in which more than 50 million people perished; were there not forces and possibilities for checking the aggressor in time and preventing the conflagration of a world war?

110. There were indeed such forces and possibilities. During the pre-war years the Soviet Union repeatedly made proposals for the establishment of a collective security system in Europe which would have constituted a serious obstacle to those bent on military adventures. Unfortunately the Governments of the Western countries preferred at that time to take another course—the course of connivance with and “appeasement” of the aggressor, of flirting with him and concluding secret deals and agreements behind the backs of the peoples in order to direct Hitler’s aggression towards the East. Everyone knows the results of that shortsighted policy.

111. Next year, the peoples of Europe and of the whole world will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the defeat of the fascist aggressors, which made it possible to create the United Nations, with the basic purpose of maintaining peace and strengthening international security.

112. In July of this year, the Byelorussian people solemnly celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the liberation of the Byelorussian SSR from German fascist tyranny. A quarter of a century ago, the last salvos of one of the most gigantic battles of the war sounded and died away. Liberation came to our towns and villages—the liberation in which we believed, for which we had fought and which was won at the price of tremendous sacrifices, by unprecedented feats of arms and labour.

113. In July we once again paid due tribute to the heroic feats of the whole Soviet people which rid mankind of that black plague. We took stock of the results of peaceful construction and we found that, as a result of the labour of our people working in fraternal co-operation with all the peoples of the USSR, an unprecedented growth in all sectors of the economy—and rise in the standard of living of the people—have been achieved. It is sufficient to say that the industrial output of the Republic has increased by more

¹² Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

than 10 times compared with the pre-war period and by more than 100 times compared with what we had to start with after the liberation of the Byelorussian land, which had been devastated by the fascists during the occupation years.

114. The Byelorussian people cherishes the memory of those who fell in the struggle against fascism. For us, this was every fourth one of the Republic's inhabitants. We have set up a memorial on the site of the former village of Katyn which, like Lidice in Czechoslovakia and Oradour in France, was annihilated by the Hitlerites with all its inhabitants. In our Republic, hundreds of villages shared the fate of Katyn. Their blood-drenched soil is preserved in urns at the Katyn memorial. This is a memorial to the hundreds of villages burnt to the ground together with their inhabitants, and to thousands of other towns and villages which were laid waste and destroyed—a memorial to all the victims of fascist terror on Byelorussian territory.

115. We cannot forget—we do not have the right to forget the tragedy of Katyn. We remember and will never forget the words carved on the granite of the common grave at Katyn: "Remember, good people: we loved life and our Fatherland and you, our dear friends. We were burned alive in the fire. Our appeal to all of you is: Let grief and sorrow be transformed into courage and strength so that you can perpetuate peace and tranquillity on earth, so that life will never again, anywhere, be destroyed in the whirlwind of fire". This testament is addressed to the peoples of the whole world. As far as the people of Byelorussia is concerned, it will do everything in its power to carry out this behest.

116. The Byelorussian SSR attaches great importance to the problem of European security and cannot remain indifferent to what is now occurring in that part of the world. There are more than enough causes for anxiety for our country and for other peace-loving countries. Many countries of Western Europe are once more entangled in the meshes of closed military and political alliances, with the aggressive NATO block playing the most sinister role of them all. Massive armed forces—including forces from overseas countries—are being concentrated and built up in the centre of Europe. Thousands of nuclear warheads are stocked in atomic arsenals. In the Federal Republic of Germany there are forces which refuse to recognize the results of the Second World War and the existing frontiers in Europe, and which are encroaching upon the sovereignty and independence of the German Democratic Republic. In Western Germany, neo-nazism is raising its head and has already openly stated its claim to participate in the determination of the internal and foreign policies of that country. The Federal Republic of Germany has not yet acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

117. All this obliges us now, before it is too late, to take measures to prevent any repetition of the past and to guarantee lasting peace in Europe. The realistic way of doing this is to create a collective security system in Europe. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have repeatedly put forward proposals aimed at ensuring a lasting peace. A concrete programme of action and measures for creating a collective security system have been

outlined at the meetings of the States members of the Warsaw Pact held at Bucharest in 1966, and at Budapest in 1969, and also by the Karlovy Vary Conference in 1967. The appeal of the Warsaw Pact countries to all European countries, adopted on 17 March 1969 at Budapest, and calling for the convening of an all-European meeting on security questions, is in keeping with the vital interests and cherished aspirations of all the peoples of Europe. The Byelorussian SSR highly appreciates the important and useful initiative of Finland on the starting of practical preparations for an all-European meeting. We welcome the statement by the Foreign Ministers of the Scandinavian countries made at the meeting at Reykjavik in September 1969, and also the statements by a number of European representatives during the general debate in the General Assembly supporting the proposal of the States members of the Warsaw Pact for the convening of a conference on questions of European security.

118. The holding of such a conference would be a valuable contribution to the strengthening of peace and security in Europe and to the development of all-European co-operation. Such a conference would help to transform Europe into a continent of peace, would have a favourable effect on the whole international situation and would point the way to the solution of many complex problems.

119. The Byelorussian SSR has always opposed and will continue to oppose the policy of militarism and revanchism, fascism and neo-nazism. All militarists, revanchists and neo-nazis would long ago have understood that the State frontiers in Europe, including the Oder-Neisse frontier and the frontier between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, are unchangeable. They should long ago have recognized such an immutable fact as the existence of the socialist German Democratic Republic which for the past 20 years has been consistently pursuing a peace-loving policy and which constitutes a stable factor for peace in Europe.

120. It is essential to recognize and give effect to the right of the German Democratic Republic to become a member of the United Nations and other international organizations on the same footing as the Federal Republic of Germany. It is essential to abandon the discriminatory practice imposed by the imperialist Powers back in the cold war years, whereby the German Democratic Republic is not allowed to take part in the work of international organizations or to become a party to international agreements and conventions.

121. In conclusion, we wish to stress again that today, as never before, what is needed is decisive action aimed at normalizing the international situation and curbing the imperialist forces which constitute the principal threat to peace and security.

122. One of the most important political events in this sense was the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in June 1969. The basic document of the Conference stresses that the main link between the common activities of the anti-imperialistic forces is the struggle against the danger of war—the danger of a world-wide thermonuclear war which continues to threaten the peoples of the world with mass destruction—and the struggle for peace throughout the world.

123. Our country's peace-loving foreign policy is based on the principles elaborated by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin—the centenary of whose birth the whole Soviet people and all progressive mankind are now preparing to celebrate.

124. This policy has played, is playing and will continue to play an important role in the common struggle of the anti-imperialist forces and in the strengthening of the power and solidarity of the commonwealth of socialist countries; it will serve as an effective instrument for thwarting the aggressive plans of imperialism, for maintaining peace and consolidating the principles of the peaceful coexistence of States with different social systems, and for supporting the liberation struggle of the peoples.

125. Mr. AMERASINGHE (Ceylon): The delegation of Ceylon is taking this opportunity of adding its own tribute to the many that have already, in the course of the general debate, been paid to the Honourable Angie Brooks on her election as President of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly. Although the cloistered woman has long been almost a social symbol of Asia and Africa, it is those two continents that have given the General Assembly of the United Nations its only two women Presidents. Like the illustrious daughter of India, Srimati Vijaya Laxmi Pandit, who preceded her in the enjoyment of this distinction, the Honourable Angie Brooks has to her credit a record of service to her country and to the international community which makes her a most worthy recipient of the honour that this Assembly has conferred on her. In doing so, the United Nations has done honour to her country and to the entire African people, whose problems and trials, whose hopes, yearnings, aspirations and strivings figure so prominently in our deliberations within the United Nations family, and which are so close to the hearts and minds of all those who believe that all men are born equal and are equally entitled to freedom and the right to determine their own destiny. On behalf of the Government and delegation of Ceylon, and on my own behalf, I offer the Honourable Angie Brooks our cordial congratulations on her election as President of the General Assembly, and at the same time should like to assure her of our unstinting co-operation in the discharge of the arduous functions that she has assumed.

126. It was with a profound feeling of sadness that we of the Ceylon delegation heard the news of the death of His Excellency Dr. Emilio Arenales, the able and talented Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, who presided over this Assembly last year. Despite a grave illness which he bore with admirable fortitude and composure, he did not flinch from his responsibilities but carried his task through to its appointed end. His death a few months after the close of the twenty-third session brought to an untimely end a career already marked by brilliant achievement and full of ample promise. To the delegation of Guatemala we extend our condolences in the loss that their country has suffered.

127. We are indebted once again to the Secretary-General, His Excellency U Thant, for a penetrating and candid analysis of the international situation contained in the introduction to his annual report on the work of the organization [A/7601/Add.1]. The lonely eminence of the thirty-eighth floor provides, in a spiritual and moral sense, a

view of the world that is denied to others too deeply involved in its conflicts and aberrations. The Organization can only at great peril submit the Secretary-General to the fate of Cassandra. My delegation would like to pay tribute to him for the patience, zeal and unfaltering faith with which he continues to serve this Organization and the highest of all causes: peace and progress.

128. We meet at a time when several important anniversaries coincide. It is 50 years since the doctrine of self-determination for subject peoples was enunciated, and which, while first finding expression in the redrawing of the boundaries of Europe and in the birth of many new nations, provided the inspiration and impetus for by far the greatest adventure of our times: the liquidation of colonial rule.

129. Twenty-five years have passed since the establishment of the United Nations. It is nearly 10 years since the General Assembly adopted its historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. We are also reaching the end of the First United Nations Development Decade and preparing for the inauguration of the Second.

130. Those last three anniversaries should serve as a reminder and a warning of the imperious challenge that the three most pressing problems of our times—international peace and security, the emancipation of subject peoples, and the economic advancement of developing countries—present to the United Nations.

131. We celebrate at the same time yet another anniversary, surpassing the rest in its relevance to the objectives and purposes of the United Nations and the problems it has yet to solve. I refer to the centenary of the birth of Mohandas Gandhi, who, by precept and example, demonstrated to the world the efficacy of satyagraha as a weapon against oppression, discrimination and injustice, and whose life and teachings have left an indelible imprint on the memory and conscience of man.

132. To us at the United Nations the most important incident in the historical process was the establishment of our Organization, the twenty-fifth anniversary of which falls next year. This is the most appropriate time, therefore, to survey contemporary history, to reflect on the experiences of the past, to examine our own and the United Nations' achievements and shortcomings and to seek the means of redeeming our lost opportunities. Elaborate preparations are being made to celebrate—not in the festive sense, we hope—the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. Apart from the visible and symbolic displays that are customary on such occasions, there is another form of commemoration, devoid of pageantry and panache, which the Members of the Organization should consider. There is a need for a renewal of faith in the principles and purposes of the Organization and for an honest pledge to make a greater effort to develop the United Nations into the living force for peace and international security that it was meant to be. Any other form of celebration would only make more obvious our reluctance to face hard facts—a habit that seems to have become deeply ingrained in the Organization as a whole.

133. It is easy enough to indulge in platitudinous assessments that the Organization has not failed using the argument that its continued existence refutes that charge, but survival is not a sign of success just as much as lack of complete success need not necessarily mean total failure. If we are to hold out to future generations even the remotest hope of realizing the purposes for which the United Nations was brought into being, we have to find the means by which nations and their peoples can free themselves from the shackles of avarice, mistrust and arrogance.

134. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations is also a most suitable occasion for a review of the Charter and the procedures of the United Nations. We have had enough time and have acquired enough experience to judge ourselves.

135. It has been stated here on the highest authority that a section of the membership is too prone to the belief that the mere passage of resolutions, actuated more by emotion than by a sense of realism, is futile and serves only to imperil the prestige of the Organization. This, in our opinion, is not the most serious defect in the Organization nor should only one section of the membership be thus singled out for censure. Realism does not mean patient resignation in the sight of intolerable injustice. Emotion is a poor description of the human reaction to the repeated frustration of all efforts at curing such injustice.

136. The real damage to the prestige and dignity of the Organization comes from the practice of adopting declarations, resolutions and even treaties with all due solemnity and of immediately thereafter pursuing policies which are in flat contradiction of the provisions of such instruments.

137. The best examples are the General Assembly resolution [1762 (XVII)] of 1962 condemning all nuclear-weapon tests, the August 1963 partial test-ban Treaty with its firm promise to seek the end of underground tests and finally the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1968 which was pressed on the membership of the United Nations with astonishing vigour and speed mainly on the assurance contained in its article VI. The world still awaits some sign of the effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament which were promised in that article. We cannot be content with declarations by the two opposing sides that they are ready for these negotiations. All we are aware of is that there is growing disillusionment among us regarding the good intentions expressed in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty and in the earlier agreements. This disillusionment is sharpened by the realization that tests are being conducted for the perfection of even more elaborate and fiendishly destructive nuclear weapons and devices and that the partial test-ban Treaty has been quite ineffective in stopping the development of offensive nuclear capacity. The international community can be excused if it has doubts regarding the value of the assurances repeated by the nuclear Powers of a cessation of the nuclear arms race. One nuclear Power alone—the United Kingdom—deserves credit for having ratified the non-proliferation Treaty with commendable promptitude.

138. Along with the review of the Charter, some of the procedures of the Organization call for fresh examination.

One example that comes to mind is the established procedure of ending every discussion with a resolution. Its futility is most apparent in the Security Council where the provisions of a resolution at the very moment of its adoption are given contradictory interpretations which completely vitiate it and render it nugatory. This admittedly is a symptom of a general malaise afflicting international relations.

139. We hope that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations will also see the attainment of real universality in its membership with the seating of representatives of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations as the only legitimate representatives of that country and its people. The restoration of the lawful rights of the people of China will repair an injustice and retrieve a folly of 20 years' duration. It will also bring within reach of fulfilment any hope that remains of real progress in disarmament or in the elimination of the nuclear danger. Without the agreement and co-operation of the People's Republic of China no progress in these fields can be achieved. It should be abundantly clear by now that the representatives of the People's Republic of China can be seated in the United Nations only through the exclusion of the representatives of the Chiang Kai-shek régime. It is the United Nations that has imposed on itself this dangerous and unrewarding isolation from the people of China.

140. The policy of decolonization has been pursued with a measure of success but the task is far from complete. In what we hope is its death throes colonialism has assumed the evil visage of *apartheid* and racialism. Those régimes which pursue these policies must know that they cannot long prevail despite the comfort and the support they receive directly or indirectly, clandestinely or openly, from certain sources.

141. The First United Nations Development Decade was a great endeavour inaugurated in 1960 with almost evangelistic fervour but ending in the melancholy realization that those early hopes have been far from attained.

142. Disarmament, after years of discussion, has produced an unsatisfactory and inadequate test-ban Treaty and an equally unsatisfactory and no less inadequate Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which has yet failed to secure the ratifications necessary to bring it into effect. Scientific research and tests continue to be conducted with the same hectic desire to establish an absolute superiority over others without any diminution of the quality or quantity of weapons of mass destruction. The arms race is only the outward manifestation of the mistrust and hostility that exist between nations. It is not by slowing down the arms race or by reducing the volume or destructive capacity of weapons that peace can be established and international security ensured but rather by the eradication of the factors that create mistrust and hostility. As the Foreign Minister of Italy very aptly observed this morning, war must not be considered solely as the result of lack of military equilibrium. We feel it to be incumbent upon the major Powers and indeed on all States to search for a bold and enlightened strategy for peace and for ways and means of establishing and implementing the principles of friendly relations and co-operation among States regardless of their ideological foundations.

143. The same problems continue to plague the world with varying prospects of mitigation or settlement—the conflict in the Middle East, the war in Viet-Nam, *apartheid* and colonialism.

144. More than two years have passed since the Middle East war of June 1967 and it is almost two years since the Security Council unanimously adopted its resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967. That resolution was acclaimed almost universally as a carefully balanced one but there is still no definite prospect of its implementation. Tension in the area grows unabated, bringing the world time and again perilously close to the brink of war and disaster. The Secretary-General has in the clearest possible terms stated that the fighting in the Canal Zone constitutes virtually a state of active war. His own observation forces, unarmed and in the line of direct fire, are exposed to intolerable dangers, but continue to face them with a heroism which goes unnoticed in a world where the only badge of honour is a weapon.

145. Israel's failure to withdraw from the occupied territories not only implies a rejection of the proposition fundamental to the settlement contemplated in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) that acquisition of territory by war is inadmissible, but is an obstacle to the creation of the only conditions in which a just and lasting peace can be discussed. The use of occupied territory as a form of hostage in international negotiations is contrary to the spirit of the Charter.

146. Concern has quite properly been expressed here over attacks on airports and the hijacking of aircraft. These are not, however, the most serious features of this problem. We do not condone such attacks on innocent persons. They are to be deplored. But in scale, in consequences, and in the degree of force employed they are diminutive in comparison with the regular and systematic Israeli attacks on Arab territory and the trail of death and destruction that these attacks leave. The Israeli contention is that these reprisals are in retaliation for the actions of Arab resistance groups. There are many States Members in this Assembly whose peoples have suffered the indignity of foreign occupation and have found in organized resistance the only hope of deliverance when no help can come from outside. Such resistance is a matter of right until the alien trespasser is evicted. Are these demonstrations of resistance, conducted under the vigilance of an occupying Power, in the shadow of overwhelming strength, and at the certain risk of draconian punishment amounting to total devastation of property and complete evacuation, to be treated as violations of the cease-fire and as a pretext for terrorizing the population of the occupied territories? Resistance of this nature by the population of an occupied territory is a natural and understandable reaction. A distinction must be drawn between such acts of resistance and the furious and frenzied reprisals for which they serve as a mere excuse.

147. Events which in other circumstances should have no bearing on the Middle East dispute tend to increase its gravity and enhance the risk of war. I refer to the recent fire at the Al-Aqsa Mosque which formed the subject of discussion in the Security Council during September of this year and ended characteristically with a resolution that was remarkable more for the support it received than for its

relevance to the issue or for its contribution to a settlement. The Security Council resolution of 15 September 1969 [271 (1969)] regrettably, in our opinion, skirted the real issue. The fire at the Al-Aqsa Mosque was neither the direct nor the indirect consequence of Israeli measures, which the Security Council has refused to recognize, to change the status of Jerusalem. It was not the status of Jerusalem that was the point at issue but the ever present danger of a grave breach of the peace and of a renewal of war inherent in a situation that can only be described as the illegal usurpation of temporal power through war.

148. The cause of peace in the Middle East will not be served by drawing red herrings like the Security Council resolution of 15 September 1969 across the trail, but rather by a determined effort on the part of the United Nations, and especially the major Powers, to concentrate on the substance of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, and to endeavour to translate it into action. The two essential features of that resolution are: first, that Israel must withdraw from all Arab territories in accordance with the principle that acquisition of territory by war is inadmissible; and secondly, that there must be a just settlement of the Palestine Arab refugee problem.

149. Despite the numerous United Nations resolutions reaffirming the right of the refugees to return to their homeland or to receive compensation—resolutions which have received overwhelming support—Israel, far from complying with them, has taken action to evict Arab residents from the occupied territories. As we see it, the Palestine refugee problem is at the heart of the Middle East question. There can be no approach to a settlement unless the four major Powers, in the discharge of their primary responsibility as permanent members of the Security Council, make it clear to Israel that the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967 alone contains all those elements that can bring about a lasting peace, and that it is not subject to any conditions such as direct negotiations, recognition and peace treaties which are not specified in it, but may well follow.

150. Peace cannot be ensured in the Middle East by the redrawing of boundaries, but by a spirit of reconciliation and tolerance on both sides, by a recognition of the right of all parties to exist in peace and security and by a permanent solution of the problem of the Palestinian refugees through full and fair restitution to those dispossessed and displaced by the act of partition of Palestine. There are no boundaries that are secure while injustice prevails. The four major Powers have both the duty and the capacity to bring peace to the Middle East and to avert a conflagration that could envelop the world. It rests with them to insist, first, on Israel's withdrawal from the territories it now occupies by the anachronistic right of conquest and, thereafter, on the implementation of the rest of the terms of the resolution by all the parties concerned. This can in no sense of the term be described as an imposition of a settlement on sovereign Powers.

151. In Viet-Nam, after years of what would now, in gloomy retrospect, seem to have been senseless slaughter and destruction, the exemplary and unexceptionable principle that the people of Viet-Nam must be left free to determine their own internal affairs and choose their own

political system was ultimately vindicated when the Paris negotiations were instituted in March 1968. The Paris talks were possible because the combatants finally realized that a political settlement was the last hope and that this could be achieved only if the affairs of Viet-Nam were discussed by the parties immediately concerned.

152. However, after 18 months of talks, peace like a wayward wanton taunts the negotiators in Paris and continues to elude their seemingly avid grasp. The circumstances were never more favourable for a settlement, and it would be tragic if the opportunity were frittered away by excessive obduracy on the part of either side or by a failure to grasp the realities of the situation.

153. The reduction in the United States commitment of forces in Viet-Nam and the hope of further reductions in the level of foreign participation in the war are an encouraging sign and must be recognized as a contribution, however small or belated it may seem to some, towards the cessation of the conflict and the creation of conditions in which the covenants of peace could be discussed. If a military victory is beyond the reach of either party and if peace cannot be secured except through the imposition of terms of surrender by one or the other, the only alternative is a political compromise on terms which would recognize unequivocally the right of the Viet-Nameese people to determine their own future and to choose for themselves the type of government they want.

154. The composition of the representation at the Paris talks is a clear recognition of the position of the National Liberation Front in the South. Their representation in any interim administration in the South would be a mere acceptance of the realities of the situation. The indispensable ingredients of a settlement are a cease-fire, a temporary reorganization in the administration of South Viet-Nam to make it more representative of the will of the people, the withdrawal of foreign troops and free elections. Thereafter the final unification of the country would be the sole responsibility of the leaders of the people of both parts of that divided nation. We would appeal to all the parties concerned to adhere scrupulously to the principles and provisions of the Geneva Agreements of 1954.

155. In considering the problems of colonialism, *apartheid* and racialism, careful attention should be paid to the Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa proclaimed by the Fifth Summit Conference of East and Central African States held at Lusaka from 14 to 16 April 1969. There we have a testament of human equality, human dignity and self-determination expressed with sober and statesmanlike restraint and moderation. The Lusaka Manifesto asks for only one gesture from the white communities of South Africa—that they declare their commitment to these principles. If this commitment is made, Africa can be spared the painful agony and pitiless violence of racial conflict. There is no lack of assurance in the Lusaka Manifesto of the determination of its signatories to combine with all groups, with patience and understanding in building an Africa where all races will be equal, discrimination outlawed, vengeance eschewed and the brotherhood of man exalted. The world will anxiously await the answer of the Governments of Portugal and South Africa, and of the white rebels of Southern Rhodesia. If they fail to give a favourable

response to the Lusaka Manifesto, they will be answerable to all humanity for the consequences.

156. Attention has been drawn to the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter regarding the possibility of recourse to regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action. In this context a system of collective security for Asia has been specially mentioned. It is a truism that international peace and security can be ensured only if in their international relations all Governments accept and observe the principles of peaceful coexistence between States irrespective of their social or economic systems, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, renunciation of the threat or use of force in the settlement of disputes between countries, abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of countries, and promotion of mutual interests and co-operation between States. Those are the five cardinal precepts which have come to be known as the *Pancha Shila* of international relations. They constitute the essence of the United Nations Charter. They were further elaborated in the Bandung Declaration of April 1955 on the promotion of world peace and co-operation. That Declaration contains all the relevant commandments for a stable international order. We need only to summon the will and the determination to adhere to those principles.

157. Schemes of collective security become necessary only because these principles are ignored. The delegation of Ceylon looks askance at the idea of dividing the world into regions for the organization of collective security. The idea of collective security has always been associated with the organization of the means of defence against possible attack. The best examples are NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Others are the South-East Asia Treaty Organization and the Central Treaty Organization. The Bandung Declaration was resolutely opposed to such schemes.

158. A collective security scheme in the military sense, as far as Asia is concerned, would be designed to serve two purposes: to protect any Asian country from outside attack or to protect any Asian country or group of countries from attack by a member of the region. Any such scheme of security would entail the obligation on the part of its members to make a contribution in the form of armed forces and armaments and would result in the diversion of a portion of their meagre resources from economic development to meet this obligation. At a time when efforts are being made to ensure the redundancy of such regional pacts as NATO and the Warsaw Pact, we must question the prudence of creating a similar scheme for Asia. An Asian collective security scheme for defence purposes would, if it embraced all the nations of Asia, be superfluous. If it were not comprehensive in its membership, it would, far from promoting security, merely increase insecurity and be a nuisance. Furthermore, it would be at complete variance with the principles of non-alignment and, therefore, could hardly be acceptable to the non-aligned nations of Asia.

159. If, however, the concept of collective security connotes co-operation between the nations of Asia in trade and economic development, in cultural promotion and in the pacific settlement of local disputes and problems, it could

undoubtedly promote security and should be welcomed by all. It might even enable the continent of Asia to discover its real identity and, while promoting the material welfare of its peoples, to undertake a role in international affairs that would be more in keeping with its priceless moral and spiritual heritage.

160. While on the subject of Asian security, we must take note of disturbing trends in the Asian region, including the Indian Ocean area. The gradual dismantling of the military establishment of a major Power in that region has led to speculation on the need for the so-called vacuum to be filled by other means. We are aware of the installation of certain logistic arrangements in islands in the Indian Ocean. Developments of this type are not calculated to promote security and ease tensions. Many nations in Asia view them with concern. To seek to prevent such developments within the Indian Ocean area is not to interfere with the freedom of the high seas. One of the most precious of all freedoms is the freedom from fear and that could be ensured if the Indian Ocean area were declared an area of peace and if all countries accepted such a declaration and honoured it.

161. The United Nations is on the eve of launching a Second Development Decade. Profiting by the experience of the First Development Decade, a strategy for the 70s is being carefully worked out. One of the vital elements in this strategy must be the determination of realistic rates of economic growth for individual nations and for the world as a whole. These rates must be more than an aspiration. They must represent not the desirable but the attainable. They must ensure a proper balance between the needs of development and the demands of elementary social justice, ensuring steady progress in that direction. Above all, if the strategy is to succeed, there must be a firm commitment by the affluent section of the world to provide the capital resources and to pursue the financial and economic policies required for its fulfilment. We do not deny that the developing nations also have a concomitant obligation. The report of the Pearson Commission¹³ comes at a very opportune moment. It contains many valuable recommendations. We trust that it will receive the serious attention that it deserves.

162. An important aspect of the problem of development is external finance. Ceylon's experience has shown that improvement in the gross national product can come entirely or largely through increases in production for domestic use, but along with a steady and serious decline in external resources. Although Ceylon succeeded in 1968 even in exceeding the growth rate of 5 per cent set as the target for the First Development Decade, the sharp fall in the export price of our main export commodity, tea, drastically reduced our import capacity. A growth rate can be illusory and even precarious if a country's import capacity is not maintained and strengthened by stability in its export prices and by an improvement in such prices. Where the increase in the gross national product is due largely to agricultural production for internal needs but is accompanied by a marked reduction of import capacity, the diversification of the economy through the development of industry is rendered almost impossible. We trust that the strategy for the Second Development Decade will

provide an answer to this problem. We have referred to only one of the many problems of development.

163. We welcome the agreement just reached within the International Monetary Fund to create an addition to international liquidity in the form of special drawing rights, which has been somewhat profanely dubbed as paper gold, amounting to \$9.5 thousand million over a period of three years. If that measure is to serve the purpose of assisting countries faced with chronic balance-of-payment difficulties the special drawing rights should not be considered a mere addition to the wealth of all countries. Treated as such, the arrangement would only have the effect of making the rich richer and the poor slightly less poor, but the relative positions of the developed and developing countries would remain unaltered. This epoch-making arrangement can, however, have the effect of stimulating international trade and economic growth within the developing sectors of the world if there is a commitment and a willingness on the part of the developed nations to use their share of the special drawing rights to augment their contribution to programmes of economic development in developing countries by releasing a portion of their special drawing rights or its equivalent in national currencies, depending on the mechanics of the operation, for the purpose of multilateral economic aid to developing countries through institutions such as the International Development Association.

164. Over the last two years the question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction, and the use of their resources in the interests of mankind, has come to be recognized as occupying a position of special importance on the agenda of this Assembly. The mineral wealth of this area is so vast and its potential so tremendous as to call for serious and urgent attention by the international community to measures for its orderly and efficient exploitation and management with special regard to the interests and needs of the developing countries of the world.

165. By its resolution 2467 A (XXIII) the General Assembly established a Committee¹⁴ composed of 42 States with a wide mandate to examine the question and make recommendations to the General Assembly on its various aspects. These include the legal principles and norms which would promote international co-operation in the exploration and use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor and ensure the exploitation of their resources for the benefit of mankind, as well as the economic and other requirements which such a régime should satisfy in order to meet the interests of humanity as a whole. The Committee was further empowered to study and make recommendations to the General Assembly on the reservation of the area for peaceful purposes, taking into account the studies and international negotiations being undertaken in the field of disarmament.

166. Assessments regarding the progress that the Committee has made during the course of the year will vary. The criterion of achievement is invariably expectation. Though

¹³ *Partners in Development—Report of the Commission on International Development* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1969).

¹⁴ Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction.

progress may be regarded by some as being too slow, it is necessary to bear in mind the immensity of the technical problems that still remain to be overcome, the novelty of some of the legal concepts which the Committee has had to consider, and the diversity of political and economic interests involved.

167. Speaking as the representative of my Government and not in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee, I should like to state that in the view of my Government the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction must be regarded as the common heritage of mankind. We do not shrink from that concept because of its novelty. International law, of all branches of law, cannot remain static but must develop in response to the changing needs of the international community whose interests it is intended to serve. It must be ready to explore and, if necessary, accept new concepts that will advance the common good. It must reflect the social conscience of the international community and stand ready to give effect to the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of mankind.

168. The General Assembly in resolution 2467 C (XXIII) dealt with the question of establishing in due time appropriate international machinery for the promotion of the exploration and exploitation of the resources of the area. The nature and form of this machinery and the programme for its establishment require the most careful attention.

169. Any examination in detail of the various aspects of the question would not be realistic if there was no agreement on what constituted the limits of the area of national jurisdiction. My Government considers it important that the United Nations should give consideration to convening, without delay, an international conference to review the provisions of the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf, which is of particular significance in this regard.

170. Meanwhile, it is our hope that all Governments will co-operate and intensify their efforts within and outside the Committee on the sea-bed to ensure that the high aims and purposes set forth in resolution 2467 (XXIII) will be speedily achieved.

171. A consultative meeting of special representatives of the Governments of non-aligned countries was held in Belgrade from 8 to 12 July this year to examine afresh the role of non-alignment in the present international situation and to assess the value and function of the policy of non-alignment in relation to major international issues. It was in Belgrade in September 1961 that the first Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries took place. That meeting brought together a group of countries which were convinced that the cold war as the political expression of the antagonism between two power blocs representing diametrically opposed political and economic ideologies could, with every new accession to one or the other of the blocs, lead to an intensification of international tensions with consequences that were too unpleasant to contemplate.

172. The avoidance of a binding commitment to either of the blocs through membership of their respective military

organizations was considered a crucial factor. The creation of a non-aligned group was promoted by the existence of a large area of common interests shared by those who assembled in Belgrade in September 1961. Those interests were concentrated on the very problems which the United Nations Charter itself recognized as threats to international peace and security. This community of interests gave the group a cohesion which could not have been maintained merely through their aversion to military alliances with the cold war power blocs. The participants in the Belgrade meeting had a common concern in the eradication of colonialism and neo-colonialism, imperialism and racialism and in general and complete disarmament. They were pledged to the principle of self-determination and independence for all subject peoples and to respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States large and small. They recognized the importance of peaceful coexistence between States with different social and economic systems and they all alike realized the need for international co-operation to improve standards of living in the developing countries of the world. They considered these principles and policies the best prescription for international peace, and security. They did not subscribe to the proposition that a country was morally obliged to state its position between two contending parties.

173. Future generations can best judge whether or not the existence of the non-aligned group at that point of time was a real contribution to the easing of tensions and to the avoidance of a major conflict.

174. In 1964, in Cairo, the principles and policies formulated at Belgrade were reaffirmed and amplified. Five years have passed since the Cairo Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries and we are now engaged in a fresh assessment of the role of non-alignment in international affairs. There is a need to do so, as the cold war has lost its original character. While the two major camps or blocs that existed in 1961 have moved progressively towards better mutual understanding and to the establishment of a *modus vivendi*, new divisions have occurred where they were least expected.

175. The non-aligned countries must maintain unremitting vigilance to ensure that such developments will promote and not hamper those aims and policies which have been defined as their common concern and which are identical with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

176. Unencumbered by any commitment to the politics of power, they can, as the United Nations enters this next phase of its existence, legitimately presume to lead the nations of the world in the pursuit of what the Secretary-General has suggested as an appropriate theme for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Organization: peace and progress.

177. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): On behalf of Miss BROOKS, I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Italy and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the permanent representative of Ceylon, for the words of congratulation they have addressed to her.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.