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CONTENTS

	Page
Address by Mr. Oliver James Seraphin, Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica	687
Agenda item 9: General debate (<i>concluded</i>) Speech by Mr. Bangui (Central African Republic)	691

President: Mr. Salim Ahmed SALIM
(United Republic of Tanzania)

Address by Mr. Oliver James Seraphin, Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica

1. The PRESIDENT: This afternoon the Assembly will hear a statement by the Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica, His Excellency Mr. Oliver James Seraphin. I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Oliver James Seraphin and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

2. Mr. SERAPHIN (Dominica): Mr. President, the Commonwealth of Dominica wishes to congratulate you on your election as President of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly and to wish you well in your new office. That you were elected to that office by this body is ample evidence of the Assembly's faith in your capacity to live up to the high expectation of that responsibility. The Commonwealth of Dominica also salutes the United Republic of Tanzania for producing so able a diplomat.

3. The Commonwealth of Dominica also congratulates the Secretary-General for a comprehensive and instructive report on the work of the United Nations over the past year [A/34/1]. The report gives us confidence that there is some hope for the continuation of the fine work that the United Nations has been undertaking and for the continued projection of the spirit of peace and security and brotherhood that inspired its foundation. We note that the report also very realistically lets it be known that all is not so well in many areas of the Organization's endeavours, one of those being the area of peace-keeping. It is to be hoped that each of us will examine his conscience in respect of the principles of the Charter and by so doing reaffirm our commitment and allegiance to those principles.

4. The Commonwealth of Dominica wishes to congratulate our sister State, Saint Lucia, which became the one hundred fifty-second Member of the Organization during this current session of the General Assembly, and we look forward to welcoming the State of Saint Vincent in the not-too-distant future. We are confident that we shall find it easy to work with every Member of the Organization. We wish also to thank all

those Members which have promoted and greeted our admission to the United Nations and which have promoted and defended our interests in that forum.

5. It is said that what is obvious and well-known bears purposeful repeating at certain times and in certain places. Hence, permit me to observe with emphasis that the Commonwealth of Dominica is a small country. I am pleased to be reminded of the saying, too, that good things come in small packages. We trust that the representation here of our country will be a shining example of the tradition of this Organization and of the international community as a whole, and that, further, this bears testimony to the fundamental rights of all free and independent nations, irrespective of size, to participate and contribute in the deliberations of this Assembly.

6. The emergence on the world scene of a large number of small States or mini-States, particularly in the Caribbean, is one of the phenomena of the second half of the twentieth century. But while the world community has recognized this phenomenon, yet very little has been done in concrete terms to come to grips with the very real problems—such as a lack of economic viability and an undue dependence on metropolitan Powers—confronting these States. Note is taken with much concern of the threatened confrontation of two of the world's super-Powers on the very doorsteps of the Caribbean archipelago. The implications of this can be very far-reaching, especially in terms of the future development of our countries and the stability of this region as a whole, and therefore we hope for an early resolution of this situation in the best interest of the Caribbean basin.

7. It is well known that the Commonwealth of Dominica became a legally, politically independent and sovereign State on 3 November 1978, which is less than a year ago. The chequered constitutional, social and political history of our State up to that date makes for some interesting reading. However, we are aware that many other States Members of the United Nations are not familiar with that history in its intimate details. Our country is a Caribbean State, situated at longitude 61 degrees west and latitude 15 degrees north. It is only 289.5 square miles in area and has a population of approximately 80,000. It lies between the two departments of the Republic of France—Guadeloupe, which is some 30 miles to the north, and Martinique, which is some 30 miles to the south. This geographical proximity has resulted in an ongoing and dynamic cultural closeness which is reflected in the fact that a large number of Dominicans still speak a French patois.

8. The basically export-oriented agricultural economy of our country has rested mainly on bananas, which constitute about 60 per cent of our exports and 80 per cent of foreign-exchange earnings, and a small quantity of citrus and coconuts. Our tourist industry

has been slowly getting off the ground, but this trend has now been tragically reversed, as has so much else in Dominica, since the onslaught of Hurricane David on 29 August 1979.

9. The story of third-world countries can be a fascinating and painful drama, but ours would certainly be in the running for first place if there were prizes to be awarded. Towards the latter part of 1978 and during the early part of 1979, the dreadful leaf-spot disease wreaked havoc with the banana industry of the Commonwealth of Dominica. The self-evident story of the implications of such an occurrence for an economy whose efforts are based mainly on the tourist industry and, of course, on agriculture is, in fact, too difficult to go into in detail. The impact may be grasped, however, if we say simply that the banana industry, which is largely labour-intensive in the Commonwealth of Dominica and which employed several thousands of persons, was responsible for the bulk of our exports and foreign-exchange earnings, as has already been noted. This has linkages and interlacings, that permeate the economy as a whole and, consequently, the life and livelihood of the entire population. The leaf-spot disease and the disaster were hardly over when the people of the Commonwealth of Dominica embarked upon a 24-day constitutional and democratic struggle to replace without violence and within the framework of their independence Constitution, a Government that they considered high-handed and dictatorial. There was a high economic price to pay for the 24 days during which the popular struggle lasted; but the unprecedented constitutional end to the struggle, which resulted in victory for the people and the preservation of democracy, the integrity of the Constitution and respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of the Commonwealth of Dominica, have lessons for States Members of the United Nations and, indeed, for all who are genuinely interested in the preservation of democratic constitutions and in the universal struggle for the preservation of the fundamental rights and freedoms and the downtrodden at home and abroad.

10. The Commonwealth of Dominica had not recovered from the shock and rigours of that struggle when a completely unexpected and deadly stroke by the forces of nature wreaked havoc with the economy, infrastructure and other aspects of life in my country.

11. The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization [A/34/1] makes interesting, but not really surprising, reading in most respects. The remarks contained therein with respect to the political and economic state of the international community, though largely dismal from the immediate point of view of the less developed countries of the world, is a good barometer of the state of the human spirit in an age when there is so much talk, so much discussion and so much journalistic fulmination about human rights and a corollary, the New International Economic Order—a good indicator, indeed, of the sincerity of an unproductive North-South dialogue.

12. Dominica, along with other Caribbean States, continues to deplore the *apartheid* policy of South Africa. That foolhardy policy must fail in time. The dynamics of international exchange and intercourse dictate this. Our own experience has taught us, quite recently, that a suffering and deprived people will al-

ways revolt against their oppressors. What is to be hoped is that it will not be too long before the abomination called *apartheid* is ended and that the price for ending it will not be too costly in terms of human life. In the meantime, those countries which continue to bolster, directly or indirectly, the racist, inhuman system for economic and other reasons, in violation of United Nations sanctions and of conscience, good faith and human decency, must be severely condemned. It is only by the imposition and meticulous observation of the severest sanctions against the evil system of human degradation and exploitation—be such sanctions imposed by individual nations or by the international community—that the system will be brought to heel. All countries whose disposition and persuasion in this matter are similar to ours come in for the highest commendation from the Government and entire people of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

13. We think, perhaps from the point of view of a country not long since cast into the arena of international politics, that the answer to the underlying theme of continuing disturbances in the Middle East lies in the recognition and implementation of the rights of all peoples of the area to a secure homeland which can be enjoyed with dignity. Unless this basic principle is observed and pursued with vigour, with a view to genuine realization, the situation in the Middle East will continue to deteriorate, with increased adverse consequences for the international community.

14. We in the Caribbean do not wish to see the region become a pawn in the international power play. The Commonwealth of Dominica believes in the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of independent, sovereign States. We also believe in the concomitant sovereign right of independent States to choose their allies. It is for this reason that we express reservation about uninvited interference in any form in the internal affairs of other independent States.

15. Mr. President, my Government is fully aware of your record as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and being fully cognizant of the imperative nature of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 1960, we wish to recommend that member States, and the Special Committee on decolonization, should keep a keen eye on the Powers which, by subtle means and by use of euphemistic terminology, perpetuate the process and system of colonization in its old form and in new forms either by economic or ideological means. The Commonwealth of Dominica is further aware that there are many territories and peoples which are still labouring under the yoke of colonialism, which want political independence and an opportunity for self-determination, and whose wishes are being balked in one way or another. To resist submission to the wishes, the will and the determination of such peoples is to court disaster. By the same token it ought to be a moral and human obligation, spelled out in international law, that a colonizing, metropolitan Power, should adequately prepare those colonized to face independence, and that such preparation should not be an excuse for the perpetuation and prolongation of colonial status. Such preparation should also include at least the provision of a sufficiently basic and sound infrastructure. A colonized, enslaved people can never be compensated for the material, physical, social,

cultural and resource exploitation which colonization represents, but at least this would enable them to "take off" over a reasonable period. In that regard, the Commonwealth of Dominica certainly would be hypocritical if it claimed to be a blessed, uncomplaining beneficiary of any largesse on the part of the United Kingdom. Indeed, even to this day, we cannot claim to have had great, if indeed any, success in gaining access to a token independence gift offered by that country. If the reason for such failure is attributable to the Commonwealth of Dominica, as some would suggest, that is, nevertheless, a strident indictment of colonialism.

16. The literature on international economic issues is of old and also of current vintage, voluminous and increasing, and the verbal debate and recrimination continues almost *ad infinitum*. As we all know, the stark fact is that the rich and advantaged, generally, are getting better off, while the poor and disadvantaged, at least in numerical terms, are getting worse off. Now, to the delight of some, we have coined a new escapist phrase: "New International Economic Order". That there is need now, and that there was need before, of such an order is beyond question. What appears to have always been at issue and in question is the will and the determination to institute that Order.

17. The Commonwealth of Dominica is mindful of the whole range of important domestic and international factors that can militate against the speedy realization of the much-needed tilting of the inequitable international economic balance. We find it difficult to accept the short-sighted psychology that perpetuates the use of those plausible factors as a means of continuing and reinforcing an economic system that is unquestionably both unjust and exploitative, explosive and ultimately self-destructive.

18. To complicate matters, the world is faced with an energy crisis which we seem unable to solve. Again, I must emphasize the Commonwealth of Dominica's understanding of the domestic and international imperatives and "politics" that complicate the problem of oil. For example, we understand the need in some quarters to make good the losses suffered as a result of exploitation, and we also understand the counterreaction not to allow former colonies to use oil as a weapon or for blackmail. What we, like the Secretary-General, find difficult to accept is the forced and artificial divorce of the energy issue from the rest of the international economic issues. We are not impressed because we are sceptical about the ultimate consequences of that divorce on the economies of "innocent" countries and the lives of millions of ordinary citizens of the world. That is why we think that the advice of the Secretary-General in his report on the Organization bears repeating:

"We need to organize our efforts to bring the negotiations on the implementation of the new international economic order out of their present state of stalemate;

"We need to deal vigorously with the area of energy, which is a major challenge, and to launch a co-ordinated and imaginative effort by the world community in this field;

"We need to address the urgent problems of the oil-importing developing countries in a concerted and effective way." [See A/34/1, sect. V.]

19. From the foregoing views on international politics and the economic scene, I wish to revert to the situation at home.

20. I should like to present in some detail the devastation which was wreaked by Hurricane David. If there is one disaster that appears to have brought international attention to the Commonwealth of Dominica, it is this catastrophe. That is not surprising. The hurricane was the worst in 100 years, bringing winds of up to 175 miles an hour. It changed course and headed for Dominica quite unexpectedly and nearly unpredictably. Before the hurricane, the economy of the Commonwealth of Dominica, like that of the rest of the Caribbean was an open economy—imports equalled about 70 per cent of the gross domestic product. It was predominantly based on agriculture and it was monopolized by bananas, which accounted for approximately 80 per cent of our foreign-exchange earnings. Added to this was the susceptibility of that crop to external fluctuations in prices and the vagaries of nature, uncontrollable by the Dominican producers.

21. During the past few years, the island faced continued balance-of-payments deficits. The economy grew during the 1960s but underwent prolonged contraction during this decade, with a real annual growth in its gross domestic product of 3.5 per cent, concurrent with population growth of 1.6 per cent and aggravated by decline in banana output and *per capita* income at an average annual rate of 6 per cent. In addition to a fall in the gross domestic product by 12 per cent by 1974, the economy faced severe problems.

22. At this time the oil crisis reared its head and sent prices and production costs catapulting. Fertilizer price rises outstripped increases in farm gate prices, agricultural exports fell by 15 per cent, manufacturing stagnated with the closing down of pumice and timber industries in 1975 and tourism fell, owing to world recession and bad publicity for the island. The trade account contracted, with real imports falling by 30 per cent and exports by 10 per cent. Imports of machinery and manufactured goods fell by 50 per cent, reflecting a stagnation of investment and a reduction in local consumption. The Government was unable to eliminate continuous current deficits, despite the imposition of successively higher taxes. Revenues could not be maintained in real terms, and the economy declined throughout the period, reducing the potential revenue base. Budgetary grants, together with commercial bank credit and financing by the social security fund, were insufficient to cover growing deficits.

23. By the end of 1977, the situation had worsened. A six-week strike by the civil service in September 1977 paralysed the economy. The severing of air and sea links put an end to imports for the period. The 1977 current account reflected a deficit of \$4.5 million from the emergency assistance programme administered by the Caribbean Development Bank. The finances for 1977-1978 saw further deterioration with the settlement of the civil servants' strike by payment of \$5.4 million, which was equal to 27 per cent of the previous year's current revenue.

24. Further, in 1978 banana production continued to fall, with 4,000 acres having to be destroyed during November and December of 1978 owing to the ravages of a disease that caught the industry flat-footed. The

only sector of the economy that experienced some success was soap production, which doubled due to the importation of palm-oil. The coconut industry also saw some economic growth owing to the demand for coconuts in Europe and the Caribbean as well as the shortage of vegetable oils and fats on the world market.

25. It was in the light of that bleak situation that the Government, in stating its aims to achieve economic development, saw them as being to improve the quality of life of the rural population to raise the standard of living of the entire population by increasing the level of economic activities, thereby providing greater opportunity for remunerative employment for the people of the country, to meet the nutritional requirements of the population, and to provide greater economic flexibility by the diversification of agriculture. Up to 29 August of this year every possible avenue had to be exploited to realize those aims.

26. However, Hurricane David made the foregoing sad tale dismal. In the Commonwealth of Dominica, as of 29 August 1979, there were no coconuts, no bananas and hardly any citrus and ground crops. In addition, Hurricane David blew and washed away our already weak infrastructure: our port facilities are almost completely destroyed; we have no hydroelectricity or other electricity; there is no internal telephone communication, and the villages cannot be reached by that means of communication; several of our main and agriculture feeder-roads have been severely damaged or washed away and will not be repaired for a considerable time; nearly every school and other government building has been structurally damaged or destroyed. To date, we are having difficulty instituting the semblance of a resumption of class-room activities, and our school population is consequently adrift, either at home and out of school, or abroad in school away from home.

27. Some 60,000 of our population are at the moment homeless, except for temporary improvised shelters which are not necessarily structurally sound or even healthy; the others who are homeless live in tents and public buildings that had not been blown away or badly damaged. Our already high incidence of joblessness is phenomenally aggravated.

28. In brief, Dominica stands destroyed and in need of all the international assistance it can get. But our spirit and our sense of pride and fair play have not been daunted by the experience. We remain unwilling to allow opportunists to exploit our situation of need for the purpose of making international or regional ideological capital to the ultimate detriment of the people of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

29. And so, the four aims which the Commonwealth of Dominica had set itself have assumed greater paramount urgency and immediacy. We have the greatest faith, a faith that is as clear and unambiguous as far as we are concerned, that the international community will listen to our plea. We therefore make a special appeal in the clearest language—the language of the heart—for over-all assistance in this our hour of suffering and need. The Commonwealth of Dominica is in need of complete reconstruction.

30. We hope that whatever further assistance may be forthcoming in response to the present appeal and as a result of the study of our situation at home undertaken

by ECLA¹—whose findings we trust will be circulated through this Assembly to Governments throughout the world—will be consistent with the genuine needs of the Commonwealth of Dominica, as signified by our Government. We wish this fact to be generally known and recognized. I have used the expression “further assistance” in the fullest awareness, because our boundless gratitude must go to the many Governments and agencies which rushed so quickly to the rescue of our country and people in an effort to provide immediate relief assistance, and to so many others that have made pledges of assistance which, we hope, will materialize as a matter of urgency.

31. I wish to thank publicly all those Governments, organizations and agencies which have assisted or offered to assist. To those which have already assisted, we say we would appreciate any further assistance, if they are in a position to give it. To those who have not yet offered or have not been given an opportunity to make an offer, we say that we are still in need and can do with any assistance compatible with that need. To the United Nations itself and its administration we say, “sincerest thanks for your expressions of sympathy and your assistance.” We have every confidence that the Organization will continue to make tangible demonstrations of its concern and solicitude.

32. To all we say that the immediate and paramount task that lies ahead for the Commonwealth of Dominica is the over-all reconstruction of our country in the wake of a natural disaster over which man had absolutely no control, despite his technological and sophisticated advances.

33. Reconstruction effort is therefore only primarily Dominica's responsibility; but in a “global village” and in the spirit of brotherhood, international peace, stability and co-operation, we hope the international community will not leave it to the Commonwealth of Dominica and Dominicans alone. The Commonwealth of Dominica is down, but not out. We are confident that, by the grace of the Almighty and the help of our friends, we will rebuild our country.

34. We conclude with a reiteration of our congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election to that position of grave responsibility and our expression of hope for a fruitful and successful term of office.

35. As a new Member of the United Nations, we wish to let it be known that we stand by the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. We respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of every nation, large or small. We respect each nation's sovereign right to make its own decisions, and we stipulate the concomitant duty and obligation of other States to respect that decision. A compelling corollary of the principle of territorial integrity is the sovereign right to control ownership by the State of its natural resources. We deprecate any attempt, overt or covert, to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States. International indications appear to be that the majority of the world's peoples, particularly in the third world, are for equitable international intercourse in the economic and other areas, without pressure to align with one antiquated ideological bloc or the other. The Commonwealth of Dominica identifies with that mood and feels that any

¹ See document E/CEPAL/PLEN.13/G.6.

attempt from any quarter to counter or reverse it may well be foolhardy at best and disruptive of international peace.

36. I am aware that I have not dealt with any problems which confront our Organization today, and more especially those which are of particular importance to the Commonwealth of Dominica, such as the proposed convention on the law of the sea, and that much time has been taken in bringing to the attention of this body the singular problems of the Commonwealth of Dominica. However, this is not through an oversight, but rather because I am guided by the need to expose to the world community the abject constraints which impede our ability as a recently independent mini-State to stand up to the economic and political winds that are storming throughout the third world.

37. It is our expectation that the constant and ceaseless expressions of good faith and good intention of Member States will now find an available repository in the Commonwealth of Dominica.

38. We look forward to our continued and permanent participation in the affairs of this Organization. We wish to maintain and justify the confidence of all free and recently independent nations that, in our newly found relationships with our former masters and expected brothers in the community of nations, all the resources available to the world will shortly be harnessed for the common good, realizing as we do that equity is the foundation upon which the era of the 1980s will allow for the universal solution of problems that will be resolved through peace, goodwill and solidarity.

39. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica for the important statement he has just made.

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (*continued*)

40. Mr. BANGUI (Central African Republic) (*interpretation from French*): A world in crisis, mankind in disarray, in peril, in danger of being swept away in a general conflagration, in an apocalyptic cataclysm, which it must ward off to make sure that the human race survives, chronic economic and financial disorder based on obsolete theories and definitions, insensitive to the inevitable changes brought by time, which it must redress and rationalize if it wishes to bring peace and justice to the world—this, in rough outline, is the picture of the international situation, fraught with dangers and pitfalls, racked by anxiety and anguish, which we should think about and study during this thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, so as to try to find, in the spirit of harmonious and calm co-operation which has always characterized our Organization, appropriate solutions to the multiple and complex problems besetting the universe that recent developments require.

41. But this thoughtful analysis requires us to go beyond what we already know, beyond the possible and the imaginable. We must go beyond the boundaries of thought to discover the sources which inspired human genius, not to cause the destruction and the disappear-

ance of mankind but, on the contrary, to bring about its happiness and well-being.

42. These thoughts should be pondered by our Assembly during the present session in order to apprehend, encompass and grasp the immensity and the scope, the urgency and importance of the task which requires of our Organization political will and a more decisive and more sustained commitment.

43. This brief introduction at once places the main concerns of my delegation before the present session of the Assembly and is the message of our faith in the destiny of the United Nations.

44. Therefore, at this very late stage in the general debate, I should like to associate my delegation with the heartfelt congratulations addressed to Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim by the eminent speakers who have spoken before me from this rostrum on the occasion of his outstanding and unchallenged election to the presidency of our Assembly. The unanimity of his election does honour to the whole of Africa, a well-balanced continent with a bright future, and to the United Republic of Tanzania, a country which, after a short period of independence, has shown its vitality, its dynamism and its political maturity, and which is seeking to make, with conviction and resolve, a major contribution towards spreading the noble ideals of our Organization and of world peace. The large body of experience of that skilled and seasoned diplomat in international problems is, for my delegation, a comforting augury of success.

45. With respect to Mr Liévano, that writer and statesman whose eminent qualities we have appreciated, his competence and the mastery with which he guided the previous session has merited the satisfaction of my delegation, as well as that of others. We should like to extend to him our sincere thanks.

46. To Mr. Kurt Waldheim, our indefatigable Secretary-General, who is completely devoted to the cause of our Organization, whose tireless efforts to restore credibility and confidence in the United Nations and in world peace, so fragile and precarious, so threatened but so desired by all, are well known to us, I should like to reaffirm the total support of my Government and the people of the Central African Republic in his activities. May the wishes of my delegation for his success be with him wherever he goes in his efforts to strengthen peace.

47. Furthermore, we note with satisfaction that the universality of our Organization, enshrined by the Charter, is being reaffirmed more every day with the admission of new Members, which come here every year to expand and strengthen its activities to bring about the consolidation of its vocation, which, though still Utopian at San Francisco, has now become a dynamic reality and a vital need which mankind has been forced to face.

48. My delegation, therefore, welcomes with great joy and pardonable pride the entry of Saint Lucia to the great family of the international community. We are convinced that the recent struggle that it waged to recover its inalienable rights and the heavy price that it paid, as well as its unquenchable thirst for justice, freedom and independence are valid reasons for my delega-

tion to believe in its profound devotion to peace and its unswerving determination to be part of the common effort to contribute to the full implementation of the will expressed at San Francisco. Therefore, I take special pleasure in welcoming that country to our Organization and in expressing, on behalf of my country, my delegation and on my own behalf, warmest wishes for ever-growing happiness and prosperity for its valiant and courageous people.

49. Since the thirty-second session, our Organization has gone through a very important stage, abounding in events which have marked international life, threatened by the curbing or even the shattering of its vitality and of its resolve for renewed activity, its efforts to adapt to the need for inevitable changes which stem from the requirements of the modern world. That ardent desire for a fresh start, that deep and legitimate aspiration for peace and international security should, in our opinion, be expressed by a more sustained and decisive will and political commitment courageously to face events of all kinds in order to dispel the uncertainty and the threats which weigh heavily on the future of mankind and to break down the contradictions of our Organization which weaken its action and paralyse its momentum.

50. Having said that, I should like to proceed, as briefly as possible, to a retrospective examination of the international political situation. A world-wide approach, which is indispensable for this examination, reveals murky areas as well as bright spots in the world political sky, which we want to be pure and calm. Despite the laudable efforts made by our Organization to maintain international peace and security, to establish a new international economic order, the world situation remains marked by threats of conflict, injustice and socio-economic inequalities.

51. The world of tomorrow, a better world, a world of justice and freedom, of moral values, will not come about through a distorting prism or through preconceived ideas. Intelligence, which has allowed man to make prodigious progress, to push forward the bounds of knowledge, must be placed at the service of his emancipation for the realization of his most legitimate aspirations and his most elementary rights. One of the great acts of courage that will have to be accomplished by the world community in modern times will be the categorical and definitive rejection of those obsolete stereotypes, to bring about a more dynamic future, resolutely turned towards the search for the well-being and happiness of man. One of the traits of modern man is his propensity for new ideas which bring about progress.

Mr. Naik (Pakistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

52. After that appraisal of this no less important aspect of the responsibilities and political obligations of our Organization, I should like now to undertake an more in-depth discussion of recent world events which, because of their political, military, social, economic and cultural impact, continue to dominate international affairs, raising the spectre of an apocalyptic war and postponing the prospects of true international peace and security to which mankind legitimately aspires. An analysis of these events reveals a pattern of confrontation of divergent interests and the implacable antagonism of established ideological systems. Will man-

kind succumb to these contradictions, or will it take up the challenge and achieve justice and peace?

53. In truth, the manifestations of that antagonism and confrontation have been felt most recently in Africa and Asia, continents which have now become the favourite terrain for hegemonistic conflicts waged by the great Powers for the dissemination of their ideologies in order to widen their spheres of influence.

54. A cradle of humanism which has managed to resist the pernicious assaults of the vicissitudes of time, Africa has been able, since time immemorial, to make its notable contribution to the universal spread of culture, a source of emancipation. Africa is today a theatre of ideological confrontation manifested in the field by pockets of tension.

55. Heedless of the irreversible winds of independence which have been blowing throughout the world, in Africa, in Asia and in Latin America; deaf to the desperate cries of peoples fighting tooth and nail for their freedom and independence; and insensitive to the human suffering of the developing countries, those great Powers continue to organize and maintain their ideological rivalries and their political, military and economic competition to delay the advent of total and final decolonization.

56. The fight being waged here and there for the full exercise of people's right to self-determination and to the free choice of their socio-economic systems has always been, and will always be, a liberation struggle. It will always triumph, as it has already triumphed, over obscurantism and imperialist forces, however mighty they may be, because it responds to the deep aspirations of those who wage it, and because nothing can resist that combat. It is a source of hope that victory will finally be won.

57. To say the least, it is regrettable that the Western Powers that still give multilateral support to the champions of one of most abhorrent and barbarous forms of colonialism—loathsome racism which, entrenched in southern Africa, the last bastion of an anachronistic era, has been institutionalized in the name of goodness-knows-what philosophy—cannot learn the lessons of history and face the truth about our modern times.

58. Undoubtedly, Africa is now turning one of the most tragic pages in the history of its decolonization, of which the most recent moving, pathetic, cruel and barbarous episodes are occurring now in its southern part.

59. Hence, regarding the Zimbabwe situation, my Government has, here as elsewhere, had occasion to express grave concern over the threat to international peace and security posed by the situation in that country due to the constant and deliberately abusive violation of the most sacred human rights and by the systematic refusal to transfer power to the majority. Moreover, my delegation has always considered that any final solution aimed at genuine peace must of necessity, and quite obviously, involve the Patriotic Front, the sole representative of the people of Zimbabwe. In other words, any proposed settlement which leaves out the Patriotic Front is doomed to failure. Muzorewa and Smith have just learned this bitter lesson after the rigged elections the results of which were rejected and

condemned out of hand by the entire international community.

60. That is why my delegation welcomes with satisfaction and relief the specific proposals adopted at the historic Lusaka Conference.² We are convinced that the Commonwealth Conference will be able to exert its influence in the practical implementation of those agreements [see A/34/439-S/13515], which mark an historic watershed in the history of Africa.

61. By the very nature of the unimaginably far-reaching dimensions and implications of the conflict, the United Nations, that guarantor of total decolonization, which is one of the basic purposes and principles of its Charter, must reaffirm and assume its responsibilities in this matter.

62. As for Namibia, the situation prevailing in that part of Africa continues to arouse deep concern. The more time that passes, the more remote are the chances for a lasting and final solution, and the more critical is the situation. That is why, in my delegation's view, only the strict implementation of relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and especially Security Council resolutions 435 (1978) and 485 (1979)—can enable the people of Namibia, under the banner of the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO], its sole representative, to achieve its deep legitimate aspirations to total peace, freedom and independence within a framework of respect for Namibia's unity and territorial integrity. Therefore, my country solemnly reaffirms its full support for SWAPO, that spearhead of the armed struggle of the Namibian people, as well as the pledge of our continued unreserved support for all efforts to bring about the total elimination of *apartheid*, that disgrace to ethical behaviour and a defiance of the international community.

63. Along the same lines, I should like to reassure the front-line States of my country's sincere fraternal support. We reiterate to them, with the same faith and conviction as always, our entire solidarity.

64. Concerning Western Sahara, the Central African Republic, in its deep devotion to freedom, peace and independence, unreservedly supports the efforts undertaken here and elsewhere to bring about a just and lasting settlement of this highly volatile issue. We endorse, in a spirit of solidarity, the decisions taken at the Monrovia Conference by the Organization of African Unity [OAU].³ In my delegation's view, any just and equitable solution must be based on self-determination. That is why my delegation wishes to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Government of Mauritania, which has just strikingly demonstrated its staunch political maturity by signing the Algiers agreement [A/34/427-S/13503, annex I]. That was a courageous and wise decision redounding to the honour of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and, indeed, to the whole continent of Africa.

65. The Middle East, a land of conquest since time

immemorial, a haven of refuge and the cradle of the world's three great monotheistic religions, a hallowed ground of tolerance and a source of justice and brotherhood, is today, as a paradox of history, the theatre of one of the most murderous, abominable wars and one of the most implacable, divisive conflicts weighing on the human conscience. The situation prevailing in that part of the world, which is so close to Africa, is a continuing source of deep concern to my country.

66. Fanned by great-Power struggles for influence, carried on through proxies, and dominated by passion and emotion, the situation prevailing in that region battered by a long destructive war constantly threatens humanity with general conflagration, so enormous are the risks of explosion.

67. In the opinion of my delegation, a just and lasting peace, so ardently desired by the people concerned, can be achieved only in the framework of a comprehensive settlement. Furthermore, we consider that a joint effort among the parties to a dispute is not always incompatible with the goals sought, because any frank dialogue is constructive; but in order for it to be so, passion must yield to reason, which is a source of enlightenment.

68. That is why my country will support all efforts and initiatives taken here or elsewhere to bring about a peaceful atmosphere and a return to calm leading to real peace. In this respect, my delegation considers that the Camp David agreements⁴ are not necessarily negative, for they are based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

69. In stating this, I wish solemnly to proclaim—should there still be need to do so—that the exercise by the Palestinian people of their legitimate rights is one of the prerequisites to a final solution to this conflict. At the same time, the right of the State of Israel to exist within secure and recognized borders should be acknowledged in accordance with the letter and spirit of those same resolutions, to which my country fully subscribed at the time of their adoption.

70. In bringing up the burning and complex problem of the Middle East, I cannot but recall another bloody and odious tragedy which is rending Lebanon asunder. That country is now the theatre of a violent, bloody and destructive confrontation. The national unity and identity of Lebanon, as well as its territorial integrity, are placed in permanent jeopardy by the escalation of the violence in which the parties are locked.

71. It is my hope that once peace is restored to the Middle East all the Lebanese communities will quell their animosity and quarrels to bring about the national reconciliation which is the only guarantee of the security and independence of Lebanon and which would enable its populations to devote themselves to the task of reconstruction.

72. In this same Mediterranean region the situation in Cyprus, which has remained deadlocked for many years, continues to cause us deep concern. Hence the resumption of the intercommunal talks announced dur-

² Meeting of Heads of Government of Commonwealth Countries, held at Lusaka from 1 to 7 August 1979.

³ Sixteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held at Monrovia from 17 to 20 July 1979, and the thirty-third ordinary session of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, held at Monrovia from 6 to 20 July 1979. See document A/34/532.

⁴ A Framework for Peace in the Middle East, Agreed at Camp David, and Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty Between Egypt and Israel, signed at Washington on 17 September 1978.

ing the Secretary-General's mission last June seemed to bring a glimmer of hope for a return to peace for the valiant and dynamic Cypriot people.

73. But the suspension of those negotiations owing to the profound divergences which exist between the parties to the dispute has quickly cast a pall of doubt over the real will of the two communities to expedite a satisfactory solution. In the opinion of my delegation, all efforts must be pursued to reopen the negotiations in order to bring about a final, just and lasting settlement which would preserve the national unity and territorial integrity of Cyprus.

74. Finally, in South-East Asia, Korea is another source of concern to my country, which, faithful to its policy of dialogue and adamantly opposed to the use of force as a means of settling conflicts between States, is deeply convinced that this is a problem which is of concern first and foremost to the Korean people themselves. The division of a people and of a nation is one of the most harrowing, odious and cruel tragedies there are: an identity and culture run the risk of being shattered and of disappearing. This illustrates how deeply my country is disturbed by the tragedy which is tearing apart the heroic, friendly people of Korea. It is why I exhort the two parties not to do anything which might aggravate a situation which is already tense, and where there is a major risk of flare-up and general conflagration. The price already exacted from the Korean people by its division is too great.

75. This is why my country hopes sincerely that the two parties will renew their dialogue as quickly as possible to bring about the national independent and democratic reunification of Korea on the basis of the principles set forth in the joint communiqué of 4 July 1972.⁵

76. At a time when the United Nations Disarmament Decade is drawing to a close, it is encouraging to note, without being unduly optimistic, that the tenth special session of the General Assembly, which was devoted to general and complete disarmament and was held on the initiative of the non-aligned countries, was an important historic event. For the first time, thanks to the wide-ranging debate to which that session gave rise, world opinion became aware of the gravity of the situation created by the frenzied arms race and of its political implications and apocalyptic consequences for international peace and security.

77. My delegation therefore is justly pleased at the signing of the agreement concluded as a result of the second round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks [SALT].⁶ It considers the agreement to be a major positive contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security, which are so dear to our Organization. The SALT agreement can be considered as a point of departure for the continuation of talks and as an example encouraging the quest for realistic solutions, based on compromise, to disarmament problems and to controversial political problems.

78. Permit me to devote the last part of my statement

⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 27, annex I.*

⁶ Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed in Vienna on 18 June 1979.

to the current situation in my country, the Central African Republic.

79. The dawn of 20 September 1979 saw the rise of a new sun, radiant in the Central African skies: a sun unmatched in its splendour except by the new hopes, the indomitable will of the people of the Central African Republic to burst the chains of oppression and tyranny; a sun calling the Central African people to wrest its own destiny from the controlling hands of a power condemned by history; a sun lighting the way for the Central African people towards a brighter tomorrow, fully devoted to its internal growth and to its positive contribution in its relations with others. For 13 years Central Africa knew weeping and wailing, unspeakable treatment: a veritable nightmare. For 13 years, Central Africa knew torture, assassination and death. For 13 years, Central Africa knew bloodshed: the blood of its many sons and daughters who disappeared into the maw of the night and fell under a hail of machine-gun fire. This is why the people of the Central African Republic today value at its full worth their return to peace and quiet, to liberty and to their role in the comity of free nations. For 13 years Central Africa—accounted until then peaceful and hard-working—experienced a political, social and economic retrogression rarely experienced in the history of nations. Our tentacular institutions were characterized only by confusion and inefficiency.

80. The national party, the Social Evolution Movement of Black Africa, no longer expressed the will of the people, but became the instrument of their regimentation and oppression. It was a party with no political or ideological direction, a party in a quagmire of immobility, unreasonableness and superstition. It freely manipulated the working masses, men, women and children, who served only as conveyor belts to pass along the arbitrary edicts of a despotic power. The party leaders were uneducated, deaf to the needs of the masses and ignorant of public affairs. They were recruited solely on the basis of their ethnic origin, their servility and their greed.

81. Parliamentary power and life were non-existent; the judiciary was in bondage; and governmental responsibilities were confused because they were two-headed, and exercised in fact by a single man surrounded by an entourage which, although superficially respectable, consisted in truth of adventurers and executioners. Decrees, orders and commands were drawn up extemporaneously, amid uncertainty, negligence, inefficiency, intimidation and torpor.

82. Its very substance gone, the administration was paralysed by lack of credit, deficits, and the frustration and under-utilization of its staff, as well as its senior officials, whose careers now faced a precarious future. It was staffed with people recruited on the basis of favouritism and nepotism, who collected State funds while performing no precise function. Drained and in disorder, the administration was totally hamstrung in its various services.

83. Diplomacy was conducted on the basis of alliances which came and went; it was unpredictable, inconsistent and enjoyed no credibility on the international scene.

84. The State police, compliant and corrupt, yielded

to a parallel police and guard force that were overstuffed and lusting for blood.

85. The State funds were managed arbitrarily as though they were a private inheritance, for the benefit of a single man.

86. In the social field, all rights and freedoms were suppressed and the individual had an interminable series of duties.

87. Education was elitist, in a state of decline both from the pedagogical and from the infrastructural point of view. Health services were defective and there was an undetermined growth in the mortality rate.

88. These are a few of the main features of our uncertain political and social life which depended on the whims and follies of a megalomaniac who was always and only interested in titles, honours and money.

89. Although gagged, although not enjoying a single moment of freedom, threatened with physical harm, arbitrary arrest, torture and physical annihilation, the people of Central Africa always resisted and fought, proud and upright, against tyranny and arbitrariness.

90. Even the stages of our fight for freedom were marked by coups and attempts at assassination in the years 1969, 1973, 1974, 1975 and 1976. The establishment in 1977 of a monarchic, autocratic and reactionary régime encouraged our people to fight with fresh vigour and new determination in their anxiety to achieve victory.

91. It is with the blood of our martyred children, of the men and women who fell last January and April, that the people of the Central African Republic, inspired by their instinctive attachment to freedom, appealed to the only democratically elected leader, President David Dacko, who was elected in 1964, to bring down the régime which had been repudiated and condemned by Africa and the world.

92. The people of Central Africa did this because they had an overriding duty so to do. They could not remain silent; they could not continue to be subject to a régime which had killed so many of their courageous sons and daughters. They did so because of a moral obligation—an obligation arising from the support it had received from the international community, in the forefront of which I should mention Amnesty International and various similar non-governmental organizations, as well as France and all those countries who have been friends of the Central African Republic.

93. What could be more natural, then, for a people that had been long in bondage, long deprived of freedom, than to appeal to their friends for assistance to ensure security? What could be more natural than for that people, in resisting a power which had violated even their very conscience, to do what they could to guarantee their own freedom?

94. That is why I wish to tell the community of the United Nations that the outside assistance which the Central African Republic requested from France in the exercise of its sovereignty to maintain security throughout our country was quite proper. It was proper legally

because it was provided for in co-operation agreements made between our two States. It is proper politically because it was requested by Central African patriots and democrats. It is also morally proper because it was the only way to avoid needless bloodshed in a country which has already suffered enough.

95. Be that as it may, the presence of the French Army in the Central African Republic is temporary. It will remain there until the Central African armed forces are reorganized. That is the desire which was expressed by the people during the support march for the President of the Republic, which was held on 23 September 1979.

96. The people of the Central African Republic in expressing that desire did not wish to sell their sovereignty or their wealth. The new régime which we are trying to promote in Central Africa is keenly aware of the sacred nature of its sovereignty and wealth.

97. That is why I wish, on behalf of the Central African Republic and its Government, solemnly to thank France and all those countries and international organizations which joined us in our victorious struggle against an oppressive and anachronistic régime.

98. In expressing this gratitude, I cannot conceal the bitter disappointment of my country over the culpable silence of the United Nations and of the OAU regarding the suffering of the people of the Central African Republic in face of the massive and flagrant violations of human rights in the name of the sacred principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

99. Those institutions, whose basic principles depend on the protection of human rights and freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, will never be able to do anything useful until they stop being a syndicate of dictatorial, oppressive Governments. Those organizations will gain incomparably in stature if they rid themselves of many of their outmoded, obsolete and irrelevant principles, whenever they have to deal with victims of genocide, torture or killing at the hands of brutal or oppressive dictators.

100. The time is ripe for my country, the Central African Republic, to create a democratic State structure. Our goal will be to create a society with no exploitation, humiliation or dictatorship—a society based on justice and on the full development of every human being.

101. The Central African Government has already overhauled its political, administrative and social institutions and it remains convinced that nothing lasting can be achieved without an effective promotion of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

102. The Central African people have just turned a sorrowful page of their history and have given themselves a provisional government which we trust will give us a fresh start. The Government knows that the task ahead will be long. Everything has to be rebuilt within the framework of our recovered national unity. Our Government has established a dialogue with various groups which were fighting from outside our country against the Bokassa régime and whose main leaders are now meeting in Bangui. That dialogue should lead to a programme of joint action.

103. The Central African Republic is fundamentally attached to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the ideals of peace, justice and co-operation, which have been laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and that of the OAU. As soon as it was reinstated, the Central African Republic immediately restored all freedoms of which the people had been deprived for nearly 14 years and it declared that it would uphold any earlier agreements entered into with other Powers whose provisions are not contrary to the higher interests of the people of Central Africa.

104. I wish now solemnly to proclaim our faith in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We vow to spare no effort to promote the creation, functioning and effectiveness of the instruments which have been adopted in the United Nations and in the OAU in order to give concrete meaning to this noble objective.

105. The people of Central Africa, whose very conscience had for 13 years been violated, are keenly aware of the size of the job ahead. They are convinced that theirs is a task which is also facing the Governments of the entire international community.

106. In the field of international relations, I wish to say that for the first time in 13 dark years the Central African Republic is happy and proud to make its voice heard in the concert of nations as a free and sovereign State.

107. That is why I wish to proclaim that in its foreign relations the Central African Republic will pursue a new form of active diplomacy devoted solely to its full development. It will try to gain respect for the principles of good neighbourliness, the peaceful settlement of disputes, free co-operation and mutual benefit, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, non-alignment and support for the just struggle of all oppressed peoples.

108. Together with a political situation that had deteriorated seriously, we were facing a catastrophic economic situation. The country was in a state of complete bankruptcy.

109. His Excellency Mr. David Dacko, the President of the Republic, concerned himself with this situation immediately when, after taking power, he stated:

“For 13 years the country has been exploited by a person who had himself proclaimed Emperor but who demeaned the country in the eyes of the world by his excesses, his ridiculous behaviour and his megalomania. The country is in a state of ruin. The economy has been destroyed.

“There are no more roads, no trade, no production. Public funds and foreign assistance have been misappropriated by Bokassa and deposited in accounts in Switzerland and in Europe.”

110. That statement obviously needs no further comment. But to give members a clearer picture, and to help them better to understand the economic stagnation that Bokassa and his accomplices brought upon our country, I should give the following details.

111. In the area of agriculture, production as a whole

started to decline in 1969. In 1978, the decline was 70 per cent of the initial global figure. The production of cotton, our leading export, declined from 60,000 tons in 1969-1970 to 28,000 tons in 1977-1978. That drop in agricultural production can be accounted for in a number of ways.

112. First, there is the fact that in order better to exploit the peasants Bokassa and his accomplices all set themselves up as official purchasers of agricultural products and through unpopular measures that could be contested by no one, had blocked the producers' purchasing prices while selling prices were constantly soaring in the markets of the world.

113. Then there is the fact that the organizations for agricultural credit that had been set up to give loans to peasants or producers' co-operatives were all in the hands of Bokassa and his accomplices. One had to belong to those circles in order to have any right to the services of those institutions.

114. The non-reimbursement of loans—money from which had been accumulated and misappropriated by the caste of privileged individuals in the fallen régime—destroyed the organizations that could have played an important role in agricultural development in the Central African Republic. Support for the peasants and agricultural popularization campaigns were completely done away with. The disastrous state of the roads—almost all the bridges had been destroyed—made communications between the provinces and the capital, on the one hand, and among the provinces, on the other, very difficult. Credits or subsidies for highway maintenance had been systematically misappropriated by Bokassa and his agents.

115. To these causes we might add the near disappearance of almost the entire social infrastructure in the provinces, and in particular dispensaries, which were in a state of ruin and devoid of medicines. Thus the rural masses were exposed to illnesses of all kinds, which led to a significant increase in the mortality rate.

116. I might also stress that the practice of making payments by cheques that were not always honoured by the Central African Treasury was a source of no solace to the peasants.

117. In mining, one witnessed the plundering of diamonds by Bokassa. Production, which in 1965-1966 was at the 1,500,000-carat level, went down to 300,000 carats in 1977-1978. Bokassa was always parading around with a suitcase full of uncut diamonds, which he used as collateral for his debts.

118. In spite of a chronic budget deficit amounting to more than 4 billion CFA francs, equal to \$US 16 million, Bokassa continued to display delusions of grandeur and a propensity for spending on prestige projects. This megalomania attained its height with the infamous coronation ceremony, and, although all businessmen, citizens and foreigners in Central Africa had to make a contribution, that ceremony emptied the coffers of the public Treasury.

119. After that date, the State was, to all practical intents and purposes, in default. Some of our diplomats abroad had to suffer worse forms of humiliation. The

size of the external debt increased fivefold, and the contributions of the Central African Republic to the budgets of various international organizations were no longer fully paid. This is a disgraceful state of affairs, but it is the truth.

120. The economy of the country was completely destroyed. It was a country without any financial resources, a country whose schools had fallen into ruin, a country in which epidemics broke out in rural zones because of the lack of medicines in dispensaries and hospitals. Such is the legacy of the bloodthirsty tyrant Bokassa.

121. The Central African Republic, in a state of ruin, now needs reconstruction. It must rebuild its economic infrastructure that was destroyed. It must rebuild its schools. It needs medicines; it needs food assistance. Now more than ever before the Central African Republic feels the need for urgent assistance from the international community for its national reconstruction.

122. As a land-locked country, the Central African Republic feels more strongly than any other the impact of the world economic crisis that has existed since 1973, the worst effects of which were amplified in our country by the unbridled greed of our fallen dictator.

123. The world economy is now in veritable crisis. This crisis stems partly from a deterioration in the terms of trade, from the introduction of protectionist measures by the developed countries, from monetary instability, from the inability of most countries to meet the targets set for development assistance, and, more generally, from their lack of the political courage to implement the decisions of the international community regarding the establishment of a new international economic order.

Mr. Salim (United Republic of Tanzania) resumed the Chair.

124. The more serious effects of the crisis have hit the developing countries very hard, especially the least advanced countries, including mine. The fact that the international community has been unable to close the gap between the rich and the poor should encourage it to seek solutions to this problem as a matter of great urgency, because, in the final analysis, the economic well-being of all nations guarantees international peace and security.

125. That is why, to return to my country, I would say that in restoring peace and security my Government needs assistance from the international community.

126. The Central African Republic is a rich and fertile land, and our people, though beaten and battered, are full of talent and imagination. We need financial, material and technological assistance from the international community if we are to mobilize our resources for national rebuilding and reconstruction. We earnestly hope that the United Nations will help us to revive our hopes.

127. Thirty-four years have already passed. They have been decisive years in the course of which the forward march of self-determination of peoples has constantly established the frontiers of many nations of

America, Asia and Africa that earlier were in bondage. That is, perhaps, a short period in the life of nations, but it has been an eventful period, with much sound and fury, with crises and successes arising out of the irreversible and explosive change going on throughout the world. There have been crises and sound and fury in the wealthier countries as well as in the poor countries. There has been a crisis of poverty and lack of equipment. There has been a crisis of over-armament. There has been a crisis of identity and sovereignty in many countries that have been victims of the world-wide balance-of-power game played by the super-Powers. Peoples are still deprived of freedom and are crying out. There has been an economic and financial crisis, and a social crisis. And mankind has experienced a profound crisis as it has awakened to its own ugliness, cruelty and moral poverty. There are many evils to do away with, but there are just as many achievements behind us. After all, in spite of its diverse membership, the United Nations has in 34 years preserved—albeit within rather precarious limits, at times perhaps—international peace and security, understanding and dialogue. It has been a bastion for the protection of the sovereignty of newly independent States. It has been a forum for the struggle for emancipation of peoples still under the colonial yoke.

128. This is the pinnacle of achievement of this century. That is the direction our world seems to be taking as this decade draws to a close.

129. Will mankind manage to bring about the changes that are necessary now, as we usher in a new decade?

130. The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in the general debate. The representative of Angola has expressed the wish to make a brief statement, and I now call on him.

131. Mr. de FIGUEIREDO (Angola): It is with profound sorrow that I speak today. I wish to convey to the General Assembly the deep appreciation of the Central Committee of the MPLA⁷ Workers' Party, the Government, the people and the delegation of the People's Republic of Angola for the numerous tributes paid in this hall during the general debate just concluded to our late President. Agostinho Neto was the father of our nation, the architect of our revolution, the author of the principles on which our nation is based and run. Agostinho Neto was a revolutionary, a visionary, a professor, a humanist, a poet. His work for the liberation of Angola and his quest for stability and peace in southern Africa place him in the ranks of great African leaders. To the third world he was a great friend.

132. Today, we are orphaned without him but, in the realization that life and work must proceed, our Party, our Government and our people are committed to following the progressive path on which Agostinho Neto set us and implementing the policies he formulated. He is no more, but his ideals guide us; his dreams inspire us.

133. Comrade President Neto had planned to participate in one of the sessions of the General Assembly, perhaps even this year. In memory of the visit that might have been, I should like to say, "Hail, Agostinho Neto".

⁷ Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola.

134. Mr. President, the international community is aware that my Government decreed a 45-day period of national mourning. That is why we cancelled our participation in the general debate; but please accept, however belatedly, the sincere congratulations of my Government and my delegation on your election to the presidency of the thirty-fourth session. It is a matter of special pride to all Africa that one of our own should hold this post.

135. Because of its commitment to revolutionary struggle and the cause of liberation everywhere, the People's Republic of Angola will continue to take part in the substantive work of the present session, although we have made no policy statement in this hall.

136. However, we cannot remain silent in the face of recent attempts at reviving "gunboat diplomacy". We condemn imperialism wherever it appears and stand ready to offer our solidarity to the third-world regions and subregions where these activities show signs of resurgence.

137. But our alarm is all the more acute when our own African continent is a target of European adventurism, especially in view of the fact that it is the last continent to be decolonized, and parts of it are still treated as colonies by the former colonizers.

138. The PRESIDENT: Several representatives have requested to be allowed to exercise the right of reply and I shall now call on them in turn. May I recall that the General Assembly, at its 4th plenary meeting, decided that statements in exercise of the right of reply should be limited to 10 minutes on any one item and should be made by representatives from their places. In the interests of orderly procedure, I intend to apply that decision strictly.

139. Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The day before yesterday the Assembly listened to the representative of the Israeli entity exercising his right of reply [28th meeting], in the course of which he falsified the facts when he spoke about Saudi Arabia and some of the brother Arab countries in connexion with the statement of His Royal Highness our Foreign Minister [21st meeting]. Accusing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or other Arab countries of being the enemies of peace is in itself an act of hostility towards peace. The enemies of peace are those who have attacked and usurped the territory of Palestine—the bands of Zionist immigrants in Palestine who unleashed a war of aggression against and dispersed the Palestinian people, which is greater in number than the peoples of many of the friendly countries that are members of this international Organization.

140. The enemies of peace are those who have resorted to arms, which they are still stockpiling, and who have signed an agreement which they call a "peace agreement", while at the same time soliciting destructive, long-range death-dealing weapons.

141. The enemies of peace are those who refuse to recognize the legitimate right of the people who own the land which is their homeland. And those enemies of peace know perfectly well that they will know no rest as long as what belongs to the Arabs by right is not restored to them. The Israeli entity, which was built from its origins on aggression and injustice and lives on a

usurped land which does not belong to it and on transient resources, cannot last. It must surely be counting its days, which cannot be long for such a fragile entity, built on bases that have been known throughout history, as is the régime—the most recent of its kind—of Ian Smith, which has begun to crumble in Zimbabwe.

142. Mr. LOEIS (Indonesia): My delegation is speaking at this late hour because a small number of delegations have made false allegations in reference to East Timor during the course of the general debate.

143. In its statement before the Fourth Committee last year⁸ my delegation categorically refuted such allegations, and therefore there is no need to repeat here what we said then.

144. As is well known, the people of East Timor freely and democratically exercised their right to self-determination when they decided on independence through integration with Indonesia on 17 July 1976, a process which was in full conformity with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV).

145. Prior to this the people of East Timor had experienced 400 years of colonial exploitation, which had left enormous misery and a backwater. In addition, the criminal negligence of the administering colonial Power created an unjust situation and havoc which left East Timor in the throes of anarchy and civil war at the time the colonial Power was departing. The people of the province of East Timor are now living in peace and experiencing development programmes in education, agriculture, health and other areas in unity with the other people of Indonesia.

146. My delegation deems it unfortunate that some delegations persist in ignoring the freely expressed will of the people of East Timor. They continue to make false accusations without fully realizing the facts of the situation.

147. Mr. BLUM (Israel): My country was assailed virulently this morning by Cuba, which addressed the Assembly as the spokesman of the non-aligned group of nations [31st meeting]. One is bound to note that Cuba follows a very odd form of non-alignment. Indeed, its track record scarcely qualifies it as a non-aligned country at all. As is all too well known, Cuba has over the last two decades put itself, both militarily and politically—

148. The PRESIDENT: I should like to draw the attention of the representative of Israel to the fact that the tradition of the Assembly with respect to speeches made by Heads of State has always been that no statements in exercise of the right of reply may be made in the General Assembly hall. He may, however, submit his reply in writing.

149. Mr. BLUM (Israel): With all due respect, Mr. President, I had, I thought, made it clear that I was responding to the statement made by the chairman of the non-aligned group of nations. You, yourself, Sir, introduced the speaker in that capacity, and in the first sentences of his statement he explicitly said that he was

⁸ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Fourth Committee, 32nd meeting, paras. 6-19, and ibid., Fourth Committee, Sessional Fascicle, corrigendum.*

addressing the Assembly in that capacity. So it would seem to me that the exercise of the right of reply is perfectly in order.

150. The PRESIDENT: I do not intend to initiate a dialogue with the representative of Israel, particularly since what is really involved is a matter of courtesy and tradition. It is true that the Head of State of Cuba said he was addressing the Assembly as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, but it is equally true that he continues to be the Head of State of Cuba and he was received here with all the ceremony accorded a Head of State. So in that context I would personally appeal to the representative of Israel to conform to the tradition of the Assembly.

151. Mr. BLUM (Israel): With your permission, Mr. President, I should like to proceed. As is all too well known, Cuba has over the last two decades put itself, both militarily and politically, at the complete disposal of one particular super-Power. Its troops have ever been ready to act as proxies for Soviet expansionism and neo-colonialism in all corners—

152. The PRESIDENT: I am sorry to have to interrupt the representative of Israel, but I am advised that the tradition to which I have referred has been respected—namely, that the right of reply cannot be exercised in the Assembly hall in respect of a statement made by a Head of State. I do not think that it would be fair to depart from the tradition in this particular case. I think that the right thing to do would be for the representative of Israel to proceed in the manner I have suggested. This would not be making an exception with regard to the Head of State of Cuba; the tradition has been respected whenever a Head of State has appeared before this Assembly. If we start departing from this tradition in respect of one Head of State, then we shall be creating a precedent that will not be in the interest of the dignity of the Assembly. Sometimes Heads of State who speak before this Assembly say things that are not totally acceptable to one or another delegation. Still, the tradition has been maintained that no statements in exercise of the right of reply may be made in the Assembly hall and, frankly, I intend to adhere strictly to that tradition, unless the Assembly should decide otherwise.

153. Mr. BLUM (Israel): In view of your statement, Mr. President, I should like to confine myself with regard to Cuba to one particularly insulting statement made about my country and my people which calls for a response—

154. The PRESIDENT: The representative of Israel must know that since I assumed the presidency of this Assembly I have tried to act in as fair a manner as possible. He must know that I have extended that courtesy to every delegation, including his own. But I cannot allow a tradition that has been maintained by this Assembly throughout the years to be departed from in this case. If, therefore, the representative of Israel wishes to challenge the manner in which I am proceeding, I shall have to ask the Assembly to take a decision.

155. Mr. BLUM (Israel): I am not challenging your ruling, Mr. President, but I should like to proceed with my reply without addressing myself to Cuba.

156. The PRESIDENT: If the representative of Israel

is going to speak without referring to the statement made by the Head of State of Cuba this morning, but only to other statements made here, he may continue. But if he again refers to the statement made by Cuba, I shall have to interrupt him immediately.

157. Mr. BLUM (Israel): Thank you, Mr. President. Since Cuba merely gives expression to its master's voice—

158. The PRESIDENT: It seems to me that the representative of Israel wants to exercise his right of reply regardless of what I have said. I think that the Assembly agrees with me that in the particular circumstances, that is completely out of order and not in keeping with the established tradition.

159. Since I know that the representative of Israel is particularly fond of maintaining traditions and adhering to the rules of procedure, and since I wish our proceedings to be orderly, I do not want to be in the position of having to refuse to call on him.

160. I shall now call on the representative of Israel, but if he continues to refer to the statement by the Head of State of Cuba, I shall not call on him again.

161. Mr. BLUM (Israel): Mr. President, in deference to your ruling, I should like to address myself and reply to the statement made by the Soviet Foreign Minister [7th meeting].

162. The Soviet Foreign Minister referred to questions of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is surely too much for him to expect that this Assembly is unaware of the appalling Soviet record on human rights and that it will be taken in by the representative of the Gulag Archipelago. For example, if life in his country is as idyllic as the Soviet representative would have us believe, I wonder if he could explain why in the last two months alone three leading stars from the Bolshoi Ballet and two Soviet international skating stars have found it necessary to seek asylum beyond Soviet shores.

163. Over the past year, the Soviet Union has intensified its incitement against the Jewish people which is disseminated day in and day out in the Soviet press and radio. I shall not burden this Assembly with the odious material against my people that is given such wide currency in the Soviet Union today. I shall only remark that, just as the notorious anti-Semitic fabrication known as the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" was put together at the end of the last century in Tsarist Russia, so today the Soviet authorities continue to regurgitate in the same obscene tradition base lies and slanders against Jews and the Jewish State.

164. Let me turn briefly to the new Soviet proposed item, entitled "Inadmissibility of the policy of hegemonism in international relations" which was presented by the Soviet Foreign Minister in his address to the General Assembly on 25 September 1979. Mr. Gromyko said:

"The time has come for all States Members of the United Nations to take an unambiguous position with regard to hegemonism—to condemn it and to block any claims to hegemony in world affairs." [7th meeting, para. 189.]

165. Does the Soviet Union really believe that the world has forgotten that this is the fortieth anniversary of the ignominious "Treaty of Non-Aggression" which it signed with Nazi Germany on 23 August 1939? That pact precipitated the outbreak of the Second World War. In its "Secret Additional Protocol", the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany staked out their hegemonistic claims to Poland. The Secret Protocol also talked about the "territorial and political rearrangement" of the Baltic States and opened the way during and after the Second World War to Soviet occupation of and hegemonism over Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, and ultimately, to the brutal imposition of Soviet hegemonism on the rest of the captive States in the Soviet bloc, not to mention the outright annexation of extensive territories of various countries. The Soviet Union's present day colonial empire is hegemonism in its purest form.

166. The Soviet Permanent Representative, introducing the new Soviet item in the General Committee, defined hegemonism as "the desire of certain States to dominate other States and other peoples".⁹ However, as Mr. Gromyko rightly declared, there can be no ambiguity in this matter. There can be no double standards either.

167. Is not the presence of Soviet combat forces in both hemispheres "a claim to hegemony in world affairs"? Direct Soviet military involvement through proxies in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Yemen, Syria, Iraq and Libya is incontrovertible. The Soviet Union has only recently doubled its combat capability in the Kurile islands of Japan. Soviet military advisers are actively assisting Viet Nam's push for regional hegemonism in South-East Asia. And to cap it all, the Soviet Union is actively assisting Cuba to build up that country's forces so that it can conduct wars by proxy on behalf of the Soviet Union in more than 20 countries in Africa and the Middle East. All this presumably is not "hegemonism" according to Soviet standards.

168. This, then, is the true face of the super-Power which would lecture Israel, a small and independent country, which I have the privilege to represent, on such subjects as occupation, expansionism, terrorism and militarism.

169. Mr. HAYDAR (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): In view of the late hour and the fact that no point has been raised that deserves a reply, I do not intend to exercise my right of reply at this meeting.

170. The PRESIDENT: As we have now come to the close of the general debate of the thirty-fourth session, I wish to take note with deep satisfaction of the manifest importance attached to the debate by the membership of this Organization. Indeed, as members will agree, this is self-evident, both in terms of the number of participants—a total of 143, by far the largest number in the general debate in the annals of our Organization—and in terms of the importance of their statements. We have thus heard important addresses from 13 Heads of State or Government and 13 Vice-Presidents or Deputy Prime Ministers, as well as 102 Ministers for Foreign Affairs and a number of Cabinet Ministers. The Assem-

bly also had the signal honour of receiving His Holiness Pope John Paul II and of hearing his important address [17th meeting].

171. Of the Heads of State, some addressed the Assembly on behalf of their own countries, others did so on behalf of very large groups of the membership. This was so in the case of the President of Liberia, Mr. William Tolbert, who addressed the Assembly in the earlier part of our session in his capacity also as the current Chairman of the OAU [10th meeting], and the President of Cuba, Mr. Fidel Castro Ruz, who addressed our Assembly this morning in his capacity as the current Chairman of the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries [31st meeting].

172. Without detracting from the equally important debates of previous Assembly sessions, I am convinced that the presence among us of such a large number of eminent statesmen and world leaders clearly demonstrates their deep concern at the ever-growing dimension and magnitude of the complex problems confronting the nations of the world. At the same time, it represents the trust and the confidence which these leaders place in the United Nations as the forum of universality, through which will emerge a consensus of the consciences of mankind and through which peace, justice and human dignity for all—without any exceptions whatsoever—will one day become a reality. As eminently stated by His Holiness Pope John Paul II in his address:

"...in view of its universal character, the United Nations will never cease to be the forum, the high tribune, from which all man's problems are appraised in truth and justice." [See 17th meeting, para. 19.]

173. All participants in the general debate have underscored the pressing need for the expanded role which the United Nations can and should play as an irreplaceable instrument for peace, justice and international co-operation. I am now more confident than ever, given the necessary commitment and the determination on the part of all the Member States, that this Assembly will be able to translate into positive action a number of important suggestions and recommendations made during the debate with a view to finding solutions to many a critical and complex issue confronting the world community. I should like to pay a particular tribute to those who took part in the general debate for their constructive remarks on the various items which, I am certain, will engage the serious attention of all the members. My observation, based on my own past experience within the Organization, is that this has been one of the most exciting, exhilarating and certainly constructive general debates.

174. At the risk perhaps of being premature, I should also like to thank all members warmly at this stage for the exemplary co-operation they have so far rendered to me and other presiding officers in the conduct of the debate, by faithfully complying with the mode of organization of our work, agreed at the outset of the session. The fact that despite the unprecedented number of participants, the debate has concluded without deviating from the established schedule speaks for itself. I wish to express my confident hope that the excellent practice thus established and the manifest spirit of co-operation and goodwill will continue to prevail throughout our work during the remainder of the session.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Thirty-fourth Session, General Committee, 3rd meeting, para. 4, and *ibid.*, General Committee, Sessional Fascicle, corrigendum.

175. Finally, permit me to take this opportunity to express my most sincere appreciation and gratitude to all the speakers and representatives who have expressed their congratulations to me on my election as President of the current session. I have been deeply moved by their generous remarks. As I said earlier, I regard the unanimous decision of the Assembly to be a tribute and an honour for my country and, at the same time, a recognition of my continent and of the OAU which, through their trust in me, made this decision

possible. In acknowledging the good wishes of so many, I wish to reiterate my pledge that I shall continue to do my utmost to live up to the confidence and the trust placed in me. In so doing, I am comforted in the knowledge that I can derive from them the assuring conviction that I can count on the co-operation of all delegations in the efficient and effective conduct of our work at this session.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.