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**President:** Mr. Edvard HAMBRO (Norway).

## AGENDA ITEM 21

### Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (*continued*)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of the Niger, His Excellency Mr. Courmo Barcougné.

2. Mr. BARCOUGNÉ (*interpretation from French*): May I be permitted, Mr. President, to offer you, on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf, our warm congratulations on your brilliant election to preside over this twenty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly. For our part, we regard it as both the recognition of your unanimously recognized qualities as an outstanding statesman, and a well-deserved and sincere tribute to your country, and we gladly join in that recognition and tribute.

3. The talents that you have displayed as a jurist and a diplomat in the course of a brilliant career devoted entirely to international affairs in the service of your country, whose devotion to peace and humanitarian traditions are universally recognized, made you the natural choice to preside over our present debates.

\*The 1865th to 1870th, 1872nd to 1879th and 1881st to 1883rd meetings contain the speeches made during the twenty-fifth anniversary commemorative session.

4. But how can we talk about peace, about human solidarity or the spirit of world-wide internationalism which is the United Nations motivating force, without turning our thoughts to the man the outstanding personage who, for the last nine years, has guided the destinies of our Organization? His passionate devotion to and abiding concern for peace, his courage and tenacity, his patience and calm sense of order make our Secretary-General, U Thant, the ideal man to cope with the complex situations besetting our anguished world.

5. The people of Niger, for their part, will not soon forget the last time he visited Niamey. Through my words they render a warm tribute to that man of action, whose steadfast faith in the future of the countries of the Third World has never wavered.

6. A quarter of a century has elapsed since, in the wake of a frightful war that had caused vast destruction and brought death to dozens of millions, fifty-one nations from five continents laid down the foundations for the United Nations, the Organization that has brought us together once again today. Vast hopes were placed in this Organization. True, some of the hopes it aroused have not been realized. The United Nations has not been able to settle all the grave political problems resulting from the upheavals of the war, nor has it been able to prevent sporadic new outbreaks of war, some of which have been, and still are, extremely serious.

7. Selfish national interests, the clash of ideologies, the rivalry among great Powers—have all given rise to fear that the United Nations is not so much an instrument for guaranteeing peace but merely a rostrum from which the predominant political concepts are placed in confrontation. The smaller nations quickly perceived that neither their great numbers nor the democratic principle of equality of vote were sufficient to reduce the role of the great Powers—far from it—or to prevent the formation of antagonistic blocs.

8. In view of this state of affairs, some even went so far as to doubt even the usefulness of the Organization and to voice exceedingly pessimistic views about its future. Still, those views do not withstand a more realistic scrutiny. No one can expect an assemblage of nations so numerous, so diverse in their civilization, sometimes profoundly divided by their ideology, and so unequal in terms of their economic and military potential, to achieve agreement and harmony overnight, or to be able to impose the will of the majority, when it has no means of enforcement. But it can be asked to act as a permanent forum in which disputes

among nations can be peacefully thrashed out; a place in which the rule of democracy can, for a moment, erase the all too patent inequality of powers; a free forum in which the weak can make their voices heard and exercise moral pressure on the strong.

9. From this more realistic point of view, we can assert that the United Nations has not failed in its task. Today, no one would dare now to say that the peace of the world would have been better served without the United Nations. The United Nations has played a fundamental role in several grave conflicts that have broken out in the world, in finding a solution to those conflicts or else at least an interim solution by halting the bloodshed.

10. Some rays of hope are discernible today in a world from which the fear of a general conflagration, with all its apocalyptic visions, has not yet been completely dispelled. If for certain reasons the United Nations has not been able to intervene in the conflict going on the Far East, at least its role seems to be an essential one in the peace efforts that are taking shape in the Middle East, efforts which we fervently hope will result in a just and lasting peace.

11. Elsewhere in the world the treaty of non-aggression recently signed between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union<sup>1</sup> has generally been greeted as an encouraging sign. However, this resumption of talks between the two great adversaries of the last world war and this beginning of collaboration between East and West would not have been possible without a prior relaxation of tension between the two nuclear super-Powers, whose possession of stockpiles of weapons capable of wiping out the entire earth condemns them to coexistence and ultimately to understanding.

12. For let us not forget that it is at the instigation and under the aegis of the United Nations that, after many years of debate, international treaties have been drawn up which are designed to reduce the dangers of the nuclear arms race and to regulate and promote the conquest of outer space.

13. My country is a Member of the United Nations, a member of the group of developing countries, and a member of the African countries grouped together under the banner of the Organization of African Unity, and as such I feel that, after these general observations on the state of our Organization, I must speak to you about problems which concern my Government and which are looming up in the future. I see four such problems: disarmament, decolonization, development and youth.

14. A large nation, although landlocked in the middle of a continent, a country wealthy in history but still poor in marketable resources, Niger, which for that matter only recently acquired its sovereignty at the conclusion of a friendly and free dialogue, is in a fairly good position, it seems to me, to discuss these problems.

15. If in fact any members of the international community have to pay in kind the price of tension or conflict, it is certainly the continental countries that are called upon to do so. Whether their neighbours are tearing one another asunder or are merely at odds with each other they find their very existence in danger. They are confronted with a shortage of goods and of energy, on the one hand, they find themselves with unproductive stockpiles of local products, on the other, and a progressive diminution of land communications, leading to economic asphyxiation, which cruelly reminds them of the virtues of peace.

16. Since they are less affected by the conflicts than those countries that are in the interior, the coastal States, that is to say, the majority of the Members of our Organization, know that war is a theft: a theft of human lives of the most odious and obvious kind, but also an unpardonable theft of resources. And the preparation of war—it has been stated from this rostrum, it has been restated and I do not hesitate for a moment to repeat it again—is no lesser a despoliation, since it diverts to naught and destroys vast resources which were intended to save humanity, care for them, teach them and enrich them. One of the merits of our Organization is, that through perhaps rather voluminous pyramids of reports, it has compiled and confronted the world with precise statistics which today make it impossible for anyone to ignore the length, breadth and depth of poverty throughout the world.

17. No Government of any Member State can henceforth decide to acquire at great cost the weapons of war without remembering that by this very fact it is postponing the conclusion of the only combat that is really worthy of our interest, the fight against poverty and underdevelopment. However, one comparison will suffice to show how we stand in this regard. Of all industrialized countries, the one which devotes the highest percentage of its national income to co-operation with the "third world", and in particular with my country, nevertheless still spends four times more for its military budget.

18. No one underestimates the work accomplished within the Organization or the Disarmament Committee in Geneva to find common language in regard to disarmament, but it seems to us that the twenty-fifth anniversary should be marked more specifically by a solemn commitment not only to curb the military arms race but to undertake authentic disarmament, that is to say, a radical reduction of all arsenals, nuclear or otherwise.

19. That would indeed be a pledge for the launching of the Second United Nations Development Decade. As I have already said, Niger does not belong to the privileged countries. Made up in large part of desert, with mining potential that is only beginning to be realized, it possesses an economy that is still based on the export of products subject to price fluctuations. Therefore, it has suffered more than other countries from the indifference of the wealthy and the unjustifiable disorderliness of trade. Despite the co-operation organized in a realistic and generous spirit with its

<sup>1</sup> Signed in Moscow on 12 August 1970.

brothers in the Council of Understanding,<sup>2</sup> the active friendship of certain developed countries which are aware of its situation, the intelligent plan elaborated at Yaoundé<sup>3</sup> to associate eighteen African States and six countries of Europe with the struggle for development, on a footing of absolute equality, bilateral assistance received from the industrialized countries of highly divergent policies, these elements do not and cannot prevent Niger from suffering the scandalous nightmare of world price fluctuations.

20. We have been a witness, like so many other developing countries, in Africa and throughout the world, to the constant deterioration in the terms of trade, and my country affirms once again, through me, that collective investments, the building of factories, the dispatch of technicians, will serve no purpose, if the international community, including our Organization, does not devote itself with the utmost determination, first of all to stabilizing and then to stimulating the commodity prices. That is, the most sensible, most collective and most powerful form of aid to development. The Organization of African States, including Madagascar and Mauritius, has shown how countries with limited resources and economies more often competitive than complementary but animated with a lively sense of solidarity, can, in of course limited areas, succeed in devising effective machinery to cope with price fluctuations. Thus it is not a utopian dream to expect the whole community of nations, regardless of their wealth or their ideology, to establish a co-ordinated system to fight the erosion of the relative prices of primary products.

21. Certainly heretofore we have tried to find an explanation for the passive approach of the international community in this area, and its inadequate effectiveness elsewhere in the incompatibility of doctrines and philosophies. However—must I repeat?—a frustrated farmer or a malaria victim who is deprived of treatment cares little about scholastic disputes. Governments that have responsibility for overcoming the economic backwardness of their countries judge aid not by its origin or its character or by its underlying ideology but rather by its effectiveness and compatibility with their own development plans. They prefer grants but they are ready also to accept loans. They seek public aid but would not for that reason reject private assistance. Whenever they can, they combine bilateral assistance, which is the more certain, with multilateral, which is more fluid.

22. However, the only assistance they do not want is that which is lost in the wind, that is to say, that which is launched enthusiastically and breaks down at an inopportune moment for one reason or another and which in the last analysis does more harm than good to the country assisted. The hopes placed in such aid at the outset in the end turn into reproaches. Cases of lack of adaptation, which were frequent in the past, have, fortunately, become increasingly rare.

<sup>2</sup> A regional organization whose members are Dahomey, the Ivory Coast, the Niger, Togo and the Upper Volta.

<sup>3</sup> Second Convention of Association between the European Economic Community and certain African and Malagasy States, signed at Yaoundé, Cameroon, on 20 July 1963.

23. It is in that spirit that my country has approached and endorsed the Second United Nations Development Decade. Let the most favoured nations, west and east alike, devote at least 1 per cent of their resources to co-operation. Let international trade finally be made sound. Let the programmes, however, be co-ordinated, but with respect for the sovereignty of every country, and above all let political dissensions not compromise its success.

24. The first Decade did not succeed in galvanizing the political will of the wealthy countries. Its modest and disparate results should not deter us from the development strategy that has been prepared during the past two years and will be launched in a few days.

25. I am addressing an urgent appeal to the developed countries, without consideration for their geographical or ideological affinities, to ensure the success of the second Decade. The existence of citadels of conservatism is no longer justified and a new, more precise and more daring concept of international co-operation should be adopted by all the leaders who will in future be examining the economic and social problems of the "third world". The developing countries place great hopes in this second Decade. No one in this forum can arrogate to himself the right to disillusion them. Peace and progress are intimately linked to development, and I need hardly repeat this fact.

26. From that standpoint, it seems to us essential that the conflict which is rending the Near East asunder should cease forthwith. Together with the Secretary-General—and we appreciate the tireless efforts he has made to assuage passions and find a solution just and equitable for all, which will respect the resolutions of the Security Council—we ardently hope that the negotiations begun under the aegis of Ambassador Jarring will succeed, that they will restore peace without delay in an area of the world where balance is vital to the stability of the world and where the sufferings of innocent populations should cease.

27. Moreover, we cannot envisage a continuation in Europe of the artificial divisions which resulted from two wars, one a bloody war, the other which is called the "cold war", doubtless because it has frozen relations among nations. The relaxation of tension initiated almost eight years ago, and happily expanded recently by the signature of the German-Soviet Treaty, has significance only if it paves the way for reconciliation in Europe and the unification of Germany. Too many ties bind the two continents separated only by a narrow basin, for Africa—reborn and devoted completely to the struggle for its well-being—to remain indifferent to the immense waste of energies and knowledge which has resulted from the quarrels between the two Europes.

28. After all, West Africa, having once regained its freedom, has shown that it has a short memory, and in a few years it has forgotten the colonial period that is nevertheless a part of its recent history, or I should say, its history, rather the most crucial period of its present-day life. For in Bissau, a sword is being thrust into our very flesh in a part of our African continent

where in 1970 so many people have been celebrating the tenth and even the twelfth anniversary of their independence. Under the fire of aircraft, or buried in the bush, the population of a small Territory is still waiting for Portugal to recognize the most basic of its rights—that of self-determination.

29. Further removed in distance, but not in terms of feeling, millions of men in southern Africa are suffering an even worse fate in the form of régimes based on the supremacy of one race. For what precisely marked the signing of our Charter, twenty-five years ago, was not only that a war had ended, or one coalition had been victorious over another, but rather that a system based on the domination of a so-called superior race had been crushed. Never would the signatories to the San Francisco Charter have imagined that a quarter of a century later, 20 million men would still be paying tribute to racist insanity.

30. Everything has been said about the anachronistic position of Angola and Mozambique, on the sinister humour of the South African lawmaker, and the inhuman aberrations of the *apartheid* régime and the odious pretension of a handful of colonialists determined to subjugate 5 million Africans in their own homeland.

31. None the less, the heads of State of the Organization of African Unity, last year, in a document reflecting the substance of General Assembly resolutions, were able to control their anger, to analyse, question and advise. They went so far as to recognize their own shortcomings. Without to their regret being able to exclude violence, they have called for dialogue. They have received no answer other than a carping casuistic exegesis, devoid of all feeling. True, they did not expect approval, but at least a reply, an answer, whatever it might have been, for a reply is already a form of dialogue. And the United Nations knows full well: the strongest conventions are those which were preceded by polemical discussions of the most lively type, and which required the most difficult compromises. How many times will Africa have to repeat that it has too much to build, too much to construct, and to foment, for it to decide lightheartedly to have recourse to violence, ever so destructive of both life and property. Our halls, a few months ago resounded with the lively quarrels of the youth of the world gathered in a congress<sup>4</sup> which was the first event organized as part of our twenty-fifth anniversary celebration. Verbal blows were struck right and left, unsparingly. The minimum of deference was paid to courtesy and replies were lost because they were made too hastily without the assistance of a microphone. The carpets were unable to muffle the hurly-burly of the meetings, nor was the Chairman able to restrain the impetuosity of the speakers. Yet in the end, these young people, most of whom were born after the signing of the Charter, and of whom many expected only vandalism and anarchy, fell into line with the methods of our institution and adopted declarations full of foresight and wisdom.

32. This encourages us to be optimistic and increases our confidence in the virtue of dialogue, even if it is a bit strident.

33. Twenty-five years for man marks a privileged moment where he still retains the childhood faculty of generosity and the power to marvel, combined, in the full bloom of physical vigour, with incipient maturity. That age where no ambition is too rash . . . is our age; that is to say, the age of our Organization.

34. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations is for all of us, large and small, a time for reflection and meditation. Faith in our common future should give us all, but above all the great developed countries, the necessary strength and perspicacity to achieve the ideal set forth in the Charter of our Organization.

35. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency General Sangoulé Lamizana, President of the Republic of the Upper Volta.

36. President LAMIZANA (*interpretation from French*): It is with a sense of the solemnity and the extraordinary nature of this gathering that I take the floor for the first time in your Assembly. I mean that I am aware of the seriousness of this supreme honour, since the responsibility for the quest for equilibrium, which is essential in today's world, could not but give this anniversary of the United Nations particular resonance.

37. First of all, however, Mr. President, I should like to extend to you my congratulations on your brilliant election. Beyond any exercise in geographical rotation, it is a deserved tribute to your outstanding qualities as a diplomat, and also a tribute to your country.

38. May I also recall that your seat was previously occupied by an African, whose talent and dedication will not have passed unnoticed. Mr. President, I wish you a still more brilliant success.

39. It is also my pleasant duty to pay a particular tribute to Secretary-General U Thant, a man who for long years has shouldered extraordinary responsibilities, who has demonstrated lucid courage, discreet self-effacement and the greatest possible effectiveness in the service of international peace and co-operation. I should like once again to express our admiration for him and to offer him our encouragement and our support for what remains to be done, which will demand of him and his colleagues a heroic and essential effort.

40. Finally, I should like to take advantage of this unusual opportunity to greet the Heads of State and Government here present or represented and also the distinguished figures in our midst. Undoubtedly, everyone will wish to see this rendez-vous with history as the point of departure for a new effectiveness which may make the international community fully meaningful once more.

<sup>4</sup> World Youth Assembly held at Headquarters from 9 to 17 July 1970.

41. In many countries, and for many traditions, anniversaries undoubtedly afford a special opportunity for mobilizing energies, taking stock of the past, drawing lessons for the present and entering into commitments for the future. If the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations is no exception to this tradition it is nevertheless on a level which is altogether beyond compare.
42. I shall resist the urge to review the Organization's 25 years of active existence, particularly since my own country joined the international community as a sovereign State only in 1960.
43. It would be presumptuous on my part to offer a diagnosis of the United Nations through 25 years of various activities, hopes and encouraging achievements, but also sometimes of disappointments. My remarks will, therefore, be more modest so far as the historical background is concerned; the essential thing is that each should add his stone to the edifice so that we may raise it to the level of our hopes.
44. Confidence in the United Nations and the will to hope which have not ceased to guide us are, however, each day threatened by the cruel realities of our world. Violence, just about everywhere, is becoming a near inevitability. No one is any longer ashamed to talk of the "balance of terror"; the population explosion in the third world and its corresponding poverty scarcely find an echo outside the specialized agencies of the United Nations, but even they are unable to generate the necessary momentum; finally, and above all, the many international friendships around which our young African nations had hoped to build a future of equality and dignity have not, with some happy exceptions, escaped the struggles of influence in the world. Perhaps it would be no exaggeration to say that it is generally easier for a poor country, as things are now, to secure an arsenal of weapons of war than money for building schools.
45. If, then, recent and extraordinary progress has compelled our admiration, we nevertheless feel a certain alarm at the apparent incapacity to put this progress at the service of all mankind. Might it not be thought that modern civilization, to safeguard its human dimension and to ensure its own survival, needs something more than scientific and technical progress?
46. Recent events are there to remind us that despair can have unforeseeable repercussions on the well-being of nations which had wished to believe that the wretched of the earth are strangers to them. These actions, which have aroused universal and unreserved disapproval, must nevertheless give us pause, for the very fact that one group of men should even have found them thinkable.
47. Do we not need a fully international inspiration to give a new direction to the tremendous changes that lie ahead? Should we not as of now begin thinking in terms of a common destiny, since there are many signs suggesting that men could at last become brothers?
48. In the impressive panoply of the beneficial achievements of the United Nations, there are eloquent chapters stating boldly what Member States are capable of when there is a concerted will in the spirit of the Charter. As instances of economic, cultural and social progress, one need only mention the evocative names of IBRD, IMF, ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, the World Food Programme, FAO, UNIDO, UNICEF, UNESCO, the United Nations Development Decade, and so on: they all reflect that will to brotherhood which alone can overcome poverty in all its forms and give all men an equal chance.
49. Yet this work will remain incomplete, these efforts will not suffice to save mankind from disaster, unless there is a new determination, a new kind of behaviour, until new forms of co-operation are established on the basis of frankness and a sense of the common destiny of mankind.
50. There are many ways of commemorating the signing of the Charter, but in the final analysis there could be none more appropriate or beneficial than a common resolution by Member States to put the United Nations at the very heart of world affairs. It must be enabled to function, as the Charter envisages, as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations, to ensure peace, justice, freedom and prosperity.
51. If we persist in placing the reflex of full-scale nationalism above all else, we shall be unable to respect commitments which might be at variance with the national interests of the moment. The fact is that today we have all the more reason to act quickly and to succeed.
52. According to an estimate by the Secretary-General, we have at the most a grace period of 10 years. If politics is the art of the possible, it is also the art of acting so that what is impossible today will no longer be so tomorrow. We must make every effort to bring this about.
53. On this twenty-fifth anniversary, what decisions can we take to make the United Nations a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations? I should like to suggest some areas as food for thought.
54. Firstly, specific steps should be considered for strengthening the peace-keeping machinery of the United Nations and for giving effect to its decisions. I am well aware that the initial reaction to this proposal will be one of scepticism, since the essential revolution in our thinking has not yet taken place.
55. Great changes have occurred in the last 10 years which today seem altogether natural. In this particular area, dominated as it is by the balance of force and spheres of influence, international morality must finally speak out.
56. Without stable peace and a feeling of guaranteed security, no progress will be possible. In this field I believe that the responsibilities of Member States are not identical; the greater the power and the influence,

the greater, too, should be the responsibilities. However, it would be neither prudent nor wise to reserve this field of action exclusively to the Powers that have the means of waging war. Better conceived, better balanced, the Security Council can play a role of the first importance, a role which could very usefully be strengthened by the prerogatives entrusted to the Secretary-General in the exercise of his "good offices". In this regard certain articles of the Charter could usefully be reactivated.

57. Secondly, a good many causes of conflict could be eliminated if firm commitments were made to assist the developing countries in overcoming their domestic problems.

58. As has already been said, development should be the new face of peace. It is the best alternative to the mad race towards nuclear apocalypse. The fatal course must be changed; the nightmare must be transformed into a dream, into a reality where every man would have the right to his place in the sun.

59. The solution is simple, if international morality will only insist that in the next budgetary year, for example, all the appropriations in all budget, allocated to military activities be made available to the United Nations to serve a cause which will then be authentically that of peace.

60. Last year some \$200,000 million dollars were spent for military purposes; this expenditure is increasing, particularly in the nuclear field. A saving of only 10 per cent on arms expenditure would suffice to furnish the external capital that the developing countries so urgently need in present conditions.

61. More than all others, the developing countries—no matter what their political label—experience the urgent need to emerge from underdevelopment as soon as possible and to pass from their status as passive clients to that of committed producers capable of participating fully and effectively through their resources and their labour in international co-operation. I believe that our dignity can assume its deepest meaning only if political independence is accompanied by a sustained effort to hasten our integration in the economic circuit of the industrialized nations.

62. In that perspective, and on the eve of the Second United Nations Development Decade, the political and economic interests of the great powers require them to have a clearer understanding of the common destiny which binds all men on our earth. It is in their interest to leave behind calculations and all egoisms for otherwise their own prosperity would eventually be jeopardized.

63. Thirdly, development assistance cannot, however, be regarded as an end in itself. I think the best technical assistance is that which makes itself unnecessary as soon as possible. In this context the United Nations should do everything in its power to respond meaningfully to the multiple challenges of science and technology. Since science and technology have linked

the earth and the moon, they should also be able to unite the inhabitants of spaceship Earth who are now separated above all by the obstacles which they themselves have created. The judicious transfer of technology should enable the poor countries to catch up rapidly and to bring their weight to bear in the cause of world equilibrium.

64. Fourthly, and finally—but above all—the vital and urgent solution would be immediately to look into assistance to education. It is there that we shall find not only the technical key to development, but above all a solution to the agonizing problem of the population explosion. At a certain economic and cultural stage, it would be absolutely unrealistic to look for solution in the progress of chemistry or medicine. It is first of all through training and through education that the essential growth of awareness can begin to take place; it is by raising levels of living that an optimum balance will be established of itself. Any delay in taking account of this formidable problem can only increase the explosive danger that hangs over everyone's future.

65. Thus, by adding a truly international dimension to our legitimate national concerns, by working for the unity of the world, the priority of man, the solidarity of nations, by recognizing each day more clearly that human sovereignty must in the final analysis prevail over national sovereignties, we, the peoples of the United Nations, will create propitious conditions for a genuine renewal of the United Nations.

66. The Upper Volta begins the Second Development Decade with confidence. It will spare no effort to help strengthen the United Nations and enable it to play to the full its role in the service of mankind. It knows that reason is with the majority and reason will triumph in the end.

67. Long live the United Nations! Long live international co-operation! Long live the fraternity of peoples in a world of justice, progress and peace!

68. The PRESIDENT: I give the floor to the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Honourable Chief Leabua Jonathan.

69. Chief Leabua JONATHAN: Mr. President, I join with great pleasure previous speakers in extending to you my warmest congratulations on your election to the Presidency of this historic session of the General Assembly. It is a fitting recognition of your exceptional talents and qualities as an international statesman. I should also like to express our compliments to Mrs. Angie Brooks-Randolph of Liberia, whose wisdom and diplomatic experience guided us at the previous session. Finally, I should like to express our deep appreciation to our distinguished Secretary-General, U Thant, for his continuing dedicated service to this Organization.

70. The statements of the distinguished statesmen who have preceded me at this podium and the speeches at other platforms by other distinguished members of the international community on the subject of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations have



been marked by a sober note of reassessment and reappraisal of the past and future of the Organization. It is fitting and timely that as this august body passes the threshold into the seventies and maps out its strategies for the future, it should take note of its successes of the last 25 years and those weaknesses which have militated against the full realization of the noble ideals that animated the representatives who met at San Francisco in 1945.

*Mr. Pardo (Malta), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

71. It is an eloquent testimony to the vitality of the United Nations and a tribute to the vision of those who drew up the Charter that after two and a half decades, in which this Organization has nearly achieved universality in its membership, its primary objectives for peace and for the harmonization of the actions of members of the world community continue to make it an enduring centre for the pursuit of human rights and the progressive achievement of the dignity of the human person, as well as for ensuring the equal rights of nations large and small.

72. For countries such as mine, the United Nations deserves praise for the fact that at the end of the first decade of the Declaration of the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, millions of former colonial subjects now enjoy freedom and independence. Indeed, it was gratifying to note that the close of the 1960s saw the former colonies of Asia and most of Africa represented in the councils of the United Nations. We have begun a new decade on a sound note with the recent accession of Fiji to full independence, and I should like to express the satisfaction and congratulations of my Government on this occasion of Fiji's admission to the United Nations, which my Government was glad to co-sponsor. The task is, however, not completed. There are, as we all know, pockets of colonialism that mar the map of the world. It is for us thus doubly appropriate that our jubilation at this anniversary and our recognition of the milestones achieved should be matched by appreciation of the distance still to be covered to reach a full realization of the goals of the Charter in the field of decolonization.

73. It is also a sad postscript to the last 25 years that the human condition has continued, in this latter part of the twentieth century, to be characterized by the poverty, ignorance and disease of a large part of mankind. The United Nations and its specialized agencies provided much of the momentum of the First United Nations Development Decade. This role is only natural for the United Nations, as human dignity and peace cannot be guaranteed in the squalid and diseased climate in which millions of people are living. My Government and the people of Lesotho are grateful for the assistance and expertise that the United Nations and its specialized agencies have made available to Lesotho and other developing countries. We have welcomed the initiatives of the United Nations through the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations bodies to bridge the gap between rich and poor.

74. We also appreciate the fact that the General Assembly provides a continuing forum for discussion and examination of the problems of the developing countries. If the First United Nations Development Decade has not achieved the objectives that the developing world looked for, we are hopeful that in the Second Development Decade the United Nations will continue its commitment to resolve the jarring economic differences that are threatening to become a permanent feature of relations between the countries of the northern and the southern hemispheres. In this context, we welcome the recommendations of the Pearson Commission report<sup>5</sup> and of the Jackson report<sup>6</sup> as indications in the right direction. I can do no more than add my voice to the numerous appeals, by spokesmen of the developing world to the developed countries, to recognize that international tensions cannot be permanently solved in an atmosphere of frightening disparities of wealth and living conditions.

75. If the United Nations is, as some commentators have argued, undergoing a crisis, it is because of the complexity of the problems that confront it and the equally complex nature of its own institutional framework. Some distinguished statesmen have advocated changes in the Charter. While I fully recognize the merit of their proposals, it is my view that a more honest commitment on the part of Member States to the Charter would go a long way towards easing some of the difficulties that the United Nations is encountering. The United Nations is still too much weakened by the narrow pursuit of national interests of some Member States, to the exclusion of the global interests that should command the actions of this body.

76. Another serious problem that faces this Organization is the arrogance of power which goes hand in hand with claims to ideological wisdom. What might have been easy solutions of the problems of peace and security have often been denied by considerations, on the part of the great Powers, of spheres of influence and the narrow ideological context within which some Members of the Organization view every problem that comes up on the agendas of the United Nations bodies. Even more disturbing, especially to the small Member States, are the signs of a new emerging ideological imperialism that in the twentieth century has the audacity to threaten to deny—or even actually to deny—to sovereign peoples the right to choose their own way of life and chart their destinies. With characteristic intolerance and ruthlessness, the new ideological imperialism fights to change the political, social and religious convictions of others and labels those who resist as *bourgeois* lackeys, thus making rational discussion of issues difficult if not impossible. It is no wonder that our Secretary-General felt it necessary to issue a warning in one of his speeches that if the United Nations is to continue to be relevant:

“There must be on the part of Governments a radical change from the present power politics to

<sup>5</sup> *Partners in Development—Report of the Commission on International Development* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1969).

<sup>6</sup> *A Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.70.I.10).

a policy of collective responsibility towards mankind. Governments, especially those of the great nations, have drifted year after year farther and farther away from this basic requirement of the Charter."

As one of the smaller nations, we can see no hope unless due heed is paid to the warning of the Secretary-General.

77. We believe that a third factor which threatens to erode the effectiveness and prestige of this Organization is the departure from the appreciation of fundamental world realities that were noted and incorporated into the Charter at the San Francisco Conference. That Conference provided, within the institutional framework of the United Nations, for actions by the United Nations based on the harmonization of the differences among Member States. It is often forgotten that the translation of a sound moral position, supported by a vast majority of Member States, into concrete action still requires the co-operation of all. In my view, it is imperative, if the United Nations is to preserve its credibility, that every effort should be made to avoid confusing moral positions which reflect the conscience of the world community with calls for action which cannot be achieved effectively because of unresolved differences. The limitations to the action that this Organization can take, which were recognized by the authors of the Charter, are still unhappily relevant even today and if most of us find it necessary to advocate a global approach to problems that come up to the United Nations, it is because we recognize that certain political realities still have to be taken into account in deciding on any programme of action. To ignore that fact can only lead to arousing expectations that at the present time cannot be fulfilled.

78. It is in this spirit that we view the intractable problems of southern Africa. For over 20 years the problems of southern Africa have featured in the deliberations of this body, and yet these problems have not been solved through the means advocated by various organs of the United Nations. Lesotho is a very small country, an enclave entirely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Its economy is inextricably linked with that of southern Africa as a whole. We participate in a common customs union agreement with the other States of the area and we rely on many commonly shared facilities for development. We fully realize that whilst we can and do seek new friends, we cannot change the facts of geography and seek new neighbours. In fact, our efforts to develop a viable economy in Lesotho are further made difficult by negative demonstration effects of a powerful economy that surrounds us. To us the backwash effects are not theoretical but direct and unabated. Already my Government has to contend with the rising level of frustrations, accentuated by the difficult circumstances which always appear in the event of a common customs agreement between unequal partners. This is an aspect of the reality of our situation.

79. It is in the light of these and other overriding considerations that, in our approach to the problems

of southern Africa, we have, as a geographical member of the area, always opted for dialogue and diplomacy. Indeed, my country owes its existence today as a separate entity to its traditional diplomatic approach to the problems of the area. We have attempted, I must add, with the assistance of Member States of this Organization, to create a society free from racial or other distinctions. Our efforts, in our view, can go a long way towards creating in southern Africa that climate of racial tolerance and acceptance that is an essential prerequisite if the problems of race in our part of the world are not to explode into a racial conflagration.

80. We cannot identify ourselves with the philosophy of *apartheid* or any system based on racial distinctions. We continue to believe that since it is a system devised and implemented by men, it can only be dealt with fully in dialogue rather than by boycotts and threats of violent action. It is a matter of small comfort that the boycotts, economic and diplomatic, that the General Assembly of the United Nations has repeatedly called for against South Africa not only have failed to recognize the scope of action that is feasible under the United Nations umbrella, but also have made dialogue with South Africa all the more difficult for every party concerned, whilst ignoring totally the interests of countries like Lesotho which also stand to suffer if such resolutions are implemented. We are thus poignantly aware that we are caught in the cross-fire of any action, economic or diplomatic, which purports to isolate the area. On the military front, we note with anxiety that in response to the extreme resolutions passed by the United Nations and other international conferences and to the increased military efforts of the peoples fighting for their freedom in that area, the white-ruled States in southern Africa have substantially increased their defence budgets and consolidated their positions, thus heightening the tragic possibility of a major military confrontation.

81. Having stated the limitations of our situation, we cannot ignore the moral responsibility towards our brothers who are still denied their basic rights, and we shall continue to make our modest and practical contributions towards the solution of their problems. We have already made contributions in the past in several ways, including providing refuge and refugee support and opening the doors of our schools and colleges to students from those areas. We are, however, not able to contribute to the use of violence. We condemn violence as a means of achieving political objectives on the basis of the Christian principles on which we stand.

82. We have said that we cannot allow our country to be used as a springboard for violent action against our neighbour. But I must say with equal emphasis that we are prepared to allow the use of our country and its Government as a bridge in a renewed diplomatic initiative, which we believe is urgently needed if we are to save that area from the scourge of war. We particularly believe in a revival of the proposals for



dialogue embodied in the Lusaka Manifesto,<sup>7</sup> proposals which we think were not given the serious consideration they deserved. I appeal especially to the big Powers to lend their active support to the major diplomatic effort that we need now to avert war. Time is running out.

83. My Government continues to share the concern of our fellow African States at the arrogant continuation in power of the Smith régime. In our view, the recent spate of racially motivated legislation introduced by the rebel régime in Rhodesia adds a note of urgency to an early solution of the Rhodesian problem. We shall continue to impress on the legitimate administrative authority to do all in its power to bring the situation back to normal.

84. The myth that Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau) constitute a part of metropolitan Portugal stands as a challenge, not only to Africa but also to this Organization. We shall, therefore, continue within the framework of the United Nations and other international organizations to bring pressure to bear on Portugal to reconsider its attitude and grant independence and self-determination to the peoples of those Territories.

85. The United Nations is to be congratulated for its persistent efforts to find a solution to the perennial question of peace in the Middle East. We look forward to the early resumption of negotiations in the continuing search for a lasting peace in the area. Once more, however, it is necessary to observe that the efforts of the United Nations cannot bear fruit unless all the parties in the Middle East are willing to show their political determination to solve the problems of the area and to move away from the rigid positions that have been fortified by 20 years of bitterness and recrimination. The Security Council resolution of 1967 [242 (1967)] still provides, in our view, the best framework for creating the necessary conditions for a lasting peace in the area.

86. My Government fully appreciates the need to gather all humanity under the umbrella of the United Nations Charter and its ideals. Nonetheless, we are of the opinion that prospective members of the Organization must in their international behaviour evince a willingness to uphold the obligations of the Charter. We are, furthermore, convinced that the admission of any member at the expense of an existing Member is not only wrong but an unjustified diminution of the contribution rendered to the activities of this body by existing Members. My Government will continue to oppose any measures advocated in forums of this Organization to unseat the Republic of China, as such measures will not only be retrogressive but will negate that universality of membership that we recognize this Organization must finally command.

87. The recent skyjackings of civil aircraft and the kidnapping of diplomats have once more aroused the conscience of the international community. This

Organization will have rendered a lasting service if it can find a solution to this new menace of bargaining with the lives of innocent men, women and children for political ends. It must look closely into the threat to peace posed by resort to terrorist and other violent means to attain political objectives. Such violent means more often result in the victimization of innocent people.

88. We should hail the achievements of the United Nations in the last 25 years not as ends in themselves but as a source of inspiration for greater dedication and determination within the limits of our capabilities to create a more just, a more human, a more equitable world society, if we are to ensure that the light of peace and not the pall of war and tension dominates the lives of the members of the world community. It has been a great honour for our delegation, on behalf of the Lesotho Government, to participate in the twenty-fifth commemorative session of the United Nations.

89. The PRESIDENT: I call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Special Envoy of the Government of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Abdul Kayeum.

90. Mr. KAYEUM: Mr. President, it is a privilege for me to be here with the distinguished Members of the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly—a session distinguished in many ways from the annual sessions and one that will have a significant impact on the future of the world Organization and the future of mankind. I take great pleasure in congratulating you on your election as President of this session.

91. Afghanistan was not among the fifty founding States that laboured to hammer out the structure of the Organization and the Charter for a world of peace, justice and progress—an international treaty now celebrated on United Nations Day, 24 October. But Afghanistan was one of the first three Members admitted to the Organization on 19 November 1946. Our lateness by one year is well forgiven if we recall that we were a non-aligned nation in both world wars. We adhere to the Charter of the United Nations with the same spirit and faith that we held for the League of Nations until it ceased to exist. We keep this faith as the oldest non-aligned Member of the United Nations—aligned only with this great assembly of nations.

92. This session of the Assembly should be considered a happy occasion, as it marks an important milestone in the history of this Organization, but, unfortunately, our joy is tempered by a sadness that today, as in the days of its founding, the United Nations is beset with war, conflicts and strife.

93. The wars in the Middle East and Indo-China have individually and jointly become a major threat not only to Asia but to the world. They have unleashed everything that is immoral and offensive in a civilized world. They threaten to reverse the gradual *détente* that, it is hoped, will be achieved between the great Powers. Allowed to pursue their course they will plunge more

<sup>7</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes, agenda item 106, document A/7754.

and more Asian countries into their conflict until the whole world is engulfed in immeasurable trouble.

94. I will not venture to improvise any panacea for bringing these dangerous conflicts to an end. I am merely pointing at an ominous sign of our times, namely, our ever-increasing preoccupation with the problems of peace and security in the world. Man everywhere is possessed, as it were, by an impending danger of catastrophe. It is as if our survival instinct were fighting a losing battle with the death instinct. Indeed, the very name of the United Nations, once thought of as an instrument of fulfilment of man's hope and aspiration for a richer and fuller life, is now inexorably linked only with the problem of peace and security in the world. No longer is it very significant what the United Nations does for the socio-economic amelioration of mankind; infinitely more important is what it does for peace and security in the world. World opinion is gradually getting accustomed to looking anxiously upon the Viet-Nam and the Middle East episodes not so much because they are wrong and unjust *per se*, but because they are the trouble spots of the world that could set off a nuclear holocaust. Socio-economic inconveniences are borne by many small nations, unlike before, without vain recrimination, in the hope that this sufferance would help mitigate, by some divine intervention, the eventuality of the dreaded nuclear catastrophe.

95. Whether or not such abnegation on the part of little nations, like the practice of offering little lambs at the altar of sacrifice to ward off dangers, would help to reduce tension between the big Powers can open endless polemics. It is, none the less, not to be denied that no sacrifice is too great to avert a catastrophe. The cause of human survival makes strict adherence to the aims and objectives of this Organization a categorical imperative. It makes it morally incumbent upon all nations, large and small alike, to have a renewed sense of dedication on this auspicious occasion of commemoration, and help make this assembly of nations an effective deterrent to wars and an active instrument of peace; in short, help make it be an eternal beacon lighting man's way through the darkness of time. Achieving this noble objective requires, if we do a little soul-searching, none too great a sacrifice on our part. It is by no means an insurmountable task, but it is perhaps the only way out of an otherwise total eclipse and irrevocable darkness.

96. Today, in the era of the United Nations, with its vast and versatile machinery for resolving conflicts by peaceful negotiations, it is indeed sad and difficult to comprehend why Governments, especially Member States which have solemnly committed themselves to the principles of the Charter, should resort to war as a first step, and pursue the conflict once fatally begun.

97. The bitter lessons of history are driven home, more effectively at times, in the developing countries than in the developed ones. From the tragic gamut of Afghan history, a history replete with the scourges of war waged by warriors like Alexander, Tamerlane and Ghengis Khan, emanates an increased measure

of devotion on the part of my countrymen to the cause of peace and international security. Tenaciously my people adhere to the course of positive neutrality and non-alignment. Stubbornly they resist all forms of military pacts and alliances. Hopefully they work for the success of great conferences such as Lusaka,<sup>8</sup> and religiously they pursue the aims and objectives of this great and only Organization that belongs to all humanity, namely, the United Nations.

98. My people lend an unsympathetic ear to the cynical criticisms of those who are ever ready to find fault with the United Nations but who are never prepared to suggest an alternative or a substitute and we do solemnly believe that there are no substitutes. A positive and constructive approach is not to set back the clock of history and do away with past accomplishments, but rather to devise ways and means of more effectively and intelligently coping with the problems. To say, for example, that the United Nations, by its alleged inner weakness, could be responsible for the two conflicts which now shake the foundations of peace is to falsify the realities of the nature and role of the Organization. This type of distorted analysis can bring the world to that ironical stage where Governments which at one time went to war with the risk of being stigmatized as aggressors, can in the future embark on conflicts with the United Nations bearing the stigma of that responsibility. The door would be open for war and aggression with a unique moral impunity, and reduce the whole concept of international co-operation for peace to a farce and absurdity. We would sanctify the familiar and dangerous argument currently advanced by some Governments that since the United Nations cannot "yet do the job", as the phrase goes, it falls upon them to take matters into their own hands in the name of unilateral enforcement. This type of reasoning does not even enjoy the legal facade of the self-defence provisions of the Charter. Formed on no legal basis, it is a sophisticated usurpation of the rights and duties allocated by these Governments to the United Nations.

99. The United Nations has, over a period of a quarter of a century, developed the means, the machinery and the methods which nations can and are solemnly bound to utilize to the maximum effect. The difficulty lies not so much in the so-called power of the United Nations as it does in those Governments which have not been able to muster the will to utilize that machinery. It should be added that it has demonstrated its ability both to prevent conflicts and to stop them after they have occurred.

100. The real power of the United Nations has barely been fully assessed, when examined closely, in the willingness of Member States to curb their own power in favour of the internationally supreme authority of the world Organization, to use it as it was meant to be used, as an alternative to the unbridled and aggressive assertion of national power.

<sup>8</sup> Third Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Lusaka, Zambia, from 8 to 10 September 1970.

101. The United Nations is comprised of 127 nations, each nation forming a link, as it were, of a chain that holds that Organization together. In the final analysis the United Nations is as strong as the nations that compose it would want it to be, and just as the weakest link of a chain forms the ultimate strength of that chain, so too will the weak or strong support of the composing nations form the ultimate strength of this Organization. We fervently pray that the big Powers do not prove to be the weakest links of this Organization.

102. I hope that at this session of the Assembly all Member States may go on record, collectively, as branding these wars wicked and intolerable, and accept no excuse for their continuation. When we have thus mobilized world-wide public opinion and a strong and firm resolve that the wars must stop, then those who bear the responsibility for making peace will be faced with a moral situation that cannot be lightly ignored. Then we shall have taken the greatest single step to justify the leap of the United Nations into the next stage of its destiny and make the occasion truly one of genuine and deserved celebration.

103. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Head of State of Cambodia, His Excellency Mr. Cheng Heng.

104. Mr. CHENG HENG (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, permit me to associate myself with the entire Assembly in offering you my cordial and sincere congratulations on your election to preside over the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

105. The unanimous choice that has elevated you to your office at this historic session does honour both to you and to your country.

106. Nor would I wish to allow the opportunity afforded me as I am addressing the Assembly today, to pass without paying a tribute once more, on behalf of the Khmer people, to His Excellency U Thant, who has devoted all his talents and energy to the service of the Charter of the United Nations and the cause of peace.

107. Great hopes attended the birth of the United Nations at San Francisco 25 years ago. Since that time, the economic and social organs of the United Nations have laboriously discharged their functions, the General Assembly has, year after year, lived through the annual ritual of its long, interminable debates, and the Security Council and the General Assembly are still awaiting the day when they will be able to respond effectively to the appeals for peace that come from all parts of the world. The world has known a precarious peace during the past quarter of a century. We have avoided an atomic conflagration by a hair. In view of these successes and failures, the following question may be asked: Will the United Nations have a better future, or will it no longer be suited to the requirements of our time?

108. Perhaps we expected too much of the United Nations. Perhaps the idea of a world united forever,

the idea which dominated the San Francisco Conference of 1945, aroused exaggerated enthusiasm which created the illusion that peace and justice governed by international law had at last become an attainable ideal. But that ideal was not within our grasp at that time, any more than it is today. National self-interest still remains clearly the common denominator in the foreign policy of nations, and the real power still resides where it has always resided, namely in the Governments and the military forces of the great Powers.

109. To be sure, it would serve no useful purpose to enumerate the shortcomings of the United Nations or to recall all the hopes that have been dashed. Still, what the United Nations has accomplished is in many respects an impressive achievement. Millions of human beings have seen their living conditions improved, their health restored and their ignorance replaced by knowledge. Thanks also to the support given by the United Nations, not less than one third of the world's population has rapidly and without bloodshed progressed from colonial domination to independence and has joined the international community without being compelled to align itself with the blocs of the great Powers.

110. During these past years, the world has been shaken by many crises in which our Organization, unfortunately, has had to stand by helpless. The major conflicts—the war in Viet-Nam, the conflict in the Middle East, and, as the last and most recent example, the foreign aggression against Cambodia—seem to be beyond the scope of United Nations action. The conflict in the Middle East is subsiding because two great Powers have lent their good offices to achieve a cease-fire and further peace negotiations. The war in Viet-Nam goes on because the parties involved have still not agreed to start genuine negotiations.

111. The aggression by the North Viet-Nameese against Cambodia continues without the United Nations being able to stop it. Meanwhile, Cambodia is compelled to fight for survival, assisted, fortunately, by a few friendly countries. In this war for our national salvation, Cambodia is aware of the inability of the United Nations to come to its aid. Yet the present aggression against my country is a tragic case of flagrant aggression by foreign forces against the integrity and neutrality of a country that is a Member of the United Nations, carried out to satisfy traditional expansionist aims under the cover of an ideology which is equally alien to us.

112. That aggression, like the other conflicts that are disturbing the world today, makes it painfully apparent that the world still has no machinery for safeguarding right and justice.

113. Certainly we have this world Organization which in principle represents the combined authority of all Member countries and which has as its most important task the maintenance of peace. However, all of its resolutions are not carried out, and the United Nations is reduced to uttering solemn appeals which have perhaps helped to alleviate the fate of the victims but which certainly have never punished the aggressors or even put a stop to their misdeeds.

114. Therefore we received with satisfaction the new proposals for peace by the President of the United States, proposals which are completely reasonable and conducive to the ending of the war which has been imposed on us from outside.

115. The tragic situation which has reduced the civilized world to a state of impotence finds its root cause in the continuing erosion of universal morality, which in turn is the result of a tenacious and vicious propaganda campaign carried out methodically by certain Powers which want their ideologies to triumph throughout the world and which use all the means at their disposal to attain their objectives.

116. The institutional power of the United Nations has neither redressed the legitimate complaints of a nation that is the victim of aggression nor prevented the war of aggression itself. And the so-called "revolutionary liberation movements" rely precisely on that impotence to continue their subversive activities against the most elementary rights of nations which, like Cambodia, Viet-Nam and Laos, are compelled to fight for their survival without the aid or support of this august Organization, which, however, was created, according to the very words of its founding fathers, to preserve future generations from the scourge of war.

117. It has been stated that, unlike a country which must have a certain unity in order to maintain its existence, the United Nations is a flexible and weak assemblage of many peoples and many ideologies. However, to maintain silence in the face of a war of aggression on the pretext of impotence is an open invitation to anarchy and disorder. To seek to gain advantages by winning the sympathy of one party to the conflict—in the case of Cambodia, the sympathy of the North Viet-Nameese aggressors—to invoke ideological excuses in order secretly to favour the aggressors to the detriment of the victims of aggression may produce political advantages or perhaps even some sort of intellectual satisfaction, but it is tantamount to an evasion of the common responsibility, which is to help the world Organization to fulfil the solemn commitments it has undertaken in the eyes of mankind. The world, and particularly the world of the small countries, needs the United Nations, if right, justice and peace are to have any meaning. In short, the United Nations is asked to deal with problems of right and justice in Cambodia, in Asia and in the world. Can the United Nations do that? Most of the peoples of Asia and even of the West may smile incredulously at such a question, but is this not indeed the very *raison d'être* of our Organization, created 25 years ago?

118. The question should be frankly put, particularly at this time, when many Heads of State and Government are met together here to celebrate the first quarter-century of the life of our Organization. Is it too much to expect that the great minds of this universal institution will be able to lift the discussion of the major problems of mankind—above all, the controlling of war and in particular the war of aggression in Cambodia—above the level of mere repetition of high-sounding but vague and ineffective formulas, so as to

find a true and just solution? For it has become only too clear that, unless a certain degree of unity of action and of aims is achieved in this Organization and unless these so-called "wars of liberation" can be halted, unless there can be effective control of the tyranny of certain countries that wish to conquer other countries to satisfy their territorial ambitions and impose their ideology, there will be neither right, nor justice nor peace in our world.

119. It seems necessary to undertake a fresh initiative to create an organ for the maintenance of peace on a permanent basis. Military units should be provided by the medium-sized and large Powers whose sincerity and impartiality are above suspicion to serve as guardians of the peace. With the agreement of the great Powers, a United Nations peace force would seem feasible. It would be a significant innovation for the world Organization, which, despite its many failures, has given evidence that it is useful and deserves to be supported and even strengthened.

120. What our Organization needs is a radical change in attitude and thinking at the international level. Twenty-five years after the birth of the United Nations, it is still useful to recall that we must all recognize that the world is one, that man is our primary consideration, that nations must maintain their solidarity, we must all recognize the cumulative effects of individual actions at the national level and the need for all to practise tolerance and to live together in peace with one another as good neighbours. We should remind ourselves that human sovereignty should transcend national sovereignty.

121. With those reflections, the Khmer people and the Government of the Republic of Cambodia, which is the emanation of that people, wish to reaffirm through me their support for the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations and join here in the solemn commitment to make our planet a better world for us all and for future generations.

122. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Laos, His Highness Prince Souvanna Phouma.

123. Prince SOUVANNA PHOUMA (*interpretation from French*): I am very glad, at the beginning of my statement, Mr. President, to be able to address to you in my person warm congratulations on your unanimous election to the Presidency of the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Your many qualities, your experience in the political, diplomatic and academic spheres, your family tradition—since your father was President of the former Assembly of the League of Nations—are sufficient grounds for all the praise and all the compliments that have been addressed to you, and for the honour done your Government and your country, of whose exceptional stability we are all aware, as well as recalling its remarkable contribution in giving the United Nations its first Secretary-General. My delegation is profoundly convinced that under your enlightened leadership the proceedings of the com-

memorative session will take place in the best atmosphere of understanding and of mutual benefit.

124. Furthermore, as it does every year at this time, my delegation would like once again to express its esteem and admiration for Secretary-General, U Thant, who has the difficult task of directing our enormous Organization and who tirelessly gives us the benefit of his great Buddhist wisdom in that arduous undertaking, the common quest for peace.

125. A quarter of a century ago, the Charter of the United Nations came into force. Created to save the world from the scourge of another war, it was almost unanimously approved by the peoples. It was indeed inconceivable that there should be a repetition of the horrors which for so many centuries have been the lot of nations. A kind of solemn warning, a fateful decree, seemed to intervene at last to illumine the judgement of statesmen and offer them a last chance of saving mankind from final disaster.

126. The United Nations was born from that moment of awareness. In 1945 spring was truly in the air for all peoples. So much blood had been shed that it really did seem that there could never again be so monstrous a holocaust as that of the Second World War.

127. The main objective of the United Nations is thus the maintenance of international security. But the problem of war and peace, as the passing years bring forgetfulness and revive the ancient demons, is far from being solved. The Secretary-General has spoken of a "serious decline in the standards of international ethics and morality, with States relying increasingly on force and violence as a means of resolving their international differences". He went on to say "this tendency to return to force as a means of national policy strikes at the very basis of the United Nations". We could not have put it better ourselves.

128. How often has our little Kingdom come here to denounce the aggression of which it has been the victim for the past twenty-five years, first of all in indirect and insidious fashion, and then overtly, with the most complete cynicism, at the hands of a nation ten times more powerful?

129. Flagrant violation of the spirit and principles of the Charter, total contempt for international usage, unacceptable justification of aggression by a sophism which we hear very often regarding us in this house, namely, the struggle against imperialism. Imperialism is adorned with so many lies, it adopts so many guises that it may be met with everywhere, so that with a little practice in casuistry one can easily put oneself on the side of the angels. That is the tactic of our aggressor.

130. There is indeed a decline in international morality. A just settlement is sacrificed to superior force, and international tensions are thereby heightened. We are at the heart of the problem.

131. We must not therefore be surprised at the crisis of confidence through which the United Nations is pas-

sing. When certain States Members of the Organization themselves perpetuate the old system of force at the expense of other nations, when, to defend themselves or to attack, they incessantly manufacture and accumulate arsenals of terrifying and deadly weapons, when they band together in blocs, when they continuously condemn political systems of which they do not approve, when they proclaim, *urbi et orbi*, that they are the repositories of historical truth, when they threaten with death and predict a shameful end to all political thinking independent of their own, then there can be no question of peace.

132. In any case, it cannot really be said that conflict has ever stopped since 1945. Although some crises have been averted or postponed, thanks to the role of the United Nations, in Indonesia, in Kashmir, in Korea, in Cyprus, for example, it can be said that States have not altogether given up the attempt to use force.

133. So far as certain great Powers are concerned, furthermore, a method brought to a high degree of perfection enables them, through third countries, to pursue their disputes and to extend their rule. This is what we see in Indo-China for example, and in our own unfortunate Kingdom in particular, where an aggressor, amply supplied with weapons by powerful friends, is carrying on a war of ideological conquest, undoubtedly in the expectation of territorial gain.

134. We must look at the evidence: might still prevails over right. Thus the super-Powers have a tendency to regulate the world's affairs. So long as they refuse to submit to the principles of our Charter, so long as they refuse to disarm, so long as they refuse to renounce the advantages of power and the intoxications of prestige, the same will be true of international problems.

135. We hope that during this anniversary, in addition to taking stock of the results achieved by the United Nations in the field of international security, disarmament, *apartheid*, colonialism, racism, human rights, economic development and the world food problem, special thought will be given to peace. That is the major problem. Once solved, all the others will become easier.

136. My delegation, which recently participated in the Lusaka Conference, has drawn some important conclusions from it. An ever-growing number of countries which define themselves as non-aligned, that is to say refusing to adhere to the policy of blocs—which is an obvious setback for the solution of international problems, discredited as it is by the errors of the past—are of the view that energetic action should be undertaken to create a different international climate. That assembly of States, representing millions of people outside the United Nations, was the culmination of an historical process that we place before the General Assembly for analysis. In our opinion, millions of men have become impatient at this division of the planet by a few privileged Powers. The Assembly is aware of the proceedings of the Conferences of Bel-

grade, Cairo and, now, Lusaka. A philosophy is emerging, and soon rules of political action will be applied. All the problems examined at Lusaka were fundamentally the same as those that have been the subject of innumerable speeches from this rostrum, speeches that seem to some like an academic and disappointing ritual, since year after year they are repeated almost word for word.

137. As far as Laos is concerned, for example, we have been waiting for more than 25 years. Ideological imperialisms are rife in our country. Our frontiers, our sovereignty, our independence, the right of our people to self-determination are sold cheap. Still worse, international accords are violated even by some of those States that signed them.

138. I do not believe that criticism is always the same as blame, particularly when it is objective and sincere. Indeed, it seems to me constructive and beneficial, for it is essential, if we are to go forward, that we rid ourselves of everything that impedes progress. If I have mentioned the failings and deficiencies of our Organization, it was with the intention of fostering ways and means of improving its effectiveness. If I have noted a decline in international morality, it was in the hope of awakening the States in question to an awareness of their responsibilities.

139. In any event, the United Nations, despite its imperfections, thus far represents the only hope of peaceful peoples and developing countries that yearn for a world without hostilities and better conditions of life. We should like to reaffirm here our dedication to the Organization's principles and provisions, as well as our conviction that it can be an instrument of peace and progress.

140. There is already a gleam of hope on the horizon. To this commemorative ceremony, each Member country is bringing its faith and enthusiasm, and making its utmost contribution. Moreover, highly important documents, representing an immense amount of research, discussion and work have already been drafted or soon will be; these documents will provide the framework and guidelines for future action on behalf of peace, for raising the living standards of mankind in the decade now beginning.

141. It is often said that we are in a rapidly changing world. But it is precisely in such times of great change that we need to look to principles of order. Permanent revolution cannot be the rule of States, even if the idea is attractive in itself. The city of man cannot flourish or progress, cannot be a place of peace and well-being, unless it be in peace and certitude. That is all that the peoples ask.

142. We are therefore happy to note that the United Nations has decided to rethink the problems which have concerned us for 25 years, bearing in mind the positive results as well as the disillusionments mentioned here and elsewhere.

143. To rethink those problems does not mean to denounce them tirelessly as has been done over the

past 25 years, but rather to move towards concrete solutions. We should like to see a United Nations decade for world peace. We have perhaps 10 years in which to solve the greatest problem, that of collective security. That is our wish so far as we are concerned because, more unjustly perhaps than any other country our small Kingdom, peace-loving and tolerant, has paid its heavy tribute to colonialism, imperialism and aggression, condemned here for 25 years but still alive, still active, ever reborn.

144. The PRESIDENT: I call on the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland, His Highness Prince Makhosini.

145. Prince MAKHOSINI: Those who have addressed this august Assembly before me have extended congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your unanimous election to the presidency of this historic session of the United Nations General Assembly. Allow me nevertheless to add the cordial greetings and congratulations of His Majesty King Sobhuza the Second, the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland. You are indeed fortunate to have been associated with this session in this manner for this is a session of introspection, self-criticism and rededication to the struggle for realizing the goals of the United Nations. Indeed this is a session at which we should identify the obstacles which lie in the way of peace, justice, progress and international understanding.

146. The world has its eyes glued on this session, hoping that something new, something holding out genuine hope for permanent peace and mankind's guaranteed survival, will emerge from it. I feel confident that with your guidance the outcome of this Assembly's deliberations will not disappoint the millions of human beings who are, day in and day out, subjected to conditions which either preclude or threaten peace and international understanding.

147. At this twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and particularly at this commemorative session, one would like to feel that the United Nations has come of age and that it enjoys world-wide support. Indeed, the United Nations has attempted to handle world problems with courage, and in spite of all its weaknesses, as well as all forms of criticism, it stands as the only hope for mankind's survival and progress. There would seem to be no alternative to the United Nations.

148. The serious thing about the United Nations programmes is that the problems of world peace, justice and progress have not diminished. Some of these problems do not appear to be easy to solve. On the contrary, our problems, our Organization's problems, have become more complicated even when we thought solutions were in sight. As in the past, the United Nations is committed to achieving lasting peace in a world which is constantly terrorized by war, division, oppression and poverty. And, as in the past, war and the demonstration of might continue to make the work of the United Nations extremely difficult. Then there



is the new dimension of madness and inhumanity which manifests itself in hijacking aeroplanes, harassing innocent passengers and destroying aircraft. The international community must take such measures as will make travel safe, and there must be an immediate return to accepted norms of behaviour. In the past, we have seen the use of the veto powers of Members of this Organization employed to promote or to support sectional interests. We regret such action, and submit that the United Nations should not be used to further any nation's self-interest, but only the common good of all mankind.

149. At this session, we cannot but remember with deep appreciation the efforts of those who made the founding of the United Nations Organization possible. We owe what limited peace we do enjoy to those who founded the United Nations for the express purpose that man should no longer suffer the scourge of war and that there might be peace and understanding in the world. But most of those who had the foresight, most of those whose efforts gave rise to our gathering here today, have left the stage of life. Are we worthy successors? The question that we have to face squarely is whether we are being successful in building upon the ashes of the recent devastating world wars an edifice of lasting peace, justice, progress and brotherhood of all men.

150. During the last session of the United Nations General Assembly, the world was preoccupied with the problems of war, freedom, peace and unity. Those problems, and many more are, even at this moment, still very much with us. War situations in Viet-Nam, Cambodia and the Middle East continue to threaten world peace and security; the United Nations still lacks the universality which it requires to become truly effective; the world is still far from achieving complete disarmament and nuclear weapon proliferation remains a real threat to international security and to life; resolutions and the authority of the United Nations continue to be flouted with impunity; colonialism, far from being dead, still claims thousands of victims.

151. Unless we all engage in serious, honest, sincere self-criticism and unless we re-examine our individual attitudes towards the international community, peace and understanding will move farther and farther away, and we shall become a completely war-torn race, while universal peace becomes both elusive and illusive. Surely more and more leaders must by now have realized that the rewards of war are nothing other than death and misery—a setback to the progress that mankind has already made in a variety of fields. We applaud the work of all those who are actively engaged in finding avenues for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem, and we are encouraged to see that the countries directly involved are taking steps to begin peace negotiations. There is, of course, no other way of solving the problem, as war only begets war, reprisals only beget reprisals, hostility only engenders hostility, fear begets fear and hatred begets hatred.

152. With regard to Viet-Nam we can only hope that the Paris negotiations will lead to a realistic, concrete

solution, the withdrawal of foreign troops will be expedited and the Viet-Nameese will have an opportunity to settle the problem themselves without external interference. Regarding Cambodia, we feel that the best judge as to what is right for the Cambodians is none other than the Cambodian people itself, if only it is left alone to settle its dispute and to end the war. After all, the lasting solution to the Cambodian problem can only be one emanating from within Cambodia.

153. On the question of the universal character of the United Nations, I need not remind you that as we are gathered here, there are vast numbers of the human race who are not represented among us. In this regard, in urging all United Nations Member States to give this question their serious consideration, I would like to refer to what I said when addressing the General Assembly in September 1968:

“... until all free States are given the feeling of belonging, the United Nations will remain not fully universal and the threat to world peace will continue to hover over our heads like the sword of Damocles.” [1674th meeting, para. 132.]

154. Then there is the problem of divided nations. I refer, of course, to Germany, Korea and Viet-Nam. In each case the division has not resulted from round-table negotiations, but from war. It does seem, therefore, that the cause of peace and harmonious relations could best be served by supporting all steps taken towards reunification. It would be self-defeating to do the opposite.

155. The proliferation of nuclear weapons has of course created a new type of problem. Mankind today is not only faced with the difficulty of achieving and maintaining world peace; it is not only faced with the problem of ending the wars in the Middle East, in Viet-Nam or in Cambodia. Mankind is also faced with the question of how to prevent self-annihilation—to avoid a holocaust. This is what makes our planet, more than ever before, an insecure place, a place in which all our energies have to be channelled into efforts to achieve complete disarmament, positive steps to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons and to achieve peace for all time.

*Mr. Boye (Senegal), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

156. The striking paradox is, of course, that man, while not wishing to die, is busy inventing the most sophisticated weapons for rapid self-extinction. And the tragedy of the arms race is that it consumes financial resources which could be used to improve the conditions of life for millions of human beings who now suffer from dire poverty, disease and hunger.

157. We still have faith in human nature, we still believe in the ability of the United Nations to achieve lasting peace, and we still hope that mankind can and seriously will make a fresh, concrete start towards destroying all the forces created by man for the purposes which amount to nothing more or less than international suicide. One of the most dangerous things is,

as many will have realized, that while the United Nations tries to solve our problems, most of them man-made, some people see it as their bounden duty to create new problems rather than to propose solutions. This, fundamentally is what makes the United Nations task so great and so arduous. We are convinced that the problems facing the United Nations, the forces narrowing the area of peace and happiness on this planet spring from human attitudes, the attitude of one State towards another, the attitude of one State towards the rest of the world, the attitude of one racial group towards another, the attitude of one power bloc towards another, and the attitudes of fear and mistrust. This is what accounts for tension and sometimes war. Indeed this, basically, is the cause of the arms race.

158. Apart from the threat of war, the arms race and the other problems I have mentioned as facing the international community, the developing world is also faced with a special type of enemy—underdevelopment. Those of us who have recently emerged from foreign domination fully realize that political independence only provides the opportunity to develop, and that development means, *inter alia*, acquiring the necessary finance, technical skills, adequately trained manpower and aid, to promote development and favour trade.

159. Furthermore, the leaders of the developing countries are keen to consolidate their political independence through social and economic development programmes. And this calls for an even greater effort on their part. Some of us have, regrettably, not found the post-independence patterns of trade, or indeed the terms of aid, in any way reassuring. It is encouraging, nonetheless, to see that some developed nations realize the predicament of developing countries and that they are favourably disposed towards participation in our development programmes. We have, however, found the United Nations contributions to our development schemes, through the numerous United Nations agencies, especially valuable.

160. Having said that, I wish to suggest that this world body should concentrate on working out ways and means whereby the next United Nations Development Decade may become a decade of promise. I make the suggestion, not merely for the sake of development. Far from it. I do so because I am convinced that winning the battle against underdevelopment enlarges the area of peace and takes the world a big step forward towards international co-operation and understanding.

161. I have earlier stated that this is a session for self-searching, and I firmly believe that only if we as Members are prepared to criticize ourselves can the United Nations succeed. The questions which immediately arise are whether each Member State sees and regards the next Member as a brother entitled to the same indivisible sovereignty and dignity, whether we are each prepared to support the United Nations and to engage in constructive criticism instead of condemning the United Nations while folding our arms and whether we are prepared to give the United Nations a chance to discharge its responsibilities instead of obstructing it and being the first to declare it incompetent to solve certain problems.

162. I have already referred to the unhealthy tendency and the habit of some countries to flout, ignore or ridicule United Nations resolutions. It seems to me that one of the major tasks of this session, while remembering with solemnity that the United Nations came into being 25 years ago, is to determine why the image and the authority of the United Nations are now tarnished and set at naught by some sections of the human race.

163. It may be all too easy to say that only the countries flouting the United Nations resolutions are entirely to blame and that the United Nations is always in the right. But is that, in fact, so?

164. Without in any way implying that my country has an answer to the question, allow me to suggest that: (a) it is essential for the United Nations to be careful to adopt resolutions which not only reflect an intimate knowledge of the problems concerned but are also capable of being implemented; (b) the United Nations may wish to consider ways and means, including those provided for in its Charter, of bringing defaulting Member States to book; (c) the United Nations could avoid several pitfalls and positively preserve its dignity if the courses of action already proposed were given the serious consideration they deserve.

165. Finally, I feel confident that the United Nations could emerge from this session with greater hope for mankind's permanent peace and survival than it has ever before entertained and that this session could go down in history as one marking the beginning of a new era—an era of systematic and realistic channelling of all efforts towards overcoming the existing crises in certain areas of the world which manifest themselves in strife, aggression and even war. This entails taking every possible step to ensure that the other man's point of view is understood, and improving and strengthening channels of communication particularly between the world's major power blocs. The advantages of this course of action are too obvious to require cataloguing. It seems certain, however, that if power blocs consciously improved and strengthened channels of communications the pen would unequivocally prove mightier than the sword, and we would see more negotiations and less brandishing of weapons; more collective and individual respect for United Nations authority; the realization of the universal principle of the brotherhood of man; an enlargement of the area of peaceful settlement of disputes and the achievement of universal peace; an end to war and all the bitterness, suffering and misery which inevitably follow; and the provision of assistance to those sadly divided nations which are moving towards reunification.

166. It is my hope and prayer that as we begin a new development decade, we shall leave the United Nations Headquarters imbued with the spirit and the statesmanship of those who first conceived the founding of the United Nations Organization and, in addition, filled with a renewed faith that mankind can and must be saved from war and misery. It is my prayer that we shall leave the United Nations Headquarters determined anew to ensure that all men, women and children

everywhere support the United Nations and what it stands for and see it as the only hope of avoiding a holocaust and achieving peace, justice and progress.

167. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Sori Coulibaly, Minister Delegate to the Military Committee of National Liberation and Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Mali.

168. Mr. COULIBALY (*interpretation from French*): It was written in the book of fate that the commemorative ceremonies of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, an Organization created for peace, justice and order, should take place in the absence of the man who precisely had devoted his life to the rebirth of his country, to the attainment of an international order, the principles of which, in accordance with those of the Charter, have inspired peoples throughout the ages and opened the annals of history to the entry of heroes.

169. Confronted with the painful problems of the Middle East almost immediately after the signing of the Charter, President Gamal Abdel Nasser has left us the record of a great patriot and the image of those rare men of feeling who bear on their shoulders the cross of the sufferings and hopes of their people.

170. The torch that he held aloft, through storm and strife, cannot be extinguished. For us, the people of Mali, whose political philosophy may be briefly summed up in a continuing refusal of domination in any form whatsoever and in a refusal to abdicate in the face of the great problems of the future of man, the life and work of Nasser set us examples and give us reasons for hope.

171. It is probably not without good reason that we waited till the Charter had been in operation for 25 years to remind ourselves solemnly of its provisions. We chose the length of time necessary for the full development of man, when, the crisis of growth behind him, he becomes aware of his full physical and intellectual potential and is able to mould himself according to his will.

172. Actually, our task requires no further definition. To accomplish it we need only be faithful to the spirit of those who, at San Francisco, tried to preserve our planet from the scourge of war, from racism, intolerance and injustice. To do this we need only remember our peoples whose devotion to the ideals of the Charter should spur us on to ever-increasing vigour and courage in the decisions we must take.

173. We should bear all this in mind in order that the attainment of the objectives of peace, justice and progress, which we have selected for the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Charter, may constitute our token of recognition to those millions of peoples who 25 years ago fell side by side united, by a single tragic destiny, just as we today, the survivors of the catastrophe, should be united by a single will to combat all that can vilify or degrade mankind.

174. A brief look at the evolution of mankind over the past quarter of a century could have provided us some reasons for satisfaction: entire nations freed from the chains of colonialism have enlarged the Membership of the international community and have brought to it the youthful vigour of their faith, fighting for the ideals of peace and respect for fundamental human rights.

175. Mankind, thanks to its creative genius, has seemed more hospitable and man has developed as a whole in fairly satisfactory conditions of health and sanitation. Generally speaking, the tensions created immediately after the war by the confrontation of ideologies are tending to wane, giving place to more positive coexistence among nations. The world, somewhat shaken by some of the just claims of youth which is increasingly interested in its future, begins to understand that that youth is the image of its own strength. Finally, man has realized his centuries-old dream of freeing himself from the pull of gravity and tomorrow perhaps the moon and the other planets will only be way stations for yet undreamed-of conquests in space.

176. Yet, as if man had only freed himself from the pull of gravity in order to escape the realities of the problems of the earth or to show himself incapable of solving them, peace has never appeared more precarious than it is now in the days following these triumphant cries of jubilation. Justice in certain parts of the world and particularly in southern Africa is denied to the majority of the people. Progress seems more and more to be measured by technical achievements than by a will to use these techniques to eliminate ignorance and poverty.

177. The spectacle that we have witnessed and are still witnessing of peoples divested of their most elementary freedoms, amply demonstrates the shortcomings and even the weaknesses of our Organization particularly in respect of the maintenance of peace.

178. True, in the Middle East a glimmer of hope had superseded the bursting of bombs. The proposal made by the United States Administration to replace violence by dialogue had appeared to us, despite certain reservations, as a factor likely to prepare for a gradual return to lasting peace in that troubled part of the world.

179. But the recent developments in the situation and the freeze in the negotiations entrusted to Ambassador Gunnar Jarring have served to highlight the difficulties of applying the Rogers Plan. Thus, in a very sincere desire to make our contribution to the search for an equitable solution for all parties directly engaged in this dispute, my delegation wishes to reaffirm the constant position of the Government of the Republic of Mali. We reject and denounce once again the acquisition of territories by force and we reaffirm the urgency and necessity of the total unconditional application of the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967 [242 (1967)].

180. Accordingly, just as we express very sincere wishes for the restoration of peace in the Middle East,

so do we consider that the bases for the establishment of that peace should be sought by taking into account the legitimate aspirations of all the peoples of the region.

181. A just and lasting peace will be established in that part of the world only to the degree that the national interests of all communities, which, for the past twenty-two years, have been at loggerheads there and have had to suffer the dramatic consequences of those confrontations, are safeguarded. We are thinking in particular of the Palestine people, which has already demonstrated that its final integration into community life can be carried out only in its own homeland. To envisage a political settlement in the Middle East without taking into account the legitimate demands of the Palestine people would not be realistic and would lead only to an illusory peace.

182. In my statement in the course of the general debate last year [1775th meeting] I had expressed the hope, following on the declaration made on 17 September 1969 by President Nixon [1755th meeting], that subsequent measures would be taken by the United States Government for the establishment of a just peace in Viet-Nam, that other portion of the world where a valiant people, for more than a quarter of a century, has been continuously fighting an unjust and cruel war that has been imposed on it. Unfortunately, recent developments in the Far East conflict, and the arguments set forth to justify the invasion of Cambodia, appear to the Government of Mali as fundamentally contrary to the search for a negotiated peace and respect for the sovereignty of peoples.

183. The Government of the Republic of Mali continues to believe that negotiations in accordance with the Geneva Agreements of 1954 cannot be understood without the total and unconditional withdrawal of the troops of the United States and its allies. It would then be up to the different political groups of Viet-Nam, and not to foreign Governments, to prepare for a restoration of peace and to negotiate, in due course, the conditions for the reunification of Viet-Nam as a whole.

184. The same may be said with respect to the people of Korea, who should settle its problems without foreign interference. Our Assembly should, in the opinion of my delegation, recommend the unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops stationed in Korea in order to enable the Korean people democratically to decide its fate.

185. The Charter, whose twenty-fifth anniversary we are now commemorating, proclaims in Article 1 the equality of rights and right to self-determination of peoples.

186. This year we also celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. However, the sad and bitter reality is that there are still peoples under colonial domination; others are also subject to the base and intolerable system of *apartheid* and racial discrimination.

187. Accordingly, how could we fail to be deeply indignant that 25 years after the signing of the United Nations Charter, more than 20 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and 10 years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, States Members of our Organization are still pleased to maintain an anachronistic concept, based on the superiority of one race over another, in order to impose brutal and degrading dominion upon other peoples or dispute the inalienable right of peoples to live freely in their own land and to organize their existence according to their own intellectual and moral capacities?

188. How can we remain unconcerned when, in Guinea (Bissau), Mozambique and Angola, colonial segregationist laws deprive millions of men, women and children of their basic civil rights?

189. Last year, I suggested a new approach to colonial problems. I said that the phase of paper-work was done with and that now we must seek ways and means of beginning a phase that would necessarily culminate in a dialogue between the national liberation movements and the colonial Governments for the speedy implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

190. Portugal's reply to those conciliatory proposals, contained in the Manifesto on Southern Africa,<sup>9</sup> was to intensify the repression in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau).

191. The aid generously provided to Portugal by its NATO allies enables it, against all logic, to maintain in those countries more than 150,000 soldiers, whose cruelty and systematic methods of destruction derive from a madness in the fights against which, 25 years ago, millions of men, including precisely men from Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau), willingly sacrificed their lives. History teaches us that a people cannot be assimilated against its will. Portugal's allies should get this elementary truth into their heads.

192. Certain States Members of our Organization tend to dissociate Portuguese colonialism from Southern Rhodesian and South African racism. As far as we are concerned, their foundations and their manifestations are identical: denial of the human personality, appalling methods of destruction, breach of the peace.

193. The economic and military conditions which enabled Southern Rhodesia to rob the Zimbabwe people of their freedom are equalled in history, only by the vast plot hatched in the nineteenth century against the peoples of Africa and Asia, at whose expense "empires" were built on the same principles of domination, repression and humiliation.

194. Great Britain, which still claims to be the administering Power of Southern Rhodesia, and which has shown more than once that it does not hesitate

<sup>9</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes, agenda item 106, document A/7754.

to commit its troops when its notion of sovereignty is imperilled, should, out of faithfulness to those principles, not have turned a deaf ear to the OAU appeal. It should not have remained indifferent to the fate of millions of inhabitants for whose political destinies it was long responsible, and who, 25 years ago, did not hesitate to bear their share of the British burden when it seemed the heaviest in history. The bitter conclusion we as Africans must draw from the behaviour of British Governments in the question of Southern Rhodesia is that for the United Kingdom justice and the rights of peoples can be overlooked when the victims are black and the oppressors white, the law of the jungle being invoked only when the security of whites is at stake. The only visible result of the economic sanctions ordered by the United Nations against Rhodesia has been to encourage the Salisbury régime in its policy of racial segregation and of defiance not only of our Organization, but of the world conscience.

195. With respect to South Africa, and for those who still doubt that the Pretoria régime poses a threat to mankind, suffice it to refer to a recent statement by Pope Paul VI, who said that "25 years after the end of the Second World War and the creation of the United Nations, racism looms as a particularly serious threat to peace".

196. That threat has already made itself felt in Namibia where, for the first time in history, an international Organization—the United Nations—faces a grave and insulting challenge from a Member State, without doing anything but adopt timid resolutions that are in any case never implemented.

197. The States that continue to arm South Africa must understand that those arms are instruments in the service of repression and imperialism, and are used against defenceless black populations that are subject to the humiliations and barbarisms of a régime as detestable as nazism, against which all peace- and justice-loving peoples fought shoulder to shoulder.

198. The easy argument used by certain great Powers, that colonial domination and *apartheid* are the domestic affair of States, does not stand up to analysis. As Secretary-General U Thant said in San Francisco on 26 June 1970: "World affairs are no longer foreign affairs of Governments. They have become internal affairs of all."

199. To forestall the threat to peace from *apartheid* and colonialism, the General Assembly should be guided by Article 39 and the following Articles of the Charter. It should also take into consideration and strengthen the proposals already made for assistance to the fighters in southern Africa and Guinea (Bissau). The unconditional application of the recommendations that the specialized agencies of the United Nations are to make to us shortly about the forms of material assistance to be given them would be one step towards a conscious commitment to the Charter.

200. The proposals we have just made do not concern the continent of Africa alone. There is no separate

peace. One of the fundamental objectives of the Charter is to create objective conditions for coexistence among peoples. Our resolutions will have full effect only if they concern all States. Their universality, which is the aim of the Charter, would then be enhanced.

201. It is in the name of that universality that the Government of the Republic of Mali believes that the absence of the People's Republic of China is fundamentally contrary to the provisions of the Charter.

202. Any agreement on disarmament which ignores the existence of the State which has the greatest human military potential and which is, furthermore, a nuclear Power with satellites in space, is an agreement without a future. How sincerely can we talk about co-operation, or the development of economic relations among countries with different economic and social systems, how sincerely is this policy being applied, when attempts are made to keep out the People's Republic of China, which is one of the best economic partners in the world and which, moreover, has proved the effectiveness of its development assistance to countries which have recently become independent?

203. Besides at this commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, it should be remembered that the Charter was signed in the name of peoples and not of Governments. We cannot think of Formosa when speaking of the Chinese people. The repositories of Chinese civilization, the architects of the new China, are not in Formosa; they are on the continent of China.

204. I have had occasion to address an urgent appeal to the Government of the United States of America to stop opposing the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations. I reiterate that appeal. The Nixon administration, if it really wants peace in South-East Asia, must understand that peace cannot be secured against China and without its participation.

205. The greatness of the People's Republic of China, its wisdom in standing physically aloof from present conflicts, the value of its political, economic, technological, scientific and social experience, are assets that our Organization needs if it is to be true to the Charter.

206. To restore the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the General Assembly, the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations, is no more than justice, and justice and equity should be the key elements in the international policy of all States, particularly the great Powers.

207. The intransigence of Governments that oppose the restoration to the People's Republic of China of its lawful rights as a founder Member of the United Nations is, we believe, very detrimental to the effectiveness of our Organization. That attitude is negative, disappointing and repugnant, for those Governments are the very same that are the political and military allies and the trading partners of the régimes of South

Africa and Portugal, whose State philosophy and daily actions are opposed to the principles, purposes and objectives of the Charter.

208. Despite our disappointments, we still hope that political wisdom will prevail over national egoisms and dogmatism.

209. The entry into force on 5 March 1970 of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [resolution 2373 (XXII)], and the atmosphere which prevails at Vienna on the non-utilization of certain traditional weapons, would be cause for satisfaction if at the same time they were to have a decisive effect on the Conference of the Disarmament Committee. The Charter and our conscience dictate a total mobilization of our resources for the purposes of development, not their squandering on the manufacture, improvement and stock-piling of weapons of destruction.

210. Guided by the concern to seek real peace in the world and an acceptable definition of the political and economic conditions in which millions of men live, the Government of Mali will support any policy based on these fundamental facts.

211. At all times we shall keep in mind that 25 years ago the world still lay in smoking ruins caused by fanaticism, intolerance and the mad urge to power.

212. The slogan "Peace, justice and progress" that we have elected to commemorate at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Charter requires that we redouble our efforts to ensure that liberty and peace are not compromised by ignorance, disease and hunger.

213. So far as we are concerned, the Government of the Republic of Mali is among those that think that—and here I quote from the Pearson report:

"Whatever is or is not done internationally, the poorer countries of the world have made their choice for development. It is part of their unfinished revolution."<sup>10</sup>

214. We would have wished to make and to finish that revolution with all countries, without exception, that believe that economic development is a prerequisite and guarantee of lasting international peace. The developing countries, and Mali in particular, had for that reason placed great hopes in the United Nations Development Decade that has just finished.

215. The United Nations and the specialized agencies are the embodiment of an international policy of development in the service of peace.

216. The volume of aid to the developing countries must be increased. The machinery for financial and banking action on behalf of those countries must be improved. Technology, which has enabled man to achieve admirable feats in all fields of economic, social and cultural life, must not be at the disposal of the

developed countries alone. But above all, assistance, in no matter what form, must be, as the Pearson report states, less uncertain and more continuous than it is now.

217. The Government of Mali is, moreover, convinced that there is no other way of tackling the problem of development than by concerted, methodical and co-ordinated action within the framework of a well-defined long-term strategy. That is why the Second Decade must not be the mere expression of inoperative recommendations. What we need is to institute as soon as possible a continuing and constructive dialogue to help open the way to the great political decisions that development requires.

218. I should like now to state my views on a question which, for many years now, has been the subject of much controversy. I refer to the problem of the revision of the Charter in view of the fact that the Organization has not, during its 25 years of existence, had much success in the very field where high hopes were placed in it—the maintenance of peace. At the risk of repeating myself, we all recognize that, as we commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Charter, unjust and cruel wars are being imposed on the populations of South-East Asia, the Middle East, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau), while the ostracism of certain great Powers is preventing the great People's Republic of China from joining us in the quest for lasting solutions to the problems on which the future of all mankind depends. To strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations and to find a solution to all these anachronistic situations some believe in a miraculous solution resulting from a revision of the Charter. For our part, without being hostile to a revision of the Charter, we believe more in the effectiveness and usefulness of a change of heart on the part of certain Governments of Member States. Here we agree with President Truman, who, after stating in San Francisco 25 years ago that the Charter was only one stage, went on to say:

"We all have to recognize—no matter how great our strength—that we must deny ourselves the license to do always as we please . . . . That is the price which each nation will have to pay for world peace. Unless we are all willing to pay that price, no organization for world peace can accomplish its purpose."<sup>11</sup>

That is what the international behaviour of every State should be.

219. Unfortunately, affirmations of good will and good intentions are one thing, but concrete and consistent actions are an infinitely more difficult thing. Indeed, if the great Powers would deny themselves just a little the freedom always to do as they please and would act in conformity with the provisions and aims of the Charter, peace would today reign in South-East Asia and in the Middle East; the People's Republic of China, with the experience and strength of its 750

<sup>10</sup> *Partners in Development—Report of the Commission on International Development* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1969), p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> *Documents of the United Nations Conference on International Organization* (vol. I, General, p. 716).



million people, would sit amongst us; Angola, Mozambique, Guinea (Bissau), Southern Rhodesia and Namibia would today be independent African States, while the Republic of South Africa would be a democratic State governed by the majority of its population.

220. My delegation therefore believes that on this twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations the Member States should search their consciences and consider to what extent their international conduct has conformed to the spirit, the aims, the purposes and principles of the Charter. The change of heart that would result from such an examination of conscience seems to me far more effective than any hypothetical revision of the Charter, for the best-drafted treaties and conventions are, in the final analysis, valid only in the minds of those who apply them.

221. We are now commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of freedom regained after six long years of grief and hatred. We are commemorating our good fortune in having escaped the hecatomb, and the wisdom that enabled us to still our rancours, to lend each other a hand in binding up our wounds and building a world which it is our duty to hand on as a shining heritage to future generations.

222. Right from the start it is our good fortune to have a man like our President to guide us in the search for the best ways and means of securing the triumph of peace, progress and justice throughout the world. He comes from a part of the world where the ideals

of humanism have prevailed over the constraints of narrow nationalism. Therefore in congratulating him I am also, of course, thinking of his country, Norway, and likewise of the whole of Scandinavia, which for more than one reason could well serve as a model of constancy in the respect for basic human rights, without distinction as to race or colour.

223. Our President occupies the Chair from which Mrs. Angie Brooks-Randolph last year gave frequent utterance to the voice and the concerns of Africa. We are convinced that she will not soon be forgotten, thanks to the skill, the altogether feminine elegance with which she guided the labours of the twenty-fourth session.

224. I am confident that with our President and the other officers of the Assembly, to whom I extend my warmest congratulations, we shall realize the wish expressed by the Secretary-General at San Francisco: to give the Charter a chance and, better still, to give mankind a chance.

225. In the struggle to strengthen peace in justice and for progress, you will always find the people of the Republic of Mali standing ready at your side.

226. That is the message I have been instructed to convey to you on this twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, and I thank you for your kind attention.

*The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.*