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AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (*continued*)

1. Mr. OULD MOUKNASS (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): The twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly opens at a moment when important events are occurring on the international stage. New centres of power and influence are appearing while détente and co-operation are replacing the traditional division of the world into two opposing blocs.

2. While these deep-rooted transformations in the general relations of forces constitute an important stage towards the establishment of peace, the countries of the third world still remain confronted with colonialism, foreign occupation and economic exploitation.

3. It is therefore in a new context, where peoples are torn between anxiety and hope, that this twenty-eighth session is opening, and it devolves upon you, Mr. President, to guide the labours of this session. Your responsibilities are difficult indeed, but we trust in your qualities as a statesman and as an outstanding diplomat, and we congratulate you warmly on your election. The well-deserved respect which your country enjoys, your foresight and enlightened understanding mean that you are well qualified to assume this heavy and difficult task.

4. Your predecessor also commands our gratitude for the tact and sense of equity with which he guided the work of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

5. We should also like to pay a tribute to the very meritorious manner in which our Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, is discharging his lofty and difficult task. We should like once again to express our support for him in his courageous and persevering efforts to enforce respect for the principles of the Charter, and thus to ensure the maintenance of peace and harmony among peoples.

6. Lastly, I should like to extend again to the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, the Federal Republic of Germany

and the German Democratic Republic our wishes of welcome and our warm congratulations, which have already been conveyed to them by the Mauritanian delegation.

7. However, I should like to add that my country experiences all the more satisfaction at these developments because its relations with the Federal Republic of Germany are long standing, and today are taking a vigorous upsurge reflecting the mutual respect between our two peoples. Our satisfaction is also justified by the peaceful work done in Europe in difficult conditions by the Federal Republic of Germany. We know how diverse these conditions are and we can therefore measure the true value of what has been accomplished and the immense task that has been carried out. These accomplishments do honour to the German people and should be a source of pride to its leaders. Such great objectives could never have been achieved without the determination of that people and the political courage and foresight of Chancellor Willy Brandt. We are convinced that the presence in the United Nations of such a highly qualified people and such far-sighted leaders will contribute to the search for justice, freedom and the equality of peoples, a search which our Organization has set itself as its objective.

8. The broad lines which guide the foreign policy of my country are naturally a reflection of its geographical position, its economic situation and its political options.

9. An under-developed country, a pivot between black Africa and Arab Africa, firmly devoted to its economic and political independence, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania intends to pursue its course in the community of efforts at the international level with firm determination to fight to contribute to the advent of a world peace, justice and harmony.

10. It is on those fundamental factors that we have based our will to safeguard and consolidate our economic and political independence and our devotion to African unity, to non-alignment and to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

11. Ever since the dawn of its accession to international sovereignty, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania has been aware that it must rely on itself before it can rely on others. It has been, above all, aware that the constant search for real political independence requires true cultural and economic independence.

12. It is this fundamental approach which has led my Government and my party to reject easy solutions and to take decisions which, if they have not been in our immediate interests, have been in accord with our principles and objectives. At the very time of our independence,

Mauritania refused to become part of the former Common Organization for the Regions of the Sahara and expressed its unhesitating support for Algeria in its struggle for national liberation, to cite only that case.

13. In 1963, in the course of the third congress of our party, we decided to give up the subsidy that had been granted to us by France for our operational budget, opting thus for a policy of austerity and financial stringency. This will to make sacrifices, accepted by our country at the national as well as the individual levels, has always been part of our continuing search for true independence.

14. The logical consequence of this difficult but continuing search was naturally the revision, early this year, of our agreements with France which had been concluded at the time of our accession to international sovereignty. Those agreements were certainly justified at the time and in a very well-defined context, but they of necessity had to suffer from the passage of time and the counter-effect of the evolution of our country, both internally and internationally. They therefore had to take into account our own national and international requirements, as well as our legitimate desire to regain control over the instruments of our economic and cultural policy.

15. It was on that basis that the Islamic Republic of Mauritania created its own national currency, the ouguiya, on 29 June last and signed with France new agreements covering various areas, not including the monetary and the military. Those new agreements, although they open a broad field of action, are, by their general nature, similar to the agreements signed by Mauritania with other foreign States.

16. Hence our two countries have decided to co-operate on the basis of mutual interest and in a framework open towards the future. In so doing, they have been able to preserve the multiple ties of esteem and affection which a long common history has woven between our two peoples. Such was the last stage in a certain area of co-operation and the point of departure for new relations of an evolutionary nature based on the real interests of our two States. That departure was not easy—for from it. At the same time as international economic relations are disturbed by the monetary crisis and its nefarious effects and by a generalized recession in the economy, a natural disaster of exceptional dimensions has struck our country at this decisive stage of our history.

17. Three successive years of drought have had dramatic consequences on the life of our people, on cattle and crops: 60 to 80 per cent of the livestock have died, depending on the region; there has been a severe food shortage, leading to epidemics among a portion of the population, mass rural exodus, non-existent crops, and a lack of drinking water. Those are just some of the problems which require urgent solution.

18. An emergency plan was worked out on 18 November 1972 and put into effect on 1 January 1973. That plan included at the outset several approaches: a regrouping of the people concerned, organization of transport and the distribution of food-stuffs, protection of existing pasture land and the raising of reproductive livestock, the drilling of

properly equipped wells, and the introduction of a market-gardening programme. By means of a rigorous limitation of expenses, my Government was able to participate to a large degree in the carrying out of this plan. While that participation has now risen to one sixth of our national operating budget, a 3 per cent national tax on salaries and a 1 per cent tax on the business earnings of companies operating in our country should reach the same amount. But if the forecasts for this initial plan have been largely exceeded, it is thanks principally to international solidarity, to which I should like to pay a warm tribute. I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to address the sincere thanks of my Government and people of Mauritania to the United Nations, to the specialized agencies, and to the private organizations and many friendly countries that have granted us rapid, effective and multifaceted assistance. Thanks to that national effort and to that international solidarity, urgent problems have found a solution or are on the road to solution.

19. We have avoided the worst; the people have been saved from a catastrophe of famine which could have killed thousands of human beings in this twentieth century, which none the less is witness to opulent consumer societies. It thus remains for us to prevent, through appropriate short- and long-term programmes, a recurrence of such a situation. The broad, general lines of this programme, for the financing of which we are calling upon friendly countries and the international community, have been defined by the Heads of State of the Sahelian region in Ouagadougou and will be communicated to the General Assembly by Mr. Sangoulé Lamizana, President of the Republic of Upper Volta, who has been entrusted by his peers to undertake this task.

20. As can therefore be seen, it is in a difficult situation that my country has committed itself to the path of mastery of its economy, an essential prerequisite for true independence. But our country—with a fairly parsimonious State, with a people that tends by nature to economy, with a largely surplus balance of trade and an adjusted balance of payments—counting on the support of many brother-States and friends, has every reason to be optimistic and confident in the future.

21. On the other hand, this policy of independence characteristic of our country does not in any way, in our opinion, exclude the possibility of consultation and fruitful co-operation. Such consultation and co-operation, in a climate of confidence, can lead to agreements respecting each of the parties involved or to the taking of a common position flowing from solidarity of interests or any other valid and legitimate motivation. Our choice of non-alignment derives its force from this spirit of co-operation; at the same time, it is the expression of our refusal to be at the service of any hegemony or to replace centuries-old forms of domination by other, equivalent manifestations. It is explained also by our devotion to freedom, to the equality of all peoples and to the safeguarding of their national independence. For that matter, those are the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, to which my country has subscribed ever since its independence and to which it has sworn an oath to be faithful.

22. As far as our relations with Africa are concerned, they are a reflection of our faith in the need for African

solidarity. If the unity of Africa finds in us a particular welcome it is because our country, as was said by the Head of State of Mauritania:

"...gives an example of harmonious cohabitation of people of different races and colours, who, with the same enthusiasm, are together building the Mauritanian nation. . . . These characteristic features of our country, as well as its geographic position, make it a link between Black Africa and Arab Africa, the cultures and races of which exist together there in order better to enrich it and to symbolize Africa united in its diversity."

23. That is certainly not a passing attitude. Those are our deep-rooted considerations of reality which we have translated into facts in our relations with other African countries, both north and south of the Sahara, and with the whole of the Arab world to which we belong.

24. At the same time as our links with our brothers from the south and from the north are growing stronger day by day, we intend to build together the Arab Maghreb, in keeping with the aspirations of our peoples and with their centuries-old ties.

25. It is therefore on the basis of these political factors—if we may use that term—that the delegation of my country intends to participate in this debate without any prejudice or partisan spirit.

26. I said a few minutes ago that our peoples were divided between despair and hope. Indeed, if we look at the international situation we will note that it has been marked by decisions and negotiations which have brought us closer to peace. Among the great Powers a link of new relations founded on economic co-operation is being established above and beyond the differences of political régimes and ideological systems. This new spirit of co-operation and understanding derives from the realization that in the context of nuclear balance certain geographical or political frontiers could not be altered by force. It is also encouraged by the fact that people have become aware that two powerful industrial and commercial blocs can derive from each other tremendous advantage on this basis of economic co-operation.

27. In Europe, where for so long initiatives for peace and attempts at settlement by peaceful means of the problems inherited from the Second World War died at a wall of misunderstanding and mistrust, a new era of confidence and mutual respect is progressively being realized. That state of mind is in particular reflected by the admission to the United Nations of the two Germanys.

28. Concerning Indo-China, the signing on 27 January 1973 in Paris of agreements on Viet-Nam, the cessation of the American bombardment of Cambodia and the Vientiane agreement¹ open up new prospects for the people of Indo-China, who have so long been scourged by war and foreign intervention.

29. On the subcontinent, the agreement concluded in New Delhi on 28 August between India and Pakistan settling

¹ Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos, signed at Vientiane on 21 February 1973.

various humanitarian problems encourages reconciliation and peace in the region.

30. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, while actually covering the prosperous regions of the planet, is none the less an initiative for rapprochement, which provides a framework for reflection and dialogue between nations that were recently competitive in all fields.

31. These outstanding factors in international relations beyond any question constitute a sizable achievement for the forces of peace in the world. They are therefore a legitimate source of hope. We must, however, recognize that peace is far from being assured in all parts of the world. That explains our attitude, which is based on equally legitimate anxiety.

32. Just so long as colonial wars rage, just so long as there is *apartheid*, occupation of territories of sovereign and independent States, the policy of force and economic exploitation of countries already poor, détente will remain an illusion or will be limited in scope. Peace and freedom are indeed indivisible, particularly at a time when the interdependence of countries and the solidarity of peoples become a vital and inevitable necessity. That is why the détente and rapprochement in Europe can have meaning only if they are not limited to a geographical zone and their effects can be extended to the rest of the world. Indeed, it happens, as though by a curious chance, that it is in the other parts of the world that one finds poverty and the sources of tension.

33. It will therefore be understood that détente can have no meaning for the oppressed peoples expelled from their homes, denied their legitimate aspirations to freedom, dignity and progress.

34. In the Middle East, Israel pursues its policy of aggression, following an unchanging scheme of colonization by force. The countries bordering on occupied Palestine have seen their territories reduced. Even their names have been changed. True violent change has been brought about—not by a normal and authentic development but by the application of a continued policy of expansion, occupation and resettlement.

35. The Palestinian people, whose lives and existence have through the centuries been intermingled with the geography and land of Palestine itself, have been expelled from their homeland, dispossessed of their goods, reduced to wandering and living on international charity. Such is the crisis in the Middle East which Israel, assured of impunity and the support of imperialism, launches as an arrogant challenge to the international community and to the United Nations itself.

36. In Southern Africa, the peoples of South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde islands continue to bend under the weight of colonialism, which becomes increasingly murderous and inhuman. The most recent massacres in Carletonville in South Africa and the criminal atrocities perpetrated in Mozambique by Portugal once again bring out the resurgence of this colonialism based on the oppression of the peoples of southern Africa by a minority of foreign

settlers. These peoples are exploited and deprived of their fundamental rights, which flouts the most elementary values of the human person. This unholy alliance between Lisbon, Pretoria and Salisbury continues to strengthen its system of domination. It is encouraged by monopolies and economic and financial foreign interests and by the multifaceted aid it is granted by certain countries within the Atlantic alliance.

37. The people of the Sahara under Spanish domination continue to be deprived of the right to self-determination. My country reaffirms its devotion to that principle in conformity with the decisions of Nouadhibou and Agadir,² and pertinent resolutions of the United Nations on this Territory. We should like to avail ourselves of this opportunity solemnly to call upon Spain without delay to apply to the people of the Sahara the principle to which Spain has in principle subscribed, as requested of it repeatedly by the United Nations. Any delay or hesitation could only worsen the situation in the Territory and compromise the many ancient and new ties of friendship and co-operation existing between Spain and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

38. The situation in Indo-China continues to be a subject of lively concern for my country. Despite the signing of the Paris agreements on Viet-Nam and the cessation of United States bombing in Cambodia and Laos, peace is far from established. And it cannot be established so long as foreign intervention is manifested in support of all kinds for the Lon Nol régime and so long as the Saigon administration and those who support it do not really commit themselves to respecting the Paris agreements.

39. In Korea, the division of the country constitutes a permanent threat to peace in that region and to security in the world. The United Nations flag continues to be used to camouflage the presence of foreign occupation troops in Korea. The Korean people cannot bring about its independence and peaceful reunification save through exercise of its right to self-determination in the absence of any foreign intervention.

40. The hotbeds of tension or selective confrontation I have just touched upon are not the only limitations to détente. There is another crucial problem of our times—that of the increasing gap between the developed countries of the north and the developing countries of the south. The international economic and monetary structures set up after the Second World War were conceived in terms of the interests of the developed countries alone.

41. If at the outset only the interests of the Western countries were involved, in our times we must recognize the fact that this system extends to the economic interests of the developed countries of the East. It is a system within the framework of which the dependence of the developing countries is an essential factor in the future growth of the wealthy advanced countries.

42. True, praiseworthy efforts and progress have been made by international institutions such as the United

² The communiqués issued at Nouadhibou and Agadir were subsequently published in *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 23*, chap. XIII, annex, appendix III, sects. A and D respectively.

Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the International Monetary Fund, but relations between the developed countries and the developing countries continue to be relations of dependence rather than interdependence. Bilateral or multilateral aid has not been sufficient to meet the needs of the developing countries and is far removed from the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade. With the price fluctuations in raw materials and the increase in the price of manufactured goods, the already scandalous gap widens steadily.

43. Such conditions testify to the lack of a real political will to take the measures necessary to bring about, in the interests of all Members, true international economic co-operation. The developed countries, in their long-term interest, are in duty bound to organize that co-operation on the basis of the equality of States and the participation of all in a task which is of necessity a common use. Otherwise, détente will remain limited in principle and in scope. It could even ultimately bring about the division of the world not into ideological and antagonistic blocs but rather into a group of developed countries, an international *gendarme* at a dual level—political and economic—and a majority of poor States, pawns of political confrontations and military hegemonies.

44. That is a real apprehension that emerged from the historic Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Algiers from 5 to 8 September 1973, in which 76 countries representing a very large majority of the world's population met together. That concern, which was clearly felt in Algiers, would be further justified if the developed countries, and in particular the great Powers, failed to convert this détente into a real and committed effort for peace and progress for the benefit of all mankind.

45. The United Nations offers an appropriate framework for such international co-operation. The rivalry between the great Powers can be manifested in this task, not by acrimonious discourse, but by a sincere search for solutions of the many problems of mankind, particularly by the improvement of the fate of man and the application of his rights. It is at this price that our Organization, an instrument of peace and understanding among peoples, can see restored to it its role as a factor for political, economic and social progress. The United Nations indeed could not be satisfied to be only what the Member nations wish it to be, for among those countries the great Powers enjoy prerogatives so formidable that they could not be justified if they did not imply at the same time duties and respect vis-à-vis Member States and the resolutions of the Organization. It is in vain that we decry the inefficiency of the United Nations if those that bear the collective responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security are the first to flout its relevant resolutions.

46. We would express the sincere hope to see every Member State work for respect for the principles enshrined in the Charter and the application of the decisions taken by our Organization. Thus, for the greater good of mankind, we would see reborn the somewhat diminished confidence of peoples in this world Organization.

47. Mr. SHARP (Canada): Mr. President, I begin by expressing Canada's congratulations to you on your election to the presidency. As a representative of Ecuador you have played an active role in the affairs of Latin America and in many areas of world co-operation. We welcome your election and wish you well in carrying out the high duties of leadership of the twenty-eighth session.

48. By the admission of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, the United Nations has taken another big step towards universality. Canada applauds the breadth of mind—the evolution from stalemate in Europe—that has made these States welcome within our Organization.

49. Canada also warmly welcomes the admission of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas as a full Member. As a country that has long enjoyed close links with the Bahamas, we are confident that the influence of our newest Member will be directed to the highest interests of the United Nations.

50. The United Nations is becoming universal—is it becoming more effective as an instrument for the attainment of the hopes and aspirations of mankind?

51. Since last we met here one of the architects of this Organization, the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, died in Canada. In those bright, hopeful days when he and others were engaged in preparing for the birth of the United Nations, Mr. Pearson expressed his fear that when the unifying pressures of world war have subsided, "nationalist pride and prejudice would become strong again—and the narrow concept of the national interest prevail". This judgement on the future was all too quickly proven accurate. Yet as conscious of its imperfections as any man, Mr. Pearson remained convinced that the United Nations was indispensable for even the most slow and painful march away from mass violence and poverty.

52. It is true that in certain key areas of world security, the United Nations appears to have been bypassed. Improved relations between the great Powers have been achieved essentially through bilateral efforts. Significant steps have been taken towards greater European stability with the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and talks of mutual balanced force reductions. The agreement reached bilaterally between India and Pakistan, restoring the conditions of peace and future co-operation in the subcontinent, has been warmly welcomed by the world community.

53. All of us are, in some degree, affected by these deliberations and decisions, and we recognize that it is the nature of our world's society that all of us do not have the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making as we would wish through this world forum. As the Secretary-General has said in the excellent introduction to his annual report:

"It is necessary to emphasize that there is no inevitable clash between bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. They are, or should be, mutually supporting, each having particular advantages in particular situations. There is no single road to peace—we have to try all roads." [A/9001/Add.1, p. 2.]

But we should never fail to assert the interest and the primacy of this Organization where it has an indispensable role to play.

54. Such was Canada's view at the International Conference on Viet-Nam held early this year in Paris. At that Conference I attempted to have the United Nations and the United Nations Secretary-General firmly integrated into the peace observation machinery which was being established at that Conference. These efforts failed.

55. After five months of efforts to play the role of an impartial international observer, we withdrew from the International Commission of Control and Supervision in Viet-Nam, frustrated, but by no means embittered.

56. Canada remains prepared to play its part in peace-keeping and peace observation. But we have learned a lesson from our long and frustrating attempts to have these peace-keeping bodies operate objectively. The lesson is this: peace-keeping and peace observation operations stand the best chance of success if they are conducted under the authority of the United Nations Security Council.

57. We have long assumed that progress in technology, agriculture and communications would mean progress for the underprivileged—a ladder on which people could climb away from hunger, disease and degradation. Yet tragically the word "progress" has come to mock us. The gap between rich and poor is wider than ever. Material achievements are threatened by spiralling world inflation, increasing pollution, unforeseen commodity shortages and by the capricious movements of world finance.

58. For ill as well as for good, we are increasingly interdependent however jealously we guard our independence. No nation can solve inflation in isolation from the others. No nation can assure the cleanness of air or the purity of water that flow freely across political boundaries. Faced individually by each sovereign State, the challenges are insurmountable. For they are universal problems and they can only be met effectively by universal solutions. The United Nations and its agencies are the only bodies with the authority and with the breadth of representation to meet these challenges.

59. Even collectively these challenges are intimidating. Our experience with the problem of international security—not least, the problem of the Middle East—has taught us that they will not be overcome by conferences alone, by resolutions or by formal votes. They require a profound and clear-headed appreciation of the dimensions of the problems matched by a common will to work co-operatively towards solutions.

60. In the opinion of the Canadian Government, we must try to avoid barren and abrasive confrontations, which are frequently the result of formal voting processes. Consensus is another and often surer route; it is the technique we are using increasingly at our Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings. The results are not dramatic, but they are none the less real. Consensus does not mean the imposition of the will of the majority on a reluctant minority which feels its vital interests are at issue; it means the shared recognition of what should and can be done. I believe we

attach far too much importance to the voting scores. Votes are little solace to the hungry.

61. There have been three successive years of drought in parts of Africa and the Asian subcontinent and of abnormally poor growing seasons in many other parts of the world. Until now only a few food-producing nations, including Canada, held surplus food stocks, and even these existing stocks fluctuated according to weather conditions and international demand. Over the years, efforts to create food banks have proved largely unsuccessful.

62. Now a constructive proposal to ensure world food security has been introduced by the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO].³ Its rate of success will be directly proportional to the effort made by each nation to adjust accordingly its food production and stocking policies. I urge every nation—not just those which are the traditional producers of surplus food—to support and co-operate with the FAO in this task. I am sure we have all noted with great interest the proposal made yesterday by the Secretary of State of the United States to convene a world food conference in 1974 [2174th meeting]. We in Canada look forward to discussing this proposal in detail, as it must be our aim to exorcize the dreadful spectre of starvation that menaces millions of human beings.

63. Canada has supported the revitalization which, over the past few years, has been transforming the Economic and Social Council. A very important change for Canada and for Canada's relations with Europe was our election by the Council to full membership on the Economic Commission for Europe. One of the Council's prime responsibilities is the successful implementation of the action programme adopted by this Assembly for the Second United Nations Development Decade—the International Development Strategy [resolution 2626 (XXV)]. That Strategy is neither perfect nor immutable. Our appraisal of it has already proven to be a difficult process. It is not, however, an impossible process, and it is one that I hope will become easier as we all become more attuned to its requirements.

64. We stand in the shadow of other terrifying and universal problems, which can be overcome only by international co-operation. Last Year I spoke out strongly about terrorism⁴ and I must do so again. Civilization cries out for effective action by the international community to protect innocent persons against premeditated acts of violence.

65. Since last year international efforts to combat terrorism have gathered some momentum through various international organizations and instrumentalities. Over 86 States have, for example, signed the 1970 Hague Convention on aerial hijacking.⁵ It is encouraging to note the growing list of ratifications of this Convention to combat acts of unlawful interference with civil aviation by States from all the geographical regions and of all political views.

³ See FAO document C 73/17.

⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2044th meeting, paras. 36-38.

⁵ Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, signed at The Hague on 16 December 1970.

However, terrorism has not been eliminated; it remains a double-edged sword. In its indiscriminate sweep it cuts at the roots of international order, as well as at the hand that wields it. We shall look to all nations and to the General Assembly for action on further measures to combat acts of terrorism.

66. And terror has another face: it is that of nuclear poison and the ultimate threat of nuclear holocaust. Although 10 years have elapsed since the partial test-ban Treaty⁶ came into force, there has been no further progress towards achieving the cessation of all nuclear tests—which was the ultimate objective of the signatories of that Treaty. Despite improving prospects for international security resulting from strategic arms limitation agreements, there has, regrettably, been no sign that either of the super-Powers is prepared to curtail underground nuclear testing or to enter into active negotiations towards the achievement of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Nor have two great Powers brought to an end nuclear testing in the atmosphere, despite the overwhelming weight of world public opinion.

67. The global dimension is clear and striking in the use we make of the oceans. Coastal States must protect their economic and environmental interests. On the other hand, there must be certain traditional freedoms on the oceans to facilitate world-wide exchanges. We continue to believe that these elements of the law of the sea are not irreconcilable and that a proper balance can and must be achieved. Canada believes that these rights, which are essential to the well-being of developing and developed coastal States alike, can be exercised in a manner that will take into account the rights of other legitimate users of the sea—in other words, mankind as a whole. A new international order recognizing both the fundamental rights and the responsibilities of States in respect of the oceans can emerge, and we hope will emerge, from the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, if the Governments here assembled have the will.

68. Similarly, outer space offers exciting prospects of benefit in meeting terrestrial needs in resource management, communications and education. These prospects can be realized for all our peoples only by searching for new and imaginative forms of international co-operation; and I believe that through the United Nations we are well embarked on this search.

69. Last year the General Assembly accepted the Canadian offer to be host to a conference on the urgent and vital question of human settlements [resolution 3003 (XXVII)]: the United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements is now scheduled for Vancouver in 1976. We were delighted that the General Assembly responded so warmly to this offer and we are encouraged by the co-operation and enthusiasm which have been displayed during the initial planning stages for the conference.

70. This year we celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

⁶ Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963.

Yet in parts of southern Africa minority régimes still deny man's basic rights through stubborn opposition to his efforts to achieve equality. Canada recognizes the legitimacy of the struggle to win full human rights and self-determination in southern Africa and is studying ways to broaden its humanitarian support for those engaged in these efforts. The most effective way to mark this twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration will be for each nation to redouble its concern to extend human rights to all its people. But concern must be expressed through achievement.

71. Mankind's occupation of this planet has been neither wise or far-sighted. Because of our greed, our indifference and our ignorance, we are speeding on a fatal collision course with our environment. The exploitation of our natural resources has been incessant, uncaring and exhaustive. Our air and our waters are becoming foul and poisonous. We seem to be incapable of feeding and clothing adequately our growing millions. So far, we have been unable to live peacefully together or to share our bounty so that all may live a life of dignity.

72. Although there is no doubt that in some circumstances the agencies of the United Nations can and do move swiftly, on the whole no one can accuse this Organization of approaching its problems with unseemly haste. Too many items have taken up permanent annual residence on the agenda. Still, some progress is being made. The increasing universality of the United Nations, as I remarked at the beginning of this statement, is an outstanding example.

73. But it seems to me that there is lacking a sense of urgency—a collective sense of urgency about the towering problems confronting mankind and this Organization. In our race with poverty and starvation, terrorism and armaments, pollution and bigotry, we are too apt to forget that time is not on our side.

74. Mr. GROMYKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translation from Russian*): Mr. President, on behalf of the Soviet delegation I should like to congratulate you on your election to the post of President of the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. In discharging your duties, you may be assured of our firm intention to help make this session a successful one. The Soviet Union seeks to ensure that every session of the General Assembly yields practical results in strengthening peace and the security of peoples.

75. The past year has been crowded with major international events. Some of them, even if viewed separately, represent historic milestones. However, what chiefly characterizes this entire set of events is the development and strengthening of the shift from an extended period of tension in the world to détente and business-like co-operation. From this standpoint, the past year can in a sense be described as having marked a turning-point.

76. The war in Viet-Nam was brought to an end. The flames of one of the most dangerous breeding grounds of war were stamped out. The just cause of the Viet-Nameese people gained a major victory.

77. In southern Asia, steps are being taken to bring about a further easing of the tension which several times in the

past has led to open hostilities. It is gratifying that all three of the States on the subcontinent—India, Pakistan and Bangladesh—are involved in this process.

78. The positive changes in the situation in Europe are even more clearly apparent. The task of normalizing relations between the States of Eastern and Western Europe is virtually complete, and we hope that no one will create artificial obstacles to the completion of this process. The convening of the all-European conference⁷ marked the opening of a new and extremely important stage in the work of guaranteeing security and organizing peaceful co-operation on a continent-wide scale.

79. The danger of a global clash between the two world-wide social systems which would inevitably result in a terrible catastrophe for all mankind has been lessened. That is how the entire world views the Agreement between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the Prevention of Nuclear War,⁸ which was concluded during the visit to the United States by L. I. Brezhnev, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

80. Today, the principle of peaceful coexistence is not only recognized as the only possible basis for relations between the socialist and capitalist countries but is increasingly being given practical effect and embodied in treaties and agreements. The process of détente is a broad and deep one which is involving an increasing number of States and affecting more and more important areas of the relations between them.

81. This gives us reason to hope that, as Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev noted in a recent statement, "the present détente is not a temporary phenomenon but the beginning of a fundamental reorientation of international relations".

82. The changes for the better in international affairs arouse particular satisfaction in the Soviet Union. Not, of course, that other peoples are any less interested in peace than the Soviet Union. It is just that to us the increasing trend towards détente and co-operation is also confirmation of the correctness and consistency of the foreign policy pursued by the Soviet Union.

83. Peace and friendship between peoples have always been the watchword of Soviet foreign policy and its unchanging goal. That goal was defined by V. I. Lenin, the founder of the Soviet Socialist State and head of its first Government. It has been and continues to be the basis of the foreign policy guidelines laid down at all Congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Our country has taken this position under all circumstances, regardless of the configuration of the international situation. It must be clear by now to any unprejudiced person that this is the long-range, permanent policy of the Soviet Union and is not merely a response to immediate circumstances. It is determined by the very nature of our social system.

84. The shift in the course of international events in the last few years indicates clearly that ensuring a lasting peace

⁷ Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

⁸ Signed in Washington on 22 June 1973.

on earth is not simply a noble but remote ideal; it is, rather a completely attainable goal of practical politics.

85. Another fact is no less obvious. The positive results that have been achieved up to now did not come about of themselves.

86. A great deal of intensive effort has gone into the various international measures which led to détente. Sometimes the result is a treaty of agreement drawn up on a page or two of official stationery, but how much labour has gone into every article and paragraph! These agreements are generally preceded by an intensive process of feeling out, by discussions and intensive negotiations. A State visit or international conference lasting no more than a few days crowns the labour of many years.

87. Obviously, there is no Government that will not say it wants peace, lasting peace, indeed eternal peace. If such pronouncements are not to remain an idle dream, however, they must be backed up by unremitting efforts that go on day after day.

88. The Soviet Union exhorts its allies as well to follow this course. Indeed, we go beyond exhortations; acting in close co-ordination and in the light of international developments, we take concrete initiatives. At the recent Crimean meeting of leaders of the Communist and workers parties of the socialist countries, it was emphasized that all the States concerned must now join efforts in consolidating the favourable changes that have come about in international affairs, must consistently give practical effect to the treaties and agreements that have been concluded and must advance steadily towards the main objective, which is that of ensuring a lasting peace.

89. It is a secret to no one that détente has its enemies whose resistance must not be underestimated. There is also a certain inertia to be overcome. After all, what we are trying to do is to solve problems that have built up over a period of years or even decades.

90. However, the supporters of détente are more numerous, and what matters is that their efforts should increase and not slacken.

91. In a number of capitalist countries, a trend towards broader co-operation with socialist States has emerged and is becoming increasingly apparent. Far-sighted political figures in those countries, taking a realistic, responsible view of the world situation, show a willingness to join efforts in working out solutions which give equal weight to the interests of all concerned. It goes without saying that this benefits not only the States directly concerned but the entire cause of peace.

92. Détente gives the non-aligned and neutral States a greater opportunity to exert a positive influence on international developments. A good many useful ventures, including some within the framework of the United Nations, got their start because of the political influence which these countries exercise. The results of the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries at Algiers showed once again that when the Conference participants speak out in favour of détente

and co-operation and against the forces of aggression and oppression of peoples, their voice is convincing and authoritative.

93. By its very nature, détente cannot simply be a matter of improving relations between a few States or certain geographical regions. If it is to become irreversible, it must be a matter of concern to all States and ultimately become universal.

94. The United Nations has 135 Member States, all of which, when they joined the Organization, assumed an obligation under the Charter to maintain international peace and security. If that entire potential for peace was translated into action, it would indeed give powerful impetus to the advance towards a reliable system of security for all peoples.

95. One sometimes hears it said that now that the Soviet Union and the United States are improving their relations and concluding important agreements which help to lessen international tension, there is nothing left for other States to do but to stand by passively. Some go further than that and try to foster the false notion that all of this damages the interests of other countries.

96. Apart from the fact that such assertions, whether intentionally or unintentionally, distort the actual state of affairs, their practical effect can only be to paralyse initiative and hamper détente.

97. Is it possible to conceive of a broader sphere in which energies can be brought to bear than that of peace? Peace offers vast scope for all countries. Every State, large or small, bears responsibility for maintaining security throughout the world. The whole question is where its policy leads to—whether it helps détente or hinders it.

98. It is important to mark out the political paths to further détente. However, it is no less important that meaningful activities should be undertaken. These efforts cannot remain shut up in government offices. They must be supported by broad, tireless work on behalf of peace by the most varied social forces. Parliamentarians and businessmen, political parties and trade-union, youth, women's and veterans' groups, scientists and artists—all can play a part if there is a determination to work for peace. Millions upon millions of people must be drawn into the movement for a lasting peace.

99. Yes, the situation in the world has definitely improved in the past year. It is incomparably better than 5 or 10 years ago. But does that mean that all is bright on the international horizon? No, not by any means.

100. In several parts of the world, the danger of war still exists. In some the guns are already speaking, while in others the finger is poised on the trigger.

101. The situation in Indo-China is still a complicated one. Military operations are now of a relatively limited nature, but tensions cannot be completely cleared away in that area unless the political settlement is fully implemented in keeping with the legitimate rights and interests of all the peoples of Indo-China.

102. The key to this lies in strict compliance by all parties with the Paris agreements on ending the war and restoring peace in Viet-Nam, in respect for the agreements reached in Laos, and in permitting the people of Cambodia to settle their internal affairs as they see fit and without foreign interference.

103. True to its internationalist convictions, the Soviet Union will continue to give the necessary aid and support to the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and to stand beside the patriotic forces in Indo-China.

104. Again and again we find ourselves returning to the situation in the Middle East, which, it must be stated bluntly, presents a danger because of the continuing Israeli aggression. Surely we cannot take comfort in the fact that right now the breeding ground of war is not aflame but merely smouldering. The flames of war may shoot up at any moment, and who can say what the result will be?

105. The aggressor seized foreign lands before the eyes of the entire world and is holding on to them by force. In doing so, he is flagrantly violating the rules of international law. One need only recall the latest acts of provocation against neighbouring Arab countries, which were just recently the object of renewed condemnation by the Security Council. Furthermore, all this is not simply a gesture of recklessness or desperation by a handful of people, but the calculated policy of the State of Israel.

106. No Arab can be made to believe that he must reconcile himself to the existing situation. The Arab States, which have been the victims of imperialist aggression, want only one thing—the restoration of what was taken from them by force—and they are right.

107. The Soviet Union remains convinced that the Middle East problem can be solved. The basis for a solution exists in the form of the well-known Security Council resolutions, which—as was confirmed once again by the recent discussion of the Middle East question in the United Nations—are supported by an overwhelming majority of States Members of our Organization. The aggressor is becoming increasingly defiant in his refusal to agree to a settlement.

108. Every effort must be made to see that Israel and the countries and circles that support its present policy understand at long last the need for a more sober approach and that they truly set out on the path leading to a solution of the problem.

109. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, its position is clear: the situation in the Middle East must be resolved on the basis of the complete—I repeat, complete—withdrawal of Israeli troops from occupied Arab territories and of respect for the independence and inalienable rights of the States and peoples of the area, including the Arab people of Palestine. Our main, decisive interest in the Middle East is to promote the achievement of a just and lasting peace. The Soviet Union wishes to state this once again from this rostrum in the most categorical terms.

110. In order to obtain a proper perspective in a situation characterized by the extreme complexity of the interplay of various factors, one must appraise events in all their

fullness and constant flux. That is particularly true at the present stage of the situation, which is dynamic and full of contrasts.

111. If one views unsolved problems without reference to the positive results that have already been achieved, it is easy to take an extreme position and deny the very possibility of resolving acute, controversial issues. In our opinion, however, there is no place for this approach to international phenomena, including the activities of the United Nations.

112. Equally unproductive is the other extreme—that of presenting the situation in rosy hues and failing to see that what remains to be done is far more than what has already been accomplished.

113. Both extremes are bad. All States, all Governments and all political figures must, if they are conscious of their responsibility, regard it as their first duty in the international arena to work actively for peace.

114. A whole series of problems are clamouring for solution. It cannot be said that the United Nations is not dealing with them. It may well be asked, however, how many of them are really being solved, and the answer is not a comforting one. It must be acknowledged that some problems become harder rather than easier to solve as time goes by, but they may become even more difficult if they are put off further.

115. The problem of problems is that of the continuing arms race. The development of techniques of mass destruction and the stockpiling of weapons have long since gone beyond the point where using them becomes an absurdity, for, as V. I. Lenin foresaw half a century ago, this process is “undermining the very conditions for the existence of human society”. It must be obvious to all how ruinous it is to go on replenishing the arsenals. Yet, only in recent years has it become possible to take the first—I repeat, the first—step towards limiting the arms race.

116. It would be wrong to underestimate the importance of the measures that have already been taken. These measures serve to impede to some extent the unrestrained proliferation of armaments, particularly the most destructive types.

117. Ten years have passed since the signing of the Moscow Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water,⁹ which was the first in a series of agreements. The fact that some countries have not acceded to the Treaty does not nullify the indisputable fact that it is beneficial to the peoples of the world.

118. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*] has gained wide recognition, and it has also been extremely helpful in curbing the nuclear arms race.

119. Success has been achieved in preventing the emplacement of nuclear weapons in several important natural

⁹ See United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 480, No. 6964, p. 43

environments, namely, the sea-bed and ocean floor and outer space. Bacteriological weapons, which are among the most deadly, have been banned and eliminated.

120. Just recently, an important frontier was crossed when, as a result of agreements reached between the Soviet Union and the United States, mutual limitations were imposed on strategic arms and principles were formulated for negotiations on further such limitations. In conjunction with the historic conclusion of the Agreement between the Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the Prevention of Nuclear War, these accords contribute significantly to an improvement in the international atmosphere.

121. However, further efforts are needed, and they cannot, of course, be confined to two nuclear Powers, even though those two may be militarily the mightiest in the world. We could, in particular, find it gratifying if other States were willing to adhere to the principles jointly laid down by the Soviet Union and the United States for renunciation of the use of force and decisive action to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war; that would be of exceptional importance in ensuring lasting peace throughout the world.

122. Huge sums continue to be spent for military purposes, and military planning goes on.

123. Since the United Nations first began to function, the Soviet Union has consistently sought to turn events in the direction of disarmament. We have always urged that it is of the utmost importance to ban nuclear weapons and ensure that nuclear energy is used exclusively for peaceful purposes. I might recall that back in 1946, the first year of our Organization's existence, the Soviet Union placed on the negotiating table a draft international convention to prohibit the production and employment of weapons based on the use of atomic energy for the purpose of mass destruction;¹⁰ it did so in the belief that the aspirations and the conscience of nations called for such a convention.

124. How much discussion there has been since that time, and how many resolutions have been adopted by the Security Council, the General Assembly and various committees and commissions! If this were not such a serious matter, one could speak sarcastically about the mountains of paper that have been used up in the process. The essential point, however, is that there has been little change in the situation.

125. It would not occur to anyone to deny that the solution of the problems of disarmament involves great difficulties. And yet the international questions which have been successfully resolved up to now also appeared forbidding at the outset. Consequently, references to objective difficulties do not reveal the main point. The crux of the matter lies in political considerations. And responsibility for political considerations rests primarily with the people who are invested with power, those who stand at the helm of government.

126. There is hardly any point in digging about in the past, in analysing all the proposals which have been made or

in dwelling on the positions of individual States. All that is quite well known. The walls of the United Nations have heard many speeches on the subject of disarmament.

127. Today, however, we all have more experience in settling international problems than we had yesterday. And it suggests to us that even in the field of disarmament real progress can be achieved in some areas. All that is needed is to follow in practice a truth which in theory is certainly recognized by all: not to proclaim "all or nothing", but to single out one after another those problems on which agreement can be reached even at the present stage, and then solve them. Experience has shown that this approach can prove its worth even in such matters as vital to the security of the State as that ultimate weapon, the nuclear missile. Is that not demonstrated by the Soviet-American agreements dealing with that matter?

128. Neither can there be any doubt about another matter. Those agreements would not have been possible if they had put either side at a disadvantage, if the principle of equal security had not been scrupulously observed.

129. But if, on such a basis, two countries have been able to achieve a limitation of arms, then why cannot, say, five Powers act similarly, provided, of course, that there will be no threat to the security of any of them? And if that can be done, what is there to prevent such a method from being applied to a wider range of countries? The greater the number of States that participate in a practical solution of the disarmament problem, the more tangible will be the benefit for the security of all peoples.

130. Furthermore, we believe that the successes achieved on the path towards détente already make it possible for considerable additional resources to be made available to assist the developing countries.

131. In view of all these considerations, the Soviet Union wishes to propose that the question of the reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries should be included in the agenda of the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations as an important and urgent item.

132. If our proposal meets with general agreement, and if the General Assembly adopts an appropriate resolution, a beneficial and useful step can be taken.

133. The States which are permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations are known to have the largest military budgets. This is taken into account in our proposal.

134. In our view it would be appropriate to take as the starting-point for the proposed reduction the level of military budgets for the current year, 1973. That proportion of the funds made available by such a reduction which would be used to benefit the developing countries could, for example, amount to 10 per cent.

135. Needless to say, such a step would require the participation of all the permanent members of the Security

¹⁰ See *Official Records of the Atomic Energy Commission, First Year, No. 2*, 2nd meeting, pp. 26-28.

Council without exception. It would also be desirable for other economically and militarily powerful States to reduce their military budgets.

136. We suggest that the funds made available for economic assistance to the developing countries should, first of all, be granted to those countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America which have experienced great difficulties this year because of grave natural disasters such as drought and floods.

137. The distribution of these funds should be carried out on an equitable basis. The amounts to be granted to individual countries, and the time-limits within which they are to be provided, could be determined by an international committee appointed on an *ad hoc* basis from among representatives of the developing countries, the States which are permanent members of the Security Council and other countries which reduce their military budgets.

138. It is obvious that the reductions in military expenditure would also benefit the States carrying out such reductions. They would be able to channel considerable funds towards the non-military needs of their own people and an improved standard of living.

139. The United Nations has laid the groundwork for fruitful activities on behalf of peace in a number of important fields.

140. Specifically, at last year's session, the General Assembly voted by a large majority in favour of the settlement of two major problems: the non-use of force in international relations and permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons [*resolution 2936 (XXVII)*], and the question of a World Disarmament Conference [*resolution 2930 (XXVII)*].

141. But has this clearly expressed will of the peoples of the world, this opinion of the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations been taken into account by all States? Unfortunately, that cannot be said to be true. It is a known fact that the Governments of some States have taken a position which prevents those decisions from being put into effect.

142. The Soviet Union believes that the earliest possible implementation of the solemn declaration of the General Assembly, speaking on behalf of the members of the United Nations, concerning their renunciation of the use of force in international relations and the permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, would be an effective means of ensuring that one of the principles of the United Nations Charter was laid down as a law of international life. To that end, a forceful decision in the matter must be taken by the Security Council.

143. For its part, the Soviet Union is ready to negotiate and to formalize reciprocal undertakings with all—and I stress, all—the nuclear powers on the non-use of force, including, at the same time, prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

144. The time has come to undertake practical preparations for the convening of a World Disarmament Con-

ference. Arrangements must finally be made so that the Special Committee provided for in the General Assembly resolution relating to preparations for that Conference can carry out the functions entrusted to it. There is no need to prove how desirable it is for all the nuclear Powers to take part in the Committee's work.

145. There are some who contend that the World Disarmament Conference could not be productive because of the large number of participants. But who ever said that complex problems must necessarily be settled by two or three States, or that a large-scale international conference will not reach agreement?

146. We harbour no illusions that the World Disarmament Conference will do away with all problems at one stroke. Let it go on for several months, or even several years. How can there be any objection to that if the Conference makes a contribution to the practical solution of urgent disarmament problems?

147. It is also argued that the Conference might hamper the efforts at solutions involving a smaller number of States. We feel that such fears are unfounded. Multilateral efforts can only help bilateral ones, and *vice versa*.

148. Although *détente* and the development of peaceful co-operation are measured, not in decades, but merely in years, into this short period of time there have been compressed events which are significantly changing the face of the world.

149. Memories are still fresh of a time when relations between the Soviet Union and the major capitalist countries were marked by tension and, in the case of some of them, by outright hostility. The fact that those times are now behind us is not welcomed by all. But all who are concerned for peace welcome the fact that those relations are now on a new track.

150. The Soviet Union and France have been dealing with each other in a consistent and serious manner for a number of years. Both countries have acquired useful experience and are using the favourable trends of *détente* to develop both their bilateral ties and political co-operation in international matters, and especially European matters. The Soviet Union values that important achievement.

151. The radical changes achieved by the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic of Germany in their relations demonstrate that the two States are guided not by considerations of expediency, but by the long-term interests of their peoples and the interests of peace in Europe. A spirit of realism has also prevailed in the approach of the Federal Republic of Germany to questions which had long divided it and the Polish People's Republic and the German Democratic Republic. Many obstacles to the establishment of normal relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the other socialist countries of Europe have been removed, although in the Federal Republic of Germany itself, from all indications, such a policy is not to everyone's liking. The influence of forces clinging to old, outworn policies can still be felt there even today.

152. A few days ago the General Assembly congratulated the representatives of the German Democratic Republic and

the Federal Republic of Germany, two independent sovereign States, on their countries' admission to membership in the United Nations. This is one of the most important indications of the changes which are taking place in the world. We warmly welcome the presence in this hall of the delegation of the fraternal German Democratic Republic, and we are also gratified to see here the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany.

153. It is not difficult to gauge the significance of the historic fact that the General Assembly of the United Nations, pursuant to Security Council recommendations, enthusiastically adopted the decision to admit these two States to membership in the United Nations. That fact shows merely that such a decision was long overdue. It is in keeping not only with the interests of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, but also the interests of all States throughout the world.

154. In a mere 18 months or two years an enormous distance has been covered in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America. As a result of Soviet-American talks at the highest level—during the visit of President R. Nixon to Moscow in May of last year and the visit of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, to the United States this year—a firm basis has been laid for the development of relations between the two countries in a way which is fully in keeping with the principle of peaceful coexistence and which opens up vast possibilities. A number of agreements in various fields have been concluded. All these agreements have been made public; they speak for themselves. And they have not remained mere pieces of paper; much work has been done to give them concrete expression.

155. It is of fundamental importance that the improvement in Soviet-American relations is being achieved on the basis of mutual recognition of the opposition between the two States' social systems and ideologies, and on the understanding that the rapprochement between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America is directed against no one and threatens no one's interests.

156. The Soviet Union is convinced that if both sides unswervingly carry out all the obligations they have assumed, including the strict observance of a cardinal principle in international relations, that of non-interference in each other's internal affairs—a principle on which our whole approach is based—then Soviet-American relations will be a permanent favourable factor promoting international peace—a point which is of historic significance.

157. Relations between the Soviet Union and Japan are not at a standstill. The Soviet Union intends to continue to work to ensure that these relations become relations of genuine good-neighbourliness and co-operation. That is quite feasible if both countries constantly bear in mind the fundamental long-term interests of peace and security in the Far East.

158. The Soviet Union is ready to expand its relations of mutually advantageous co-operation with all countries of

Europe and the other continents which so desire, whether in the search for solutions to current international political problems, wide-ranging economic agreements, joint efforts to use the benefits of scientific and technological progress or the exchange of spiritual values.

159. On the first day of the present session of the General Assembly the second phase of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe began. This is a great and unprecedented endeavour. For the first time all European States, together with the United States and Canada have sat down at the same table in order jointly to determine measures that would help to assure the peoples of Europe a peaceful future for as long as can be foreseen.

160. The Soviet Union views the prospects for the work of the Conference with considerable optimism. Its participants have already to a certain extent found a common language; there are, at least, no differences between them in agreeing that the Conference faces tasks of great importance which will require business-like and constructive consideration. If such an approach prevails to the end, the participants in the Conference will be able to place their contribution to the strengthening of general peace in the scales of history with a sense of satisfaction. That will benefit not only States directly concerned with European affairs, but all peoples of the world.

161. There is a possibility of achieving a good and, in terms of its potential consequences, even a historic success as a result of the Conference. All that is necessary for this is for all participants to display a responsible and serious approach to the problems before them. Nobody should yield to the temptation to teach others how to manage their internal affairs. It must be admitted that some would like to try to impose their own internal practices on others. No, internal practices, internal laws, represent the line before the threshold of every State at which all others must stop.

162. Were we to embark on a course of imposing our own practices on other countries, whether in the field of economic life or ideology, it is probable that those who are trying to persuade us to adopt the laws, morals and customs of others would disagree. And that is understandable and justified. If States and their representatives to the United Nations tried to act in that way, none of us here would advance one step in important matters and people would, not without justification, draw an analogy between the activity of the United Nations and the Biblical legend of the Tower of Babel, where those involved ceased to understand one another and failed to complete what they had intended to build.

163. Meanwhile, some in the West are not averse to launching noisy propaganda campaigns and even to resorting to the methods of blackmail in order to cover up their own attempts to interfere in the affairs of other countries. Matters have gone so far that they are attempting to arrogate to themselves the right to dictate right and left by whom and how the question of emigration from this or that country should be handled, how many emigrants there should be and when and just where they should go. In doing so, they do not hesitate to praise to the skies those who represent no one but who, whether deliberately or

inadvertently, are merely an unwitting weapon in the hands of the forces opposed to the relaxation of tension in the world.

164. The Soviet Union decisively rejects such an approach and condemns it. We will not allow anyone to interfere in our internal affairs.

165. The question that inevitably comes to mind is this: do the organizers of these campaigns seriously think that only the Soviet Union, only the socialist countries are interested in international détente and in the development of trade, scientific and technical and other forms of co-operation and that others are merely doing them a great favour by agreeing to hold talks on these matters?

166. Anyone who is interested in the slightest degree in seeing an improvement in the international situation is well aware that this is not the case, that this is a reciprocal process governed by the mutual interests of the parties concerned and, above all, by the interests of the people.

167. The main thing now is not to let the basic, truly important problems facing States be overshadowed by a poisonous atmosphere deliberately created over trumped-up questions.

168. The Soviet Union considers it desirable to supplement political détente in Europe by military détente. This cause may be served by yet another major undertaking by a number of States: the talks opening on 20 October 1973 on the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in central Europe.

169. As a result of the positive changes in the international situation, it is also becoming possible to view the situation in Asia in a new light.

170. In Asian affairs, as in international affairs in general, the policy of the Soviet Union is a policy directed towards peace, security and co-operation. The Soviet Union extends its hand to any State which shares these goals. A shining example of this is the uninterrupted development of relations between the USSR and India, a great, peace-loving Asian Power. It is further demonstrated by the history of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and many other Asian countries. Our fundamental belief is that there are no problems in relations between the Soviet Union and the States of Asia which could not be solved at the negotiating table.

171. The Soviet Union is the initiator of the concept of collective security in Asia. This idea is constantly gaining strength; scepticism is being dispelled and the unfounded suspicions are disappearing.

172. In a recent speech in Alma Ata, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, L. I. Brezhnev, said that we support collective security in Asia because "we are seeking to eliminate war, armed conflicts and imperialist aggression on the continent of Asia; we want the conditions for unhampered development and national revival to be guaranteed every country and people; we want a spirit of trust and

mutual understanding to prevail in relations between the countries of Asia".

173. The Soviet Union is in favour of equitable participation in the system of collective security by all Asian countries, without any exception. Any intention of directing collective security in Asia against any State is totally alien to us, despite allegations to the contrary.

174. The positive changes which have recently become apparent on the Asian continent also include the emergence of new, constructive factors in the situation on the Korean peninsula and this is, first and foremost, to the credit of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That being so, it would be all the more inadmissible for new, artificial obstacles to the peaceful and democratic unification of Korea to be added to the old forms of outside interference in the internal affairs of the Korean people.

175. There is, of course, no need to recall in detail in this Assembly the consistent support which the Soviet Union has given and continues to give to the developing States of Asia, Africa and Latin America. On more than one occasion the United Nations has been the arena for fierce political battles with colonialism of every kind, and the Soviet Union has always resolutely defended oppressed peoples and given all possible support to their struggle for national liberation.

176. We are well aware that this is a difficult and grim struggle, and some very recent events remind us yet again that it may take tragic turns.

177. In Chile, as we know, the lawful Government has been overthrown. The elected President, Salvador Allende, his country's most outstanding patriot, has been killed. The forces of reaction have struck a blow at the Chilean people's desire for true independence and freedom.

178. There was serious provocation of another Latin American State, Cuba, whose embassy and one of whose ships were fired upon. Surely the heads of the military junta realize that such acts can only be described as international brigandage and acts of aggression?

179. An anti-Soviet campaign has been stirred up in the country; there are instances of arbitrary and violent action against Soviet institutions and citizens who were sent to give friendly assistance to the Chilean people at the request of the lawful Government of the country.

180. What can one say about this? There can be no doubt that history will bring to account those who attempt to prevent the peoples from breathing the air of genuine independence or to drown in blood their right to national freedom.

181. For its part, the Soviet Government could not remain indifferent to the intolerable situation that was developing and took the decision to break off diplomatic relations with Chile, or, more precisely, with the régime of the military junta.

182. There is no doubt that the just cause of the Chilean people will triumph in the end, despite the current tragedy.

183. States which have embarked on the course of political independence have always found and will continue to find in the Soviet Union a friend ready to aid them in consolidating their economic self-sufficiency, to share its knowledge and experience and to assist them in their moments of difficulty. Expansion of co-operation with developing countries is an integral part of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

184. It is our conviction that the relaxation of international tension is conducive to a situation where young States can, in peace, devote all their efforts and resources to economic and social progress, to raising the living standards of their people, and to shaping their own future without fear of outside interference.

185. The healthier the over-all world atmosphere becomes, the more anachronistic are the remaining vestiges of colonialism and the reserves of *apartheid* and racial discrimination, the stronger is the condemnation they merit and the more vigorous must be the struggle to bring about their complete elimination. It is the clear duty of the United Nations to contribute to the speediest possible elimination of these shameful survivals of colonialism wherever they still exist, be it in Angola or Mozambique, Bissau or Southern Rhodesia, South or South-West Africa.

186. It is our aim that the voice of the fighters should be clearly heard here, within the walls of the United Nations, that the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples adopted by the fifteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly [*resolution 1514 (XV)*] should be fully implemented and that the racists and colonialists should be finally deprived of the opportunity to receive support from outside, in particular from certain Member countries of the United Nations, something which is still a feature of current international life.

187. Those who struggle against colonialism and racism for their national liberation and for their inalienable human rights and dignity enjoy the unwavering support of the Soviet Union. Let there be no doubt that the Soviet Union will continue to do its utmost to ensure that this struggle ends in a decisive victory.

188. In the struggle for peace, the Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist community are one with the developing States and we value this highly. With some of these countries we have well established relations; with others, relations are only now beginning to develop. But apart from this, the platform of the struggle for further détente offers ever-greater opportunities for co-operation. We believe that the fullest possible advantage should be taken of them.

189. Throughout its history, the United Nations has operated in varying political weather, and so far the fine days have been far fewer than the bad ones. What has enabled it not merely to survive but also to do many useful things? The fact that it was founded for the purpose of maintaining international peace. And this task remains permanently relevant. From another point of view, the United Nations Charter contains adequate provisions for the fulfilment of the Organization's lofty mission. The

United Nations has demonstrated its strength in those cases where the purposes and principles of its Charter have been strictly observed, and its weakness when departures from the Charter have been permitted. What matters is that this world Organization should remain in the mainstream of international politics, contributing to the solution of crucial problems.

190. This does not in any way imply that the Soviet Union is inclined to neglect even one aspect of the diversified activities of the United Nations, whether of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian nature. It actively assists in putting into practice everything of value—I repeat, everything of value—that the collective wisdom and experience of States can produce.

191. Indeed, a few days ago, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR ratified two important international legal instruments pertaining to respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms and the protection of human dignity and the interests of society as a whole. These documents were carefully and thoroughly elaborated in United Nations bodies and were subsequently approved by the General Assembly. I am referring to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [*resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex*] and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [*ibid.*]. These two Covenants do not merely contain wishes or recommendations of a declaratory nature, but provide for quite specific obligations on the part of States parties to them. We appeal to countries which have not yet signed or ratified these Covenants to follow our example and to take steps to ensure that they come into force as soon as possible.

192. The peoples of the world expect from the United Nations measures which will contribute to a further improvement in the international situation. With favourable changes taking place in the world, opportunities are increasing for the United Nations to make its own, major contribution to the consolidation of détente and to making it stable and irreversible.

193. For its part, the Soviet Union is sparing no effort for the triumph of the cause of peace on earth. This is the essence of its peace-loving policy and its peace programme, launched by the Twenty-fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Every State, every statesman can be confident that he will continue to find in the Soviet Union a faithful partner at all times and in all cases where action is taken to prevent the danger of war and contribute to peace.

194. Mr. ANNINO CAVALIERATO (Greece) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, on behalf of the Greek delegation and on my own behalf I should like to tell you how much satisfaction we feel in knowing that the General Assembly is meeting this year under your guidance. Your election is a well-deserved tribute to your high moral and intellectual qualities; it is also an affirmation of the positive role your country, with which Greece maintains friendly and cordial relations, is playing in international affairs. Your distinguished career in the United Nations, marked by a strong sense of deep devotion to peace and

international co-operation, assures us that your mandate will be exercised in the best possible way.

Mr. de Piniés (Spain), Vice-President, took the Chair.

195. At the same time, I should like to express our deep gratitude to the outgoing President, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, Mr. Trepczyński, for the able and effective way in which he discharged his heavy duties during a session that was difficult and fraught with complicated problems.

196. Lastly, I should like to welcome the admission of three new Members to our Organization: the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. On behalf of my Government I should like to convey to them our warmest congratulations. We hope that they will be able to contribute to the strengthening of our Organization in the interests of world peace and peaceful co-operation among peoples.

197. Before proceeding to express very quickly my Government's views on certain items of the agenda I should like to pay a tribute to the persistent efforts of our Secretary-General for the maintenance of peace and the attainment of the ideals of our Charter. The year that has passed since the last session of the General Assembly has been marked by a relaxation of international tensions and the creation of a climate favourable to the search for peace throughout the world.

198. Greece, a country devoted to peace and firmly devoted to the principles of the Charter, has made it its duty to make a sincere and constructive contribution, either on a bilateral or on a multilateral basis, to any initiatives designed to safeguard peace and strengthen international security.

199. In particular, I should like to refer to the policy inaugurated by my Government a few years ago towards the countries of the region in which Greece is situated. Despite differences in political and social system, and without prejudice to our respective international commitments, and of course with the co-operation of the other countries of our region, we have been able to inaugurate a new period of co-operation in all fields to the mutual benefit of all. What we desire above all is not only development of bilateral relations on a broader and more fruitful basis but also transportation of those relations to a multilateral plane. If I have ventured to refer briefly to these developments in south-eastern Europe, it is because we are convinced that they are in complete harmony with the purposes pursued by our Organization and certainly contribute to their attainment. In this context I should also like to recall that it was Romania, a country of our region, which, with the vigorous support of other countries including Greece, in the General Assembly last year mentioned the need to strengthen the role of the United Nations in matters affecting the safeguarding of world peace, the development of co-operation among all countries and the strengthening of the rules of international law.¹¹

¹¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Annexes*, agenda item 24, document A/8792.

200. Turning now to certain items of our agenda, I should like first of all to deal with the question of disarmament under strict and effective international control. We are comforted by the fact that a new period of détente and international co-operation is looming on the horizon. This development could only lead to a process of various types of negotiations on the limitation of armaments. I would first refer to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the United States and the Soviet Union, which have already had a concrete impact upon the limitation of defensive strategic weapons. We all hope that the second phase of those negotiations covering the possibility of limiting offensive strategic weapons, a phase under way at the present time, can achieve the same success. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament continues its work in Geneva along positive lines, though perhaps not at the desirable pace. Next month in Vienna we shall be resuming negotiations between the countries members of the NATO alliance and the countries signatories of the Warsaw Treaty on possible reductions in the forces of the two alliances on a mutual and balanced basis. Finally, the European countries, as well as the United States and Canada, are hoping that the second phase of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which has just begun its work in Geneva, will succeed in endorsing military measures which will serve to strengthen confidence between East and West.

201. With respect to the other items on the agenda of that Conference—that is, security, economic and trade relations and the freest possible circulation of information, ideas and persons—we shall participate actively in the second phase in order to try, in co-operation with the other participating countries, to find concrete solutions to all those problems at the root of the fundamental issue, which, in our position, is as follows: Will we merely experience a period of détente of a more or less verbal nature, or will we, rather, find the means of setting up real and sincere co-operation between peoples and States?

202. That line of thinking leads us to examine briefly the problem created by the fact that the world is divided into developed countries and developing countries. Some—and rightly so—have called this a problem of the north and south of our planet. First of all, we should consider how the vast resources, both material and intellectual, which are today used in pursuit of the arms race, can rather be devoted to economic and technological support for the developing countries. We firmly believe that all efforts to establish and strengthen a lasting peace cannot succeed if the major portion of the people of our earth continues to live in conditions bordering on famine, poverty and misery.

203. In respect of the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the peaceful settlement of international problems and the strengthening of peace, there is still a great deal that remains to be done, and I can only agree with the Secretary-General when, in the introduction to his report on the work of the United Nations, he says: "Some of the mechanism provided in the Charter for achieving these aims, however, has not proved workable . . ." [A/9001/Add.1, p. 1].

204. To that I should merely like to add that my Government considers it essential to fill in the lacuna consisting of the lack of practical machinery that would

enable our Organization to discharge its primary task—that is, to maintain and strengthen world peace. Thus the time has come to leave improvisations aside and to adopt a general agreement covering all aspects of peace-keeping operations. While not overlooking the socio-economic tasks of our Organization, we consider that primary attention, with everything that this involves in terms of material contributions, should be devoted to peace-keeping, particularly in those countries bearing a major responsibility for that task. Greece, desiring to see the goals of the Organization achieved, is contributing materially and morally to their success and is ready to do everything it can along those lines. In particular with respect to the United Nations Force in Cyprus, I should like most warmly to thank our Secretary-General for his interest and all those countries that have exerted so much effort to preserve peace on the island.

205. In respect of the problem of Cyprus, which continues to be a source of deep concern for my Government and the entire Greek people, I should like to add the following comments. We have repeatedly stated—and we firmly adhere to this viewpoint—that this question should be settled by establishments on that island of a truly independent, sovereign and unitary State. That is the position we adopted after several tragic phases of the question which affected the rights and aspirations of the Greek population of Cyprus. Moreover, we consider that that solution can be achieved only through the intercommunal talks under way at this very moment in Cyprus, in which the United Nations representative is participating and which are being followed by constitutional experts of Greece and of Turkey. That is our position of principle, and we lend our full and complete support so that the talks can achieve a successful result. For that matter, success can be achieved only if the participants show a spirit of realism and compromise.

206. The Greek delegation had occasion at previous sessions of the General Assembly to explain its position on the situation in the Middle East. Despite certain hopes expressed last year, we are compelled to observe, to our very deep regret, that no progress has been recorded in the restoration of peace in that part of the world. Indeed, Arab territories are still occupied, the path of negotiation continues to be blocked and the hour of peace apparently is no closer. This immobility, this state of stagnation in which the problem of the Middle East is bogged down, hardly serves to help heal the still open wounds; on the contrary, it opens the door to backsliding, which could have nefarious effects on peace and international security. As the Secretary-General has stated—and I endorse his statement—“Time is not on our side in this highly explosive situation” [*ibid.*, p. 3].

207. No one can therefore be complacent or accommodate himself to the present state of “no war, no peace”. We consider that it is incumbent upon our Organization, and more particularly upon those of its Members that are endowed with exceptional prerogatives by the Charter, to explore and encourage fresh diplomatic initiatives for the application of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which still provides the best basis for a just, viable and equitable settlement of the problem which concerns us. The passage of time is neither to the advantage

of the Arab countries nor to the benefit of Israel, but it is certainly detrimental to peace and international security.

208. On the question of bringing peace to Indo-China, I shall confine myself to expressing the fervent hope that the agreements and the communiqués ensuring peace will be scrupulously applied by all the parties in order to ensure that the so-sorely-tried peoples of that region of the world can live in peace and in respect for human dignity, and that the political will of those peoples will be freely expressed without any foreign intervention.

209. My delegation attaches particular importance to the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. However, I must emphasize that the interests involved are so broad and the difficulties to be overcome so vast that we must envisage the United Nations initiative in this area with very cautious optimism. Greece, which is almost entirely surrounded by the sea, is anxious to safeguard its sovereignty and its territorial integrity from any attacks and, in addition, to respect or, rather, to see respected—the traditional principle of the freedom of the sea. Although we would like to confirm our determination to contribute to the success of that Conference, for obvious reasons we could not depart from certain fundamental principles of international law. Those principles are as follows: First, no discrimination can be accepted between the mainland and the island part of the same national territory; secondly, no discrimination can be accepted between citizens of the same country; thirdly, we must have absolute respect for the fundamental principles which govern the deliberation of maritime frontiers.

210. Any infringements of these principles will certainly lead to complications, the consequences of which cannot be foreseen.

211. I turn now to a question which is dear to the hearts of all of us. Thanks to a long tradition and to the national character of the Greek people, that people has always rejected any form of discrimination, whether it be racial, religious or social, and it has rejected it morally, politically and culturally. It is therefore without any great effort and remaining completely faithful to our traditions that we unreservedly and without hesitation endorse all the efforts that our Organization is making to do away with the racism and intolerance which, unfortunately, exist in certain parts of the world. But just because of this point we have no reservations or prejudice whatsoever, we think that these principles of acceptance and mutual tolerance should be applied reciprocally and without discrimination. We certainly cannot accept the idea that racial discrimination should be condemned in one country and tacitly tolerated in another.

212. By the same token, I should like to refer to what may be considered as another form of racial discrimination, that is to say, the vestiges of colonialism. If the principles of our Charter are to be accepted by all—and they must be—then the principle of self-determination of peoples should be respected in the first instance.

213. The year that has elapsed since the last session of the General Assembly has seen a new and terrible wave of terrorism unleashed throughout the world, conducted on an

international scale, which constitutes a resounding provocation in the face of international morality. The impunity which most often accompanies those acts, which are as horrible as they are condemnable, should no longer be tolerated by the international community and especially by our Organization, the attitude of which so far has been passive, for such an attitude only serves to increase the number and scope of these base criminal acts. What we are called upon to do is to condemn unequivocally and without reservations acts of terrorism and those who perpetuate them, because any equivocation on this only leads to the impunity of the criminal and consequently to the encouragement of those acts.

214. I must add that no national cause, no matter how worthy of respect, can find justification in such acts, which serve only to arouse the indignation of world public opinion. My delegation hopes that this session of the General Assembly will not conclude its work without having obtained: first, the accession of all Member States to the Tokyo Convention of 1963,¹² The Hague Convention of 1970 and the Montreal Convention of 1971;¹³ secondly, the adoption of a new convention on such acts of

¹² Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, signed at Tokyo on 14 September 1963.

¹³ Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, signed at Montreal on 23 September 1971.

international terrorism, as the aforementioned conventions still have not dealt with, which would establish an international jurisdiction recognized by all Member States and which would provide in detail for the responsibility of those criminals.

215. In conclusion, I should like to add that, in a world which is in a continuous state of evolution and where gigantic transmutations of values are being manifested, the new generation, which is not bound to the past by any mental habits, will not be able to support us so long as we obstinately continue to feed on the past and to model ourselves on the past. The world today knows that it is our refusal to respect the commandments of our Charter—rather than the structural defects of the temple of peace erected on the ruins of the last World War—which discredits our profession of faith in the great ideals on which our Organization was founded.

216. Therefore, let us not expect public opinion to give weight to our proclamations, unless they reflect a change in spirit, a ripening of our common will to prove that the ideals that led us to create the United Nations are still very much alive.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.