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President: Mr. Hamilton Shirley AMERASINGHE
(Sri Lanka).

AGENDA ITEM 17

Appointment of the Secretary-General
of the United Nations

1. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly has before it a letter dated 7 December 1976 from the President of the Security Council to the President of the General Assembly [A/31/393]. The text of the letter is as follows:

"I have the honour to inform you that the Security Council, at its 1978th meeting, held in private on 7 December 1976, unanimously adopted resolution 400 (1976) concerning the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The resolution reads as follows:

"*'The Security Council,*

'Having considered the question of the recommendation for the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations,

'Recommends to the General Assembly that Mr. Kurt Waldheim be appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term of office from 1 January 1977 to 31 December 1981.'

"(Signed) Ion DATCU
"President of the Security Council"

2. In connexion with the recommendation of the Security Council, the General Assembly has before it a draft resolution submitted by Romania in document A/31/L.28. That is the only document before the Assembly on which action is required.

3. I now call on the representative of Romania, Mr. Ion Datcu, who is also President of the Security Council.

4. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): Today's meeting which is devoted to a memorable event in the life of our Organization--the appointment of the Secretary-General--gives me the unique privilege and signal

honour to speak from this lofty tribune in my capacity as President of the Security Council for this month.

5. At its 1978th meeting on 7 December 1976, the Security Council adopted unanimously resolution 400 (1976) which you, Mr. President, have just read out.

6. Pursuant to this unanimous recommendation of the Security Council, a draft resolution [A/31/L.28/ has been circulated, and I should like now to submit it to the General Assembly.

7. This draft resolution proposes that the General Assembly of the United Nations should appoint Mr. Kurt Waldheim as Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term of office of five years beginning 1 January 1977. In so doing, the Security Council has taken due account of the outstanding qualities of Mr. Waldheim and of his dedication and effectiveness in serving the cause of the United Nations during his first term of office as Secretary-General of the United Nations.

8. Indeed, the great skill, the multilateral experience and the unwavering sense of duty which Mr. Kurt Waldheim has constantly displayed are recognized and appreciated by the Members of our Organization.

9. Mr. Kurt Waldheim's long and fruitful involvement in international affairs on the most diverse levels, his energy and tact throughout the very eventful five-year period which has elapsed since he was appointed to his first term of office, are so many qualities which recommend him eloquently to the lofty post of Secretary-General of the United Nations. As a negotiator he has worked with insight for the peaceful settlement of certain acute international crises in recent times. Suffice it to say that the efforts made to that end by Mr. Kurt Waldheim constitute a significant contribution to the conceptual and practical development of preventive diplomacy.

10. These qualities have won him throughout the world a well-deserved prestige.

11. It can be said that his tireless work in the service of the United Nations is closely linked to the efforts of Member States to strengthen the role and contribution of the United Nations in the solution of major international problems, such as disarmament, the establishment of a new international economic order, the fostering of progress and justice in the world, the elimination of racial discrimination and *apartheid* and the exercise of the right of self-determination by all peoples still under colonial rule.

12. All this gives us grounds for expressing the conviction that Mr. Kurt Waldheim will be able to continue his mission

with the same self-denial and with the same dynamism, and that he will again, as he has done in the past, place his outstanding diplomatic skills, all his experience and his capacity for work in the service of the noble ideals and principles of the United Nations, of peace and security and of co-operation and good understanding.

13. I should like to express my confidence that the General Assembly will adopt unanimously the draft resolution which I am submitting to it pursuant to the unanimous recommendation of the Security Council. That would be a new expression of the support which Member States intend to give, in the future also, to the discharge of the extremely responsible duties of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

14. The PRESIDENT: I thank the President of the Security Council, who has just introduced draft resolution A/31/L.28. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt this draft resolution by acclamation?

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation (resolution A/31/60).

15. The PRESIDENT: Mr. Kurt Waldheim has been appointed by acclamation Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term of office beginning 1 January 1977 and ending on 31 December 1981.

Mr. William Buffum, Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, conducted Mr. Kurt Waldheim into the General Assembly hall.

16. The PRESIDENT: Your Excellency, the General Assembly has today appointed you to a second term of office as Secretary-General of the United Nations commencing on 1 January 1977 and ending on 31 December 1981. May I congratulate Your Excellency sincerely and invite you to address the General Assembly.

17. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I am both honoured and deeply moved by the unanimous decision of the General Assembly to elect me for another term as Secretary-General of this Organization. I am profoundly grateful for this gesture of confidence. I thank you, Mr. President, for your kind words of congratulation. I also wish to express my deep appreciation to the Security Council for its unanimous recommendation, and in particular to the President of the Security Council for his most gracious remarks.

18. I accept the decision of the General Assembly with pride, but also with humility. I am fully conscious of the immense opportunity conferred on me by being elected for a second time to serve the world community in the unique capacity of Secretary-General. But I am also vividly aware of what that privilege means in terms of responsibility, work and the possibilities of success.

19. I would be less than frank if I were to pretend that these feelings were not mixed with a large measure of concern and anxiety. The post of Secretary-General is at the same time one of the most fascinating and one of the most frustrating jobs in the world, encompassing, as it does, the height of human aspiration and the depth of human frailty.

20. The holder of this office has great public responsibilities but little or no real power. Unlike the leader of a sovereign State, he has no consistent political constituency he can claim as his own, no clear-cut, single-minded policy line on which to base his efforts, and only modest establishments with which to carry out the decisions of the Organization. His best assets are principle and objectivity; his weapons are persuasion and reason; his main support is the confidence of Governments and the desire of humanity for peace, justice, decency and progress.

21. As Secretary-General, one is acutely conscious at the same time of almost limitless possibilities, and of the frustrations, difficulties and disasters which beset the community of nations in its struggle for a better world. One is confronted on the one hand with great opportunities, and on the other with the extremely limited range of options permitted by the interactions of national and international politics. Thus, while the physical burden of the task is often crushing, the psychological burden is at times overwhelming.

22. A day seldom passes without approaches to the Secretary-General from one or more of the member Governments for assistance in solving problems which have defied solution by other means. Even if the Secretary-General, as often happens, cannot succeed where others have failed, the fact that Governments can, in certain situations of crisis, place their worries before him and discuss them in full confidence can in itself be helpful to Governments. Certainly the Secretary-General must make every possible effort to find means and ways of helping in such cases through quiet diplomacy and discreet approaches to the Governments concerned. I mention this function because, although by its very nature it cannot be publicized, it represents a large part of the Secretary-General's workload--and in my opinion, a valuable part.

23. I am profoundly conscious of how much needs to be done if our Organization is to develop with the times and live up to its ever-greater responsibilities. It is indeed essential that its work be made more effective and more relevant to the life and the problems of the peoples of the world in the last quarter of the twentieth century. That task has been, and will continue to be, my main preoccupation. I shall count on the co-operation and understanding of all Member States in the effort to bring our Organization measurably nearer both to the ideals which inspired the authors of the Charter and to the objectives which year by year have been set by this General Assembly.

24. At 31 years of age, the United Nations is no longer a novelty. When it fails, it cannot claim the excuse of inexperience or youth. When it succeeds, as happens far more often than is widely recognized, it cannot always expect enthusiastic acclaim. Our Organization is now an established fact of international life. It is absolutely essential that we use the experience which has been acquired in the past 31 years as the basis for a new and realistic effort to develop its potential for constructive and important work.

25. I believe we should try at the same time to reinforce and uphold the principles on which the United Nations was founded and to develop a more pragmatic approach to the

work of the Organization. These two aims may seem at first sight to be contradictory, but in fact they are complementary.

26. The United Nations cannot, and will not, play the role foreseen in the Charter, especially in relation to international peace and security, until all Member States adhere, not only in word but also in deed, to the principles of the Charter. Until they respect and abide by the decisions of the competent organs and regulate their attitude to world problems accordingly, we shall not make a reality of the vision of the founders. I know that such a course is not as simple for sovereign Governments as it sounds. I am convinced, however, that the future of the world community will remain uncertain and unsafe until we reach the point where the principles of the Charter and the decisions of the main organs are universally accepted as a primary guide to national policy and behaviour. Such an acceptance will inevitably depend not only on the will of Governments but also on the quality, maturity and wisdom of the decisions reached by the principal organs themselves.

27. We are all, I think, increasingly aware that our energies and the contributions of member Governments are often dissipated or rendered ineffective by a proliferation of international activity and a failure to concentrate on essentials. A more pragmatic approach may help to correct this tendency. There should be a new emphasis on action and on follow-up. Before embarking on new activities we should ask ourselves who will really benefit from them, whether significant results can be expected, and whether the activities concerned contribute to and strengthen the over-all effort to build a better and more peaceful world.

28. I should like to mention briefly a few of the main problems on which, in my view, we should concentrate. In the domain of international peace and security, the United Nations faces particularly urgent challenges in the Middle East, in southern Africa and in Cyprus. There are signs that the coming years will be of exceptional importance in all these areas. I shall do my utmost to assist in the search for just and lasting solutions to these crucial problems. Apart from these and other specific conflict situations, progress in the field of disarmament is of primary concern to all our efforts.

29. One theme which has become predominant in our work in recent years is the complex of activities involved in the search for a new, more positive and more equitable relationship between the developing countries and the industrialized nations. This problem, usually referred to as the North-South relationship, has many aspects. Of these, none is more important for the future than the effort to bridge the persistent gap between rich and poor in the world and to evolve a new international economic order which will be more equitable, more viable and more responsive to the rights, needs and aspirations of all the peoples of the world. Much has already been done to chart the course for this historic effort. What is now called for is the practical realization of the ideas agreed upon. This task, a major priority for the coming years, is a unique challenge to the international community, calling for political determination, co-operation and creative thinking of an unprecedented order. I am determined that we in the Secretariat shall not fail to play our part in meeting this challenge.

30. Obviously, the Secretary-General and his colleagues in the Secretariat have to be in the forefront of efforts to revitalize and streamline our Organization. However, such efforts cannot be successful without the full co-operation and understanding of member Governments. Any significant restructuring will require political decisions and a positive effort on the part of the Members. Moreover, we must try to avoid an unnecessary proliferation of new programmes with insufficient potential for practical success.

31. This Organization was founded on the belief that the human race is capable, by an effort of will, of improving its lot and fulfilling, in a more satisfactory way, its promise and its genius. There is always a danger, as the years pass, that idealism and dedication will lose their strength, and that people will begin to think more of their own part in an institution than of the great aims and objectives which animate the whole enterprise. Bureaucracy sets in, and habit, vested interests and a measure of fatigue erode clear thinking, meaningful communication and the will to action. This is a natural organizational hazard. In the United Nations we should fight such tendencies. Without idealism, dedication and the will to act, even in unpromising situations, this Organization cannot possibly live up to the hopes of the peoples of the world which it uniquely represents.

32. Although this is an organization of sovereign Governments, the Charter begins with the words "We the peoples". The United Nations will not have the necessary solidity and broad support to perform its task effectively until the peoples of the world can identify its work with their own lives and aspirations to a far greater extent than is now the case. We must therefore be very careful not to enshrine ourselves too much in a world of diplomacy, protocol and procedures which the outside world finds not always comprehensible.

33. I am very conscious that the kind of improvements I have been speaking of must begin here in this house. I and my colleagues will be looking first and foremost to the efforts which we can make in the Secretariat to give our Organization a new momentum and a new effectiveness. Those efforts, however devoted and energetic, will not succeed unless member Governments supply the necessary element of political will and consistent support. I therefore count on the co-operation and purposeful assistance of all Member States in the challenging years ahead. I hope that by our common efforts a greater degree of solidarity in the international community may begin to supersede narrow self-interest, which has all too often frustrated the United Nations in its search for peace and for a better future for humanity.

34. I take this occasion to reaffirm my oath of office. I solemnly swear to exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to me as Secretary-General of the United Nations, to discharge these functions and regulate my conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view, and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any Government or other authority external to the Organization.

35. I am confident, notwithstanding all the many difficulties which face us, that we can—indeed we must—unite our strength in order to achieve peace and a better future for all the peoples of this earth.

36. The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency Mr. Kurt Waldheim for his statement.

37. Mr. Secretary-General, may I once again offer you my warmest congratulations on your appointment for a second term of office as Secretary-General of the United Nations. Your appointment by acclamation is an eloquent and clear expression of the confidence that all sections of the United Nations repose in you. That confidence you have earned by your great diplomatic skill, your unfailing diligence and your untiring industry. In doing so you also have shown unswerving fidelity to the provisions of the Charter relating to the role and functions of the Secretary-General. The United Nations has relied very heavily on its chief executive, the Secretary-General. The chief executive has himself relied very heavily on the United Nations membership itself. This is a partnership that calls for mutual understanding, and on the cordial maintenance of which the efforts of the United Nations to realize the purposes and objectives of its Charter so heavily depend.

38. Mr. Secretary-General, the General Assembly has today equipped you for a further period of five years of its precious trust in the certain conviction that you are equal to the task of discharging it with honour and distinction. I wish you health, happiness and success in the years to come.

39. I now call on the representative of Mauritius, who will speak on behalf of the African States.

40. Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius): I salute the presence of Mrs. Kurt Waldheim in the General Assembly hall on this happy morning.

41. Five years ago, when the name of Mr. Kurt Waldheim was formally recommended to this General Assembly for appointment as Secretary-General of our Organization, I had the privilege of representing my country and of casting its vote in support of his appointment. Today I again have that privilege and honour of supporting his appointment for a further term of office. On this occasion, however, I do so not only in my capacity as head of the delegation of Mauritius, but as current Chairman of the African group of States at the United Nations, and on behalf of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, the Right Honourable Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam.

42. Of course, no two periods of history are the same, and in the case of the Secretary-General, the two terms of office in which he will have served our Organization in his great and challenging task will have marked differences.

43. When our beloved Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, first assumed office in January 1972, he was faced with a whole set of international problems which would have daunted the most fearless of us. He assumed office in the aftermath of the tragic conflict on the Indian subcontinent and found himself faced with having to organize the greatest humanitarian assistance programme which ever

faced our Organization. It is due to his great resourcefulness and abilities that he was able to discharge the challenging task to the benefit of the people of Bangladesh and to the satisfaction of the international community.

44. Our Secretary-General was faced with the cruel war in Viet Nam—a war which had claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and had wrought untold havoc on the economic and social fabric of that country. We all know that in the diplomatic negotiations which took place behind the headlines Mr. Waldheim played an important role. Fortunately, we can look back upon the Viet Nam war as a matter of history but the damage that was done to its economy places upon the international community a responsibility for ensuring that our assistance is mobilized to help the people of that country to reconstruct their national life. I am glad that the Secretary-General is cognizant of his responsibilities in this respect and has already begun to campaign for an assistance programme to help the people of Viet Nam.

45. Another serious problem which faced the Secretary-General in 1973 was the Middle East situation. He had been in office for only a few months when the third round of hostilities broke out between the States in the Area. His tireless efforts in the pursuit of a peaceful settlement in that intractable problem is well known and requires no further comment on my part. We have seen under his direct control the organization of an effective peace-keeping force consisting of contingents from many countries and from various continents—a truly international force. We have seen his form of subtle diplomacy in the Middle East, always with the aim of bringing his personal touch to the diplomatic negotiations so necessary for the evolution of a peaceful settlement.

46. The Cyprus problem is another situation which was handed over to the Secretary-General at the time when he assumed office in 1972. Again he has manifested to the admiration of all of us his qualities of being able to be an activist for peace and a quiet and skilled negotiator in the complex diplomatic negotiations which this dangerous problem involves.

47. Finally, although by no means of less importance, we have found the Secretary-General actively involved in the problems of southern Africa, problems which have critical areas in the maintenance of international peace and security. From the moment he assumed office our Secretary-General was plunged into the problems of our great African continent—when he was asked to conduct, on behalf of the Security Council, a most sensitive and delicate mission to Namibia. His performance then, as has been the case since, has been most creditable. He has made it his duty, and quite rightly so, to keep the burning issues of Namibia, Zimbabwe and the racial problems of South Africa foremost before world opinion. His warnings, his counsel, his formulas, for these problems have reflected not only his own personal concern and high standards but the principles and purposes upon which our Charter is based. We recognize the helpful role he played in the transition stages following collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire in Africa and his efforts in mobilizing assistance for the newly independent States which emerged victorious, after centuries of struggle.

48. Finally, no testimony of our Secretary-General's performance of his past five years would be complete without mention of his contribution and personal involvement in the efforts to bring about a more just and equitable world economic order. His role in the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly, his active participation in the fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, his involvement in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm and again in the Habitat Conference in Vancouver, all indicate the depth of his interest in our diverse affairs and his concern for our welfare.

49. I have mentioned but a few of the major issues with which he has been closely involved in the search for just and durable solutions to our complex and interdependent world. Our Secretary-General has, on all occasions, demonstrated his unqualified commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter and has made clear that in this age where race must no longer be an issue dividing people that he is a man of all nations for all nations.

50. It is a signal honour for me to be able to recall that the African group of States gave its unqualified and unanimous support to the recommendations made by the Security Council and contained in draft resolution A/31/L.28 that Mr. Kurt Waldheim be appointed for a second term of office as Secretary-General of the United Nations. We are delighted that the unanimity with which his appointment was recommended by the Security Council was reflected in the action of our Assembly. We wish our esteemed and beloved Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, good health, renewed strength and the continuity of his usual determination to serve the causes of peace, justice and progress in the best interests of mankind and in accordance with the lofty ideals laid down in the Charter by the founding fathers of the United Nations. We pledge our full co-operation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, and we feel convinced that he will reciprocate and extend his own personal and official co-operation to the Organization of African Unity.

51. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Fiji, who will speak on behalf of the Asian States.

52. Mr. VUNIBOBO (Fiji): Five years ago the General Assembly, at the closing meeting of the twenty-sixth session, met to consider the appointment of a new Secretary-General. That meeting marked the end of an era, for the election of a new Secretary-General marked the closing chapter of a period in which a distinguished son of the Asian region occupied the exalted post of Secretary-General of the United Nations. The representative of Argentina, Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, who moved the resolution, then said:

"I cannot conclude this presentation without devoting my final words to the man who for 10 years has guided the destinies of our Organization, leaving on it the inimitable mark of his dignity, confidence in harmonious coexistence among nations and respect for human values. For many years he will be identified as the living symbol of the United Nations, and we wish most gratefully to play heartfelt tribute to U Thant."¹

53. Today, therefore, as representative of the Members of the Asian group of States, which bore and nurtured a former Secretary-General, it is my privilege and honour to speak for the members of the Asian region. Our Arab friends, faithful to tradition, have asked that they, too, be given an opportunity to speak and convey in their own way their words of felicitation.

54. Mr. Secretary-General, may I, on behalf of the member countries of the Asian region, and also on behalf of the country which I have the honour to represent, convey to you our very warm and sincere congratulations on your re-election as Secretary-General of the United Nations? We congratulate you for your dedication to the high office which you have served with great distinction during the past five years. The countries of the Asian region welcome the opportunity of associating themselves with other regions represented in this Organization in re-electing you to a second term. In identifying ourselves with our other colleagues, we do so confident that you are following in the distinguished steps of a loyal, dedicated and devoted son of Asia.

55. In congratulating you, we, the countries of Asia, are confident that you will continue to maintain the high standards of dedicated service which you have devoted to our Organization and indeed to the world community of nations during the past five years.

56. Today is a day of congratulations. Yet it is for us also a day to look to the future and at the same time to look to the past. In doing so, we do not for one moment wish to open old wounds or to reawaken memories that are best forgotten; rather we hope that looking to the past will help us avoid pitfalls in our journey to the future.

57. The past five years have witnessed the end of the Indo-China war and we of the Asian region express the hope that you will bring the influence of your high office in helping the countries of Indo-China repair the ravages which have brought their otherwise beautiful countries to almost total destruction. We hope that through your distinguished leadership, your humanity, your commitment to peace, your commitment to freedom, that the countries of Indo-China will, God willing, be restored to prosperity and peace so that they, too, will bring to this Organization the richness and wealth of their experience, traditions, culture and history.

58. A review of the many complex problems which the world community faced during the years of your tenure of office will be time-consuming and exhaustive. Yet not only have events served to influence the course of history, they have also in their own way served to subject and test you in the crucible of fire. These tests have not only found you fit and able, but, more importantly, they have confirmed the choice made by the General Assembly on 22 December 1971 to be the only choice possible. History, in our view, has indicated that choice.

59. Mr. Secretary-General, a litany of the outstanding problems left to be solved will serve no useful purpose. The perennial problems facing our brothers in the Middle East cry out to the heavens for settlement. The countries of Asia express the hope that you will devote the energies and

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2031st meeting, para. 110.

influence of your high office to bear on the various parties involved so as to enable that part of the world to experience the peace and tranquillity which they have long been denied.

60. In highlighting some of the outstanding problems of Asia, we are not unmindful of the sufferings, the humiliations, which beset southern Africa. Though there has been prospect for a settlement, we nevertheless wish that you will continue to use whatever influence is available to you to bring peace, justice and prosperity to that unhappy part of the African continent, so that like the sages of old, you may with humility say:

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me show love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope.”

61. Our Secretary-General has been re-elected by the unanimous vote of this General Assembly. No individual carries a greater load or responsibility than our Secretary-General. He is the servant of each State Member of our Organization. His task is not an easy one; for in the discharge of his high responsibility he must exercise integrity of the highest order; he must exercise fidelity to his oath of office; he must exercise loyalty to the United Nations; he must exercise prudence and, above all, patience and compassion, particularly for those in need.

62. In reiterating the qualities which we expect from our Secretary-General, we are only too conscious of the pre-eminent position which he enjoyed before becoming Secretary-General. He has, since joining the diplomatic service of his country, displayed those qualities of leadership of which greatness only a few of us are endowed. This re-election is not only an expression of the confidence and trust we have in the eminent qualities possessed by Mr. Kurt Waldheim, it is also an expression of confidence and gratitude to the country of his birth. It is a country, which, though small, has in its own way contributed to and influenced the affairs of Europe and, indeed, of the world. Austria has, over the years, been the centre of life in continental Europe. It is a country which, though small numerically, has produced giants in the political and diplomatic fields. Mr. Kurt Waldheim is heir to a tradition of one of the oldest civilizations and cultures in Europe. Austria, his home, is today a factor for unity and understanding between the East and West. It is neutral politically and constitutionally. Mr. Waldheim is the successor to some of the most astute minds which Europe has ever produced. We believe also that Secretary-General Waldheim will continue to bring to his high office those qualities of leadership, dedication, wisdom and prudence.

63. The world community looks to you, Mr. Secretary-General, with renewed hope that, with your international reputation as a distinguished diplomat and international civil servant, you will bring the charisma of your high office to bear on the many difficult issues which we face today. We are confident that these hopes will not be disappointed.

64. Mr. YANKOV (Bulgaria): I feel greatly honoured to have the privilege of congratulating you, Mr. Secretary-General, on behalf of the Eastern European group of States

on your unanimous re-election as Secretary-General of the United Nations. We are very well aware of the high responsibility vested in this high office which you assume for another term. We are also aware of the enormous energy, competence and profound dedication to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations with which you have discharged the functions of Secretary-General. Your statement today is another testimony of the sense of responsibility and duty with which you look at your functions for the future. But to us, your past performance of these functions and your achievements provide convincing assurances for our best expectations.

65. Now that we can assess in retrospect the past five years, it is worth while mentioning that 15 new States joined the United Nations, thus bringing closer this Organization to its complete universality. We would like to express our confidence that this principle of universality, which is embodied in the Charter, shall be implemented in full by the end of this new tenure of the Secretary-General.

66. During your first term of office, Mr. Secretary-General, the United Nations covered a complicated and difficult stretch of its road. Its all-round activities invariably reflected international events with all their complex nature. In this respect we cannot fail to recall the fact that you assumed your responsible office at a time when contemporary international relations marked a turning-point in their history. That was the period when the world crossed over from the cold war and confrontation to the days of détente and the policy of constructive co-operation, based on the principles of peaceful co-existence. The profound political and social transformations in the world and the radical shift in the balance of forces in favour of peace and progress require tremendous efforts so that we can maintain and strengthen the positive trends in world affairs, which have emerged in the past few years. There is no doubt that the world Organization has played and will have to play a primary role in this respect. There is no doubt either that the Secretary-General has made and will make a sizable contribution to turn our Organization into a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of the main objectives in the name of which the United Nations was created: to maintain world peace, to strengthen international security, to establish relations of understanding and fruitful co-operation among all States.

67. In his inaugural statement on 22 December 1971, the Secretary-General said among other things: “The United Nations has arrived at an important cross-roads.”²

68. I may say straight away here that mankind chose the road of common sense mapped out by the Charter. Important prerequisites were thus created to enable the peoples to reach their coveted dream—“to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind”, to use the words of the Charter.

69. The world as a whole and the United Nations in particular have faced some difficult moments in the past five years. Numerous efforts were needed to overcome a number of crisis situations, some of which even threatened

² *Ibid.*, para. 123.

international peace and security. The countries on whose behalf I have the honour of making this statement today are justifiably proud that they have always been in the front ranks of the struggle for the preservation of peace, in defence of the sovereignty of States, in defence of the right of nations to self-determination and independence and for the complete elimination of colonialism and racism and for the promotion of equitable economic relations.

70. We are particularly gratified that our Governments and peoples have made their important contribution to the achievement of the significant transformations which were carried out in Europe and reflected in the decisions adopted at the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in 1975. We are also gratified for another reason. Our Governments and peoples have done their utmost, and will continue to do so, to extend the positive changes emerging in Europe to all other parts of the world.

71. The experience of history and particularly that of present-day international relations shows convincingly that peace is indivisible. It also shows that in order to preserve and strengthen peace, we need the active co-operation of all States, big and small, developed and developing. The United Nations can and must assist these efforts all the more effectively. The safest way to enlarge the contribution of the United Nations to the endeavour of nations to build a better world is to comply strictly with the principles of its Charter. At the same time the best guarantee for the triumph of the United Nations' purposes lies in the implementation of its own decisions. In accordance with the Charter, the Secretary-General is entrusted with important and responsible tasks for the implementation of the decisions and resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly.

72. I am pleased to say that our delegations hold in high esteem the contribution of the distinguished Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, in this direction. In discharging his noble and highly challenging mission, he has manifested the qualities of an experienced statesman and his dedication to the cause of peace and understanding among nations. We are confident that he will place his vast experience in international affairs and his qualities as an efficient administrator in the service of these noble ideals.

73. On behalf of the delegations of the Eastern European countries, I should like to express to the Secretary-General, once again, our sincerest congratulations. His re-election today is an evidence of the great confidence which Member States place in him. It is an expression of the appreciation of Member States for his concerted efforts to enhance the role of the United Nations and for his determination in fulfilling the missions with which the Security Council and the General Assembly have entrusted him.

74. We would like to assure you, Mr. Secretary-General, that you can continue to rely on the full co-operation of the countries of Eastern Europe and their delegations in the United Nations. You may rest assured that our countries will continue, as they have done before, to draw inspiration from the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and will do their best to see these principles triumphant in the practice of international relations.

75. We wish you, Mr. Secretary-General, good health and much success in the discharge of the difficult but noble mission with which the United Nations has again entrusted you today.

76. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Guyana, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American States.

77. Mr. JACKSON (Guyana): Nearly five years ago, on 22 December 1971, a son of Latin America, Ambassador Ortiz de Rozas of Argentina, proposed to this Assembly that Mr. Kurt Waldheim be appointed Secretary-General by acclamation. Today, it is my special honour to speak on behalf of all of Latin America in response to the approval given by acclamation that Mr. Waldheim be appointed for a second term of five years as Secretary-General of this Organization.

78. Within the past five years, all of us and many others who have served in this Organization during that period have recognized that in Mr. Waldheim we have had a Secretary-General who has pursued with steadfastness the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We have had a Secretary-General who has endeavoured to make this Organization truly a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of common human ends. To be the chief executive of the most complex global Organization is no mean task. To fill that role and to perform that function during a period of acutely heightened political consciousness has been a challenge of an extremely high order. Over the last five years the United Nations has been at the core of the efforts of the international community to come to grips with and to seek solutions to some of the most critical global issues ever to face mankind. This Organization has been deeply concerned with the question of the law of the sea, the role of women, the issues of population, of racism, of colonialism and *apartheid*, and of selective affluence, to name only some. In nearly all of those issues the contribution of the United Nations during the current term of office of Mr. Waldheim as Secretary-General has been most significant. I should like to dwell a little on two of those issues: those of the eradication of colonialism and *apartheid* and the promotion of accelerated economic and social development, issues which are indispensable elements in the construction of that secure and universal peace for which all mankind yearns and which remains the primary objective of the United Nations.

79. In the fields of anti-colonialism and anti-*apartheid* great victories have been won. The increase in the membership of this Organization attests to this reality. We stand poised at the decisive moment when the international community, through united action by this Organization, can lend the support of its considerable weight to those peoples who still suffer to recover their freedom and their independence. I speak here principally of the people in southern Africa, the people in Namibia, in Zimbabwe and in that bastion of racism, South Africa. As regards economic and social development, suffice it to observe that during the last five years this Organization has taken many important steps. At the sixth special session in 1974 we adopted a blue print for the establishment of a new international economic order and articulated a programme

of action for its realization. One year later, at the seventh special session we sought to carry forward some agreed positions adumbrated in 1974. During this period as well, the Assembly adopted the important Charter on the Economic Rights and Duties of States, a charter, the elaboration of which owed so much to the genius and vision of President Echeverría of Mexico, a sister Latin American republic. The challenges of the next five years are clear. They are well known to the Members of this Organization. The question is whether we will confront those challenges with resolve and make meaningful and genuine collective efforts to overcome them. The answer hangs simply on the manifestation of political will by all of us, and it is no secret that in this regard a greater responsibility falls on the major Powers and the developed part of the world.

80. The States of Latin America warmly congratulate Mr. Kurt Waldheim on his unanimous election as Secretary-General for a second term of five years. We know him as a man of great patience, tact, skill and dedication. Mr. Waldheim's wide experience as an outstanding statesman, his qualities of leadership, his abiding commitment to the principles of equity and justice have all been clearly demonstrated. As a sincere believer in peace, Mr. Waldheim is fully conscious of the role this Organization can and should play in that respect. Thus, we approach the next five years confident not only of the exceptional qualities and talents of our Secretary-General but also of his acute perception of the problems we face and of his commitment to contribute to their solution on the basis of what is right and what is just, whether it be in relation to the Middle East situation and the Palestinian question—in respect of which the moments and circumstances for forward movement seem to be propitious—whether it be the troubled State of Cyprus, whether it be the security of small and medium-sized States, whether it be the matter of disarmament, whether it be the issues of racism, colonialism, and *apartheid*, or whether it be the vital question of the new international economic order. In all these fields and more we expect of Mr. Waldheim the unrestricted application of his phenomenal energy.

81. Within recent times it has been fashionable in some quarters to be severely critical of the United Nations. There is, of course, a good deal that is wrong with this Organization, and we should bend our efforts collectively to rectify its deficiencies. Nevertheless, the sometimes malicious and deliberate distortion of the United Nations and its activities which persists need to be categorically refuted. Mr. Waldheim has been an indefatigable defender of this Organization, convinced as he is of its usefulness and indeed of its indispensability. We expect him to continue to promote the interests of the United Nations and to defend those interests whenever necessary.

82. The States of Latin America on whose behalf I speak salute Mr. Kurt Waldheim. We wish him well in the many arduous tasks which lie ahead of him in this the acknowledged era of interdependence.

83. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Malta, who will speak on behalf of the group of Western European and other States.

84. Mr. GAUCI (Malta): Both personally and as a representative of one of the smallest countries in Europe and in

the world, a heavy responsibility has been placed in my hands today. On behalf of the group of Western European and other States, I have been given, by mere chance of geographic rotation, the exceptional honour and privilege of briefly speaking for these States on this memorable occasion. It is to me, therefore, a moment of living history, for in response to the recommendations of the Security Council we have just unanimously decided once again to appoint a Secretary-General of our Organization and to place on his shoulders the enormous responsibility of steering its course for the next five years. It is a happy augury for success that our choice has fallen again on a person who has already proved his capability for being all things to all men and for being a real representative of the world community who has with exceptional competence and dedication come to grips with the innumerable problems of the last five years.

85. The Secretary-General's qualifications were equal to the high requirements of his position. A son of Europe, schooled in the discipline of international law and diplomacy, he was soon involved in the work of international organizations and his subsequent service is known to us all. In fact, there is a certain symbolic element in his career. Mr. Waldheim presided over the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and was responsible for drawing up a legal framework on the restricted regions of space. He came down to earth with a vengeance in January 1972 when he assumed the responsibility of the office of Secretary-General. The noble ideals of our Charter are universal in scope and boundless in their application; yet the role of the Secretary-General is constrained by the requirements of his office, as Mr. Waldheim has just explained.

86. To carry the symbolism a bit further, Mr. President, I venture to predict that, within the next five years and also under your presidency, the Secretary-General help us to set the seal on the legal framework for activities in "inner space", the land beneath the sea, which will soon reveal even more of its fascinating secrets and potentials.

87. In addition to his diplomatic qualities our distinguished Secretary-General has also many endearing characteristics. His ready smile and friendly disposition, his keen sense of history, his patient determination, his skill in negotiation, his probing intellect and his indefatigable energy all redound to his credit and to our benefit. He has travelled far and wide—from the heart of Europe to the farthest reaches of the antipodes. He is now personally known to most of the world's leaders and his name is also a household word in every country. He will continue to be, as in the past, a strong advocate of peace, a promoter of economic, social and humanitarian progress, a defender of law and liberty, a ministering angel for disaster relief, and a trouble-shooter in areas of tension.

88. We do not know what is in store for us during the next five years. Of one thing we can be certain, and that is, that many difficulties and dangers will arise which our Secretary-General and our Organization will have to face and overcome.

89. And so today we, the peoples of the United Nations, commend into the capable hands of our distinguished

Secretary-General this ungainly Organization, which with all its faults remains the best hope for mankind. Behind it goes the faith of nearly 150 countries, spanning five continents. For a fleeting moment, Mr. Secretary-General, as we, united, ask you, with unbounded confidence and hope, to assume this onerous responsibility, each one of us in his own way and according to his own belief will, I am sure, breathe a silent prayer on your behalf. Because without a spark of supernatural guidance, your human spirit is bound to falter in the face of the demanding tasks ahead.

90. We congratulate you and wish you well and we offer you our unstinted co-operation, for your success will be ours, as we strive constantly to secure peace with justice and dignity with progress.

91. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Democratic Yemen, who will speak on behalf of the group of Arab States.

92. Mr. ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I have the pleasure, on behalf of the Arab group of States, to extend our warm congratulations to Mr. Kurt Waldheim on the occasion of his re-election as Secretary-General of the United Nations.

93. The international unanimity which has been demonstrated in re-electing Mr. Waldheim is a unanimous confirmation of the effective role that he has been playing in discharging his noble task over the past five years.

94. Our region has been and still is one of the most afflicted regions in the world and it is therefore quite normal that the situation in this region should draw the attention of the United Nations and the Secretary-General. We shall never forget the sincere efforts that the Secretary-General made in order to find solutions to tense situations in order to re-establish stability in this region and to guarantee the well-being of its peoples with a view to consolidating world peace and security.

95. In expressing our congratulations to the Secretary-General, we are thereby reaffirming our firm confidence in him personally and in his capacities and skills. We also greatly appreciate the untiring efforts that he has deployed in assuming his functions and we are quite convinced that his re-election will give him the opportunity of being able to pursue the path that he has already embarked upon in order to consolidate the role of the United Nations for the service of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter.

96. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of the United States of America who will speak on behalf of the host country.

97. Mr. SCRANTON (United States of America): We rejoice at the strong support and confidence that the United Nations has shown for you, Mr. Secretary-General, and I say that both as the representative of the United States, the host country, and personally, as one who has faith in the United Nations as a source of solutions to the immense problems facing mankind in this final quarter of the turbulent twentieth century. It is no exaggeration to

say that, since his appointment five years ago, Mr. Kurt Waldheim has personified the qualities of objectivity, exceptional patience and seemingly tireless personal efforts which are associated with the best diplomacy. Diligently travelling to sites of conflict or tension whenever his presence as a neutral party was needed, he has been, personally and really, a centre for the harmonization of nations and a vigorous force for international peace.

98. The United States extends congratulations to Secretary-General Waldheim. We pledge you, Sir, our support and wish you Godspeed in accomplishing still more for world peace, for justice and for human betterment in the next five years.

99. If I may, I would like to add a personal anecdote. This morning one of the major representatives of the United States in the United Nations, Mr. George McGovern, the United States Senator and one of our outstanding persons and leaders in the United States, told me this story. He said yesterday he was trying to explain to his six-year old grandson what the United Nations was all about, and his grandson asked him a lot of very intelligent questions, one of which was, "Is the leader of the United Nations the king of the world?" I do not know what the Senator answered, but I think I would have answered that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, while he is no king, is a man of character, which is even better.

100. The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to General Carlos Romulo of the Philippines, signatory of the Charter and President of the fourth session of the General Assembly.

101. Mr. ROMULO (Philippines): My Government would like to express its gratification over the Security Council's unanimous recommendation for the re-election of Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim which has just been endorsed, also unanimously, by the General Assembly.

102. The votes in the Security Council and in the General Assembly constitute an eloquent tribute to the Secretary-General. They also vindicate the judgement of the great majority of the United Nations membership that Mr. Waldheim has richly earned a second term as Secretary-General of the United Nations.

103. When I made the policy statement of the Philippines in October, I ended that statement with the following paragraph:

"He [Mr. Kurt Waldheim] has done an outstanding job at an extremely difficult time in the life of the United Nations—a time, as I have noted, of disenchantment and even of antagonism towards the Organization, and a time, moreover, of portentous change, marking a far-reaching shift in emphasis from political confrontations between great Powers to an economic dialogue between the rich and the poor nations which could shape the future of our world. As he has correctly observed:

" 'Although East-West problems persist in many fields, the North-South relationship is in one form or another increasingly the basic theme of our debates.'

“While effectively practising ‘quiet diplomacy’ . . . to forestall violence in southern Africa, to maintain the precarious peace in Cyprus and in the Middle East, and to damp down dangerous tensions in other places, the Secretary-General has also performed invaluable service in facilitating the crucial dialogue on the new international economic order. The key office of Secretary-General could not have been placed in better hands during this time of historic change and transition. In our estimation, Secretary-General Waldheim deserves to be highly commended for a difficult job well done.” [13th meeting, para. 98.]

I said that on 1 October of this year.

104. The Secretary-General does not dictate the resolutions and declarations of the General Assembly, nor can he exercise the power of veto in the Security Council, but it is around him that the Organization revolves. He is at the centre and must see the world through 292 different eyes of different colours and depths of focus. And he must speak with 146 different tongues and, in all of them, quietly and evenly. It is for this reason—and I trust that as one of the signers of the Charter 31 years ago I may be permitted to say so—that the post of Secretary-General should not be filled through the process of ordinary electioneering. It seems to me that Secretaries-General are not so much elected as they are discovered. There can be no specific qualifications for this high office which candidates must meet. In fact it is only in office that the Members of the Organization discover the qualifications of their ultimate choice as we have fortunately discovered the eminent qualities of Mr. Waldheim. We remember Trygve Lie and we remember Dag Hammarskjöld and we remember U Thant. Each had his own style, pragmatic or mystic or hard-driving, with his own view of the world and his own language of conciliation. For Kurt Waldheim, now in full activity, it is not yet time for memories, but I know we shall remember him too, calm and detached and, like his own country, permanently neutral—the centre that, in defiance of the poet, can and must hold in a divided world.

105. The world really might say that the United Nations is always in a state of crisis but its current state is a crisis of opportunity, the opportunity to reclaim its original role of arbiter now that a certain relaxation has been achieved in the rigid confrontation of past years. As the citizen of a country where the super-Powers first reached an accom-

modation, Kurt Waldheim, the able Secretary-General of this Organization, is admirably qualified to assess the present balance of forces and to bring the collective political and moral will of all the Members of the United Nations to bear on the peaceful solution of the tragic disputes that still fester in many parts of our world and on the search for a more equitable and efficient economic order in a time of widespread confusion and deep-seated apprehension.

106. An experienced United Nations professional, a true believer in his mission, Secretary-General Waldheim knows how the machine which is running works and when it cannot be expected to work. Coming from a neutral country, which is unaligned with any super-Power, is the seat of an ancient empire having no colonies in the modern age, and is relatively small yet economically developed and sovereign, he can be expected to understand the widely varied problems of the Members of his vast constituency. Secretary-General Waldheim may not have become the President of his country but in the tradition of *felix Austria* he can now be, if not the marriage broker, the power broker of the world. We need him in the United Nations more than when he was just appointed. Let us give him all our support because he is the ideal man who, with his firm and steady hand, should remain at the helm of our earth-ship. His unclouded vision as a statesman and as a diplomat will stand us in good stead in the difficult years ahead of us.

107. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Saudi Arabia.

108. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia): Thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to say a few words. Now I wish to address our beloved Secretary-General. As I said and must repeat, we congratulate ourselves on the election of such an illustrious gentleman to a second five-year term. But, indeed, we commiserate with him on the heavy burden he has to carry for those five years. However I hope that Member States of this Organization will lighten his burden through our . . . , no matter to what ideology they belong and that . . . will give instructions to the diplomats here that will be in harmony with the principles and purposes of the Charter. Therefore we can assist him by endeavouring to respect the Charter.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.