

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH SESSION

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## 771st PLENARY MEETING

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## CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Agenda item 9:	
General debate (continued)	
Speech by Mr. P. B. Shah (Nepal) . . . . .	329
Speech by Mr. Mahgoub (Sudan) . . . . .	331
Speech by Mr. Padilla Nervo (Mexico) . . . . .	335

**President: Mr. Charles MALIK (Lebanon).**

## AGENDA ITEM 9

## General debate (continued)

1. Mr. P. B. SHAH (Nepal): It is my privilege to bring to you the greetings of my sovereign and the salutations of the people and Government of Nepal, and their best wishes for the success of the work of this thirteenth session of the General Assembly.

2. Permit me, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your election to the high office of the Presidency of the current session of this Assembly. I have no doubt that your intrinsic merit, combined with your experience in international conferences, amply qualifies you for the high post you now hold. We hope that you will successfully guide the proceedings of this Assembly, which is at the moment seized with vital problems that seem to affect the very peace of the world itself.

3. I do not think it will be out of place here to outline briefly the main features of the foreign policy of His Majesty's Government in Nepal. His Majesty's Government believes in a policy of friendship with all, irrespective of the political and social systems which prevail in the different countries of the world. We believe that it is entirely for the people of the countries themselves to choose the kind of government under which they want to live. Small though our country is, we have been intensely proud of our national sovereignty. In our own history, we have always prized freedom more than anything else, and that is precisely why we have the same respect and consideration for the freedom of others.

4. We have good will towards all; we bear ill will towards none. We believe in a policy of non-alignment with any one of the existing international power blocs because we pursue an independent foreign policy. We do not wish to be committed beforehand to the support of one bloc or the other. We believe in assessing every international issue on its merits, without consideration of anybody's fear or favour. That is the only way, we feel, in which we can retain our independence of judgement on any international issue until the very end. That also explains why we ourselves are not in favour of military pacts and alliances as a rule. We sincerely believe that, as a small country, we can contribute most to the deliberations in the United Nations by retaining our objectivity and independence in

this regard. If all the small nations conscientiously adhere to this kind of policy, they can exercise a moderating and highly constructive influence on the work of the United Nations, and sometimes even on the attitudes of the great Powers.

5. Though we do not suffer from past resentments against Western imperialism in the same way as many other countries in our part of the world do, yet we feel strongly that it is wrong and immoral for any country to dominate the affairs of another country. With the passage of time, the forms of imperialism are also becoming more and more subtle. To us, however, imperialism implies every attempt on the part of the bigger countries to influence the affairs of the smaller countries by taking advantage of the weakness of the latter in any manner or under any pretext whatsoever. That is why we have always expressed ourselves firmly against imperialism of every kind or colour, be it over seas or over land.

6. We have instinctive sympathy with the movement for political and national renaissance everywhere in Asia and Africa. We feel that nationalism, though it might have outlived its utility in some of the more advanced countries of the world, is still a potent force in Asia, which, if canalized in constructive channels, might prove to be of immense good to the people in general. To those friends of ours in the West who have shown apprehensions about the excesses of Asian nationalism, all that we have to say is that even in their case—that is, in the case of Europe—history shows that the road to a wider measure of international co-operation has always lain through the healthy growth of nationalism. Therefore, we oppose every attempt to obstruct the free growth of nationalism in any part of the world. The United Nations Charter itself is based on the principle and concept of international co-operation in various spheres, including the economic. It has become a truism to say that prosperity, like peace, is becoming more and more indivisible in the world we live in. Recent events are making it more and more clear that the world can no longer survive half rich and half poor, nor can technical or industrial knowledge remain forever the monopoly of a particular group of countries. We feel very strongly that the more developed the pattern of economic and technical co-operation between the so-called advanced and under-developed countries, the greater the chances of the foundations of peace and prosperity being strengthened in the world. But in this age of democracy, even in the relations between nations, this pattern or relationship of economic co-operation has also to be evolved on the basis of mutual benefit and equality. We have always viewed and accepted in this light the technical assistance and aid which we have received from the United Nations and from other countries in the world, and we acknowledge our gratitude to the United Nations and to other countries which have come forward to help us on these terms.

7. We live in a world in which the only alternative to peaceful coexistence has been non-existence. Call it by any name you like: call it the practice of tolerance and living together in peace with one another as good neighbours, or call it peaceful coexistence, the peace and prosperity of the world will largely depend on how well the nations practice this principle in international conduct and life. There is nothing new about this principle itself. It is contained in the United Nations Charter, as we have seen, and long before that it inspired the Kellogg-Briand Pact. The Bandung Conference of 1955 reaffirmed it as an important principle of international conduct. His Majesty's Government in Nepal has always abided by the five principles of the Pancha Shila in dealing with other countries. The Pancha Shila—or the Five Principles—form the basis of our treaty with the People's Republic of China, and recently, the joint communiqué issued by His Majesty the King of Nepal and the Chairman of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mr. Voroshilov, emphasizing these Five Principles, expressed the conviction that "war should be renounced as an instrument of State policy," and reaffirmed the "desire for the universal peace and friendship which are so essential for the progress and prosperity of humanity".

8. After having outlined the main features of our foreign policy, I would now like to turn my attention to some of the immediate problems with which the United Nations is seized. Though the events in the Far East have been quite disturbing and tense, nevertheless I would take up the Middle East question first because it has already received some attention in this Assembly. As my delegation stated at the time of the third emergency special session [745th meeting], no lasting settlement in the Middle East can be arrived at unless and until the proposed solution takes full cognizance of the following facts: first, the potentiality of Arab nationalism; second, the economic inter-relationship between the Arab East and Western Europe; and third, the interests of two of the great world Powers in the area from the point of view of the cold war strategy. Our delegation ventured to suggest at the emergency special session that the neutralization of the entire region, with the undertaking by the great Powers under the auspices of the United Nations not to interfere in any way with the natural course of developments in these countries, could eventually result in the solution to the Middle East question, a question which has baffled the United Nations over the past ten years. The report of the Secretary-General [A/3934/Rev.1], however, is commendable and suggests some practical measures which, if implemented, might bring about the temporary relaxation of the tensions in that region, which of late has become one of the most sensitive and explosive areas in the world.

9. The events in the Far East are no less disturbing and are full of portentous significance to world peace. Though it is to be remembered that the Bandung Conference in 1955 consistently counselled restraint and the use of peaceful means to the People's Republic of China in the matter of acquiring its legitimate control of the off-shore islands, it must also be said to the credit of the People's Republic of China that it has abided by this counsel over all these years. His Majesty's Government in Nepal has not, as a rule, approved of the use of force for gaining political ends,

yet it has always recognized the title of the legitimate government of China—that is, the Central Government of the People's Republic of China, in this case—to the control not only of the off-shore island, but also to that of Taiwan as a whole. All that we can say now is that we hope the United States, with its inheritance of world influence and prestige, will not fail to show the real sort of vision, imagination and wisdom which the situation seems to demand of it. All this might call for great efforts on the part of that country. Let us hope that it will show itself capable of these efforts, and will not fail to give further proof of its greatness.

10. Another problem which confronts this Assembly is that of disarmament. I need not recall before this distinguished audience the background and history of the disarmament talks in the United Nations. Everybody is agreed that disarmament is the most serious problem that confronts the international community, but the fact remains that no real progress has been made towards the real settlement of this problem. There was some hope for some measure of agreement on this question as long as the Disarmament Commission was functioning, but, as we all very well know, there has been a serious impasse, which has resulted not only in a complete deadlock over the negotiations but also in a breakdown of the very machinery for the conduct of the negotiations themselves.

11. It is indeed a sad state of affairs. The failure of the disarmament talks might eventually lead to the failure of the United Nations itself. We all know that the failure of the Disarmament Conference in 1930 eventually led to the collapse of the League of Nations and to the outbreak of the most disastrous war the world has so far seen. Let us hope that the agreement that has been reached between the scientists of the East and the West on the feasibility of setting up systems for the detection of atomic tests and the outcome of the conference between the representatives of the East and the West this month on a workable system for the prevention of surprise attacks might have an impact on the nations which will prove strong enough to compel them to resume disarmament negotiations in all seriousness.

12. We have always stood for the cessation of nuclear tests and have also welcomed the initiative shown in this matter by the great Powers from time to time. All that we can do as a small nation that has nothing to disarm is to hope and pray that wisdom will eventually dawn on the great Powers of the world in this vital matter of saving the world from complete extermination and annihilation. If only the great Powers that are engaged in the race for arms could spend on the development of under-developed countries a part of what they might eventually save by cutting down their expense on armaments, the entire outlook would change for everybody. This is the kind of positive disarmament for which we have always pleaded.

13. At the twelfth session, in our statement during the general debate [698th meeting], we endeavoured to show how a United Nations peace force could be a source of comfort and strength to the smaller countries of the world. Everybody knows that the kind of collective force of the United Nations which was envisaged by the founding fathers of the Charter could not come into being because of the differences between the two great Power blocs in the Military Staff Committee as early as 1947, and unfortunately, those differences have only been accentuated with the passage

of time and the prospects for this kind of force are as dismal as ever. But the events in the Middle East in the fall of 1956, and the still more recent events there, have called on the General Assembly to take upon itself the functions for which it was never intended. The result is that it has been necessary every time to organize a force or observation group on an ad hoc basis, more or less as an expediency. We strongly feel that the creation of a United Nations peace force, even though it may be just for non-combatant purposes, for the purpose of enforcing only negotiated peace may go a long way in equipping the United Nations better to meet similar contingencies in the future. If the discussion of the report of the Secretary-General on the subject<sup>1/</sup> results in the eventual creation of mobile equipment of this kind, to be placed at the disposal of the Secretary-General, it would be a step forward in this sphere.

14. We have always advocated that universality should be the goal of the United Nations. With this end in view, we have always welcomed the admission of new Members to the United Nations. We hope that in the near future quite a few nations from Africa will be able to take their rightful place in this council of nations. One thing that has always perplexed us and bewildered us is the question of the recognition of the People's Republic of China. We have always expressed the hope that the recognition of the People's Government of China will carry the United Nations a great step forward in the direction of universality. The exclusion of 600 million people of the world from the wholesome and efficacious influence of this great Organization does it no credit. From yet another point of view, the admission of this country to membership of the United Nations appears to be very, very essential. There are so many international problems—as, for example, the problem of the settlement of the Far East question, that of disarmament and the like—which, as has become clear over the years, cannot be solved without the willing consent and co-operation of the People's Republic of China. After all, the United Nations was never intended to be, and should not be, an exclusive club of like-minded countries. The more it reflects the realities of the world situation the greater the chances of its success in its high mission.

15. The eyes of the world are upon us. The people are waiting for the successful outcome of our deliberations here, especially in those vital matters that affect the peace of the world and the survival of humanity. The common man in the world has placed his confidence in the United Nations. People everywhere have pinned high hopes on this organization and its future. Let us not betray their hopes and confidence. In other words, let us not fail them.

16. Mr. MAHGOUB (Sudan): Mr. President, let me first congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the thirteenth session of the General Assembly. Your personal ability, your experience and other attributes have all merited your occupying this high office. The fact that I competed with you in the elections for this office did not by any means derogate from my personal respect for you and my high esteem of your country, Lebanon. Your election gave me as much happiness as if I were personally elected.

17. Allow me to express the gratitude of my Government and people and the members of my delegation

<sup>1/</sup> Subsequently distributed as document A/3943.

to the Member States who supported my candidature and to the Members who kindly paid tribute to me from this rostrum.

18. Once again the General Assembly is convened in annual regular session in order to review the world situation and to make, as far as humanly possible, suitable recommendations which it is hoped will reduce world tension and bring about just and equitable solutions to outstanding issues which threaten international peace and security. Whereas we believe that the international situation as a whole is still tense and charged with explosive possibilities, nevertheless we have reason to hope that wise counsels may in the end prevail, and that problems which seem to defy solution may ultimately be settled in conformity with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations Charter.

19. I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate that the Government and people of my country have always placed great hopes in the United Nations as a world Organization, chiefly charged with the maintenance of world peace and security. We must realize that the tragedies of wars that have befallen many generations before us may henceforth serve as a grim reminder so that we may double our efforts and show more determination in putting an end to war and all the tragic consequences which inevitably flow from it.

20. The Sudanese people are among the most peace-loving nations in the world. In our long history it cannot be recalled that we have aggressed against a neighbour or disturbed the peace of a friend. Ours has always been a mission of peace and good-neighbourly policy, and since our country has regained its independence we have conducted ourselves by word and by deed in a manner which justifies the confidence placed in us when, in November 1956, our country was unanimously admitted into this great family of nations. Like all countries, big and small, ours has a vested interest in world peace and stability. We believe that the most difficult and conflicting problems can be settled peacefully and without recourse to the use of force, if only we have patience to practise restraint, tolerance and goodwill. But tolerance and goodwill should not blind us but rather gird us to face squarely at least some, if not all, of the grave issues awaiting settlement. In this connexion, I would mention the Algerian war where a valiant and gallant people are fighting for their birthright: freedom and independence and a rightful place under the sun. I shall deal with this later in my statement at somewhat greater length.

21. Then there is also the fight that is being waged by millions of Africans to free themselves from foreign domination. We sincerely believe that conditions prerequisite to world peace and stability can hardly be achieved unless and until those millions on the African continent finally achieve freedom and independence. This I believe is the goal of the United Nations. This I believe is a goal of nations of goodwill all over the world.

22. The grave situation of the Arab refugees from Palestine is well known to all of us here, and we sincerely urge that the United Nations live up to its responsibilities and that a solution to this burning question be found without further delay.

23. It is also appropriate to mention here the tense situation prevailing in some parts of the South Arabian peninsula. We urge, most sincerely, that an end be

put to this tense situation and that conditions of peace and friendly relations be brought about without delay in accordance with the spirit and letter of the Charter.

24. There is also the question of West Irian. True, it does not figure among the items inscribed for discussion during the present session, but this should not give rise to false interpretations that such an omission has in any way diminished the pressing necessity for reaching prompt solution of this issue, the postponement of which entails grave consequences.

25. The question of Cyprus is once again on the agenda for this session. We have always stood for the principle of self-determination for all people whose destinies are still under foreign domination, and in this respect our attitude has not changed towards the Cyprus question and we stand for the self-determination of the Cypriot people.

26. My delegation views with deep concern the developments in the Far East, which endanger world peace. As a dispute between great Powers, these developments will no doubt threaten to engulf the whole world in a total war, the result of which would be disastrous to our civilization and to all human heritage. We appeal to the parties concerned to settle the dispute amicably and ease world tension.

27. Last, but not least, I should mention the question of disarmament. We realize that one of the most fundamental questions facing the United Nations and the world at large is the question of disarmament, both in conventional and nuclear weapons. We are glad that our efforts in this direction to arrive at a solution have been made in the last few months, though many people have been disappointed at the slow pace at which the discussions have progressed. Nevertheless, we believe that the question is both difficult and complicated. With patience and good will, we sincerely hope that humanity will be spared the most disastrous fate since the beginning of time, and this can only be assured when the question of disarmament is discussed sincerely. We believe that the United Nations still has a great role to play in bringing the parties concerned together and in paving the way for the final settlement which the whole world awaits with deep anxiety and hope.

28. The year 1958 has witnessed two great events which my country welcomed with gratification: the Conference of Independent African States, held at Accra, which gave expression to the personality of rising Africa, and the third emergency special session of the General Assembly in which Arab nationalism was fully recognized by all the States Members of the United Nations.

29. In the Conference of Independent African States, the African States were conscious of their responsibilities to humanity and especially to the peoples of Africa, and they were therefore able to assert their African personality. This African personality does not emerge out of selfishness or for ulterior motives, but is the result of our belief in peace and our unswerving loyalty to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The deliberations in the Accra Conference have assured us all of our solidarity and our unflinching efforts to see that the dependent peoples of Africa eventually emerge as independent States able to play their full role in international relations. Ours is a mission of

justice and observance of the dignity of the human race, and the African personality should be understood in this context. All independent African States were for some time under foreign domination, and no wonder that we are, all of us, conscious of our duty to guide the rest of Africa to freedom and independence. We are striving towards the same goal: a free Africa, a united Africa. We bear no grudge against our former rulers and we sincerely hope that they will understand our attitude when we stretch out our hands to help our brethren in Africa, who are still under foreign rule, to achieve independence.

30. As I said at the Accra Conference:

"We are neither troublemakers nor fomenters of dissension and discord. Our aim is to bring prosperity and happiness not only to our African brethren but to all mankind, for we do not live in isolation, and our struggle for the achievement of freedom and independence of Africa is directed towards the creation of a better world, and the maintenance of international peace and security."<sup>2/</sup>

31. The African personality is not directed against any one State or another, but is a consolidation of the African peoples' desire to see the light shine from dark Africa and to bring to the rest of the world a new code of morality, a spirit of co-operation and cordial friendship, and thereby ensure the prosperity of the human race and preserve peace and international security.

32. The Accra Conference, apart from its Declaration, adopted a number of resolutions, and I will refer here, with special emphasis, to the resolution on the Algerian question.<sup>3/</sup> The resolution was practical and in conformity with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. It recommended, *inter alia*, that the representatives of the independent African States at the United Nations be instructed by their various Governments to consult each other constantly and acquaint Members of the United Nations with the true state of affairs in Algeria and solicit their support for a just and peaceful settlement; to recommend to the independent African States measures which may from time to time become necessary; and in particular, to find ways and means whereby the independent African States may enlighten world opinion on the Algerian situation, including the appointment of a mission, as soon as possible, to tour the capitals of the world to enlist the support of Governments.

33. It gives my delegation great satisfaction that these recommendations have been carried out and that representatives of the independent African States have recently toured the Scandinavian countries and Latin America with a view to enlightening the Governments and peoples of those countries on the Algerian question and to explain to them the true state of affairs in that Arab-African country which is fighting desperately to regain independence. The Declaration of the Provisional Government of Algeria, which my Government hastened to recognize, is a step in the right direction to attaining complete independence. It

<sup>2/</sup> See Conference of Independent African States, Speeches delivered at the close of the Conference, 22nd April 1958 (Government Printer, Accra, Ghana, 1958), pp. 13 and 14.

<sup>3/</sup> See Conference of Independent African States, Declaration and Resolutions, 22nd April 1958 (Government Printer, Accra, Ghana, 1958), p. 6.

is our ardent hope that the Members of the United Nations at this session will, once and for all, accord the right of self-determination to the peoples of Algeria. My delegation regrets that the two previous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the Algerian question [resolutions 1012 (XI) and 1184 (XII)] were not needed by France. The United Nations can only be an instrument for the preservation of world peace and security if the Member States respect its recommendations and resolutions and act favourably on them.

34. Furthermore, the Accra Conference co-ordinated the foreign and economic policies of the different independent African States. The participating countries resolved to maintain unity of action in international affairs, which they established themselves in that historic Conference, and to safeguard their hard-earned sovereignty and integrity and to preserve among themselves the fundamental unity of outlook on foreign policy, thus enabling them to assert a distinctive African personality which will speak with a concerted voice in the cause of peace.

35. In the economic field we decided to co-ordinate our economies with a view to making them complementary to each other rather than competitive. We were alive to the European drive to set up a European Common Market which would, no doubt, cut down the prices of commodities produced by African countries and we were therefore prompted to study the possibility of establishing an African Common Market to safeguard our common interests and protect our economies.

36. One of the most important events of this year was the establishment of the Economic Commission for Africa. The United Nations has recognized the need for economic development of under-developed countries, living up to its responsibilities and obligations under Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter to foster the economic development of under-developed areas, and has at last realized the aspirations and dreams of many millions in Africa who have been waiting for a long time for the establishment of such a commission similar to the other economic commissions established for Europe, Latin America and for Asia and the Far East. We believe that the Economic Commission for Africa can be of great assistance in raising both the level of economic activity and the standard of life in that continent and that through it, close co-operation among the African countries in the economic and social field can be established.

37. We are certain that the work of the Commissions in the other areas has proved extremely useful to the organization and the development of the economies of those countries, especially the under-developed countries in Asia and Latin America. We have no doubt, on the basis of this knowledge, that the African continent will greatly benefit by the Economic Commission for Africa thanks to the efforts of the United Nations in the economic and social fields.

38. We in the Sudan are extremely pleased, not only because the Economic Commission for Africa has at last been established, but because its Executive Secretary has been chosen from among our most enlightened and intellectual men, Mr. Mekki Abbas, who in our country has shouldered great responsibilities in the economic and social field. We are indeed

delighted that Mr. Mekki Abbas has been chosen for this high office.

39. International relations can be a paradoxical as individual human relations. An international situation which appears at moments of despair to be gloomy and threatening to peace and international security—suddenly and in a miraculous way shows signs of hope and optimism. Two months ago we were facing in the Middle East a crisis which struck all peace-loving people with awe and disaster. My Government and people shared the bitter experience with our Arab brethren. We were disturbed but we did not despair. The third emergency special session witnessed one of the marvels that the United Nations could achieve. The representatives bent heart and soul on the problem with which the Assembly was seized and they expressed their fear and appealed to reason to help relieve the tension.

40. Arab nationalism was put to the test and it emerged successful and stronger than ever. The Arabs realized, for the first time, that the world gave cognizance to Arab nationalism, praised it and expected from it a renaissance of a glorious past. The Arab States which were the source of the trouble were able themselves to bring forth the resolution of 21 August 1958 [1237 (ES-III)] which provided the solution for the situation that had threatened the world with war. The resolution was unanimously adopted and the United Nations scored an unprecedented success. We Arabs have been fortunate enough to mend our differences and heal our wounds. We immediately embarked on a new phase of objective and productive Arab nationalism. We are now seeking ways and means to strengthen the League of Arab States, to increase its responsibilities and to enhance its powers and last but not least, to create from it machinery capable of handling the common interests of the Arabs and preserving their unity of purpose. We will meet in the near future in the League of Arab States not only to implement the letter and purport of the resolution but also to renovate the League of Arab States.

41. I am confident that all the Arab States who co-sponsored resolution 1237 (ES-III) will live up to their pledges. They will practise tolerance and live together with one another as good neighbours; they will strengthen the close relations and numerous ties which link the Arab States; they will act strictly in accordance with the principles of mutual respect for each other's territorial sovereignty, of non-aggression, of strict non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and of equal and mutual benefit, and to ensure that their conduct by word and deed conforms to these principles. They will observe the provision of article 8 of the Pact of the League of Arab States which provides that "each member State shall respect the systems of government established in the other member States and regard them as exclusive concerns of these States," and that "each shall pledge to abstain from any action calculated to change established systems of government."

42. My delegation notes with satisfaction paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's report [A/3934/Rev.1] which reads:

"I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express my appreciation for the way in which governments in the area engaged in a full and frank dis-

ussion of the difficult and delicate matters involved, thus strengthening the ties of co-operation between the United Nations and themselves. I believe that the consultations properly pursued will render this co-operation increasingly fruitful."

43. The resolution of the Arab States was described inside the United Nations Headquarters as a miracle and now the miracle has not been confined to words only—it has been duly translated into deeds.

44. In section II of the resolution of 21 August 1958, the General Assembly:

"Requests the Secretary-General to make forthwith, in consultation with the Governments concerned and in accordance with the Charter, and having in mind section I of this resolution, such practical arrangements as would adequately help in upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter in relation to Lebanon and Jordan in the present circumstances, and thereby facilitate the early withdrawal of the foreign troops from the two countries."

In compliance with this request, the Secretary-General visited Amman, Cairo, Baghdad and Beirut and rendered his report of 29 September 1958.

45. My delegation wishes, in the first place, to express our high estimation of the unflinching efforts of the Secretary-General to relieve the tension in the Middle East. His report deals in the first place with an interpretation of the resolution under review. My delegation does not wish to contend with the interpretation given by the Secretary-General to the resolution. The resolution no doubt is intended to establish good-neighbourly relations between all the countries in the area and to ensure that practical arrangements, which will not derogate from the sovereignty of any of the States involved, will be made and thereby facilitate the withdrawal of foreign troops from Lebanon and Jordan.

46. With respect to Jordan, the practical arrangements made by the Secretary-General are: first the posting of a United Nations representative in Jordan, properly staffed, to serve "as a special representative of the Secretary-General to assist in the implementation of the resolution, specifically with a view to help in upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter in relation to Jordan in the present circumstances", [A/3934/Rev.1, para. 29] and secondly, the special representative of the Secretary-General will have liaison offices in Beirut and Damascus which are needed in support of the establishment of a United Nations organ in Jordan. Both the Governments of Lebanon and the United Arab Republic agree to grant such facilities. The practical arrangements further provide that the Secretary-General, for the purpose of implementing the said resolution, will have a special representative in such direct contact of a diplomatic nature with the Government concerned as the Secretary-General may find called for in the light of the findings of the representative charged with the purview.

47. With regard to the practical arrangements in relation to Lebanon, the Secretary-General felt that the United Nations Observations Group in Lebanon set up under a resolution of the Security Council of 11 June 1958,<sup>4/</sup> while continuing to serve the general

purposes mentioned in the resolution, presents a practical arrangement of the resolution of 21 August 1958, and in the present circumstances with the further development of it envisaged, adequately helps in upholding the purposes of the Charter in relation to Lebanon. It is the candid opinion of my delegation that the proposed practical arrangements are adequate for the time being. My delegation hopes that such arrangements will be of a temporary nature.

48. There remains the vital question of the withdrawal of United States and British forces from Lebanon and Jordan, respectively. My delegation considers that such withdrawals are necessary for the stabilization of peace in the area and the relieving of tension. The United States Government and the Lebanese Government have indicated that the total withdrawal of the forces will begin in the near future and will be completed as expeditiously as possible—they hope by the end of October. This statement [A/3934, annex I, para. 2] would have been satisfactory had it not been for the proviso attached to it. They added the qualification that such withdrawal will take place provided the international security situation with respect to Lebanon continues to improve in the framework of successful implementation of section I of the resolution of 21 August 1958.

49. It is the respectful submission of my delegation that the implementation of section I of the resolution of 21 August 1958 is not the special concern of the Governments of the United States and Lebanon inasmuch as it is the concern of the General Assembly. The withdrawal should be completed without any conditions being attached. If any of the States fails to implement section I of the resolution of 21 August 1958, then the matter can be considered by the General Assembly or can be referred to the Security Council by the Secretary-General, as provided in Article 99 of the Charter, or by any one of the interested States.

50. With regard to the withdrawal of British troops from Jordan, a letter dated 1 October 1958 [A/3937], from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, addressed to the Secretary-General, was circulated. It was stated in that letter that Her Majesty's Government had agreed with the Jordanian Government that the withdrawal of British troops would begin on 20 October and that this withdrawal would be completed within a period not exceeding such time as might be required for the necessary arrangements for the movement of personnel, stores and equipment. It is the respectful submission of my delegation that the final date for withdrawal is not clear from this letter. A more explicit statement, explaining this declaration, is still required from the representative of the United Kingdom and also from the representative of the Government of Jordan. I am sure a reply will come forthwith, and I hope such a reply will give us the final assurance that the situation in the Middle East has been relieved and that the resolution of 21 August 1958 has been fully implemented. At that point, there will be no need for any of us here to ask that the Secretary-General's report be made an item on the agenda. On the contrary, we will all hail the Secretary-General for his unflinching efforts and for the way in which the resolution has been implemented to everybody's satisfaction. Of course, we will also hail the Governments con-

<sup>4/</sup> See Official Records of the Security Council, Thirteenth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1958, document S/4023.

cerned, because they will have made it possible for the Secretary-General and for all of us here to see that the resolution has been fully implemented.

51. It is not the intention of my delegation to make things difficult, but it is our concern to see that the resolution of 21 August 1958 is fully implemented, that peace and order are restored in the area, and that international relations are resumed in a cordial atmosphere.

52. I have already mentioned that we in the Sudan, Government and people alike, have placed our faith in the United Nations and have pledged our support to peace and international security, which can only be achieved by observing the canons of international law, the purposes and principles of the Charter and the decisions of the United Nations. My delegation believes that this is the case with all Member States, and especially the small States.

53. My delegation cannot therefore let pass without comment the caustic remarks made by one representative, attacking the United Nations and assailing the small nations to the extent of attempting to amend the Charter with a view to not giving the small States equal rights in the process of voting in the United Nations. It is the respectful submission of my delegation that international relations are fundamentally based on equality of status between States. The concept of equality of States is derived from that of State sovereignty. Every State, irrespective of origin, size, or form of government, is equally entitled to the rights accorded by international law. States are equally entitled to the enjoyment of the rights, prerogatives and privileges which their membership in this community of nations and the different international organizations confers upon them.

54. The Charter of the United Nations not only stresses the principle of equality of States but is in fact based on it. Article 2 of the Charter, which lays down the fundamental principles upon which the new international order is founded and in accordance with which the new world Organization and its Members shall act in pursuit of the purposes of the United Nations, devotes its first paragraph to the principle of sovereign equality. As rightly stated by Goodrich and Hambro's standard work on the Charter of the United Nations:

"This Article is of fundamental importance in the total economy of the Charter. It lays down certain fundamental principles which the Organization operating through its various organs must respect. These same principles are also binding upon Members."<sup>5/</sup>

55. In contrast to the Covenant of the League of Nations, where no prominence is given to the concept of State equality, the Charter of the United Nations makes it one of the chief pillars. Article 1 of the Charter sets out as one of the purposes of the United Nations: "to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples...". The preamble of the Charter begins with a pledge expressing the determination of the peoples of the United Nations to

reaffirm faith in the equal rights of nations, large and small.

56. It is noteworthy that all the preparatory work and the international conferences which preceded the San Francisco Conference underscored the concept of "equality of States". Thus, the expression "sovereign equality" appears in the four-Power Declaration of the Moscow Conference of 1943 and in the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals of October 1944. The drafters of the United Nations Charter therefore decided irrevocably to base the new Charter on international equality and to set up the new world Organization as a democratic association of sovereign and equal members. They decided to do away with pre-Charter institutions and the "concept of Europe system" under which a number of States shoulder the task of shaping the destiny of the world or decide the fate of small nations or peoples. Any attempt to change the fundamental principles of the Charter would only result in undermining the structure of this world Organization. Such an attempt would represent a retrogressive step in the struggle of mankind towards a universal and democratic community of nations.

57. It is a defiance of the United Nations Charter and a flagrant disrespect of this Organization by a Member State when its representative declares in unequivocal terms from this rostrum that his Government will disregard any resolution or decision that may be taken by this Assembly in one matter or another.

58. It is to be regretted that the Charter contains no provision governing the interpretation of this long-debated and invariably contested Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. If there should be any amendment of the Charter, that amendment should be a clarification of paragraph 7 of Article 2. It must be made clear that the drafters of the Charter did not intend to eliminate, by paragraph 7 of Article 2, the right of the United Nations to grant subject peoples the right to self-determination. If that was their intention, Chapter XI should not have formed part of the Charter. Again, it is our respectful submission that the drafters of the Charter did not intend to eliminate, by paragraph 7 of Article 2, the right of the United Nations to discuss matters relating to human rights and the fundamental beliefs of members of the human race in any given State. The United Nations General Assembly has, more than once, decided that it is within its power to discuss problems of segregation and race discrimination obtaining in one State or another.

59. My delegation expects every Member State to respect the principles of the United Nations, to uphold its purposes, to observe its decisions with diligence, and to implement its resolutions without delay. This will be the only safeguard against the disintegration of this new international community and the only way to secure for the human race prosperity, happiness, peace and security.

60. The last act in the drama of the struggle of mankind on this earth is in the process of being written. It is for us, the Member States assembled here, to make it unfold a glorious future for the generations to come, a future full of prosperity and happiness. Let us all go forward, united and unperturbed, in our mission to secure a permanent and lasting peace.

61. Mr. PADILLA NERVO (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, I should like to extend to you

<sup>5/</sup> Goodrich, Leland M., and Hambro, Edvard, Charter of the United Nations (Boston, World Peace Foundation, 1949), p. 98.

my heartiest congratulations on your election. By electing you, the Assembly has recognized your long and fruitful association with United Nations activities, your high qualifications, your experience and your ability. Your election is doubly satisfactory to me personally because of the circumstances of which you and the Assembly are aware relating to your candidacy last year. I should therefore like to extend to you my best wishes for success in your task.

62. Over the years every nation's voice has been heard from this great forum, every cultural value and all men's highest aspirations have been made known. For thirteen years, the United Nations General Assembly has been the scene of dreams and disappointments, of acts of good faith and expressions of intransigence, of magnificent human achievement and small but decisive steps towards peace and harmony.

63. What makes us persevere in our tasks of discussion and negotiation? What have we achieved and what are we striving for? Although we have accomplished much, through our perseverance, we are determined to do much more. Speaking once again from this rostrum, I feel that our hopes are nourished by our experience. This combination of the reality we have lived through and our ambitious goal form the basis for what might be called our conviction, reaffirmed year after year in our loyalty to principles which we consider fundamental, principles which have been the age-long guides of the Mexican people and—I might venture to add—of all men of good will throughout the world.

64. We reaffirm our conviction that mankind deserves a world based on peace, freedom and justice.

65. We reaffirm our conviction that respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of all States is essential to security.

66. We reaffirm our conviction that all international disputes can be settled by peaceful means and declare that the use of force is not only morally reprehensible but in practice ineffective as a means of solving the problems of coexistence of States.

67. We reaffirm our conviction that the right of peoples to the full enjoyment of civil and political liberties and the guarantee of a continuous improvement in the living standards of the great masses of the people are essential conditions of universal peace.

68. We reaffirm our conviction that every nation—the product of historical forces which it is not always easy to understand from the outside—is entirely free to choose the political and economic system which suits it best and to exercise full sovereignty in solving its internal problems. We therefore reaffirm the validity of the principle of non-intervention, which protects the right of self-determination.

69. We reaffirm our conviction that every country must decide for itself whether to maintain democratic institutions.

70. We reaffirm our conviction that prosperity, like peace, is indivisible. It is impossible to conceive of a harmonious world in which a few are wealthy and many hungry. If our real purpose is peace, let us recognize that the individual's interest and the general interest are now one and the same.

71. In the present dangerous international situation, the peoples of the world are watching the attitude of

the Great Powers with fear and misgiving. The path we are following, at their behest or against their will, is not one which leads to peace and there is a universal feeling that there is an urgent need to go in a different direction and adopt different methods.

72. We all recognize the existence of legitimate individual principles but we believe that the most complex problems can be solved without undermining such principles and without repeated accusations which world public opinion finds useless, monotonous and sterile. Attempting always to put the blame and all the responsibility on the opponent does nothing to help mankind. Similarly, there is no advantage to be gained from comparing each other's faults, errors and abuses. It is puerile to produce political statistics merely to show which State has most frequently acted in a manner contrary to the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. Two wrongs do not make a right, nor two untruths a truth.

73. We believe in positive statements, not negative ones, and we are sure that there is not a single country which is unworthy or committed to evil. However, a policy of recrimination tends to create the belief that there are such countries and to encourage in a people continually exposed to arbitrary denunciations a feeling of rancour and inflexibility. We therefore think that recriminations must be met with silence; a qualified silence, that is, an avoidance of denials, charges and accusations. No country is so free from blame that it can throw the first stone in the name of truth or set itself up as judge of the conduct of others.

74. The world is not divided into good peoples and bad peoples. It is divided only into a number of nations with different spiritual motivations, different historical backgrounds and differing philosophies. It is neither proper nor wise to think that a nation nurtured in the philosophy of Aristotle or Thomas Aquinas should react to political, economic and social events in exactly the same way as a nation whose philosophy stems from the individualism of Locke or from the oriental concept of becoming. For good or evil, the world is still made up of nations which differ spiritually. Instead of continuing to judge others from our own point of view, let us strive to understand them, and draw from the characteristics which astonish or trouble us because we do not understand them, the essence common to us all, which is part and parcel of our human heritage. Let us use our intelligence and discern the universal features of humanity in the national image of every people. We may thus sow the seeds of peace in the most fertile soil, in the hearts and minds of men.

75. Every day, political and military declarations place bars, obstacles and limitations in the way of Governments which are involved in an unending battle of words. The Powers risk their prestige in each new skirmish and their freedom of action is becoming increasingly restricted. This makes it impossible to appraise problems properly, and difficult to treat them realistically according to their true nature and real significance. Our means are unsuited to our ends and we are setting off on roads which lead us away from our goals.

76. It is urgently necessary to agree on a truce of silence which will permit a reappraisal of the international situation. A suspension of verbal outbursts, an armistice for reflection in which the din of mutual

recrimination would be lulled, an interlude of kindness in the exchange of threats. The science of politics is no longer in its infancy; it is time for it to produce results befitting its maturity.

77. I humbly and respectfully suggest an armistice of silence, a lull in the din, in which it will be possible to talk quietly and to good purpose. That would indeed be a true policy of silence—of eloquent silence—which we should agree to apply forthwith.

78. Mexico is convinced that the problem of peace depends fundamentally on what progress can be made towards disarmament. In accordance with this unshakable conviction, we have spared no effort at the various sessions of the General Assembly to help to bring the great Powers, and particularly the "nuclear Powers", closer together. Convinced that the only thing which can get us out of the impasse in which we have unfortunately been for some time, is not oratory but valid practical suggestions, however modest they may appear at first sight, we now wish to submit to this Assembly a few concrete ideas, the fruits of our reflections on some outstanding aspects of the disarmament question.

79. As we all know, the efforts which were being made within the framework of the United Nations during the period between sessions of the General Assembly were completely broken off, because the specific machinery provided for the purpose has not been used this year. It would therefore seem that one question to which we should give priority is the exploration of methods likely to lead to the resumption of the interrupted negotiations within the framework of the United Nations. This obviously cannot be achieved by majority votes but only with the agreement of the great Powers; my delegation feels, however, that the Assembly might make a useful contribution by recommending that the representatives of those Powers should meet to consider the specific point to which I have just referred. If this idea was received favourably by other delegations, my delegation would be willing to submit it to the appropriate body, namely the First Committee, in the form of a draft resolution in which that Committee would recommend that the representatives of France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics should jointly consider, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, how to resume the negotiations on disarmament.

80. I should also like to refer to two other suggestions which I made at the twelfth session from this very rostrum. The first is that the Assembly should consider the feasibility and advisability of appointing a statesman of high international prestige, on the unanimous recommendation of the Powers I have just mentioned, to act as a United Nations Commissioner or Mediator for disarmament. I do not consider it necessary to go into the details of this idea, as the Mexican delegation had an opportunity to explain it at length, both in the statement I made on 3 October 1957 in the general debate [699th meeting] and in the statements made by the Mexican representatives in the First Committee at its 884th and 891st meetings. Let me merely read the draft resolution which we were—and are still—prepared to submit to the Assembly if there is agreement on it among the great Powers, because, as we said before, we feel that the unanimous recommendation of those Powers is essential and indispensable for the success of our initiative. The draft resolution would be as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Convinced that an agreement on disarmament is necessary and possible,

"Considering that there is an urgent need to intensify efforts and to seek further means of reconciling the divergent points of view,

"Requests the Governments of France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States to consider, when they deem it appropriate, the possibility and advisability of unanimously nominating a statesman of high international prestige to be appointed by the General Assembly to assist them in their negotiations and, for that purpose, to consult with them, submit to them for their private consideration whatever proposals he considers advisable and, in general, to promote the conclusion of agreements between them;

"Requests the Secretary-General to provide the facilities required to give effect to the present resolution."

81. It may also be advisable to repeat that our suggestion is not dependent in any way on the composition and functions of the Disarmament Commission and that it has the advantage, in our view, that in the person of the Commissioner, the Assembly would not only be represented but could bring to the notice of the great Powers any views, suggestions or studies, which might, in the general interest, contribute greatly to a gradual solution of the problems of disarmament. Another advantage which will be obvious to anyone who is familiar with the real difficulties, often quite different from the apparent difficulties, which have been encountered in disarmament, is that the Commissioner could assist the representatives of the great Powers in their negotiations, maintaining constant contact with them and submitting privately for their consideration any proposals considered helpful in conciliating divergent views, and, in general, in smoothing the way towards agreement.

82. The second suggestion I would reiterate, since unfortunately it could not be carried out last year owing to the international situation and to the trend of our discussions on disarmament, was to consider the possibility of the Assembly urging the great Powers to redouble their efforts to achieve positive results as soon as possible in the disarmament negotiations, addressing an appeal to them similar to the resolution unanimously approved on the initiative of Mexico in 1948 [resolution 190 (III)], for the establishment of a lasting peace, and which might be phrased in the following terms:

"The General Assembly,

"Conscious of the fact that the armaments race today represents the greatest threat to peace and security,

"Convinced that disarmament, even on a partial scale, would alleviate international tension, thus freeing mankind from fear and anxiety, and would create a propitious climate for the solution of pending political problems.

"Considering that an agreement on disarmament would make it possible to use substantial resources to raise the standard of living of all peoples,

"Convinced that the adoption of concrete disarmament measures is both necessary and feasible,

"Addresses a solemn appeal to the Powers which, because of their war potential, have a more direct responsibility in this field, to renew their negotiations and to redouble their efforts towards the early conclusion of mutually satisfactory agreements covering the various problems connected with disarmament."

83. We share the view expressed by the Secretary-General in the introduction to his annual report [A/3844/Add.1] that the encouraging results obtained by the Conference of Experts to Study the Possibility of Detecting Violations of a Possible Agreement on the Suspension of Nuclear Tests, held in Geneva last summer, seemed to indicate a way of separating the political from the non-political elements so that a solution may be found at an early stage to the problems entailed in the former, which will undoubtedly increase the possibilities of arriving at a subsequent agreement on the latter. This is also evident from the interest in holding similar talks shortly concerning the security measures necessary to prevent surprise attacks. The same method might perhaps also be tried with regard to the other concrete measures specified in resolution 1148 (XII) which the General Assembly adopted at the twelfth session and which would seem likely to benefit by a similar approach by stages.

84. With regard to tests of nuclear weapons, I had occasion at the twelfth session [699th meeting] to recall the statement I made in 1957 in the International Law Commission, concerning the international responsibility of a State for the harmful results of such tests in that they are beyond human control. This does not refer, of course, to the magnitude of the explosions and the physical devastation they produce, but to the unpredictable effects of radiation on human and other living beings as well as on future generations. My delegation reiterated its concern about the situation in the following statement to the First Committee:

"We know that radioactive fall-out caused by these explosions produces harmful biological and genetic effects. We also know that the greatest danger stems, not from direct exposure to radioactivity caused by the tests, but from indirect absorption, by means of a chain in which the last link is food, of substances which might have harmful genetic effects."<sup>6/</sup>

85. In examining the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation [A/3838], which sets forth the results of three years of study and which is, as the Secretary-General points out in the introduction to his annual report, "the most comprehensive and authoritative single contribution to knowledge in this field that has been made up to the present" [A/3844/Add.1, p. 2], we have found our statements of last year confirmed. Thus, in its general conclusions, the Committee states that "even the smallest amounts of radiation are liable to cause deleterious genetic, and perhaps also somatic, effects" [A/3838, para. 55 (a)]. It also points out that:

"Radioactive contamination of the environment resulting from explosions of nuclear weapons constitutes a growing increment to world-wide radiation

levels. This involves new and largely unknown hazards to present and future populations; these hazards, by their very nature, are beyond the control of the exposed persons. The Committee concludes that all steps designed to minimize irradiation of human populations will act to the benefit of human health. Such steps include the avoidance of unnecessary exposure resulting from medical, industrial and other procedures for peaceful uses on the one hand and the cessation of contamination of the environment by explosions of nuclear weapons on the other." [Ibid., chap. VII, para. 54.]

86. The foregoing will fully explain why it is a matter of great satisfaction to us, as it is to the rest of mankind, that after the constructive Conference of Experts at Geneva the Powers producing nuclear weapons reached agreement on a date close at hand, 31 October, for the suspension of all nuclear tests and the opening of talks which we certainly hope, for the good of present and future generations, will lead to the final cessation of such tests.

87. As we have already said, the solution to the problem of disarmament will provide the key to lasting peace. It is obvious, however, that the arms race and the dire threat which it constitutes for mankind is not only the cause of a deterioration in the world situation but also largely the result of the constant frictions arising, particularly between the great Powers, out of regional conflicts which are aggravated by the rival interests of those Powers.

88. I therefore feel that while endeavouring to promote agreement on partial disarmament measures, we should constantly bear in mind at our annual sessions the need also to help to reduce international tension by adopting such other measures as seem appropriate to eliminate, or at least to reduce, the areas of conflict between the great Powers. I shall proceed briefly to discuss the three main areas in which this conflict is now apparent.

89. There is no denying that the conflict over the off-shore islands of China, the most important of which are Quemoy and Matsu, is the most vital issue at the present time. Up till now, the measures adopted and the stands taken outside the United Nations by some countries have not often been conducive to a favourable climate for negotiations. We nevertheless hope that the discussions now being held at Warsaw between the representatives of the United States and the People's Republic of China may result in a peaceful settlement of the dispute over the off-shore islands. If these hopes should be disappointed the Assembly could not, in our opinion, overlook this serious matter without failing in its responsibilities. In such an unfortunate event, we should therefore envisage, not an acrimonious debate serving only to reiterate mutual recriminations and rigid positions, which are only too well known, but a calm and objective approach towards a solution based on justice and law, but also taking into account the facts of the situation. One such solution, and perhaps not the least effective, might be to entrust the Secretary-General with a mission similar to the one he has just carried out in the Middle East with such success.

90. This should give a clear idea of our position on the question considered by the General Assembly at its third emergency special session. The Mexican Government, as shown by its delegation's active

<sup>6/</sup> This statement was made at the 884th meeting of the First Committee, the official record of which is published only in summary form.

participation in that session, has been and continues to be deeply concerned that a just, equitable and mutually satisfactory solution should be found as soon as possible to the problems which for many years have beset the countries of the Middle East and which have caused so much suffering to the peoples of that area. Our interest, which is in keeping with Mexico's consistent policy of favouring the peaceful settlement of controversies and in support of the right of peoples to self-determination, is also based on its unswerving adherence to the principle of non-intervention, which we consider of fundamental importance in international relations.

91. My delegation is therefore doubly pleased with the task accomplished by Mr. Hammarskjöld, as described in his report of 29 September 1958 [A/3934/Rev. 1], since it appears that, thanks to his efforts, the policy of good neighbourliness advocated by the Charter will be safeguarded in the area by means of a series of practical measures freely agreed upon by the Governments concerned and will, at the same time, result in the complete withdrawal of the foreign troops which are still in Lebanon and Jordan. However, for a complete and permanent return to normal in that area, upon the withdrawal of those troops, the Powers will have to show by their conduct, in accordance with the appeal made by the General Assembly at its third emergency special session, that they intend to act in strict conformity with the principle of non-intervention in their dealings with the Middle Eastern countries.

92. With regard to Europe, my delegation shares the view expressed by Eastern and Western statesmen, both in the United Nations and outside, that consideration should be given to the possibility of applying practical measures designed to reduce international tension. The suggestions made here since last year, and elaborated on in the present general debate by the Foreign Minister of Ireland [751st meeting], for securing what he called "a military and diplomatic drawingback in Middle Europe", as well as those put forward [697th meeting] by another of our distinguished colleagues, Mr. Rapacki, the Foreign Minister of Poland, within the framework of his plan, may perhaps serve as the basis for a detailed examination of the question. The possibilities of international friction will obviously diminish, as a result of the physical removal of the military forces of both sides, and the limitations that may be imposed on their supply of armaments.

93. Disarmament and the other problems I have briefly reviewed and which are only a few of those which have been dividing the great Powers and constituting a serious threat to world peace, have prompted the intermittent but persistent cry heard of late for what is generally known as a "summit meeting" at which the Heads of State of the great Powers would try to sink their differences and save not only future but also present generations from the scourge of war. We believe the time has come for the General Assembly to respond to this appeal and consider whether to recommend that the great Powers should resume their negotiations, which were interrupted by the Middle East crisis, with a view to reaching an agreement on the place, date and agenda for such a meeting at the highest level. It should not be forgotten that the Chiefs of State of every one of the Powers in question have recently spoken in favour of holding such a meeting, differing only on the conditions in which

it should take place. Moreover, if that conference were to be held on the recommendation of the Assembly and the participants were required to submit a report on its result, it would then remain within the framework of the United Nations.

94. There are three further items on our agenda on which I should also like to make some brief remarks, namely the question of territorial waters, the promotion of economic development and the right of self-determination.

95. With regard to the first, the Mexican Government has expressed regret that the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, held in Geneva last spring, was unable to reach agreement on the width of the territorial seas. The establishment of a reasonable limit, in accordance with the practices, claims and aspirations of the majority of countries, would undoubtedly have done much to facilitate friendly co-operation between nations. The Conference can, however, justly claim two constructive achievements in this special field. In the first place, it has proved that the old concept of the three-mile limit has been generally abandoned and rejected and its claim to be a rule of international law no longer obtains in legal circles; secondly, what may be called a customary rule of international law concerning the width of the territorial sea is provided, as I said in 1956 at the 362nd meeting of the International Law Commission, by a "rule of variable content" the maximum limit being twelve nautical miles, since that emerges from the legislation and practice of roughly two-thirds of the countries of the world. That was Mexico's argument at the Geneva Conference. It was embodied in a draft resolution<sup>7/</sup> sponsored by Mexico and India and was taken first of all from the texts voted upon in the First Committee of the Conference. It was reintroduced by our delegation in the plenary meeting<sup>8/</sup> in a draft resolution<sup>9/</sup> sponsored jointly by Mexico and seven States from three different continents and won majority approval, although it failed to obtain the two thirds majority required under the rules of procedure. It was the argument put into practice, after the close of the Conference, by two more States, while a number of other countries and political entities stated their firm intention to take similar action at an early date.

96. The objection frequently raised by some of the opponents of this rule to the effect that it would jeopardize freedom of navigation is without foundation and in open contradiction with reality. The right of innocent passage across the territorial sea is based on generally recognized and respected principles of international law, which have moreover been expressly reaffirmed in the Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone adopted by the Geneva Conference. Nor is it true that the rule might be prejudicial to the legitimate interests of air navigation. For the past twenty-three years the breadth of Mexico's territorial sea, for example, has been nine miles, under existing legislation, and I do not know

<sup>7/</sup> See Official Records of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, vol. II, Annexes, document A/CONF.13/C.1/L.79.

<sup>8/</sup> Ibid., vol. II, Plenary Meetings, 14th meeting.

<sup>9/</sup> Ibid., vol. III, First Committee, document A/CONF.13/L.34.

of a single case where this has harmed or impeded either maritime or air traffic.

97. The real reasons for the opposition to a twelve-mile limit which, if all the factors involved are examined objectively, seems eminently reasonable, are to be found elsewhere. They arise primarily from the selfish interests of States which have large fishing fleets accustomed to operating hundreds and even thousands of miles from their own shores, disregarding the rights of the riparian States. Naturally those interests come into conflict with the legitimate interests of States like Mexico, whose programme "A March to the Sea" — which merely indicates its decision to exploit the natural resources of the sea in the off-shore area for the nation's welfare—would have no meaning if we found the sea impoverished and emptied of its natural riches.

98. If we are to bring about international harmony as defined in the Charter, our conduct must be adapted to the Charter's principles. The problems of the régime of the sea provide an excellent opportunity for us to translate into deeds the principles of co-operation among nations and repudiation of force, in accordance with the spirit of the eloquent statements we are accustomed to hearing in his forum. For example, my delegation feels that there is no justification for the situation created by the United Kingdom's incursion into the territorial waters of Iceland, which the Icelandic Foreign Minister described here the other day [759th meeting] in a statement which was all the more forceful because it was so sober and thoughtful. We share the speaker's confidence that the United Kingdom statesmen will soon recognize that their position is untenable and can cause incalculable harm, even from a purely practical point of view. The head of the delegation of Canada, one of the principal members of the British Commonwealth, was not speaking in vain when he stated emphatically at the recent Geneva Conference:

"It might be said that it would not be legal for a State to take unilateral action substantially to enlarge the width of the sea under its control. But what sanctionative law would it be violating if we fail to agree on a law here? How could any nation fishing in remote waters prevent the application of the laws and regulations enacted by the riparian State, if we fail to reach agreement? Certainly, not by force. The day is past when any action of that kind could seriously be contemplated."

99. What I have said, and particularly what I stated regarding the argument upheld by Mexico in Geneva, explains to a great extent, I think, our position with regard to the agenda item dealing with the possible convening of a second United Nations conference on the law of the sea. Briefly, that position may be summarized as follows:

100. First, the Geneva Conference may rightly be counted as a success of the United Nations. It avoided the mistake of The Hague Codification Conference (1930) in that, while it did not succeed in concluding agreements on two basic problems — the breadth of the territorial sea and the width of the zone in which the riparian State has exclusive fishing rights — it did succeed in drafting four conventions of indisputable value.

101. Secondly, another United Nations conference on the law of the sea would have on its agenda only those problems which the first conference failed to settle. Consequently, the convening of such a conference will have to depend on whether there are any new developments showing a change in the divergent positions held at Geneva. So long as there are not, the holding of a second meeting, which would surely end in a discouraging failure, would only defeat the intended purpose.

102. Thirdly, in the opinion of the Mexican delegation, the only change which can reasonably be expected to occur, and which should occur as soon as possible in the interest of everybody, is the acceptance of a flexible rule with a maximum limit of twelve nautical miles, which is a reasonable limit in keeping with prevailing legislation, practice and the claims of about two-thirds of the States of the world.

103. Turning now to questions relating to promotion of the economic development of the under-developed countries, I should like to say that on the regional level—as shown by the recent Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the American Republics, held in Washington—as on the international level, the most urgent and overriding problem appears to us to be the stabilization of prices of primary commodities.

104. Unfortunately, we must recognize that what has been done thus far, whether under the inter-American system or within the United Nations, towards achieving a solution of this problem is very little compared with the magnitude of the task. As an example and in order to illustrate the serious effects this has on countries in the process of development whose essential commodities constitute an important source of income, I shall cite the case of Mexico. In a single year, 1957, Mexico experienced a loss of about 15 per cent of the total value of its exports in its sales abroad of five of its main primary commodities—cotton, coffee, lead, zinc and copper—as a result of the decline in the prices of those commodities. This figure is computed on the basis of the volume of what we sell, not of what we might have sold. It is a loss due solely to the decline of prices and not to a falling off in the volume of exports. Fluctuations have recently ranged from 20 per cent in the case of cotton to 55 per cent in the case of copper.

105. The case of Mexico is far from exceptional. I am sure that many representatives here could give us similar examples relating to their respective countries. That is why it is so urgent to find a satisfactory solution, and we think it should be sought through continuous consultation and the conclusion of multilateral agreements. It is essential for us to find ways of eliminating excessive and violent price fluctuations. We believe that that task offers the United Nations its greatest opportunity in the economic field to make a truly important contribution to the welfare of mankind. In this connexion, we noted with satisfaction the reorganization of the Commission on International Commodity Trade during the twenty-sixth session of the Economic and Social Council, and we hope that, as a result, the Commission's work will increase in scope and effectiveness. Similarly, we find it encouraging that study groups have been set up on the situation and prospects of certain primary commodities, like those in London which recently dealt with copper, lead and zinc.

106. We believe it would also help to achieve our purpose if due attention were paid to the financing of economic development. Too much emphasis has frequently been placed on the necessity for loans to be repayable in convertible currencies, which, in some cases, has given rise to an overproduction of certain primary commodities such as lead, zinc and copper.

107. The narrow limits of this course—which might be justifiable for private banking institutions, but is wholly unsuitable for co-operation in financing the economic development of the under-developed countries—should be altered if such financing is to produce constructive results. We are confident that existing international credit institutions are becoming increasingly aware that loans should be directed towards strengthening the economic infra-structure of States. This would lead to better utilization of national resources for the process of industrialization. We therefore believe we are entitled to hope that this will be the policy underlying the operations of similar agencies to be set up in future, such as the Inter-American Bank on which agreement was reached in principle at the Washington Conference to which I referred earlier.

108. I shall dwell only briefly on the third and last of the three points which I enumerated: the right of peoples to self-determination. The efforts of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to attain full self-government deserve our warmest sympathy. That is why we welcomed with real gratification the admission to the United Nations of new Member States from Asia and Africa, whose entry into the international community is a happy augury of an era when the colonial system will have been entirely liquidated.

109. The principle of self-determination enshrined in the Charter and its corollary, non-intervention, have been steadfastly championed by the Mexican people since it won its independence over a century ago. We have always rejected the claim of other States, however powerful, to assert their hegemony, because it is incompatible with our sovereign rights, just as we scrupulously respect the rights of others.

110. This explains why Mexico has been watching with growing and friendly interest the formation in Belize of a country, neighbouring ours, and endowed with definite characteristics and a distinct personality. Our position on Belize is that, if its present status is altered, Mexico will claim its rights in accordance with well-known historical and legal precedents and by the peaceful and friendly methods by which it conducts its international affairs.

111. At this point, I should like to add, using the terms of Article 73 of the Charter, that we recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories are paramount, and that in developing self-government, due account should be taken of their political aspirations, freely and genuinely expressed. Accordingly, I believe, and

I am sure that I am reflecting the profound feeling of the Mexican people, that Mexico, when the time comes, will not neglect to take into account that a solution of the question of Belize must be based on freedom and independence for the people of that territory.

112. The exercise of power always carries with it responsibility. There is no act of power which cannot be attributed to someone, and we must recognize that in the United Nations we are all responsible for the fate of mankind. We therefore believe that the so-called small and medium-sized countries are exercising and must continue to exercise the lofty responsibility of exerting their moderating, constructive and mediating influence.

113. It is time to ask the great Powers—which have a greater responsibility commensurate with their power—for effective co-operation and assistance, and to examine their general behaviour and their specific actions not for the purpose of judging them before world public opinion, but in order to contribute to the solution of the problems which beset us through a dispassionate and honest analysis of international questions.

114. We shall not advance a single step towards the peaceful settlement of disputes if we align ourselves blindly in hostile and inflexible camps which seem to be incapable of slowing their headlong rush towards a fatal collision in the midst of a growing clamour of arms.

115. Let us proclaim prudence and moderation while we seek unremittingly those solutions which we believe appropriate. Let us proclaim them with sincerity and firmness, undeterred by the fear that our voices will not be heard in the wilderness, because there will come a day when the wilderness will be peopled by those who know how to listen. Let us now take first steps, contenting ourselves with modest tasks and humble beginnings in the search for means and methods to lead us out of our present dilemmas. Some day our perseverance will open the way to reason and the higher interests of mankind will prevail.

116. The world hopes that the great Powers will never plunge into the inferno of mutual atomic destruction. It hopes that the balance of power may some day be replaced by the power of the spirit and the balance of understanding. Throughout history, men have recognized the basic and eternal values in life's changing pattern. They know that no conflict can last forever, no anguish is interminable and they look forward to being able to perform their daily labours in peace.

117. We believe that it is necessary and possible to convert those hopes into realities. Mexico has faith. Mexico continues to have faith. Mexico knows that will is as strong as hope and that even the greatest hope may be fulfilled in the future.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.