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President: Mr. Rudecindo ORTEGA (Chile).

Statement by the Secretary-General

1. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I should like to draw attention to rule 65 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which provides that the President and Vice-Presidents for an emergency special session shall be, respectively, the chairmen of those delegations from which were elected the President and Vice-Presidents of the previous session. In accordance with the provisions of this rule, I have the honour to invite the Chairman of the delegation of Chile, Mr. Ortega, to occupy the chair of the President in order that he may, in that capacity, declare open the first emergency special session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Ortega took the chair.

AGENDA ITEM 1

Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Chile

2. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): I declare open the first emergency special session of the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

3. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): In accordance with rule 64 of the rules of procedure, I invite the representatives to stand and observe one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation.

The representatives stood in silence.

Statement by the President

4. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): These are not only hours of suspense and anxiety for

people everywhere. These are times of drama and tribulation which trouble the conscience. Peace has been disturbed in the Middle East, and the first attempts to restore it have failed. People all over the world are turning anxiously towards the United Nations, which bears the heavy responsibility of finding a solution for the problems which have brought about this serious situation of belligerency, and of reconciling the divergent views of the parties. Is it still possible for the United Nations to do that? Every Member State bears the grave responsibility, the historic responsibility, of answering that question in the affirmative.

5. This first emergency special session, which I, as chairman of the delegation of Chile, have the honour to open, has been convened for the purpose of examining the problem in all its aspects. May I, in my capacity as the representative of a country devoted to peace and to conciliation as a procedure for settling disputes, express the hope that all members of this Assembly will bring their hearts and minds to bear upon the problem, so that we may find a favourable solution compatible with the principles of the Charter which we must all respect, a solution that will enable us to overcome the obstacles which have thus far prevented the countries involved in this conflict and all those which have offered their co-operation from reaching a peaceful settlement.

6. We all know that in any action we may take we must defend the principles of justice and of dignity which have been jeopardized in this conflict. All of us are aware that the United Nations must fulfil the duties incumbent upon it under the Charter by defending the moral principles which should govern relations among the members of the international community, and that it must safeguard the inalienable right of peoples to work in peace for the advancement and welfare of mankind.

7. Let me therefore repeat the hope that this sound and noble purpose will guide the work of this special session of the Assembly and the decisions which it adopts. With these words, I wish to open the session and extend a cordial welcome to all the representatives.

8. Before considering the first item of the agenda, I would draw the Assembly's attention to a note by the Secretary-General [A/3213] on the summoning of the first emergency special session of the General Assembly. That note embodies the resolution adopted by the

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Security Council at its 751st meeting, held on 31 October 1956 [S/3721], under which the Council decided to call an emergency special session of the General Assembly under the terms of resolution 377 (V) of the General Assembly, entitled "Uniting for peace". The Secretary-General's note likewise confirms the telegram that was sent last night to all Members notifying them that the emergency special session would be held at Headquarters on 1 November 1956 at 5 p.m.

9. I should add that the Secretary-General has received a large number of communications from Governments supporting the convening of this emergency special session. They are being reproduced and circulated as Assembly documents.

AGENDA ITEM 3

Appointment of a Credentials Committee

10. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): We shall now proceed to the appointment of a Credentials Committee, as provided for in rule 28 of the rules of procedure.

11. In accordance with the spirit of the rules of procedure, I feel it would be appropriate to suggest that the Credentials Committee for this emergency special session should have the same membership as the Committee appointed for the tenth session.

12. The Credentials Committee would therefore consist of the representatives of the following countries: Afghanistan, Australia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, France, Indonesia, Iraq, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and United States of America.

13. If there is no objection, I shall consider this proposal approved by the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

14. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): I should add that the credentials of representatives who are not yet authorized to represent their countries in the General Assembly will be recognized in accordance with rule 27 of the rules of procedure, and may be presented by telegram.

AGENDA ITEM 4

Adoption of the agenda

15. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): In connexion with the provisional agenda [A/3214], I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to rule 65 of the rules of procedure, which provides that, unless the Assembly decides otherwise, the Assembly, in case of an emergency special session, shall convene in plenary session only.

16. Unless there is any objection, I shall take it that the Assembly will proceed directly to consider the item proposed for its consideration.

17. Mr. DE GUIRINGAUD (France) (*translated from French*): I should like to know exactly what is the question before the Assembly.

18. In the Security Council, over which I presided yesterday [751st meeting], I put the same question to the representative of Yugoslavia. He replied that his draft resolution was clear, but it was precisely because it was not clear that I put the question to him.

19. Mr. Lodge, the United States representative, answered my question in these words: "I would say that the United States draft resolution would be the one that would be referred to, and that that is perfectly

adequate to meet all the needs of the situation." In my capacity as President, I took note of the United States representative's statement.

20. Presumably, therefore, the Assembly has before it the resolution of the Security Council adopted at the proposal of the United States [S/3721]. It could not possibly be discussing the point raised in the letter from the representative of Egypt, dated 30 October 1956 [S/3712]. General Assembly resolution 377 (V), entitled "Uniting for peace", provides that the General Assembly, meeting in emergency special session, shall be seized of a matter only "if the Security Council, because of lack of unanimity of the permanent members, fails to exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in any case where there appears to be a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression". In the debate on the Egyptian complaint, no draft resolution was submitted. Therefore there was no vote and, consequently, no manifestation of the lack of unanimity of the permanent members. In the circumstances, the Council could not legally bring the Egyptian complaint before the Assembly.

21. The United States complaint, on the other hand, was clearly within the framework of Chapter VI, not Chapter VII, of the Charter. In that case too there was no reason to bring the matter before the Assembly, because, irrespective of whether or not Chapter VII was involved, the second condition laid down by the "Uniting for peace" resolution was not fulfilled.

22. Consequently, on behalf of my Government, I wish to reserve my position fully on the legality of convening this emergency special session of the General Assembly and on all the resolutions which it may adopt.

23. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): If there are no other speakers on the point raised by the representative of France, I shall put to the vote the item proposed for the agenda of this session: "Question considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th meetings held on 30 October 1956."

The item was included in the agenda by 62 votes to 2, with 7 abstentions.

The agenda was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 5

Question considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th meetings, held on 30 October 1956

24. Mr. LOUTFI (Egypt) (*translated from French*): I sincerely thank the members of the Security Council who voted yesterday for the draft resolution presented by Yugoslavia [S/3719], and also those Member States which have informed the Secretary-General that they support that draft resolution and have voted for its inclusion in our agenda today. They have given me an opportunity to address the world forum of the General Assembly in this hour of trial for my country.

25. You all know what the issue is. I shall therefore be brief. As I stated yesterday before the Security Council, this is no time for speeches. My country has been subjected to bloody aggression. More blood is being shed every minute as the result of that aggression.

26. During the night of 29 October 1956, Israel committed the most serious act of unprovoked armed aggression that has taken place since the conclusion of the armistice agreements. This time, it was not a reprisal raid. It was a premeditated, carefully prepared

armed attack for the purpose of occupying part of Egyptian territory and provoking war in that area.

27. On 30 October, during the day, a note from the British Government was handed to the Egyptian Ambassador in London, serving an ultimatum on the Egyptian Government and calling upon it, first, to cease all hostilities on land, sea and air; secondly, to withdraw all Egyptian military forces ten miles from the Suez Canal; and thirdly, to agree to the occupation by French and British forces of part of Egyptian territory, including the towns of Port Said, Ismailia and Suez.

28. The ultimatum called for a reply by 6.30 a.m., Cairo time, on 31 October, failing which the Governments of the United Kingdom and France would intervene as they deemed necessary in order to obtain satisfaction of their demands.

29. Since that date, the Franco-British air force has begun to bomb Egypt from bases in Cyprus, where it is stationed against the will of the inhabitants of the island. Several raids took place yesterday, including raids on Cairo. According to information I have received, three air raids were carried out yesterday by British and French jet bombers, at 7 p.m., 8.45 p.m. and 10.30 p.m. respectively, against the military academy, a mosque, a hospital at Almaza, Cairo airport, some military airfields and several points in the Shubra district. Nine lives were lost.

30. Throughout last night, British and French bombers carried out non-stop raids against all the Egyptian airports. The French air force joined Israel aircraft in their attacks on Egyptian troops in the Sinai peninsula.

31. Today, 21 raids took place over Egypt, 9 of them on Cairo, 3 on Ismailia, 3 on Port Said, 3 on Suez and 3 on Alexandria. In the raid on Alexandria, dwellings at Montaza, near Alexandria, were destroyed. The number of casualties is not yet known.

32. Furthermore, the Commander-in-Chief of the Franco-British forces attacking Egypt declared today, at Nicosia:

"Aerial bombing will continue until Egypt sees reason. Length of the operation depends on how quickly Egypt accepts our terms. The sooner Egypt sees reason, the less damage will occur. We have considerable strength to deal severe blows."

This cynical *communiqué* calls for no comment.

33. Egypt is thus the victim of combined premeditated aggression by Israel, the United Kingdom and France. It is now clear that the aggressors conspired together to commit this act of war.

34. In order to justify the armed attack they have just perpetrated, the Governments of the United Kingdom and France have presented arguments which it is very difficult to find words to describe.

35. Sir Pierson Dixon said yesterday in the Security Council [751st meeting] that he regretted that Egypt had rejected the British ultimatum. I was amazed that the United Kingdom representative could have thought for a single moment that Egypt would agree to Franco-British forces landing on its territory against its will, after unprovoked aggression had been committed against it.

36. The United Kingdom representative has alleged that the main purpose of this intervention is to safeguard the Suez Canal and to restore peace in the Middle East. But no danger threatened the Suez Canal before the Franco-British intervention.

37. According to our information, the aircraft of the aggressors have sunk an Egyptian vessel in the Canal. This act of war committed by France and the United Kingdom in the Canal zone is a violation of the United Nations Charter, the Constantinople Convention of 1888, and the principle of free passage, even in time of war, guaranteed to all States under article 4 of that Convention.

38. Apart from all this, who gave the United Kingdom and France the right to intervene in order to safeguard the Canal? The 1888 Convention gives Egypt alone the right to take measures for the defence of the Canal. Has there been a decision by the United Nations, a resolution of the Security Council, giving the United Kingdom and France the right to resort to force, with the alleged purpose of safeguarding the Canal and ensuring the free passage of vessels? Many other States use the Canal, yet no one else thought for a moment of resorting to force or of joining the French and the British in occupying the Canal zone.

39. What makes the situation even more strange, as was stressed by Mr. Brilej, the representative of Yugoslavia, at the meeting of the Security Council in the afternoon of 30 October 1956, is that:

"This threat of force is primarily directed against the country which is the victim of aggression. Egypt is being enjoined to waive its inherent right of self-defence as set forth in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Egypt is also being summoned to acquiesce in the occupation of part of its territory by two foreign Powers. It is confronted with a rigid time-limit in the worst tradition of what we had hoped had become an obsolete policy of ultimatums." [749th meeting, para. 26.]

40. Moreover, the United Kingdom representative claims that one of the purposes of the Franco-British intervention is to put an end as soon as possible to any act of war on land, at sea and in the air. If that is really the purpose of the Franco-British intervention, why did the representatives of those two countries use the veto against two draft resolutions containing stipulations for a cease-fire?

41. An argument advanced by the French and United Kingdom representatives which struck my delegation forcibly was their allegation that the occupation was merely a "temporary measure". History has taught us that the words "temporary measure" as used by the United Kingdom representative have a very different meaning from their usual one. The occupation of Egypt in 1882 was a "temporary measure", according to the British leaders at that time. It lasted seventy-four years.

42. But the bad faith of the aggressors hardly needs further proof. It is self-evident that the aggressive action of France and the United Kingdom in trying to settle, on their own account and in a unilateral manner, a question which has been submitted to the United Nations, is a flagrant violation of the Charter. We thought the United Nations Charter had put an end to the reign of force and that the era of the ultimatum and the *diktat*, of bitter memory, had vanished with the signing of the Charter at San Francisco. Resort to force may now take place only in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Charter.

43. France and the United Kingdom, in violating the Charter, have assumed a heavy burden of responsibility before the world. This act will have incalculable repercussions, and France and the United Kingdom will have to bear the consequences.

44. In this grave ordeal which my country is undergoing while attempts are being made to invade Egypt and to trample its sovereignty under foot, one thing only comforts us—the condemnation of this act of aggression by world public opinion, and the fact that two of the great Powers which are members of the Security Council, the United States and the Soviet Union, have censured the use of force by France and the United Kingdom.

45. No less a person than President Eisenhower, and the Soviet leaders also, have clearly stated that they oppose the use of force in the settlement of this dispute. Many other leaders have made similar statements, among them Marshal Tito, the Head of State of Yugoslavia, and Mr. Nehru, the Prime Minister of India. I should have liked to quote their statements, and others as well, but I shall leave this to the representatives of the countries concerned.

46. Even in the United Kingdom, the members of the Opposition, the Labour Party, have condemned the policy of the present British Government in no uncertain terms. Mr. Gaitskell, the leader of the Opposition, made the following statement in the House of Commons yesterday:

“All I can say is that, in taking this decision, in the view of the Opposition, the Government has committed an act of disastrous folly, whose tragic consequences we shall regret for years . . . I can only say that any impartial observer must recognize that this is a clear breach of the Charter of the United Nations . . . There are millions and millions of British people—as we believe a majority of the nation—who are deeply shocked by the aggressive policy of the Government and who still believe that it is both wise and right that we should stand by the United Nations, the Commonwealth and the United States alliance.”

The conclusion to be drawn from these quotations is that, even in the United Kingdom, public opinion by no means approves of the policy of Sir Anthony Eden's Government.

47. As I have already told the Security Council, until such time as the necessary measures are taken by the Council or the General Assembly, the Egyptian Government has no other choice but to defend itself and to protect its rights against this armed and unprovoked attack. We stand by this attitude.

48. This act of war committed by two permanent members of the Security Council is a heavy blow to the United Nations, world peace and all mankind.

49. By using their right of veto against the draft resolutions presented in the Security Council, France and the United Kingdom have paralysed the Council's action. In these circumstances, it is for the General Assembly to follow up the adoption of the Yugoslav draft resolution in the Security Council, and, in accordance with resolution 377 (V), to take the necessary measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression and other breaches of the peace.

50. The Assembly is called upon to take very grave decisions, which will affect the future of our Organization and the principles governing the world in which we live. Egypt is defending itself and will continue to do so. The matter is in your hands. Denounce the aggressors, and put an end to aggression.

51. Mr. GUNewardene (Ceylon): We meet today in a situation of extreme danger to international

peace. The territory of a Member nation has been subjected to armed attack by three Powers. Two of these are permanent members of the Security Council charged with the responsibility of maintaining peace in the world. All three Powers, as Members of the United Nations, have pledged themselves to uphold in spirit and in letter the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

52. As a member of the Commonwealth, an association of nations dedicated to the cause of peace and international harmony, it is with profound sorrow that I express my Government's strong dissent and disapproval of the actions of a fellow member of the Commonwealth with which we have traditional ties of friendship.

53. It is to me a matter of profound grief that I should have to perform this duty. I have always been a stout upholder of the concept of the Commonwealth as one of the greatest contributing forces fostering international peace and the principles of liberty and justice.

54. Events are moving fast, and time is very short. It is not for us to debate at tortuous length the intricate antecedents of this grave situation. The fact remains that aggression has taken place and that this must be halted immediately. The territorial integrity of Egypt has been violated and Egypt has been subjected to invasion and aerial bombardment. What seems to be deplorable is the fact that two members of the Security Council, instead of joining in efforts to halt the initial aggressor, have themselves committed a further act of aggression—all this in the name of peace.

55. It is our strong belief, shared I have no doubt by all right-thinking people, that the United Nations is the proper organ for the settlement of disputes among nations. It is not for individual members of that body to arrogate to themselves the right to intervene with military force. In this case, such intervention occurred at the very moment when the Security Council was earnestly engaged in the pursuit of a peaceful settlement.

56. We have heard the phrase “police action” with regard to internal matters within a sovereign State. We are now asked to accept, in the name of “police action”, a wanton violation of a sovereign nation's rights.

57. This action on the part of three Member States sworn to uphold the Charter constitutes a serious threat to the effectiveness of the United Nations. As a small nation, we look to the United Nations as the guardian of peace, but if superior military strength is wilfully and, in our opinion, unjustifiably used, as in this case, by individual nations in the exercise of their fancied rights, the future of this Organization will be in serious jeopardy.

58. The events of the last few days have demonstrated the tremendous weight of world opinion that has been brought to bear against the reckless use of force. We refuse to believe that there is any nation so devoid of conscience and responsibility that it can continue to defy the moral judgement of the world.

59. In the view of many responsible nations, the action of the United Kingdom and France is a continuation of the tradition of colonialism. It does not require much foresight to see that no nation, however powerful, can turn back the clock in Asia and Africa, and resist the inexorable march of events. The nations of resurgent Asia and Africa are determined to exercise their sovereign rights in conformity with the principles

of the United Nations Charter. It is naïve to assume that this process of change can be arrested by the crushing of a leader or of leaders. The spirit of Asia and Africa can never be crushed.

60. It would be both expedient and dignified for the colonial Powers to accept the change with grace. In this connexion, I have no hesitation in applauding the United Kingdom Government for its timely recognition of the claims for freedom and self-determination in India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. This act earned the United Kingdom the admiration and respect of the whole world. I would appeal to the United Kingdom even at this late stage not to jeopardize this well-earned goodwill in the pursuit of an objective that is fraught with disaster. May I also address a similar appeal to the Governments of France and Israel.

61. In the tragic situation that has developed, my Government feels that the least that should be done is that, first, there should be an immediate cease-fire, and, secondly, all military forces should be withdrawn to their own territory. We feel also that this Assembly should continue in session until these objectives are achieved.

62. At this stage, may I take the liberty of delivering a message sent to this Assembly by my Prime Minister, Mr. Bandaranaike, which reads as follows:

"On behalf of the Government and people of Ceylon, I wish to express my sense of shock and perturbation at developments in the Middle East. I consider that there has been no adequate justification for the invasion of Egyptian territory by Israel and for the action taken thereafter by Britain and France. I consider the situation one of the utmost gravity to the whole world, and press most strongly that Israel, British and French forces be immediately withdrawn from Egyptian territory and the situation prevented from deteriorating into one that is bound to bring calamity and disaster to the whole world. I appeal to you in the name of humanity to do everything in your power to achieve this object."

63. I wish to express also my Government's appreciation of the positive stand taken by the Government of the United States in its earnest search for a peaceful solution of this problem, in spite of its traditional friendships.

64. May I express the sincere hope that the deliberations of this august body will restore peace and harmony to a trouble-torn world.

65. Sir Pierson DIXON (United Kingdom): Before I enter into the substance of the matter for which this emergency session of the General Assembly has been called, I feel bound to point out, as has already been done by the representative of France, and as I did in the Security Council yesterday [751st meeting], that the procedure under resolution 377 (V) of the General Assembly, "Uniting for peace", has, in our view, been improperly invoked on this occasion. I stated in the Council that the draft resolution [S/3519] providing for the convening of this emergency special session of the General Assembly was out of order. I asked that the question be put to the vote, and the result of that vote showed that my doubts regarding the legality of the proposed reference to the General Assembly was shared by several members of the Council. On that occasion I accordingly reserved the position of my Government on the question whether the procedure under the "Uniting for peace" resolution had been properly invoked on this occasion.

66. I shall not restate the reasons why I believe that this procedure is out of order, and I do not wish to argue the point further now. I shall merely endorse the arguments which were advanced a few moments ago by the representative of France in support of the position which we both took up.

67. Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has nevertheless decided to attend this session, for an important reason. It is because it believes that the United Nations can and should do what it can to make effective contributions in the present grave situation in the Middle East.

68. The situation in the Middle East is indeed grave. I do not believe that it has been fully realized by those who may not be as intimately concerned with Middle Eastern affairs as we are how explosive the situation in the Middle East was a few days ago, when the United Kingdom and French Governments took the drastic steps which they felt obliged to take.

69. From all the information at our disposal, we had reason to judge that a major clash, whose consequences would have been incalculable, between Israel and its Arab neighbours was more imminent than at any time since the signing of the armistice agreements in 1949. The sudden Israel mobilization and incursion into Egypt made it imperative to take very speedy and effective measures to prevent a war between Israel and Egypt which could only lead to a general conflagration throughout the Middle East and which would, in its train, have involved prolonged disruption of free passage through the Suez Canal, the canal which is of such vital interest to so many nations.

70. It has long been the declared policy of the United Kingdom to do everything in its power to lower tension in the Middle East in order to bring about conditions favourable for the conclusion of a final peace settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Unhappily, neither Israel nor the Arab States has seen fit to listen to our advice or to that of our friends. It is as a consequence of this that we are now faced with the present situation which culminated in the Israel incursion into Egypt. I think it is fair to say that the United Nations has done everything that it could do to promote the prospects of a final settlement and, in the meantime, to uphold the fabric of the armistice régime.

71. The General Assembly, the Security Council, the Secretary-General and, in the area, the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, have done everything that was humanly possible. As regards the General Assembly, I would recall that at the seventh session, in 1952, a group of delegations, representing countries far from Palestine and with no partisan feelings in regard to the problem, put forward a proposal that the parties to the armistice agreements should negotiate directly with a view to a settlement. After a long and at times very heated discussion, their draft resolution failed to secure a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly; and, except in connexion with the budget of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, the General Assembly has not discussed the Palestine problem since then, four years ago.

72. Then let us look for a moment at the history of this question in the Security Council. As those representatives who have served in recent years on the Council will know, the Security Council has devoted a very great part of its activities to a continuous effort to uphold the armistice régime and to support the United Nations Chief of Staff. It is my impression—

and I should be interested to hear whether my present and past colleagues in the Council disagree with me on this—that the attitude of all the parties has been getting more and more refractory, and less and less inclined to take serious account of the Council's views in so far as these seem to them inconvenient.

73. In these circumstances, how could we have confidence, much as we should have liked to, in view of the past disregard shown by all parties for the United Nations wishes and injunctions and, indeed, disregard for their treaty obligations to one another, that any fresh injunctions by the Security Council would be effective to deal in time—and time was of the essence—with a situation which was getting so clearly out of control?

74. With regret, I say that the Security Council, in our opinion, could have provided no effective remedy in time.

75. I need not here go into the reasons why those provisions of the Charter which were designed to provide the Council with a military arm have remained in abeyance. It is well known that it is because a permanent member of the Security Council, by a persistent misuse of the veto, has seen fit to thwart the intentions of the Charter. The result has been that the world has not been able to rely on the United Nations for the collective security which the Organization was designed to provide. Least of all, in view of the intransigence of the parties and the cynical misuse of its veto power by the Soviet Union, could we expect swift and effective action from the United Nations in an emergency in the Middle East.

76. It is hard to say these things, but I fear they are true. It is precisely because of this unhappy limitation in the effective powers of the Security Council to deal with such an emergency that the United Kingdom and French Governments were compelled to intervene at once, as they were fortunately in a position to do.

77. It was through no wish of ours that a situation arose in which we were compelled to act independently of the United Nations. Indeed, as soon as the news of the Israel action reached us here in New York, in the afternoon of 29 October, I took immediate steps, with the representatives of the United States and France, to make it clear that the Council should be seized of this situation at once.

78. We did not, however, consider that the course of action proposed by the United States, without consultation with Her Majesty's Government, could effectively achieve the twin objectives of separating the belligerents at once and of safeguarding free passage through the Canal.

79. It was in these circumstances that we were obliged to cast our negative votes in the Security Council. The action which we and the French Government have taken is essentially of a temporary character, and, I repeat it, designed to deal with a unique emergency. Our intervention was swift because the emergency brooked no delay. It has been drastic because drastic action was evidently required. It is an emergency police action. The situation is not dissimilar to that which obtained at the time of the North Korean invasion. On that occasion the Member of the United Nations which had forces on hand and was in a position to intervene at once courageously did so. By a happy chance—and I mean the absence of the Soviet representative from the Security Council on that occasion—the Council was able to endorse the United States action. The same fortunate chance was not ours.

I cannot, however, believe that the United States would not, in any case, have acted, and rightly so, in the circumstances.

80. I would now like to try to fill in some of the background of the grave situation with which we are all faced in the Middle East, and which we judged to have reached the point where our own intervention had become essential.

81. Over the years, since the signing of the armistice agreements, every effort has been made to reduce tension between Israel and its Arab neighbours in order that the armistice agreements themselves should be fully respected and conditions created which could lead to permanent settlements in the Middle East. But, despite the continued effort of the Governments most closely concerned, namely, the United States, French and British Governments, and the injunctions of the United Nations, together with the persistent and skilful work of our Secretary-General, there has been a mounting series of incidents and the risks of war have become increasingly greater.

82. It would be a profitless task to attempt to apportion the blame between Israel and the Arab States. It may be, but I am not sure, that in terms of border incidents Israel has infringed the armistice agreements more seriously than have the Arab States. An increasingly serious situation culminated a few days ago in the partial mobilization by Israel of its forces, and a large-scale incursion into Egyptian territory in violation of the armistice agreements. But we must not lose sight of the fact that Israel has felt its very life to be threatened, in particular by Egypt, whose Government has proclaimed, again and again, that its aim is the total destruction of Israel.

83. Let us not forget that Egypt stands today in open defiance of the United Nations. It has deliberately maintained the exercise of belligerent rights against Israel and has refused to afford free passage to Israel ships and cargoes through the Suez Canal, thereby flouting the express injunctions of the Security Council [S/2322]. It is unrealistic to think that, in searching for a peaceful solution of the Palestine problem, we can ignore the declared aspirations of the Egyptian Government to establish an Egyptian hegemony throughout the Middle East, after having eliminated the State of Israel.

84. That is what has been happening, and it is essential to understand this background if we are to deal constructively with the present situation. For it is from these Egyptian policies in particular that much of the present crisis has sprung. I submit that to ignore them is to shun reality.

85. So grave, indeed, is the present situation that it would be wrong for this Assembly to turn a blind eye on the malevolent activities of a country, outside the area, which are no less pernicious for being partially concealed.

86. The Soviet Union bears a heavy burden of responsibility for the present situation. Having extended its domination over a number of ancient and civilized countries of Europe by overt aggression and by covert subversion, the Soviet Union had until recently been able to keep those great nations in subjection by such means of terrorism as the execution, on orders from Moscow, of sincere national patriots, and by the dreaded and hated secret police.

87. It then looked round for further areas to subjugate, and turned its attention to the Middle East. The

Soviet Union has repeatedly intervened in Middle Eastern affairs with the scarcely concealed purpose of discomforting the Western Allies and profiting from the disorder which it itself has helped to create. Both inside and outside the United Nations, Soviet influence has been used to incite the extremists in the Arab countries and to thwart all attempts to achieve a peaceful solution of the Palestine problem.

88. This callous policy was most blatantly revealed a year ago when, by arming Egypt with the most modern weapons, the Soviet Union deliberately brought to nought the careful efforts of the responsible Powers, the United Kingdom, France and the United States, to keep a balance between the war potential of the Arab States and Israel.

89. Not content with thus inciting the Egyptian extremists to follow out expansionist aims in the Middle East, the Soviet Union, by methods of propaganda and subversion, has sought to undermine the establishment of the other Arab States. I do not believe that Egypt would have dared defy the United Nations or forcibly seize the Suez Canal if it had not thought that it would never be brought to book because the Soviet Union could be relied upon to frustrate any efforts by the United Nations to establish peaceful conditions and the rule of law.

90. It was, above all, the Soviet Union's irresponsible exploitation of the privileges of a great Power that had made it impossible for the Security Council to mete out impartial justice as between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Who can deny that, as a consequence, the Security Council has been working under impossible conditions in attempting to maintain the peace in the Middle East?

91. It has indeed been for me ironical, in these last few days, to see the Soviet Union posing—and, it would seem, being accepted—as the apostle of peace, and to see the motives of the United Kingdom and France being maligned and misunderstood. It is more ironical if one pauses for a moment to consider the record of my country in the Middle East.

92. In the first place, it is no exaggeration to say that most of the countries in the area owe their existence as States at all to actions on the part of my country. Furthermore, our contribution to their continued existence as independent States and to their economic prosperity has been immeasurable. There has been a long tradition of friendship and co-operation between the Arab States and England. The emergence, under the aegis of the United Nations, of the State of Israel, has caused many new problems, but we have not been backward in the efforts that have been made to solve those problems. My country, as much as any other, has been responsible for keeping the peace in the Middle East. We have supported all the measures taken by the United Nations towards a just settlement. Again, I would ask representatives to contrast this with the attitude of one of our accusers.

93. I have dwelt at some length on the background in order that there should be no misunderstanding about the reasons which prompted Her Majesty's Government and the French Government to make the communications of 30 October 1956 to the Governments of Israel and Egypt.

94. The immediate situation with which we were confronted was Israel's incursion in force into Egyptian territory, in violation of the Egyptian-Israel General Armistice Agreement, and the ensuing threat to the safety of the Suez Canal.

95. The threat to the Canal arising from Israel movements in that direction—and I can assure this Assembly that it is only too clear that this threat was very real—introduced a further complication in an already highly explosive situation. If the Israel adventure were allowed to continue as planned, it would undoubtedly have given rise to a threat to ships and cargoes in passage, and to the security of the Canal itself. It would have imperilled free passage through that vital waterway. It was a threat to the vital interests of my country, as well as to those many nations which are dependent on free passage through the Canal.

96. The Assembly must acknowledge that, by our swift intervention, the Israel advance has already been halted and this threat to the Canal has been averted. I do not know of any alternative steps which could have achieved this result.

97. It is absurd to suggest—as it has, I regret, been suggested—that our intervention was part of a long-prepared plot concerted with Israel. Such allegations are not only absurd, they are false. It is common knowledge, I think, that, over the past few months, our relations with Israel have been difficult and strained, precisely because of our efforts to restrain Israel from retaliation against its Arab neighbours.

98. Between Egypt and Israel the attitude of Her Majesty's Government remains quite impartial. We do not and could not condone this Israel action, which is clearly in violation of the Armistice Agreement and aimed at the occupation of positions in Egyptian territory. It was indeed precisely because of this very serious Israel violation that we judged it necessary ourselves to intervene. It is, of course, our view that Israel should withdraw its forces from its present positions as soon as this can be arranged.

99. Let me, at this stage, towards the end of my speech, briefly restate the objectives of the Anglo-French intervention. The overriding purposes are: the safeguarding of the Suez Canal and the restoration of peaceful conditions in the Middle East. Let me say with all the emphasis at my command that neither we nor the French Government have any desire whatever that the military action which we have taken should be more than temporary in its duration. It will be terminated as soon as the emergency is over. It is our intention that our action to protect the Canal, to terminate hostilities and to separate the combatants should be as short as possible in duration.

100. The action taken by my Government and by the Government of France has been called an act of aggression against Egypt. This is a charge which we emphatically deny. There is much debate about what constitutes aggression, but it is certainly not true to say that every armed action constitutes aggression. Every action must clearly be judged in the light of the circumstances in which it has taken place and the motives which have prompted it.

101. The action of France and the United Kingdom is not aggression. We do not seek the domination of Egypt or of any part of Egyptian territory. Our purpose is peaceful, not warlike. Our aim is to re-establish the rule of law, not to violate it; to protect, and not to destroy. What we have undertaken is a temporary police action necessitated by the turn of events in the Middle East and occasioned by the imperative need not only to protect the vital interests of my own and many other countries, but also to take immediate measures for the restoration of order.

102. Our action is in no way aimed at the sovereignty of Egypt, and still less at its territorial integrity. It is not of our choice that the police action which we have been obliged to take is occurring on Egyptian territory. We have taken the only action which we could clearly see would be effective in holding the belligerents apart and which would give us a chance to re-establish peace in the area. By entering the Suez Canal area, we would only be seeking to protect a vital waterway, and it is also the only practicable line of division between the combatants.

103. Finally, on this point, I cannot help contrasting the motives of this police action undertaken by France and the United Kingdom in the Middle East with the armed action of the Soviet Union aimed at perpetuating its domination of Hungary.

104. I suggest that there is a great need for realism about this situation. After all, the fighting in which Israel is involved is taking place in Egypt, and it is therefore only in Egypt that it can be stopped. When two householders have committed a breach of the peace, the policeman has no option but to attempt to separate them where it is taking place.

105. Although my Government was obliged to disagree with the measures which it was proposed that the Security Council should take to meet this emergency, because they would have been too late to be effective, I trust that, in the light of what I have said, this Assembly will recognize that the Anglo-French intervention has been justified and is indeed in the best interests of all concerned.

106. I can well understand that the emotional shock naturally created by the fast-moving pattern of events may have obscured the realities behind the events in the Middle East. In the light of what I have said about the ambitions of Egypt and the policies of the Soviet Union, I hope that the true situation will now be clearer.

107. It is indeed ironical to see today in the United Nations the two Powers which have contributed so much to the world Organization being arraigned in certain quarters for actions which they have taken in the interests of the world community and of the United Nations itself.

108. We believe that the United Nations now has a unique opportunity to bring peace to the Middle East. It is our hope that the emergency action we have taken to protect the Canal, to terminate hostilities and to separate the belligerents will result in a settlement which will prevent such a situation from arising in the future. We must speedily work for a settlement of the whole Middle East question which takes account of the legitimate interests of the Arab countries as well as those of Israel.

109. I am not making any precise proposals—it would be inappropriate on such an occasion—but I should like to throw out the suggestion that one method of achieving this would be to convene a suitably constituted conference to consider how best to promote a permanent settlement.

110. I realize that there may at this moment be a temptation for this Assembly to take no effective action but merely to call upon all parties to cease hostilities and withdraw, but I must solemnly state—and I say this with great emphasis—that, if that were the only action which the United Nations was prepared to take at this time of crisis, we would merely revert to the continuation of the chaos in the Middle East which

we have endured in the last eight years. We should thus inexorably be drawing nearer to the time when the growing threat of war became a reality.

111. The first urgent task is to separate Israel and Egypt and to stabilize the position. That is our purpose. If the United Nations were willing to take over the physical task of maintaining peace in the area, no one would be better pleased than we. But police action there must be, to separate the belligerents and to stop the hostilities.

112. In my sober submission, all Members of the United Nations should earnestly bend their efforts to bring about a lasting settlement which can replace the armistice agreements which have now proved to be too fragile for their task of preserving peace and order in the Middle East.

113. Mr. TSIANG (China): Yesterday afternoon, when I voted in the Security Council for the draft resolution to call an emergency special session of the General Assembly, I explained to the Security Council that I was primarily interested in a constructive approach. By that I meant that my primary interest was to help to restore peace and to find solutions in harmony with law and justice. I also stated that, in voting for a special session of the General Assembly, I was not interested in the mere denunciation or condemnation of any party; neither was I interested in providing an occasion for propaganda and controversy.

114. The United Nations, looked at from one angle, is a mechanism for the preservation of peace. It is a delicate and complicated mechanism. If we are to use this mechanism in a constructive way, I submit that in such complicated questions we cannot use push-button operations. The Charter of the United Nations provides us with principles which the Secretary-General has rightly called holy. I submit that the application of these holy principles to our problems, again, cannot be a push-button application. We want to stop war; at the same time we must work hard to remove the cause of war.

115. Time is pressing. I do not wish to make any long statement. I wish to indicate the kind of action which, in the opinion of my delegation, would be suited to the present occasion.

116. I wish, first of all, to take up the Israel phase of the problem. I do not wish to go into the history of the present conflict or the invasion by Israel of Egyptian territory. The officers of the United Nations charged with the supervision of the truce have certified to the United Nations and to the Security Council that Israel has violated the armistice.

117. My delegation would favour, first of all, an unconditional and immediate cease-fire. I think the situation obviously calls for that. Now, whereas one party can break the peace, it requires the co-operation of both parties to restore the peace. Therefore, the cease-fire obligation must be laid upon both Israel and Egypt.

118. Secondly, I feel certain that we all would favour the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israel's forces from the territory of Egypt. However, cease-fire and withdrawal are interrelated, indeed, inseparable. Without the cease-fire, the withdrawal would not be possible.

119. I note that General Burns, in trying to prevent a worsening of the situation in the Sinai peninsula, called for a cease-fire and withdrawal. Therefore my delegation strongly urges that, in so far as we deal

with the Israel stage of this conflict, we ask for an immediate and unconditional cease-fire, and the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israel's troops from the territory of Egypt.

120. Would these two steps alone suffice? After we had taken these two steps, could the Assembly say that we had done all we could to settle the Israel phase of this conflict? I think not. I think it is our duty to bring the moral prestige of the United Nations and of the General Assembly to bear to remove the causes of war and to prevent future recurrences of the conflict which we face today.

121. My term of service in the United Nations has covered the entire period of the Palestine question. This question is in fact a chain of events, conflicts and developments. When we examine each link in that chain, as the Security Council has had to examine the individual links on numerous occasions, we are, for the most part, able to assign blame and responsibility. We can pinpoint that, on a particular occasion, country "X" committed aggression or violated the armistice. That is possible in most of the individual links in this chain of events. But, when we examine the chain as a whole, it would be very difficult and unfair to say that one party, and one party alone, bears the whole responsibility for the recurrence of conflict in the Middle East. The responsibility is two-sided, and the restoration of peace in that region does require the co-operation of all parties.

122. Now that this emergency special session of the General Assembly is meeting—and I feel that the Security Council, in calling for this session, has raised the moral prestige of the United Nations—we must seize the opportunity to do as much as we can to remove the causes of disturbance in the Middle East. I suggest that this special session should make an appeal both to the Arab States and to Israel to make the transition from the state of armistice to the state of peace. The state of armistice has lasted seven years. It has not been able to stand the strains. It cannot stand the strains in the future. We must either advance to the state of peace or we will be forced to retreat to future conflicts and wars.

123. Therefore, so far as the Israel phase of the present conflict is concerned, my delegation stands for: first, an immediate and unconditional cease-fire; secondly, an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israel troops from Egypt; thirdly, an appeal both to the Arab States neighbouring on Israel and to Israel to proceed to make the transition from the state of armistice to the state of peace.

124. Let me now turn to the British-French phase of the present conflict. It is a sad sight. These events were both a shock and a surprise to me. I choose to interpret these developments as a temporary detour which the United Kingdom and France have taken from their usual path of peace. I hope that they will find that this detour leads nowhere, that this detour is a dead end, and I hope that they will soon return to their usual path of peace which they have followed in the community of States.

125. I do not care to assign, and I am not interested in assigning, blame or responsibility. Therefore, so far as this phase is concerned, my delegation stands for: first, an immediate and unconditional cease-fire; secondly, a withdrawal—in case there is anything to withdraw. I am not informed militarily up to the minute. I do not know where the forces are. I hope that there is nothing to withdraw. But, if there are forces to be

withdrawn from Egyptian territory, or from the Egyptian air, or from Egyptian waters, such forces of the United Kingdom and France should be withdrawn.

126. But in this case, too, I do not believe that these two measures—a cease-fire and a withdrawal—would be sufficient. They are important; they are steps that must be taken right away; we must insist on the priority of these two steps, and they must be taken unconditionally—the United Nations cannot bargain for a return to peace. However, facing this complicated situation, I do not believe that these two steps alone would be sufficient. If we should limit ourselves to these two steps, I have the feeling that we would be resorting to what I called a push-button application of the principles of the Charter.

127. A moment ago, I heard the explanations of the representative of the United Kingdom. I must say frankly that I do not accept his explanations, and I have a feeling that those explanations were specially tailored in view of the Charter and the atmosphere in the Assembly. I think the real motives lie elsewhere. And I venture to say that, in taking the actions which they have taken, France and the United Kingdom are not without provocation. There, again, we face a chain of events. The first link in that chain was Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal. I stated in the Security Council [737th meeting] how my delegation regarded that act. We felt that that act was not correct either in substance or in manner. Fortunately, that question was brought to the Security Council, and fortunately there was some kind of agreement. I myself do not say that the six principles agreed upon in the Security Council resolution [S/3675] are a complete solution of the Suez Canal question. I think they do point the way to a solution.

128. I choose to think that the real motive of the United Kingdom and France in this instance is connected with the vital interests that these two States—and others, too—have in the Suez Canal. Therefore my delegation would like to see the Assembly take a further step, to appeal to all the parties concerned to apply immediately the principles accepted by the Security Council and to work out a régime under which, on the one hand, Egyptian sovereignty would be accepted, and, on the other hand, the users of the Canal would feel guaranteed in their freedom of navigation.

129. If we were to limit ourselves, in this phase too, merely to a cease-fire and a withdrawal, again I feel that the Assembly would be doing only a part of its duty. Even if we should succeed in this instance in restoring peace, we might be allowing material to accumulate which some day would again face us with similar problems.

130. The Assembly today, in so far as it can act, must fall back on world public opinion. Fortunately, or unfortunately, public opinion with regard to the Palestine question is divided. It is divided in every country, and I would even venture to say it is divided even in Israel itself. There are extremists and there are moderates in Israel. So is public opinion with regard to the Suez Canal. If the Assembly adopted a resolution which primarily and instantly could restore peace, and at the same time would go far to remove the causes of war, I believe that we would be able to fall back upon the opinion of the moderate people not only in Israel but also in the United Kingdom and France.

131. I think that, in taking action on the Palestine question on the lines I have indicated, and in taking action with regard to the Suez Canal on the lines I

have indicated, we would have strengthened our decision to have a cease-fire and a withdrawal of forces.

132. Mr. DULLES (United States of America): I doubt that any representative ever spoke from this rostrum with as heavy a heart as I have brought here tonight. We speak on a matter of vital importance, where the United States finds itself unable to agree with three nations with which it has ties of deep friendship, of admiration and of respect, and two of which constitute our oldest and most trusted and reliable allies.

133. The fact that we differ with such friends has led us to reconsider and re-evaluate our position with the utmost care, and that has been done at the highest levels of our Government, but even after that re-evaluation we still find ourselves in disagreement. And, because it seems to us that that disagreement involves principles which far transcend the immediate issue, we feel impelled to make our point of view known to you and, through you, to the world.

134. This is the first time that this Assembly has met pursuant to the "Uniting for peace" resolution which the General Assembly adopted in 1950 [*resolution 377 (V)*]. I was a member of the United States delegation and had the primary responsibility for handling that proposal in committee and on the floor of this Assembly. It was then the period of the communist attack upon the Republic of Korea, and at that time surely we little thought that the resolution would be invoked for the first time under the conditions which now prevail.

135. What are the facts that bring us here? There is, first of all, the fact that there occurred, beginning last Monday, 29 October 1956, a deep penetration of Egypt by Israel forces. Then, quickly following upon that action, there came action by France and the United Kingdom in subjecting Egypt first to a twelve-hour ultimatum, and then to an armed attack, which is now going on from the air with the declared purpose of gaining temporary control of the Suez Canal, presumably to make it more secure. Then there is the third fact that after the matter had been brought to the Security Council, it was sought to deal with it by a draft resolution which was vetoed by the United Kingdom and France, which cast the only dissenting votes against the draft resolution.

136. Thereupon, under the provisions of the "Uniting for peace" resolution, the matter was brought before the Assembly upon a call from the Secretary-General instituted by a vote of seven members of the Security Council requiring that this Assembly convene in emergency special session within twenty-four hours.

137. The United States recognizes full well that the facts which I have referred to are not the only facts in this situation. There is a long and sad history of irritations and provocations. There have been armistice violations by Israel and against Israel. There have been violations by Egypt of the Treaty of 1888 governing the Suez Canal, and disregard by Egypt of the Security Council resolution of 1951 calling for the passage through that Canal of Israel ships and cargoes [*S/2322*]. There has been a heavy rearmament of Egypt in somewhat ominous circumstances. There was the abrupt seizure by Egypt of the Universal Suez Canal Company which, largely under British and French auspices, had been operating that Canal ever since it was opened ninety years ago. There had been repeated expressions of hostility by the Government of Egypt

towards other Governments with which it ostensibly had and should have friendly relations.

138. We are not blind to the fact that what has happened within the last two or three days has emerged from a murky background. We have, however, come to the conclusion that these provocations—serious as they were—cannot justify the resort to armed force which has occurred during these last two or three days and which is continuing tonight.

139. To be sure, the United Nations has perhaps not done all that it should have done. I have often—and particularly in recent weeks—pointed out that Article 1, paragraph 1, of the United Nations Charter calls for the settlement of these matters in conformity with the principles of justice and international law; that it calls not merely for a peaceful but also for a just solution. The United Nations may have been somewhat laggard, somewhat impotent, in dealing with many injustices inherent in this Middle Eastern situation. I think that we should, and I hope that we shall, give our most earnest thought—perhaps at the next regular session of the General Assembly—to the problem of how we can do more to establish and implement the principles of justice and international law. We have not done all that we should have done in that respect, and on that account part of the responsibility for the present events lies at our doorstep.

140. If, however, we were to agree that the existence in the world of injustices which this Organization has so far been unable to cure means that the principle of the renunciation of force should no longer be respected, that whenever a nation feels that it has been subjected to injustice it should have the right to resort to force in an attempt to correct that injustice, then I fear that we should be tearing this Charter into shreds, that the world would again be a world of anarchy, that the great hopes placed in this Organization and in our Charter would vanish, and that we should again be where we were at the start of the Second World War, with another tragic failure in place of what we had hoped—as we still can hope—would constitute a barrier to the recurrence of world war, which, in the words of the preamble to the Charter, has twice in our lifetime brought untold sorrow to mankind.

141. This problem of the Suez Canal, which perhaps lies at the basis of a considerable part of the forcible action now being taken, has been dealt with over the past three months in many ways and on many occasions. I doubt whether, in all history, so sincere and so sustained an effort has been made to find a just and peaceful solution.

142. When, on 26 July 1956, the Universal Suez Canal Company was abruptly seized by the Egyptian Government, all the world felt that a crisis of momentous proportions had been precipitated. Within, I think, three days after that event, representatives of the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and France met together in London to see what could be done about the situation. Already at that time voices were raised in favour of an immediate resort to force in an attempt to restore the *status quo* before the Egyptian seizure. But it was the judgement of all three of our Governments that such resort to force would be unjustified—certainly under the conditions existing at the time—and that efforts should first be made to bring about a peaceful and just solution.

143. Instead of any resort to force at that critical moment, the three Governments agreed to call a conference. Invitations were issued to twenty-four na-

tions—including nations which were clearly surviving signatories of the Convention of 1888, nations which were the principal users of the Canal, and nations whose pattern of traffic showed a particular dependence upon the Canal. And twenty-two of those twenty-four nations met. Egypt declined to attend the conference. Out of the twenty-two nations at the conference, eighteen agreed upon what they regarded as sound principles for arriving at a peaceful solution which would be just and fair and which would secure for the future the open use of this waterway.

144. That agreement of the eighteen was sent to Cairo as a proposal. It was presented to President Nasser, who rejected it. Then, the eighteen met again in London and considered a proposal for creating an association, a co-operative group, of the users of the Canal. We felt that it might be possible to work out, with the Egyptian authorities, on some practical, provisional basis, an acceptable arrangement for ensuring the operation of the Canal in a free and impartial way. While that association was in the process of being organized, the question was brought to the Security Council of the United Nations by France and the United Kingdom.

145. In the Security Council, six principles were unanimously adopted [S/3675]. Egypt, which participated in the proceedings, although it is not a member of the Council, concurred. Those principles were, in essence, the ones which had been adopted by the eighteen nations which met in London [S/3665]. A second part of the draft resolution which was presented to the Security Council looked forward to the implementation of the principles. That part was not adopted—owing, in that case, to a veto by the Soviet Union.

146. Despite that fact, there occurred under the auspices of the Secretary-General—to whom I should like to pay a tribute for his great contribution to the efforts at a just and peaceful solution of this problem—exchanges of views on how the six principles could be implemented. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say something which I am quite sure the Secretary-General would confirm—that is, that very considerable progress was made and that it seemed that a just and peaceful solution, acceptable to all, was near at hand. It was hoped that those negotiations would continue.

147. I would remind the Assembly that, at the close of that series of Security Council meetings, I made a statement [743rd meeting, para. 111], which was acquiesced in by all present, to the effect that the Security Council remained seized of the problem and that it was hoped that the exchanges of views by the three countries most directly concerned—Egypt, France and the United Kingdom—with the assistance of the Secretary-General, would continue. They did not continue, although I am not aware of any insuperable obstacle to their continuance.

148. Instead, there occurred the events to which I have already referred: the resort to violence, first by Israel and then by France and the United Kingdom—the events which again brought the matter to the Security Council and which, in the face of the vetoes cast there, have brought the matter before the General Assembly tonight.

149. Surely, I think that we must feel that the peaceful processes, which the Charter requests every Member of the United Nations to follow had not been exhausted. Even in the case of Israel—which has a legitimate complaint, since Egypt has never complied with the Security Council's 1951 resolution recognizing Israel's

right to the use of the Canal—there was a better prospect, because the principles adopted at the series of Security Council meetings on the Suez Canal, and adopted with the concurrence of Egypt, called for the passage of ships and cargoes through the Canal without discrimination and provided that the Canal could not be used or abused for the purposes of any nation, including Egypt.

150. Thus, peaceful processes seemed to be at work. As I have said, it appeared—at least to us—that those peaceful processes had not run their course. While I should be the last to say that there can never be circumstances where force may not be resorted to, and certainly there can be resort to force for defensive purposes under Article 51 of the Charter, it seems to us that, in the circumstances which I have described, the violent armed attack by three Members of the United Nations upon a fourth cannot be treated as anything but a grave error inconsistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter; an error which, if persisted in, would gravely undermine this Organization and its Charter.

151. The question then is: what shall we do? It seems to us imperative that something should be done, because what has been done, in apparent contravention of our Charter, has not yet gone so far as irretrievably to damage this Organization or to destroy it, and indeed, our "Uniting for peace" resolution was designed to meet just such circumstances as have arisen. It is still possible for the united will of this Organization to have an impact upon the situation and perhaps to make it apparent to the world, not only for the benefit of ourselves but for all posterity, that there is here the beginning of a world order. We do not, any of us, live in a society in which acts of disorder do not occur, but all of us live in societies where, if such acts do occur, something is done by the constituted authority to deal with them.

152. At the moment, we are the constituted authority, and while, under the Charter, we do not have the power of action, we do have a power of recommendation, a power which, if it reflects the moral judgement of the world community, world opinion, will be influential upon the present situation.

153. It is animated by such considerations that the United States has introduced a draft resolution [A/3256] which I should like to read out:

"The General Assembly,

"Noting the disregard on many occasions by parties to the Israel-Arab armistice agreements of 1949 of the terms of such agreements, and that the armed forces of Israel have penetrated deeply into Egyptian territory in violation of the General Armistice Agreement between Egypt and Israel of 24 February 1949,

"Noting that armed forces of France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are conducting military operations against Egyptian territory,

"Noting that traffic through the Suez Canal is now interrupted to the serious prejudice of many nations,

"Expressing its grave concern over these developments,

"1. Urges as a matter of priority that all parties now involved in hostilities in the area agree to an immediate cease-fire and, as part thereof, halt the movement of military forces and arms into the area;

"2. Urges the parties to the armistice agreements promptly to withdraw all forces behind the armistice

lines, to desist from raids across the armistice lines into neighbouring territory, and to observe scrupulously the provisions of the armistice agreements;

"3. *Recommends* that all Member States refrain from introducing military goods in the area of hostilities and in general refrain from any acts which would delay or prevent the implementation of the present resolution;

"4. *Urges* that, upon the cease-fire being effective, steps be taken to reopen the Suez Canal and restore secure freedom of navigation;

"5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to observe and promptly report on the compliance with the present resolution to the Security Council and to the General Assembly, for such further action as they may deem appropriate in accordance with the Charter;

"6. *Decides* to remain in emergency session pending compliance with the present resolution."

154. I recognize full well that a recommendation which is merely directed towards a cease-fire, to getting back to the armistice lines the foreign land forces in Egypt which, so far as we are aware today, are only those of Israel, to stopping the attacks by air and to preventing the introduction of new belligerent forces in the area, and which puts primary emphasis upon that and upon the opening, as rapidly as possible, of the Suez Canal, is not an adequate and comprehensive treatment of the situation. All of us, I think, would hope that out of this tragedy there should come something better than merely a restoration of the conditions out of which this tragedy arose. There must be something better than that, and surely this Organization has a duty to strive to bring that betterment about. If we should fail to do that, we, too, would be negligent and would have dealt only with one aspect of the problem.

155. I have said, and I deeply believe, that peace is a coin which has two sides—one is the avoidance of the use of force and the other is the creation of conditions of justice. In the long run you cannot expect one without the other. I do not by the form of this draft resolution want to seem in any way to believe that this situation can be adequately taken care of merely by the steps provided therein. There needs to be something better than the uneasy armistices which have existed now for these eight years between Israel and its Arab neighbours. There needs to be a greater sense of confidence and sense of security in the free and equal

operation of the Canal than has existed since three months ago, when President Nasser seized the Universal Suez Canal Company. These things I regard as of the utmost importance.

156. But if we say that it is all right for the fighting to go on until these difficult and complicated matters are settled, then I fear that such a situation will be created that no settlement will be possible, that the war will have intensified and may have spread, that the world will be divided by new bitterness and that the foundation for peace will be tragically shattered. These things that I speak of need to be done, and I believe that they are in the process of being done because the Security Council is already seized of these matters and has been working upon them in a constructive way.

157. We must put first things first. I believe that the first thing is to stop the fighting as rapidly as possible, lest it becomes a conflagration which endangers us all—and that is not beyond the realm of possibility. As President Eisenhower said last night, the important thing is to limit and to extinguish the fighting in so far as it is possible and as promptly as possible. I hope, therefore, that this point of view, reflected in the draft resolution, will prevail, because I fear that if we do not act, and act promptly and with sufficient unanimity of opinion so that our recommendations carry real influence, there is great danger that what has started and what has been called a police action may develop into something which is far more grave; and that, even if that does not happen, the apparent impotence of this Organization to deal with this matter may set a precedent which will lead other nations to attempt to take into their own hands the remedying of what they believe to be their injustices. If that happens, the future will be dark indeed.

158. When we wrote the Charter at San Francisco in 1945, we thought that we had perhaps seen the worst in war and that our task was to prevent a recurrence of what had been. Indeed, what then had been was tragic enough. But now we know that what can be will be infinitely more tragic than what we saw in the Second World War. I believe that at this critical juncture we owe the highest duty to ourselves, to our peoples, and to posterity to take action which will ensure that this fire which has started shall not spread but shall be promptly extinguished; and then to turn with renewed vigour to curing the injustices out of which this trouble has risen.

The meeting rose at 7.40 p.m.