

**United Nations**  
**GENERAL**  
**ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records



**1838th**  
**PLENARY MEETING**  
(Closing meeting)

Wednesday, 17 December 1969,  
at 4 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
Agenda item 27: The situation in the Middle East . . . . .	1
Agenda item 10: Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization . . . . .	1
Pending appointments:	
(a) Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade;	
(b) Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;	
(c) Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations . . . .	2
Completion of the work of the twenty-fourth session . . . .	5
Agenda item 2: Minute of silent prayer or meditation . . . . .	11
Closing of the session . . . . .	11

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

**AGENDA ITEM 27**

**The situation in the Middle East**

1. The PRESIDENT: Consultations which I have carried out with various delegations have given me to understand that the general feeling is that agenda item 27 should be postponed until the next session. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the General Assembly agrees to include this item in the provisional agenda for the twenty-fifth session.

*It was so decided*

**AGENDA ITEM 10**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the work  
of the Organization**

2. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly still has to consider a matter which does not require any specific action by it. I refer to agenda item 10. That report and the introduction to it were submitted to the General Assembly in document A/7601 and Add.1.

3. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I take the floor to say just a few words with regard to the report of the Secretary-General, which comes in a routine manner at the very end of the General Assembly session at a time when there is no

possibility of making it an item calling for some discussion on matters that are contained in the report and that are of considerable importance. Of course, we know that it was the understanding originally that the general debate would be conducted on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General. Perhaps this did take place during the first session, but after that the report of the Secretary-General did not appear as a sub-heading of the item entitled "General debate". If it were, that would be satisfactory. Of course, many delegations refer to the report of the Secretary-General, usually to support a particular view or with reference to certain matters of world affairs, but perhaps they do so incidentally, not as an item before them.

4. In the general debate, each delegation comes forward and presents its own views in support of its own thinking about problems and not necessarily with any direct reference to the report of the Secretary-General. I would therefore submit that either there should be a sub-title under the heading "General debate" entitled "Report of the Secretary-General", which would give the report the prominence to which it is entitled, or else an item could be placed on the agenda of the General Assembly to be discussed some time before the end of the session, so that if Members wished to make remarks or draw attention to certain parts of the Secretary-General's report, they could do so.

5. As matters now stand, the item comes before us, but at the same time Members are precluded from discussing the report or drawing attention to any parts of it. That is the situation that has to be remedied and I hope that next year the General Committee will see fit to adopt either of the procedures I have mentioned so that the report of the Secretary-General may be given due regard. This is particularly important in a world where there is a growing danger and threat to the very existence of mankind, and when many suggestions of the Secretary-General and many warnings have been of great importance. Unfortunately, I cannot say that they have been sufficiently heeded.

6. Therefore, let us do something to heed a little more carefully what the Secretary-General has to say. An example of this would be the suggestion made by the Secretary-General in his annual report for 1966-1967, with reference to Article 28 of the Charter, which says that "the Security Council shall hold periodic meetings at which each of its members may, if it so desires, be represented by a member of the Government or by some other specially designated representative", in order to review the world situation, irrespective of any particular item. As matters now stand, the Security Council only meets with regard to some particular items; but it would be very useful if it could meet and review the world situation. This suggestion was made by the Secretary-General in his annual report for

1966-1967, and apparently not sufficient notice was taken of it.

7. When the delegation of the Soviet Union brought the matter up this year under the item entitled "Strengthening of international security", it became part of the draft resolution that was adopted unanimously. Therefore, obviously, this measure was a useful one—one that the members wanted. If the report of the Secretary-General were given sufficient attention, by being placed on the agenda as an item to be examined, then probably this type of action could have been taken two years ago.

8. That is a mere example. Consequently, we can say that a great deal is contained in the Secretary-General's report which not only is worthy of note, but also requires action. I hope, therefore, that something will be done next year by the General Committee to give the report of the Secretary-General its due place of importance.

9. The PRESIDENT: If there are no objections, I propose that the Assembly take note of the annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization.

*It was so decided.*

#### **Pending appointments:**

- (a) **Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade;**
- (b) **Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;**
- (c) **Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations**

10. The PRESIDENT: I should like to take this opportunity of informing the General Assembly of the steps I have taken to discharge the responsibilities vested in me by paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 2411 (XXIII) of 17 December 1968, concerning the membership of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade. Pursuant to that paragraph, it is the duty of the President of the General Assembly to designate annually:

"twenty-seven States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies and of the International Atomic Energy Agency . . . keeping in view the composition of the Economic and Social Council, equitable geographical distribution and the need to ensure the maximum degree of continuity."

These 27 States, together with the 27 members of the Economic Committee of the Economic and Social Council, make up the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

11. On 5 December 1969 I initiated discussions with delegations regarding the 27 States to be designated by me to serve on the Preparatory Committee for the year 1970. I handed delegations an aide-mémoire requesting the various geographical groups to submit to me, by 12 December 1969, the requisite number of nominations for me to consider when designating the States to fill the places which would become vacant at the end of this year. In the

aide-mémoire, in addition to inviting nominations, I pointed out that I would have no alternative, in the absence of such nominations, but to carry out my responsibilities by designating the requisite number of States from each group concerned and informing the General Assembly accordingly.

12. I have now received the necessary number of nominations from all groups except one. This last group adhered to the view it expressed both when resolution 2411 (XXIII) was adopted, and subsequently, that that resolution was invalid in that it provided for an illegal procedure of appointment to one of the principal organs of the United Nations—the Economic and Social Council—enabling non-Members of the Organization to participate in its work on an equal footing with Members. I have examined that view and sought competent advice. It is clear to me that the Preparatory Committee in question is an organ quite distinct from the Economic and Social Council and is a subsidiary, not a principal organ. There are many subsidiary organs of the United Nations which are open to non-Member States and the legal validity of the resolutions creating these organs has never been challenged. I am therefore, in the circumstances, unable to accept the argument that resolution 2411 (XXIII) is in any way illegal. I should mention, too, that when the report of the Preparatory Committee was discussed at the present session no move was made to revise resolution 2411 (XXIII), which might have been expected had it been a widely held view that the resolution contained any illegalities.

13. I now find myself, therefore, in the same position as the President of the twenty-third session when he was seeking to discharge his responsibilities under resolution 2411 (XXIII) and when one group failed to submit any nominations to him. Like him, I have no alternative but to discharge my responsibilities by designating 27 Member States to serve on the Preparatory Committee and to do so strictly within the terms of resolution 2411 (XXIII). As he pointed out in a letter of 20 February 1969,<sup>1</sup> the President of the Assembly is not obliged by the Charter, the rules of procedure, or the text of the resolution to consult the various geographical groups or to be limited by the recommendations, or absence of recommendations, of the groups. In these circumstances, and pursuant to the responsibilities vested in me by paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 2411 (XXIII), I have decided to conform to the terms of that resolution and to designate the following 27 States to serve on the Preparatory Committee: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Federal Republic of Germany, Guatemala, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Republic and Venezuela.

14. Nevertheless, if the group which has not so far presented any candidates submits to the Secretary-General, before 31 December 1969, a list of such candidates, they shall replace, to the extent necessary, the States from that group designated by me.

<sup>1</sup> Document A/7269/Add.2.

15. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The Soviet Union's views on the Second United Nations Development Decade and the Preparatory Committee which is to prepare a programme for the Decade were presented in detail by the Soviet delegation in the Second Committee at the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly during the discussion of items 12 and 40 of the General Assembly's agenda [1262nd and 1304th meetings]. Those views were also formally expressed in a letter dated 19 November 1969 from the Permanent Representative of the USSR to the Secretary-General of the United Nations [A/C.2/248].

16. The delegation of the Soviet Union would now like to make the following statement in connexion with the announcement by the President of the General Assembly of the membership of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

17. At the last—twenty-third—session of the United Nations General Assembly the situation created through the efforts of certain countries in effect precluded the possibility of the Soviet Union's participation in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Second Development Decade. The USSR's reasons for not participating in the Committee were explained at that time in the Assembly [1745th meeting] and in a subsequent letter dated 21 February 1969 to the President of the twenty-third session of the General Assembly.<sup>2</sup>

18. The essence of the matter was that the composition of the Preparatory Committee violated the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council. Discrimination was permitted against socialist countries which are not Members of the Organization, and in particular against the German Democratic Republic, which has as much right to participate in the work of that Committee, and in the system of international economic co-operation, as the other German State, the Federal Republic of Germany. The inclusion of the well-known discriminatory wording in General Assembly resolutions on the Second Development Decade has created an obstacle to such participation by the German Democratic Republic and other socialist countries which are not Members of the United Nations. The principle of universality has been grossly violated. Until that injustice has been redressed the Soviet Union will not participate in the work of the Preparatory Committee.

19. With regard to the Second United Nations Development Decade itself, the Soviet Union, in accordance with its basic policy of protecting the interests of the developing countries and promoting the fullest friendly co-operation with them, considers that the success of the Decade will only be assured, as we sincerely wish, if the international situation improves, international security is strengthened, all States steadfastly strive for general and complete disarmament, and all freedom-loving countries actively oppose colonialism and neo-colonialism and promote the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

20. We are also firmly convinced that the Second United Nations Development Decade can only succeed if the efforts of the developing countries are directed to radical reform in the social and economic fields, full mobilization of their domestic resources, development and consolidation of the State sector, and adoption—through the United Nations and in other ways—of effective measures to protect themselves from the neo-colonialist exploitation which still afflicts many of them. The developing countries should be entitled to compensation from the former colonial Powers for the damage caused to their economies during the period of colonial dependence and exploitation, as also from all those States which are still continuing to exploit the human and natural resources of the developing countries to their detriment.

21. We should also like to state yet again our conviction that the Second United Nations Development Decade should be open for participation by all interested countries, without any prejudice or discrimination whatsoever, in strict accordance with the principles of universality and compliance with the Charter of the United Nations. Only on those conditions can the programme for the Second Development Decade be effective and successful. For all that, these crucial principles were not duly reflected in the resolution adopted at the present session of the General Assembly [2571 (XXIV)], on the so-called International Development Strategy. Indeed, that resolution is based on the discriminatory provisions of a resolution adopted at the last session of the General Assembly [2411 (XXIII)], which, of course, we simply cannot accept.

22. In this connexion, our delegation would like to draw the attention of other delegations to the fact that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic at one stage sent a communication to the Secretary-General of the United Nations [A/7511], officially stating its Government's willingness to participate on a fully equal footing in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The Soviet Union believes, as before, that it would be an act of simple justice for the German Democratic Republic—a highly industrialized sovereign socialist State, which has recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary—to be made a member of the Preparatory Committee and given an equal opportunity with all other States to make its own constructive contribution to the Second Development Decade.

23. The Soviet delegation feels in duty bound at this plenary meeting of the General Assembly to affirm yet again its basic position on this major international issue.

24. Since the reasons for our country's non-participation in the Preparatory Committee have still not been removed, our delegation feels that it must state that the Soviet Union is still unable, as matters now stand, to participate in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

25. Mr. SMIRNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*translated from Russian*): We have just learned that the Byelorussian SSR has been designated a member of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade. This was done without the consent

<sup>2</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Annexes, agenda item 37, document A/7490.



of our Government or of the Permanent Mission of the Byelorussian SSR to the United Nations, which runs counter to established practice in the appointment of United Nations bodies.

26. In February 1969, the Byelorussian SSR, in company with other socialist countries, addressed a letter to the President of the twenty-third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations<sup>3</sup> explaining in detail why it could not participate in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade, which had been created in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2411 (XXIII).

27. The Byelorussian SSR is still unable to take part in the work of the Preparatory Committee, since the reasons which have prevented us from taking part this year still exist. Indeed, at the twenty-third session of the General Assembly our delegation voted against resolution 2411 (XXIII), since it opened the way, in violation of the Charter, to discrimination in the appointment of members to one of the main organs of the United Nations—the Economic and Social Council. This resolution was from the start discriminatory against the socialist States, especially the German Democratic Republic. Events since then have confirmed our apprehensions as to the negative consequences of the inclusion of the Federal Republic of Germany in the Preparatory Committee. That cannot fail to have an unhappy effect on the activities of the United Nations and shows that certain circles in the United Nations are determined to violate the Charter and to prevent the achievement of conditions which would have permitted truly fruitful international co-operation in the interests of the Second Development Decade.

28. In the light of the above, our delegation declares that the inclusion of the Byelorussian SSR in the Preparatory Committee has no legal force, and that representatives of the Byelorussian SSR will not be taking part in the work of that Committee.

29. Mr. KASPRZYK (Poland): The Polish delegation expressed many times its interest in and positive attitude to the question of the economic growth of less developed countries and to the Second United Nations Development Decade. At the same time, for well-known reasons, we were unable to participate in the work of the Preparatory Committee established as a result of resolution 2411 (XXIII), which we could not support.

30. I should like to take this opportunity of stating that since the situation in that respect has not changed and the reasons I mentioned above continue to exist, the Polish delegation can do nothing but maintain its present reservations with respect to the Preparatory Committee. In those circumstances, to our regret, Poland is now not in a position to participate in the work of that Committee.

31. Mr. DOBLES (Costa Rica) (*translated from Spanish*): Costa Rica is very satisfied at the appointment of her sister Republic of Chile to the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade, which was made in accordance with the provisions of operative paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 2411 (XXIII).

32. When consultations took place within the group of Latin American countries, my delegation stated that it would not insist on participating in the work of the Preparatory Committee, not through any lack of interest but in recognition of the legitimate aspirations of other Latin American delegations. We therefore take pleasure in the appointment of our sister Republic of Chile to this important Committee. We are sure that its contribution will be of great value in the Committee's work and we offer it our warmest congratulations.

33. Mr. VIAUD (France) (*translated from French*): The Federal Republic of Germany—for I should like to come back to this point—has been designated by you, Madam President, to be a member of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade. This designation was made on the proposal of the group of Western European and other States. Moreover, it is entirely in accordance with resolution 2411 (XXIII) adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third session, a resolution which laid down the procedure to be followed in setting up the Committee. The French delegation, therefore, cannot but support your proposal, Madam President.

34. The PRESIDENT: I now invite representatives to turn to the question of the Committee of Twenty-Four and to consider the letter dated 28 January 1969 from the permanent representative of Australia [A/7507].

35. I give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia on a point of order.

36. Mr. WODAJO (Ethiopia): I am not sure whether the remarks I am going to make would fall under a point of order. I have a minor proposal to make to the General Assembly, through you, Madam President, and that explains the purpose of my request to be allowed to make these remarks.

37. Members of the United Nations will have noted for some time now the decision of the Government of Australia to withdraw from the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Much as we regret the decision of that Government, we have to recognize that it is a decision which the Government of Australia alone can make. It also seems that its decision is final. It is apparent that the Assembly will have to make, sooner or later, a decision with regard to the replacement of Australia in the Special Committee but it seems to us that the time is not ripe for the Assembly to take specific action in that connexion.

38. We feel that not enough consultations have taken place with regard to the candidate who will replace Australia in the Committee. We feel that consultations should be carried out by you, Madam President, taking into account the kind of considerations that figured in the selection of Australia in the first place. Therefore, Madam President, I humbly request that the Assembly should defer action with regard to the replacement of Australia on the Committee.

39. The PRESIDENT: Members have heard the proposal made by the representative of Ethiopia in connexion with

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

the appointment to the Committee of Twenty-Four. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly accedes to the proposal made by the representative of Ethiopia.

*It was so decided.*

40. The PRESIDENT: Let us turn now to another pending appointment. I refer representatives to the letter dated 8 December 1969 wherein Sweden states that it has decided to withdraw from the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations [A/7632]. After consultations Denmark has accepted to serve on this Special Committee.

41. If I hear no objection, I shall consider that the Assembly takes note of Denmark's offer to serve on the Special Committee.

*It was so decided.*

### *Completion of the work of the twenty-fourth session*

42. The PRESIDENT: We are coming now to the close of the session, and at this time I shall call on representatives who have expressed a wish to address the General Assembly at this stage.

43. Mr. MASHOLOGU (Lesotho): Madam President, as we near the final moments of this session it is my very pleasant duty to thank you and to congratulate you on behalf of the African group for the able manner in which you have conducted the affairs of the current session. We should also like to thank the Vice-Presidents and all the delegations and regional groups whose contributions have greatly facilitated the work of the General Assembly. We also wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to our highly esteemed Secretary-General for his dedicated and untiring efforts to carry out the decisions of the Organization. Finally, we wish to express our gratitude to the Under-Secretaries and to all the other members of the Secretariat for their efficient and dedicated assistance throughout this Assembly.

44. Madam President, you have come from one of the so-called small and developing countries and we are grateful for the time which the Assembly has devoted to the consideration of our problems.

45. Mr. HAMBRO (Norway): Madam President, when you were elected President of the General Assembly you said in your speech certain wise words to us. Only history can prove whether this session of the General Assembly has nobly performed its task or failed in the aims we set ourselves. Only history can prove that; it is not for us to comment on it.

46. You also stated that you approached your task as the President of the Assembly with great humility. I do not know whether it is possible for you to keep that humility after all the praise and all the thanks you received at the beginning of the session, and also all the praise you will get today before we all part. That too is a question that only the future can settle and it is not on our agenda to decide it, so I am not going to take it up.

47. There is another question which I think is easier to solve. You said, Madam President, that you would bring to

your present high office all your ability and all your will to perform your task to our satisfaction. I think I may state, at least on behalf of the group I have the honour to represent—Western Europe and other States—that you have performed the task to our very great satisfaction. We think that you have performed nobly in this Assembly hall. You have led our debates with intelligence, dispatch, efficiency and a patience that at times has seemed nearly super-human.

48. We know that you have performed other tasks outside of this house. Some of us have participated at meetings where you have spoken as a representative of the nations. You have also done that nobly. We know that you have also been engaged in tasks, negotiations and mediations in difficult situations. Many of those talks have been so confidential that we do not know much about them, but we believe that you have brought to that task the same high qualities that we have learned to admire in this Assembly. For that reason, you return to your home with all our best wishes and with all our thanks for a task well performed.

49. We wish you a good vacation, which you well deserve for what you have done here and which you need for the tasks you will have to perform in the future, both for your beloved country, and your glorious and beautiful continent, and in common with us all, in our endeavours for the peace of the world in this Assembly. Our good wishes follow you, Madam President.

50. Mr. SOUVANLASY (Laos) (*translated from French*): Madam President, now that we are concluding our work, it is for me a very pleasant duty and an honour to convey to you on behalf of the delegations of Asia and the delegation of Laos our deep thanks for the greatly appreciated efforts you have made and for the devotion and wisdom you have demonstrated constantly throughout these long months of debate.

51. Let me also take this opportunity to express to our greatly respected Secretary-General and to all the members of the Secretariat our warmest thanks and our sincere appreciation for the devoted and tireless efforts they have made in the service of the Assembly.

52. On this occasion, Madam President, I am pleased to say once more that it has been a great honour for my country, as well as for your own and certainly for all countries of the third world, to have had you as President of this session of the General Assembly, and we have all felt sincere satisfaction at this.

53. Small countries, including my own, still place their faith and trust in the United Nations. However, our Organization can only see its efforts rewarded and leading to concrete achievements for the welfare of all mankind if a real peace, a just peace, is established between all the peoples and countries of this planet. The happy advent of this state of affairs, which we all so ardently hope for, is naturally a matter of concern to all Member States, and particularly to those which by the terms of the Charter signed at San Francisco, are primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

54. I should like to hope, therefore, that this modest observation, made on the eve of the twenty-fifth anniver-

sary of the United Nations and following many similar and more eloquent appeals made from this rostrum, will very soon meet with an encouraging response.

55. This year, notwithstanding an international atmosphere charged with uncertainty, suspicion and mutual distrust, which is hardly propitious for truly fruitful international co-operation, it is nevertheless comforting to note that our session—thanks to your active and enlightened leadership, Madam President—has achieved progress in many fields by adopting numerous resolutions and thereby enriching the already impressive record of accomplishments that stand to the credit of our Organization.

56. Mr. POLYANICHKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*translated from Russian*): Madam President, it is a great pleasure for me, on behalf of the group of Eastern European socialist countries and on my own account, to congratulate you on the completion of the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly and to express our appreciation for your skilful guidance of its work.

57. We attach great significance to the fact that this year the President of this session of the General Assembly was a representative of Africa, a continent that was for centuries a stamping-ground for colonialism and imperialism, which thwarted the self-determination of its peoples and tried to keep them in colonial subjection, to hold up the historical process of development and to prevent them from participating actively in the affairs of the international community.

58. The just struggle of the African peoples for liberation from foreign domination has always enjoyed the unflagging support of the socialist countries, and we are very pleased to note one sign of the success achieved in this struggle, namely, the fact that in recent years the proceedings of the General Assembly have periodically, in accordance with the principle of rotation among the various geographical groups of United Nations Members, been presided over by representatives of independent African States.

59. Your election, Madam President, to this lofty post is also evidence and acknowledgement of the increasingly active role played by women in the present-day world, and particularly in international relations. This is now the second time in the history of our Organization that the General Assembly has carried out its work under the Presidency of a distinguished representative of the other half of the human race.

60. The year 1969 has been a year of tension in the life of this planet. There is the continued arms race; the war in South-East Asia; the as yet unliquidated consequences of aggression in the Near East; and the continued colonial wars in Africa.

61. And it is no coincidence, either, that at the centre of attention at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly have been problems connected with the maintenance of universal peace and international security. I refer first and foremost to the well-known proposal submitted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union on the question of strengthening international security [A/7154].

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the need to formulate, in connexion with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, appropriate recommendations for strengthening international security [2606 (XXIV)] is a step in the right direction, corresponding to the interests of all peoples.

62. The General Assembly has adopted a number of important decisions in the field of disarmament—in particular, on the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological (biological) methods of warfare, together with a declaration that their use contravenes international law—on the liquidation of colonialism, on economic co-operation on an equal basis, and sundry other matters.

63. We are very pleased that this was the first session of the General Assembly in which Russian was a working language. That undoubtedly aided many delegations, including my own, in their day-to-day work.

64. In congratulating you, Madam President, on the termination of the labours of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, I should also like to express my gratitude to the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, and to all the Secretariat—in particular, the Office of Conference Services, which throughout these months has done so much to lighten the task of all delegations.

65. In conclusion, I should like to tender to you, Madam President, to the Secretary-General, to the Members of the General Assembly and to the Secretariat our best wishes for the coming New Year, which will usher in the new decade of the 1970s.

66. Mr. JACKMAN (Barbados): Madam President, it is a great pleasure for me, speaking on behalf of 23 Latin American countries, to join in the tributes being paid to you on this last day of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

67. As one of the Vice-Presidents of this Assembly, and thus a member of the General Committee, I have personally had the privilege of working in close collaboration with you, and I know from that contact that when people speak of your tact and your intelligence and your firmness those words are more than merely mechanical compliments. My friends in Trinidad and Tobago have an expression “a distant beauty”. They use that expression to describe a person who is nice from afar, but far from nice. You, Madam President, are not a “distant beauty”.

68. It is not my business nor is it my intention in this brief intervention to review the progress made during this session of the General Assembly. In any event, it is impossible for anyone at this stage to have a significant over-all view of the complex range of interlocking activities which have been taking place in these halls since 16 September. Nevertheless I would venture to record one firm impression which my delegation will take from this Assembly. It is that, in many respects, the smaller countries of the Organization have significantly enhanced their prestige at this twenty-fourth session. They have done so, in our view, not by shouting and posturing, but by careful, thoughtful hard work, by a constant search for realistic solutions to the problems



facing the world community, by their readiness to collaborate closely and enthusiastically with the more powerful Members of the Organization when convinced that such collaboration was in the interest of world order and development, and by their firm refusal to be chivied and stampeded into action which did not appear to be in their interests.

69. If that assessment is correct, Madam President, I think you are entitled to claim at least a part of the credit for it. There is little doubt that the frank cautionary lecture which you delivered to us at the beginning of this session has led to some much needed heart-searching, and I would guess that this is reflected in the developments to which I have referred.

70. In the minds of the members of the delegation of Barbados and of the other 22 countries on behalf of whose delegations I have the honour to speak, it is certain that you will leave your own highly individual mark on this Assembly. It is a mark of realism, of good humour and of human warmth. And I think there is a lot of evidence to suggest that under your "maxi" dress lies a "maxi" heart.

71. I do not think, Madam President, that any of us will ever forget the occasion on which your speedy use of the gavel reduced the entire Assembly to a state of helpless but acquiescent laughter and earned you the very well-justified title of "the fastest gavel in the West".

72. There is a ritual in these little speeches according to which, after having paid compliments to the President, one turns and pays compliments to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat. I do not think we need to pretend about our sincerity when we compliment the Secretary-General and the Secretariat on the splendid way in which they have carried out during this twenty-fourth session the very difficult and complicated work which is their lot. Therefore I should like to go on record, on behalf of the 23 countries for which I have the honour of speaking, as saying that we of the Latin-American group have certainly benefited very profoundly from the work of the Secretariat, just as we have benefited from your own handling of this Assembly and from your tactful and thoughtful dealings with us at moments of some stress. We wish you and the Secretary-General and the staff of the Secretariat happy holidays and a very happy New Year.

73. Mr. TEKOAH (Israel): Madam President, my delegation wishes to join others in paying tribute to you, to the Secretary-General and to the members of the Secretariat for having guided our work at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly with so much wisdom and efficacy. In this you have brought great honour to yourself, your country and the entire continent of Africa.

74. The time when you assumed the Presidency of the General Assembly was one of heart-searching and reappraisal of the significance and effect of the United Nations in international relations. With the United Nations playing a marginal role in the world's main conflicts, with some of the gravest mass violations of human rights remaining outside the scope of its action, with States impervious to Charter obligations appearing as mentors of international conduct and sometimes elected to the highest positions in

the Organization, many Member Governments and world opinion have come to share a growing sentiment of frustration and concern. That sentiment has been enhanced by the sterile and repetitive acrimony of certain United Nations discussions and by the adoption of resolutions which are at times divorced from equity and reality.

75. In your opening address on 16 September 1969 [1753rd meeting], Madam President, you drew the Assembly's attention to the seeming decline in the effectiveness of the United Nations and its reputation and to resolutions adopted without serious consideration of the possibility, or even probability that they would not be implemented. With dedication and valour, you have devoted yourself during this session to a gallant effort to lift the United Nations from its low ebb. With patience and moderation, you have tried to steer the Assembly towards a respect for the basic principles of the Charter and responsible procedure. With limitless understanding, you have given of your time and prestige even to the salvation of individuals caught in the frenzy of hostility. If the Assembly ends in an atmosphere of continued futility, if Member States show ever stronger reservations about the moral and judicial force of our activities, if world opinion displays a markedly diminished interest in our proceedings, you, Madam President, stand out above all that as a symbol of the division which the United Nations was founded to pursue and attain. It is the hope of my delegation, shared by many others, that the family of nations will continue to benefit from your inspiration and guidance in the pursuance of that vision.

76. Mr. YOST (United States of America): As representative of the host country, it is my great privilege to express the sentiments of the United States as this twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly draws to a close.

77. First of all, let me congratulate you, Madam President, on the wisdom, firmness, good humour and dedication with which you have presided over our proceedings and helped us through our difficult moments. The United Nations is greatly in your debt, and you have richly earned for yourself, your country and your continent the honour that this body bestowed in electing you.

78. I would add a most sincere word of praise for the other officers of this Assembly, our Vice-Presidents and the Chairmen and officers of all our Committees, who have likewise rendered a vital service to us in the conduct of our parliamentary business.

79. Our hearty thanks go also once again, as always, to our great and good friend, the indefatigable Secretary-General, to the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and to their dedicated staff for the wise counsel and invaluable services they have all so cheerfully rendered to keep this Assembly functioning. In this tribute I include not only our interpreters and guards and other officials whose excellent service we recognize, because we hear and see them every day, but also, and equally, the many others in the Secretariat whom we seldom see but whose devoted and expert support is no less vital to our proceedings.

80. Finally, it is my privilege to express the good wishes of the United States and the American people to all members of delegations who came to our shores to take part in the

proceedings of this session. Above and beyond the work accomplished by the Assembly, one of the most intangible yet most precious values in these annual sessions lies in the human contacts and friendships they bring, bridging many nations and cultures and adding an ever new meaning and warmth to the phrase, "the family of nations"—"the human family".

81. Next year, when we again gather here, it will be under a special sign, that of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. My Government—and indeed, I am sure, most of us here—will be hard at work throughout the coming year to help ensure that that session will be historic and productive in the life of this Organization, on which so much of our destiny depends.

82. In the meantime let me express to all my fellow representatives and their staffs my country's cordial wish for a safe journey home and for a more peaceful New Year.

83. Mr. BARODY (Saudi Arabia): Madam President, before and after you became President we admired and respected you. During this session we ended by loving you. We thank you, we thank the Secretary-General and we thank all the members of the Secretariat, without amendments or reservations.

84. The PRESIDENT: Some 13 weeks ago, the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly opened in this hall. Since then we have considered 107 agenda items and have come to the final stage of our work. It is not my intention to delay you from a well-deserved rest and vacation, but I trust that you will bear with me just a few minutes longer before I strike the gavel for the close of this session.

85. When I spoke at the opening meeting of this session I expressed my gratitude and pride at the honour paid to my country and to me by my election to the Presidency. I also spoke of my feeling of responsibility and my fear. That fear was soon dispelled by the unfailing courtesy and consideration which every one of you has displayed towards me since the very beginning. I can now openly extend my unreserved and whole-hearted thanks to all delegations, to all the Chairmen of the Main Committees, to the Vice-Presidents and to the Members of the Assembly for their constant assistance and support in the discharge of my responsibilities. I hope that I have measured up to those responsibilities and that you will let me leave this podium with the feeling that, whatever mistakes I may have made, they were but human; that I have tried to be honest, impartial, and to carry out my responsibilities to the best of my ability.

86. To refer once more to my statement at the opening of this session [1753rd meeting], I struck a rather sombre note in reviewing the status of the United Nations and its work, and I stressed the need for our Organization to translate ideals into action. Today I shall permit myself a little more optimism. The session which is now ending has been largely without polemics. It has been a somewhat sober one. This is all to the good. We have not finally resolved the long-standing political problems before us, but we have made some progress. If much remains to be done, new avenues to be explored, new attitudes and ideas to be found, we have given the direction to future assemblies. In the months which intervene between now and the twenty-

fifth anniversary which the United Nations will celebrate next year, we must dedicate ourselves to seeking out those new avenues, attitudes and ideas, so that we may translate them into action in the sessions which lie ahead.

87. Let me now turn to the work of this session. As this is a plenary meeting, it would be redundant for me to recall the items we have taken up directly in plenary. Nevertheless, you will permit me, as an African, to mention my satisfaction at the endorsement directly in the plenary of the Lusaka Manifesto, which charts the ideals and ideas for a new course in southern Africa. Perhaps the achievement of those ideals and ideals will take a long time, but mankind's aspirations have always triumphed in the long run over seemingly overwhelming forces. These aspirations will eventually prevail in southern Africa.

88. This plenary depends, for most of the resolutions which it adopts, on the recommendations of its Main Committees. It is therefore to the work of the Committees that I must turn now in assessing the value of this session.

89. Four of the eight items allocated to the First Committee concerned disarmament. The others covered Korea, outer space, the sea-bed and ocean floor and the strengthening of international security. This last item, taken up on the initiative of the Soviet Union, gave rise to a most constructive debate and to a resolution, adopted by acclamation, which will give due prominence to recommendations on the strengthening of international security at our anniversary session.

90. The progressive development and universal acceptance of international law is crucial in our search for peace with justice. This is true not only of traditional areas of the law but, even more important, of those other areas which the wonders of modern technology are now opening to us. It is essential that the sea-bed and outer space should be developed in an orderly fashion for the benefit of all. A régime conceived and drafted under the aegis of the United Nations is emerging for outer space. To carry this régime forward, it is to be hoped that we shall very shortly see concluded—perhaps at our next session—the agreement on liability for damage caused by objects launched into outer space, a subject on which the great majority of States feel that a treaty is now urgent.

91. For the sea-bed we are still in the initial phase, and there are undoubtedly powerful clashes of ideas and interests; but our work here must go on and a realistic and beneficial régime must be developed from which all nations can profit. The sea-bed must be a treasure chest, not a Pandora's box which will let loose yet further conflict and distress. Success will reward our endeavours only if some international régime can be evolved which provides for the reasonable interests of everyone. In a world of sovereign States, the enforcement of the law cannot come from the use of force, but from the acceptance by States that the law is reasonable, just and in the common interest.

92. As regards disarmament, may I first take note of the meetings being held in Helsinki between the two super-Powers on the question of strategic arms limitation. I hope that they will arrive at a solution which will bring lasting peace to the world. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the



question of disarmament and of the strategic arms limitation should be dealt with in the framework of the United Nations.

93. Concerning the work of the First Committee in this field, perhaps I should mention the particularly significant declaration that the 1970s will be a disarmament decade; the calling for suspension of nuclear-weapon tests in all environments; the declaration concerning the scope of generally recognized rules of international law as embodied in the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the related resolution calling for, among other things, the accession or ratification of the Protocol and requesting the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to consider urgently a convention for the elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons; the appeal to the Soviet Union and the United States to agree on a moratorium on further testing and deployment of new offensive and defensive strategic nuclear weapon systems; and lastly, the resolution on the elaboration of a draft treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor. That the Committee, after prolonged consultations, was able to arrive at a consensus on this question—on which considerable difference of opinion existed—is one of the achievements of the session.

94. Thus this progress appears to me to be of particular significance in that it has laid the foundations for realistic future agreements on matters of peace, security and international co-operation.

95. As regards the Special Political Committee, in the case of *apartheid*, that Committee, for the first time, accepted the idea of promoting assistance to and holding consultations with representatives of the national movement of the oppressed people of South Africa. The Special Political Committee also considered the problems of the Palestine refugees and their rights. In connexion with the problem of refugees in general, may I take this opportunity of stressing again the need for support of refugees through voluntary contributions from Member States. In saying this, I recognize that it is in Africa and Asia that the problems of refugees continue to grow.

96. On the question of peace-keeping, I would call upon the permanent members of the Security Council to resolve their political differences and make more effective peace-keeping operations wherever needed.

97. It is gratifying that the Second Committee's recommendations this year included new dimensions in such fields as education and tourism. The Assembly has adopted a resolution on the establishment of an international university, proposed by the Secretary-General. This resolution, I hope, has sown the seed for the foundation of such a university. It is interesting to note that the debate held in the Committee concerned the type of university to be set up, rather than whether there should be one. In the field of tourism, the Assembly has been able to adopt a resolution providing for the establishment of an intergovernmental tourism organization.

98. Last year the Assembly decided to convene a United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972. Qualified representatives to be nominated by the Prepara-

tory Committee will assist in organizing and preparing the Conference. If I may, I should like to refer to the statement of the representative of the United States, Mrs. Black, on human environment. She said, *inter alia*:

“Obviously we cannot turn off the faucet of human progress. Our common challenge is to improve the management of our human environment. The proper use of science is not to conquer nature, but to live with it.”  
[1834th meeting, para. 68.]

99. We are now on the verge of launching an international strategy for development for the 1970s, and at next year's session of the General Assembly we hope to proclaim that strategy. I have purposely referred to this question last because I want to end this section on economic matters with an urgent note of appeal. All our efforts must be marshalled in the next few months towards reaching agreement at the highest possible level for providing the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade with the necessary tools so that it, in turn, can make recommendations to the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly which reflect an agreed, concerted effort to improve the lot of all mankind. What should be emphasized is the complementary nature of, not the conflict between, the needs of the developed and the developing nations. International aid and the expansion of international trade are not just humanitarian endeavours: they are essential to peace and prosperity for each one of us. “Peace, justice and progress”, the slogan of our twenty-fifth anniversary, must be kept in mind by Member States, by this Assembly, and by all other relevant United Nations organs, as we stand on the threshold of the Second Development Decade. When that Decade finishes, I hope that we can honestly say that the world is a better place in which to live.

100. Among the matters dealt with by the Third Committee, I should like in particular to draw attention to the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the adoption of which, in my view, constitutes one of the most important achievements of this twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly. This is a truly significant step in pursuance of the objective of promoting social progress and better standards of life and larger freedom as set out in the United Nations Charter. The Declaration takes on particular significance because it is the first international instrument which provides clear guidelines not only for social policies but also for the integration of economic and social action for the improvement of the social environment and the well-being of the individual. The Declaration may rank one day in importance with the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. These other declarations have had considerable impact on the history of our times, and I hope that in the years ahead the Declaration on Social Progress and Development will likewise influence all those who guide our destinies in our search for better standards of life in larger freedom.

101. Among its other notable achievements, the Third Committee adopted resolutions on the education of youth in the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and on the problems and needs of youth and its participation in national development.

102. As regards the work of the Fourth Committee, I think that it can be fairly assumed that its work this year has been in the spirit of the Charter, more conciliatory and more realistic. On certain problems which occupied the attention of the Assembly for a number of years and which often led to long discussions and debates, we have seen this year, as a result of the urgings of the Assembly, a new trend towards conciliation. Dialogues between the States concerned aiming at the final settlement of these problems are already afoot. I refer in particular to the questions of Gibraltar, the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), French Somaliland and Fiji. On each of those problems, the Fourth Committee has adopted a consensus taking note of recent developments concerning those Territories, while at the same time requesting the Committee of Twenty-Four to keep developments in those Territories under continuous review. This happy development was unfortunately not the case with the Territories of southern Africa. In Rhodesia, in the Portuguese Territories and in Namibia, the Fourth Committee had to face the same hard realities and the unflinching opposition of the colonial Powers in this region to the spirit of the Charter as well as to the myriads of resolutions that have been adopted over the years, calling on them to desist from courses which they have adopted in violation of the principles of the Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, as well as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. A number of recommendations were submitted by the Fourth Committee to the Assembly, in particular with respect to intensified efforts to be made by the Security Council with a view to the full and effective implementation of these principles to which I have just referred.

103. It is also pertinent to allude in this connexion to the action taken by the Fourth Committee concerning the activities of foreign economic and other interests which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and Territories under Portuguese domination and in all other Territories under colonial domination, and efforts to eliminate colonialism, *apartheid* and racial discrimination in southern Africa. The Fourth Committee, as in the past, has condemned these interests and called for the immediate cessation of these activities in order to remove yet another obstacle to the fulfilment of the goal set out in the Declaration for these Territories.

104. Another matter to which the Fourth Committee gave close attention was the question of small Territories, particularly those strewn over the Caribbean area and the Pacific region. The Fourth Committee has in this connexion called once again upon the administering Powers to co-operate with the United Nations in the dispatch of visiting missions so as to enable the Committee of Twenty-Four to discharge its functions with respect to these Territories.

105. One final point which also deserves mention in this general evaluation of the work accomplished by the Fourth Committee this year relates to the recommendations which were adopted with respect to the role to be played by the specialized agencies and other international organizations concerned in increasing their assistance to refugees from colonial Territories as well as to national liberation movements.

106. To turn now to the Fifth Committee. In the midst of all the political, economic, social and legal questions with which we have to deal we sometimes forget the hard work of the Fifth Committee, which deals with all our many administrative and financial questions. This year the Committee reviewed and approved a budget of \$168,420,000 for 1970. Of particular significance, both to delegations and to the Secretariat, was its approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for new construction and alterations at United Nations Headquarters in New York for a total United Nations commitment of no more than \$25 million, although the total cost of the project is estimated at more than \$72 million. The balance, it is anticipated, will be provided by the host State, the City of New York and private sources.

107. The Fifth Committee also recommended to us this year a far-reaching resolution on publications and documentation of the United Nations, which should help to reduce the volume and size of publications and documentation and thus prevent delegations, the Secretariat and the interested public from drowning in what has been an ever-widening sea of documents.

108. I turn now to the Sixth Committee. This year the Sixth Committee has made a further significant contribution to the progressive development of international law and its codification with the adoption, on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee, of the Convention on Special Missions, comprising 55 articles and an optional protocol on the compulsory settlement of disputes. This, together with the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations, completes the progressive development and codification of the more traditional forms of diplomatic and consular relations. As the Convention on Special Missions was adopted almost unanimously, it can confidently be hoped that it will enjoy the same wide acceptance as its two related Conventions. By including the question of special missions in the agenda of its twenty-third and twenty-fourth sessions, the Assembly undertook for the first time the adoption of a convention for the progressive development and codification of international law on the basis of a draft prepared by the International Law Commission.

109. The Sixth Committee also submitted to us draft resolutions on the declaration on principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among States and the definition of aggression which it hopes will be completed very shortly. I very much hope that the first of these in particular will be completed for adoption as a significant element of the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations.

110. Unfortunately, because of the time element, the item "Need to consider suggestions regarding the review of the Charter of the United Nations" was not seriously considered by the Assembly. For while the Charter was remarkably forward-looking when it was adopted at the end of the Second World War, and while its purposes and principles still stand, the growth and development of the United Nations since that time—a quarter of a century ago—demand a careful study and upgrading of both the Charter and the rules of procedure to meet the needs of an enlarged membership and new situations which now prevail.

111. Time has not permitted me to mention all that we have done but I hope that I have been able to recall some of the more interesting developments of the session.

112. As we leave today, we cannot feel that we have finally solved either the armed conflicts in Africa, Asia and the Middle East or the remaining problems of colonialism, or that universal and complete disarmament has been achieved, or that *apartheid* and other forms of suppression of human rights have been abolished. Against these evils our achievements may appear to be very slight indeed. Modest though they may be, we have nevertheless taken some steps which promise that the world of tomorrow may be a little better than the world of today. If our satisfaction is thus only small, let it drive us to greater efforts in the future and let us dedicate ourselves to a really significant anniversary session next year from which mankind may benefit.

113. Again I must say that I cannot close my heart to the innocent victims of war in different parts of the world. I am deeply concerned also—as I am sure all of you are—about the tragic situation in Nigeria. It is the women and children who are suffering most, particularly in the Biafran-controlled area of Nigeria, but also in some of the other areas affected by the fighting. It is our impression that the situation of these children is deteriorating and for many the damage is now irreversible even among the survivors. My country is one of those working through the Organization of African Unity for an early political settlement. All of us here must hope for success in that endeavour and on that basis I would therefore make a sincere appeal to the parties directly concerned to effect an immediate cease-fire. This appeal is also made to the parties directly involved in the conflicts in South-East Asia and the Middle East. Meanwhile, there is an immediate need for food, especially protein, and medicines for the civil population on both

sides in Nigeria. Relief supplies have been given generously, but at present sufficient amounts cannot be delivered. We need to find ways immediately of preserving the health of women and children. One of these would be a cease-fire for humanitarian purposes, even for a limited period, to allow the delivery of food and medicines. I am confident this could be accomplished with adequate safeguards.

114. Finally, I wish all of you a very happy holiday and as I take leave of you I thank you, each and every one, for your kindness, courtesy, consideration and wise counsel. The experience of the last few months will be one of the most treasured of my life. My parting words must be those of deepest gratitude to you, Mr. Secretary-General, and to the members of the Secretariat, seen and unseen, who have assisted me unfailingly and unstintingly throughout the session. Thank you again.

## AGENDA ITEM 2

### Minute of silent prayer or meditation

115. The PRESIDENT: I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

*The Members of the Assembly observed a minute of silence.*

### Closing of the session

116. The PRESIDENT: I declare the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly closed.

*The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.*