



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

S/PV.2710
3 October 1986

ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERRATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
SEVEN HUNDRED AND TENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 3 October 1986, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. AL-SHAALI (United Arab Emirates)

Members:	Australia Bulgaria China Congo Denmark France Ghana Madagascar Thailand Trinidad and Tobago Union of Soviet Socialist Republics United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland United States of America Venezuela	Mr. WOOLCOTT Mr. TSVETKOV Mr. LI Luye Mr. GAYAMA Mr. BIERRING Mr. de KEMOULARIA Mr. GBEHO Mr. RABETAFIKA Mr. KASEMSRI Mr. MOHAMMED Mr. BELONOGOV Sir John THOMSON Mr. OKUN Mr. AGUILAR
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The meeting was called to order at 4.10 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

LETTER DATED 30 SEPTEMBER 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ, JORDAN, KUWAIT, MOROCCO, SAUDI ARABIA, TUNISIA AND YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/18372)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): In accordance with the decisions taken at the 2709th meeting, I invite the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Tunisia and Zambia to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; I invite the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization to take the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Aziz (Iraq) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Alaoui (Morocco), Mr. Al-Ansi (Oman), Mr. Kabanda (Rwanda), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Sarré (Senegal), Mr. Bouziri (Tunisia), Mr. Mwananshiku (Zambia) and Mr. Kaddoumi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Bangladesh, the German Democratic Republic and Yugoslavia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the

(The President)

Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Delpech (Argentina), Mr. Siddiky (Bangladesh), Mr. Ott (German Democratic Republic) and Mr. Golob (Yugoslavia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Security Council will now resume consideration of the item on its agenda.

The first speaker is the representative of Senegal. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. SARRE (Senegal) (interpretation from French): I wish first, Mr. President, to express my appreciation and thanks to the members of the Security Council for allowing me to participate in this debate, in which unfortunately we are reverting to the Iran-Iraq conflict, a matter of the greatest concern to Senegal's Head of State, Mr. Abdou Diouf, and all the people of Senegal. I am justified in using the word unfortunately, because we had thought after previous meetings on the question, especially those of May 1984 and more recently in February this year, reason would prevail over emotion and intransigence.

My delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your election to preside over the Council for October. Your qualities as a seasoned diplomat and your objectivity, allied to your knowledge of the background of the situation before us, since you are from the region, give us every reason to believe that our efforts will lead to a just and lasting solution to this fratricidal conflict - in other words, that it will lead to peace in the Gulf region.

I wish to pay a tribute, Sir, to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. Alexander Belonogov, for the exemplary way in which he led the Council's work in September. I repeat our congratulations and our welcome to him on his taking up his important post.

I wish also to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for his tireless efforts to find a solution to the conflict. We believe that what he said in his statement this morning to the Council deserves the most serious consideration.

(Mr. Sarré, Senegal)

My country asked to take part in the debate, first, because we believe the United Nations is the most appropriate place to resolve disputes between States by peaceful means, and, secondly, because the deterioration of the situation in the region may have a harmful effect on the economic and even the political development of the States of the world, especially of the third world. Thirdly, we hope the Council, as the upholder of world peace and security, will be able to take responsible measures to promote peace, co-operation and understanding in the region.

The situation that has led to this new series of meetings undoubtedly has serious implications for international peace and security. The striking statements that we heard this morning demonstrate the extent to which we are slipping into a situation with incalculable consequences. Indeed, the threats to - inter alia - freedom of navigation in the Gulf and to air traffic show that if we are not careful all the countries of the region could suddenly find themselves facing difficulties that could lead to not only economic but political instability.

However, we believe the present situation should be placed in a much broader context, that of the conflict that has been tearing the region asunder for several decades. For almost six years the fratricidal conflict between Iran and Iraq has further complicated a situation that has for long made the Middle East potentially one of the regions presenting the greatest threat to international peace and security. In six years the conflict has cost the lives of thousands of innocent men, women and children and inflicted terrible suffering on large numbers of people on both sides. Every passing day means months of delay in every aspect of the region's development.

This conflict is not only draining the valuable human and material resources of those two fraternal countries; it poses an additional threat to the stability of the whole region and, over the long term it carries the seeds of a catastrophe of

(Mr. Sarré, Senegal)

unforeseeable magnitude. The Secretary-General's detailed statement this morning makes that clear.

The fact that Senegal is a member both of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the Organization of the Islamic Conference means that we cannot remain indifferent to this distressing problem, which is a source of constant concern to my country. The magnitude of the damage caused and the possible escalation of the war to involve other States of the region strike the conscience of the international community, which cannot continue to stand by as an idle spectator of this dangerous conflict.

As the Foreign Minister of Senegal stressed exactly a week ago at the beginning of the forty-first session of the General Assembly:

"With regard to the situation in the Gulf, the international community has no choice but to persevere in its efforts to persuade the leaders of the two warring countries to use peaceful means to put an end to their dispute, in keeping with the wishes of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the United Nations." (A/41/PV.12, p. 78)

Senegal, which is a member of the Islamic countries' mediating Committee, created in At Ta'if in 1981 by the third summit Conference of the Islamic countries, intends to continue together with the other member countries of that Committee, its efforts to restore peace and harmony between those two fraternal countries.

Peace in the Gulf region has already been the goal of courageous and commendable initiatives taken under various auspices, such as those of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. None the less, it is here at the United Nations that the groundwork must be done. The present meetings of the Council reflect very well the deep concern of the vast majority of Members of our Organization over the continuance of this conflict and the new threats that it poses to the region's security.

(Mr. Sarré, Senegal)

Since the beginning of the conflict the Council has adopted many resolutions, and there have been many presidential declarations, asking the two parties to observe a cease-fire and resolve their differences by peaceful means. Unfortunately, so far none of the resolutions have had substantial results, for reasons which we all know. It should be added that the difficulties are so great that they have made United Nations efforts of little account. That is all the more regrettable since in our view there is not, and there should not be, any fundamental conflict of interest between those two countries which both belong to the third world, and which moreover are both Islamic countries. Because of the war, enormous resources and priceless energies are being diverted from other burning problems that are threatening peace, security and stability in the region.

(Mr. Sarré, Senegal)

In other words, the prolongation of this conflict can in no way serve the real interests of the Iranian and Iraqi peoples. Nor does it meet the legitimate aspirations of the other States of the region, which, it must be said, are unjustly suffering the repercussions of this war: the repeated and - regrettably - sometimes deliberate, destruction of their economic infrastructures and supplies. We need not repeat here what has been so aptly said by preceding speakers.

This also means that neither the passing of time nor the lack of progress should induce us to relax our efforts to promote a just and equitable settlement of this fratricidal conflict. The Security Council, in particular, must persevere in order to ensure that all the concrete and positive aspects of that settlement are the subject of negotiations, on the basis of the fundamental principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and the mutual interests of the parties to the conflict.

The conflict itself is compounded by the fact that Iran and Iraq are situated in a particularly sensitive part of the world. And one need not be an alarmist to note that the danger of an explosion that could lead to a broader conflict is increasing day by day. Here I have in mind the internationalization of the conflict.

That is why it is indispensable for the States of the region, and in particular Iran and Iraq themselves, to recognize the seriousness of the situation, in the interest of their interdependence and their very survival.

That is also why my country expects this of the present series of Security Council meetings: first, that all obstacles will be removed; secondly, that a renewed appeal will be made for the cessation of hostilities - and that this time all the consequences of this will be drawn; thirdly, that the Council will reaffirm its request to the belligerents to respect the territorial integrity and the economic infrastructures of the other coastal States and that stress will be

(Mr. Sarré, Senegal)

placed on the need for all the States of the region to refrain from any act that could worsen or broaden the conflict.

The objective that we have set for ourselves - that is, to restore peace and stability in one of the most sensitive regions of the world - remains a noble objective, however strewn it may be with obstacles and pitfalls. In order to attain that objective, we need to use all our political will, all our patience and resolve, in order to encourage the two parties to embark on a real process of peace. For six years now, the use of force has not succeeded in achieving a solution to this conflict. We must deduce from this that no strategy based on force can bring peace to that troubled region. More than ever before, the "peace of the brave" - la paix des braves - is required. This means the cessation of hostilities and the unconditional opening of negotiations between the parties concerned, under the auspices of the United Nations. Without any further delay, the Security Council should, with the assistance of our Secretary-General, explore that channel. In the course of the negotiations, the legitimate and just aspirations of the two parties, as well as their recriminations and claims, can be examined with the utmost attention.

May the two parties understand that there is no alternative to dialogue and negotiation for the promotion of a just and lasting peace in that region.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Senegal for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Zambia, Mr. Luke J. Mwananshiku. I welcome him here and invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MWANANSHIKU (Zambia): I wish on behalf of the Zambian delegation to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Security Council for giving me this opportunity to participate in the debate on this important subject. As this debate is taking place under the presidency of a representative of a State member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to which both Iran and Iraq belong, we are confident that the two countries concerned will show accommodation in the interest of ending the war.

May I also extend my special compliments to Ambassador Alexander Belonogov of the Soviet Union for the able manner in which he guided the work of the Security Council during the month of September.

My country has been concerned about the war between Iran and Iraq since it started six years ago. In those six years, both countries have suffered heavy losses in human life and property, and resources which were meant to support the economic development of both countries have been diverted to the war. It is our view that the war now even threatens the political and economic security of the region.

My country is distressed about this conflict because, first, the two countries involved are neighbours; secondly, they both belong to the Organization of the Islamic Conference; thirdly, they are both members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries; fourthly, the two countries are also Members of the United Nations; and fifthly - and above all - both countries enjoy friendly relations with Zambia.

Zambia has in the past consistently called on the two countries to end this conflict by negotiation. Indeed, it will be recalled that the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the United Nations have repeatedly invited the two warring partners to cease fighting and to commence negotiations leading to the establishment of peace and stability in the Gulf.

(Mr. Mwananshiku, Zambia)

The Security Council in its resolution 582 (1986) called upon the two States to observe an immediate cease-fire, to withdraw all their forces to internationally recognized boundaries, to exchange prisoners of war and to submit all aspects of the conflict to mediation or any other means of peaceful settlement of disputes.

Zambia notes with regret that although Iraq has accepted and is willing to implement this resolution, Iran, on the other hand, remains inflexible. Zambia again calls on our brothers in Iran to show moderation in the interest of peace and security. We also call on the Security Council to do everything possible to bring this useless war to an end.

For its part, Zambia wishes to assure both Iran and Iraq that it is ready and willing to support and participate in any efforts in search of peace.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zambia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Oman who wishes to make a statement in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States for the month of October.

I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AL-ANSI (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, I have the honour to convey to you, on behalf of my delegation, which has close links with your country, my most sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month. In view of the special links between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates, between whom there has always been co-operation, and of the fact that my country is also President of the Gulf Co-operation Council and Chairman of the Group of Arab States this month, and has close ties with your country and all Arab countries and peoples, we feel the same responsibility regarding common national questions.

On behalf of my delegation and all the other Arab delegations, I am also pleased to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Belonogov, Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, on the excellent manner in which he guided the work of the Security Council in September, especially since it was the first time he assumed the important duties of President of the Security Council, following his stint as an eminent diplomat of his country in the Arab Republic of Egypt.

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

I avail myself of this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and his colleagues in the service of the international community and to find solutions to difficult regional and international problems, especially the conflict between two neighbouring fraternal, Moslem countries, Iran and Iraq.

The war between Iran and Iraq has entered its seventh year and is exhausting their resources and energies. Recently, there has been a serious escalation of this war, at a time when the Gulf ministers were making praiseworthy efforts, following upon the recent sixth summit held in Muscat, in November 1985, on the basis of resolutions adopted at Arab, Islamic and non-aligned summits, councils, conferences and meetings, as well as by other international bodies, with a view to safeguarding the interests of both parties in keeping with acknowledged principles of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter and in conformity with the responsibilities of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General.

The Arab Group, on whose behalf I have to honour to speak today, held a high-level ministerial level at United Nations Headquarters on last Wednesday, 1 October, with a view to co-ordinating Arab positions on the items on the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly. The ministerial Committee of Seven and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States requested the convening of this important series of meetings of the Security Council in order to add impetus to the efforts at ending the unjustified war between Iran and Iraq.

My statement expresses and reflects the deep concern of the Arab Group over the continuing war between Iran and Iraq and also the support of our Group for the good offices undertaken with a view to finding a way that might bring a peaceful end to the war as quickly as possible.

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

While we commend the positive attitude adopted by fraternal Iraq with regard to the peace initiatives undertaken, we continue to hope that the Islamic Republic of Iran will take a similar stand on the international, Islamic and Arab initiatives to put an end to the war, whose continuation and expansion would only serve the interests of the enemies of the Islamic and Arab nation and those of the peoples that cherish peace, security and justice.

My country, along with our fraternal Arab countries, buttressed by their faith in the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force in international relations, as well as their faith in and respect for national integrity and non-interference in internal affairs of States and respect for bilateral and international agreements and freedom of navigation in international waters, have supported all efforts at putting an end to this tragedy. Although there has not thus far been any noteworthy progress towards bringing the two parties face to face at the negotiating table, the United Nations, under the auspices of its Security Council - the main guarantor of international peace and security - the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, remains the best hope for the beginning of an active dialogue and finding a solution to the conflict.

We believe that the important proposals that have long been put forward by the Secretary-General on the subject represent the common denominator and acceptable basis for beginning a dialogue.

The various statements and proposals that have been successively issued in the past year at various regional and international bodies, directly or indirectly, have the same clear and unambiguous goal.

The Arab Group, which has for the first time in many years been actively and collectively participating in a debate in this international body on such an important subject, invites all the parties concerned to make every effort to find a

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

speedy decisive and just solution to this conflict - that is, to bring an end to the conflict between Iran and Iraq. We fully support what is said in dealing with the conflict by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and the ministerial Committee of Seven, which was created by the States members of the League in order to arrive at a peaceful solution as soon as possible. We hope that the five permanent members of the Security Council, as well as all members of the Council and of the international community as a whole, will be at our side in seeking the same objective, thus reaffirming the relevant purposes and principles of the United Nations.

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

Both the summit meeting and the ministerial meeting of Arab States reaffirmed the right and the need to put an end to this war and confirmed the national legitimacy of brotherly Iraq. That was emphasized at the second summit meeting in Fez, the Casablanca summit in August 1985 and the League of Arab States meeting held in March 1986. All the summit and ministerial meetings of the Gulf Co-operation Council have taken a similar positive attitude. The summit meetings and ministerial conference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, of which both Iran and Iraq are members, supported the efforts made by the international community, through its good offices, to put an end to the war and find a solution which would restore peace and security for these two neighbouring Muslim countries, Members of our Organization.

The summit meetings of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, including the most recent one in Harare, adopted the same stand for peace. The efforts made by the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the United Nations all complement one another. They are all aimed at achieving the same objective: an end to the war and observance of international legitimacy. I draw attention again to what was said by the Secretary-General in his statement this morning.

After a meeting of the heads of delegations who took part in the general debate in the General Assembly and in the debate in the Security Council, they all asked that an end be put to this war between Iran and Iraq and that freedom of navigation and international maritime trade be respected, as well as the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and of respect for their national integrity. All this proves that we must continue our efforts to restore peace and harmony and to end the war as soon as possible.

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

All this growing international support compels us to ask the Security Council and the Secretary-General to continue their effective efforts in accordance with interests of the international community and the principles of the Charter.

We would like to thank the members of the Ministerial Committee of the Seven, who asked for the convening of this meeting, and to emphasize the need for a successful conclusion, one which would reflect the unanimous Arab will. We hope that the unanimous support of the Security Council and the international community will help us, secure implementation of resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly which have been adopted in this connection in recent years.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Oman for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make a statement.

Mr. KADDUMI (Palestine Liberation Organization) (interpretation from Arabic): It is my pleasure, Sir, to preface my statement by expressing to you our most sincere congratulations on your assuming the presidency of the Security Council, particularly since you represent a brotherly country which is dear to us. Your well-known qualities of skill and wisdom will certainly lead this Council's deliberations to success.

I cannot fail to thank your predecessor, Mr. Belonogov, the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, that friendly delegation, who presided over the Security Council during the month of September. I thank him for his wise guidance of the work of the Security Council, which we followed most attentively. We welcome him to his new post.

(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine
Liberation Organization)

It is also my pleasure to thank this Council and express my appreciation to those who welcomed the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in the work of the Council at this series of meetings.

A few days ago, six years had elapsed since the outbreak of this bloody war, which has caused the loss of hundreds of thousands of human lives as well as astronomic material losses and damages estimated at hundreds of billions of dollars. The Palestine Liberation Organization was in the vanguard of those who sought to prevent that war before it broke out as well as those who repeatedly attempted to put an end to it.

Undoubtedly, the Council will be aware that the Palestinian people are among those most affected by this war and its grave consequences. The continuation of the war hampers international efforts of good will which are aimed at finding a just solution to the crisis in the Middle East. The continuation of the war exacerbates tension in the region and encourages Israel, which occupies Arab and Palestinian lands, to perpetuate its expansionist policy of aggression. During this war, Israel has struck at the Iraqi nuclear reactor, invaded Lebanon and occupied parts of its territory and committed acts of aggression against a peaceful country, brotherly Tunisia. Israel has continued to practise its policy of terrorism against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. Indeed, its arrogance has grown and it has rejected all international efforts and initiatives aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the region.

All these facts and all these events and experiences have shown that the forces of imperialism and zionism are indeed the beneficiaries of this war and of its continuation. Those circles use the war to sow the seeds of division and mistrust as well as intimidation in the region and among its countries.

(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine
Liberation Organization)

They are increasing the pressures on the countries of the region. They propose security agreements, and the United States of America is promoting and developing its alliance with Israel so that Israel may remain a threat to the peoples of the region as a whole, a threat to their independence and national security.

(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine
Liberation Organization)

Aware of the facts I have mentioned, we have actively sought through the good offices Committees of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and by our own unilateral efforts to put an end to the war, which is causing destruction to two brotherly peoples and worsening the already intractable situation in the Middle East. It is also giving the forces of Zionism and imperialism, which are inimical to the aspirations of our peoples for progress, liberation and well-being, a chance to increase their intervention in the region's affairs and to continue to impose their domination and hegemony on those peoples. Therefore, we have always been concerned to put an end to the war.

As an international body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council is called upon today more than ever to take practical, effective measures to put an end to the dispute and establish peace guaranteeing both parties their sovereignty and independence, a peace which will maintain good-neighbourliness, based on the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of either party.

Our peoples - and, indeed, the world - can no longer tolerate a continuation of the war, with the sacrifice of human life, destruction and damage to civilization in that region, which are being caused without justification and without a reasonable goal. The obstinate insistence on continuing the war is no longer acceptable, and must not be condoned.

The international community must speak out, proclaiming firmly and unequivocally the need to end the war and save present and future generations of both countries the horrors of massacre and bloodshed.

(Mr. Kaddoumi, Palestine
Liberation Organization)

The Council has repeatedly debated the war and its evils. We are familiar with its resolutions and declarations. Unfortunately, so far none of them have been implemented.

The world's conscience is strained by the burdens of the war. The international community cannot fail to impose peace and security by all the means available to it.

We have heard that Iraq has opted for peace and the settlement of the dispute. Are we to hear a positive response from Iran? We appeal, from our wounded hearts, to Iran to respond to that call for peace, a call stressed by Iraq in its messages to the Council, in its official declarations, its peaceful initiatives and its acceptance of the Council's resolutions, as well as its response to the Council's appeals for the settlement of the dispute on the basis of international law and norms, so as to guarantee both parties sovereignty and independence, with no interference in the affairs of either.

We repeat our appeal to all members of the Council: do not let this year end with Iran and Iraq continuing to face up to one another in armed struggle. We hope that the Council will adopt a decisive resolution expressing the desire of the international community and all the peace-loving peoples comprising it for an end to the dispute by peaceful means, so that peace may prevail in that part of the world.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Argentina. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. DELPECH (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): First, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. We are certain that your expert and skilful guidance will contribute significantly to the success of the work of this important body.

We wish also to commend your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union, who presided over the Council so effectively last month.

Our decision to participate in this debate was not taken lightly. It is a logical corollary of my Government's firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. The preservation of international peace and security is a principal objective of Argentine foreign policy. We firmly support the principle of the peaceful settlement of international disputes. We believe that Member States are obliged actively to seek a negotiated solution to their disputes with other States.

The Argentine Government has upheld these principles firmly and consistently. They are the basis for our participation in the initiative of the Five Continents and in the Contadora Support Group, as well as for our policy in the dispute over the Malvinas Islands. They compel us to make this statement.

The armed conflict between Iran and Iraq should cease without any further delay. Nothing can warrant its continuation. In fact, it is impossible for us to understand the logic that the indefinite prolongation of this war is a valid way to put an end to the differences between Baghdad and Tehran. That logic, I must say, is incompatible with the system of international coexistence enshrined in the United Nations Charter. To accept it would set a dangerous precedent.

Argentina has excellent relations with Iran and Iraq. We wish those links to continue. At the same time, even at the risk of being misunderstood by our friends in Baghdad and Tehran, we feel that it is our obligation, as responsible members of the international community, to speak out in favour of peace.

(Mr. Delpech, Argentina)

The fratricidal war of the past six years has only brought death and destruction to the two parties. It has diverted resources that are indispensable to the economic and social progress of Iran and Iraq and has not in any way improved the conditions of the two peoples. It has submerged Iran and Iraq in a long night of violence, whose painful results - cities flattened, children orphaned, people mutilated - are daily blows to the conscience of mankind. How could we remain silent?

We are not underestimating the importance of the arguments put forward by the parties, including those related to the beginning of the conflict and the need to respect the rules of war - above all, those of a humanitarian nature. None the less, these issues do not justify the indefinite continuation of the armed conflict; nor do they detract from the urgent need for an immediate cessation of hostilities and, at the same time, the beginning of negotiations to re-establish conditions for a mutually acceptable and lasting solution.

The prolongation of the war between Iran and Iraq has a cost also for the United Nations itself. It contributes to worsening tension and discourages co-operation and progress in a highly sensitive area, an area where there is already conflict. Furthermore, it conspires against the strengthening and credibility of the system of international relations and coexistence that this Organization represents.

We believe that, through the Security Council, the international community must shoulder its responsibility and affirm its common interest in ensuring the prompt restoration of peace between Iran and Iraq. Baghdad and Tehran should accept an immediate cease-fire, the withdrawal of their respective armies to the international boundaries and the prompt initiation of contacts aimed at seeking ways and means of establishing a lasting peace between them. In that endeavour,

(Mr. Delpach, Argentina)

the United Nations should be able to co-operate materially and intellectually by protecting the security of the boundaries, serving as a bridge between the parties and harmonizing ideas for a long-term solution. Perhaps new co-ordinated action could be considered, with the participation of the Secretary-General - whose tireless efforts deserve our appreciation and firm support - and possibly a group of countries not directly involved in the issue.

It is in the broad interest of the international community, and it is its concrete responsibility, to encourage, through effective measures, an end to the war between Iran and Iraq. It is an obligation of the United Nations to make a new, energetic effort in that direction. It is our duty to insist that the two Governments restore to the long-suffering Iranian and Iraqi peoples, as soon as possible, the full exercise of their fundamental right to life and to peace.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Argentina for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Jordan. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. SALAH (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): First, I have the great honour of thanking the members of the Security Council for allowing my delegation to participate in the Council's deliberations on the item on its agenda.

I extend to you, Sir, our warmest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am particularly pleased to see the representative of a brother country, the United Arab Emirates, in this important post. I am sure that you will preside over the Council's deliberations with your well-known skill and wisdom, and that those qualities ensure the success of the Council's work this month.

(Mr. Salah, Jordan)

I express our great appreciation and thanks also to your predecessor, Ambassador Belonogov of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, who presided over the Security Council last month with remarkable skill and even-handedness.

The Security Council is meeting on the initiative of the Arab Committee of Seven, established by ministerial meetings of the League of Arab States in 1982 and given the mandate of following the developments in the Iran-Iraq war.

This is not the first time that the Security Council has met at the initiative of the Committee of Seven or other concerned groups to consider the Iran-Iraq dispute. Furthermore, the Committee has engaged in many endeavours and activities on other international levels in an attempt to help put an end to this regrettable war.

(Mr. Salah, Jordan)

The Council has already issued many appeals and resolutions calling for an end to this dispute and most of the latter shall await implementation. In addition to the efforts of the Committee of Seven and those of the Security Council, many energetic efforts have been made at the highest levels by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference; all this in addition to the efforts of the Secretary-General.

I am recalling these mediation efforts in order to emphasize the importance attached by the States of the region and the international community to this dispute. I also wish to stress the extreme concern at its continuance felt by all. This concern is accompanied by the fervent desire of the international community to see this destructive war end.

The most recent occasion on which the concern of the international community about the continuance of this war and the desire for it to end were expressed was at the eighth summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Harare in September of this year. Extreme anxiety and concern were expressed at the continuance of the war and calls for an end to it were a prominent aspect of the Conference.

Naturally, this international position did not come about in a vacuum. There is international unanimity to the effect that the continuance of this war is not justified from the humanitarian, political or even moral viewpoint. From the humanitarian viewpoint, to date, this war has caused hundreds of thousands of dead and wounded, including a large number of civilians - women, children and the elderly - and resulted in thousands of prisoners on both sides. The extent of civilian damage and the mistreatment of prisoners is such that the Security Council has been prompted to discuss them more than once because of the implicit flagrant breaches of the Third Geneva Convention, of 1949.

(Mr. Salah, Jordan)

There is no need to stress the uselessness of this war from the political point of view. All are convinced that it will not result in a victorious party and a defeated party. Furthermore, there is no possibility of achieving a military solution to the issues of contention between the two warring parties. Furthermore, the war has been draining the economic potential and human resources of both countries and there are justifiable fears about the effect of its continuance on the safety and stability of the region, and this will undoubtedly have an impact on international peace.

We are all aware of the danger to peace and security both in the region and in the world inherent in the continuance of the struggle. We have seen signs of the possibility of the expansion of this war to neighbouring States. This would indeed be a threat to vital international interests, particularly freedom of navigation in international waters.

This concern is increased by our awareness of the unique importance of the region. The neutrality and stability of the Arab Gulf region, are among the most important phenomena in the current international order and have a positive effect on the Middle East region, which is in an explosive state because of acts of aggression and occupation on the one hand and international competition on the other. This has led to extremism and violence which will have grave consequences unless it is dealt with and halted and the reasons for it eliminated before it is too late.

In addition to the elements I have already mentioned regarding the lack of any political justification for the continuance of this war, there is a general feeling that it is the responsibility of the Security Council to ensure that it ends and that its failure to do so raises doubts about the effectiveness of the United Nations both as an institution and as an international order for the prevention of aggression and the establishment of peace.

(Mr. Salah, Jordan)

If there is a consensus that this war is destructive for both parties, that it threatens the region and international peace and security, that it is not possible for the parties insisting on its continuance to achieve the political ambitions and objectives it seeks, that it lessens the effectiveness of the Security Council and has a negative effect on the prestige of the United Nations and the system of collective security - if that is true, why does Iran insist on continuing this war, rejecting all attempts to put an end to it?

It is even more difficult to understand the reasons for Iran's persistence in its desire to continue the war in the light of the fact that the substance of all efforts of good offices aimed at ending the war are based on the following principles: an immediate cease-fire; withdrawal of all forces to internationally recognized boundaries; submission by both parties to mediation and reunification of the use of force, so that a solution to the problems between the two parties may be reached in a peaceful, just and honourable manner, a solution, that is, acceptable to both parties.

What we can conclude from the situation is that Iran does not agree to stem the bleeding of the two countries from a lethal war now entering its seventh year. Iran does not agree to a just, honourable and peaceful settlement, in the interest of both parties, based on negotiation or mediation, so the fighting continues between two peoples linked by close ties of proximity, history and faith. The fighting continues, with all its serious implications for the region. Above all, Iran does not respond to the overwhelming international wish to end this war on a basis that is just and honourable for both warring States. Iran does not seem to pay any attention or heed to the adverse effects of the continuance of the war on the prestige of the United Nations.

Given this situation, the Security Council must take a decisive and effective stand in order to translate into reality the international community's intentions in

(Mr. Salah, Jordan)

laying the foundations for a just and honourable settlement - which is, indeed, the substance of the Security Council resolutions on this issue adopted since 1980. The international community cannot continue to be held hostage to the intransigence or rejection of one party.

Israel and South Africa are two of the best examples of this kind of situation; we do not wish to see Iran become the third. We find ourselves facing a choice: we can either do harm to the credibility and effectiveness of the Security Council or take the necessary effective measures to put an end to aggression and achieve peace in the Gulf region. We must say most sincerely that neither of these options is a first choice. We should like to appeal to Iran once again to respond to international efforts and express its desire to see a just, honourable and comprehensive settlement.

(Mr. Salah, Jordan)

In this context, I do not believe that the Security Council can ignore Iraq's flexibility and positive approach vis-à-vis appeals and initiatives for peace and an end to the dispute. The Security Council cannot but highly appreciate that flexibility and positive approach.

However, should Iran persist in its defiance of the wish of the international community to put an end to the war - and we have so far seen no indication to the contrary - we shall have no choice but to act collectively through the Security Council and individually as States so as to compel Iran to respond to the appeals for peace, in its own interest, in the interest of the region and in the interest of the peace and security of the world.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Jordan for the kind words he addressed to my country and to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. KABANDA (Rwanda) (interpretation from French): I thank you, Sir, for granting my request to speak before the Security Council, and I extend to you warmest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council. We hope that during this month of October, which seems to augur well for the reduction of tensions in certain parts of the world, you will have the good fortune of finding lasting solutions to some of the problems before the Council. That is my earnest wish, as I proceed to make my statement.

As a citizen of the United Arab Emirates, a country which is located in a region that is witnessing one of the bloodiest conflicts in this decade, you can fully appreciate the scope of the human and material losses and the geopolitical stakes involved in the conflict between Iran and Iraq - two neighbouring fraternal countries whose peoples have throughout history developed together, forging identical civilizations and cultures that have enriched the common heritage of mankind.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

I wish also to congratulate Ambassador Belonogov of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the manner in which he guided the work of the Council during September. We are convinced that his political and diplomatic experience will bring a significant contribution to the cause of international peace and security.

The Charter has conferred a difficult duty upon the Security Council - to watch over international peace and security. Where peace is enjoyed, it must be maintained; where it is fragile, it must be consolidated; and when it has been breached, it must be restored. Hence the Council must remain vigilant at all times. The Charter has granted it broad powers and privileges; but without the active collaboration of the States involved its task becomes rather difficult. That task is further complicated when considerations other than peace and security are introduced in considering a breach of the peace.

The solution of conflicts also becomes difficult when the parties involved eschew mediation and the advice of friends, hoping perhaps that conflicts can be settled by force of arms.

The toll in human lives in this fratricidal conflict is in the tens of thousands. Material damage is assessed at several million, if not several billion, dollars. However, above and beyond the human and material destruction, we find particularly heart-breaking the suffering of the women who have lost their husbands, of the thousands of children and young people who, today experiencing the trials of war, will grow up in a climate of mistrust and hatred and, little by little, develop feelings of vengeance. We greatly fear that the necessarily negative effects of this conflict will long leave their imprint on present and future generations.

I have asked to speak in order to call for peace. Rwanda seeks peace for the peoples of these two friendly countries, for the Iranian people and for the Iraqi

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

people. Like all the other Members of the United Nations that believe in the principles of good-neighbourliness, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force in international relations, Rwanda is convinced - and this without placing responsibility anywhere - that the contravention of these principles is at the root of the conflicts we deplore in certain parts of the world, especially in the Gulf region.

The Security Council has endeavoured - alas without success - to accommodate the parties involved. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference have sent mediation missions to Iran and Iraq. Appeals for moderation have been made by the Organization of African Unity and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as by statesmen and others. All that has not succeeded in convincing the two belligerents to commit themselves to negotiations aimed at putting an end to an absurd and costly war, a war whose continuation gravely compromises the interests of the two fraternal countries that are raising the stakes in a manner prejudicial to the interests of their respective peoples.

Rwanda once again expresses the hope that Iraq and Iran will now be convinced by the constant appeals urging them to take the path of harmony and once and for all forsake the path of hatred and deadly destructive turmoil.

Like all the other Members of our Organization, Rwanda is concerned over the continuation of the war, which is undermining the strength and the energies of two fraternal peoples. We maintain the hope that Iraq and Iran will fully appreciate the honour inherent in fostering peace, solidarity and complementarity.

(Mr. Kabanda, Rwanda)

Consequently my Government wishes once again to associate itself with those who, for six years now, have been asking these two countries, bound by the same Islamic faith and by their common ideal of non-alignment, to put an end to a conflict which has lasted all too long by making use of a mutually agreed arbitration that might facilitate a settlement of their dispute.

In this International Year of Peace we beseech Iran and Iraq to do everything within their power to offer their peoples the gift of peace.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Rwanda for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country.

There are no further speakers on my list for this afternoon.

The next meeting of the Security Council, to continue consideration of the item on the agenda, will take place on Monday, 6 October 1936, at 3.30 p.m.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.

