



Temporary President: Mr. Imre HOLLAI
(Hungary).

President: Mr. Jorge E. ILLUECA,
(Panama).

AGENDA ITEM 1

**Opening of the session by the Chairman
of the delegation of Hungary**

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: I declare open the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

2. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: Before calling on representatives to observe a minute of silent prayer or meditation in accordance with rule 62 of the rules of procedure, I propose that we observe the International Day of Peace, on this third Tuesday of September, as proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 36/67 of 30 November 1981, to be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples. Peace remains the primary objective of the Organization. But we have to face the unpleasant fact that peace continues to be an objective that we are seeking rather than an accomplishment to be preserved. For this reason there is no more timely and pressing matter before us, as several armed conflicts keep reminding us, than the eradication of war-like policies and actions and the maintenance of international peace and security. Our peoples expect us to rededicate ourselves to the constant search for peace among nations and peoples.

3. I now invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

AGENDA ITEM 3

**Credentials of representatives to the thirty-eighth session
of the General Assembly:**

(a) **Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee**

4. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: Rule 28 of the rules of procedure provides that the General Assembly shall at the beginning of each session, on the proposal of the President, appoint a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members. Accordingly, it is proposed that, for the thirty-eighth session, the Credentials Committee

should consist of the following Member States: China, Colombia, Indonesia, Jamaica, Mali, Portugal, Uganda, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America. May I take it that the States I have mentioned are hereby appointed members of the Credentials Committee?

It was so decided (decision 38/301).

AGENDA ITEM 115

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions

5. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: Before turning to the next item on our agenda, I should like, in keeping with the established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/38/430, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General in which he informs the Assembly that two Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

6. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: When I adjourned the thirty-seventh session on 21 December 1982 [115th meeting], I had occasion to make some observations on certain aspects of the work done by the Assembly in the session up to that time.

7. Now, as we embark on the thirty-eighth session, I should like, with representatives' permission, to look at the efforts we have made to strengthen international peace and security against the background of events of the past year.

8. Who would not agree that for the proponents of international co-operation the period since September last has been an inauspicious one? There has been definite tension in this period. Wars have broken out in several parts of the world and the focal points of crisis have increased rather than decreased in number.

9. Although relations between the major Powers were maintained, accords in the negotiating forums did not abound. The agreement reached at the Madrid follow-up meeting on security and co-operation in Europe provides a reassuring exception, a sign indicating that even in the present tense international situation it is possible for East and West to find acceptable solutions.

10. The unfavourable international situation inevitably affected the international organizations as well. It is in the nature of the policy of force to approach international issues from the premise of confrontation, to be *a priori* distrustful of negotiations, since they imply the possibility of compromise. This policy prefers unilateral advantages to persuasion and mutual concessions.

11. Such efforts were perceivable during the General Assembly session itself and had an adverse effect on our work. Let me recall my opening statement at the thirty-seventh session [1st meeting], in which I expressed my

hope that our session would make some contribution to a better international atmosphere. Looking back upon the deliberations over the past year I can safely say that, in spite of the heated debates provoked by the efforts at confrontation, it was not these clashes that characterized the session. In a world afflicted with a bad international atmosphere, one cannot expect more of an organization whose primary driving source is international co-operation.

12. As President I had the opportunity to meet a great many statesmen, all of whom underlined the necessity for a stronger peace, disarmament and economic development. If no progress was made on these major issues—or not enough progress—it was because the Organization could not be sufficiently instrumental in forging the commitment of responsible statesmen into a common will to achieve objectives of the Organization. It is incumbent upon us to examine why we failed and to find ways and means of resolving this dilemma.

13. It is not the duty of the President of the General Assembly to make himself the arbiter of the development of the international situation, but he can rightly be expected to sympathize with the protagonists of peace and détente; nor is he authorized by the Charter to adopt a different view. I still cannot see any reasonable alternative to international co-operation.

14. Therefore, it is regrettable that the permanent members of the Security Council have yet to achieve the much needed working relationship required by the Charter and demanded by the cause of peace. It is even more regrettable that obstacles are being raised to prevent the normal participation of the delegation of one of the Council's permanent members in the work of the General Assembly.

15. A large number of resolutions on the question of disarmament can be recorded to the credit of the thirty-seventh session. Unfortunately, the abundance of resolutions is also indicative of the fact that we adopted repetitive resolutions on several topics, the implication being that earlier resolutions have remained ineffective. This, of course, is not the fault of the Organization. On the other hand, it should be considered an undoubtedly positive fact that the overwhelming majority of States are against the arms race and advocate disarmament. Our sense of responsibility for the survival and destiny of the peoples of the world obliges us to persist in tackling the extremely important question of disarmament as a matter of priority. The many useful initiatives and proposals put forward on this subject over the past year will surely help us in this endeavour.

16. Let me add that in the past year I have become more and more firmly convinced of the inevitable necessity of disarmament. The rising spiral of the arms race jeopardizes international peace and security, and as the danger grows, so grows the alleged imperative need for arms buildups, and we are held captive anew by the vicious circle. This is why particular importance should be attached to the bilateral and multilateral initiatives which, whether they relate to space, missile or other weapon systems, demand so much of our attention these days. My belief that we must break free of this vicious circle and that disarmament is in the interest of all mankind has been reconfirmed.

17. It is with deep regret that I note that our session could do little to counter the setbacks in the decolonization process. Special mention should be made of Namibia, whose accession to independence was further delayed by the obstruction of vested interests. The untenability of the current situation was underlined and urgent

action was demanded also in the documents adopted at the important international conference held on this issue in Paris in April 1983.¹ The mandate given to the Secretary-General by the Security Council is in keeping with the declared aim of the General Assembly.

18. Although our session continued to devote full attention to the Middle East problem, the situation in that region has not improved but, unfortunately, has deteriorated. The resolutions of the General Assembly and those of the Security Council concerning Lebanon have yet to be implemented. The exercise of the right to self-determination by the Palestinian people, which was also supported by the recent International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September, is still being delayed by strategic considerations that are alien to the interests of the peoples in the region. The problems of the Middle East, which are further aggravated by another long-drawn-out war, are thereby exacerbated.

19. The picture is, unfortunately, no more favourable with regard to international economic relations. The sixth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development failed to live up to the great expectations, and the world economic crisis still persists. Nor will the situation be alleviated by politically motivated interference by some aimed at hampering international trade and economic relations. National leaders are under growing pressure to ease and gradually cure the ills, step by step. There is urgent need for measures to solve the grave problems faced by most of the developing countries, but without stable East-West co-operation this is not feasible either.

20. The Organization has always accorded priority to human rights. Day after day television brings terrible scenes of violence into our homes. Hundreds of people are tortured and killed in various corners of the globe, and it seems that the world is becoming nonchalant about such horrors—so much so that obvious cases of mass and gross violations of human rights are often relegated to the background even in this Organization, and destructive propaganda prevails instead.

21. If I had to draw a balance of the General Assembly's contribution in the past year to the achievement of the major objectives of the Charter, I could say that considerable efforts were exerted to make this world safer for its inhabitants. The achievements, however, fell far behind the real needs and possibilities. For this to be otherwise we would need, if not literally united nations, at least nations more united. This is no simple task for an organization with more than 150 sovereign Member States, but it is one that needs to be faced time and again. We must continue to try to know each other better and to search for possible and realistic compromises.

22. Regarding some general aspects of our session, I think our work needs to be more substantive and less formal. There is too much repetition and the agenda abounds in items which are not discussed as integrated subjects. All this tends to reduce effectiveness.

23. The Organization would gain weight and authority if our discussions were more concentrated on the major trends and substantial aspects of the international situation. We are often reproached for indulging in debate for debate's sake. To be honest, is there not a grain of truth in this, even if it is far from the whole truth?

24. It is obvious that rationalization of the Organization is needed. The General Assembly has already concerned itself with this issue; further initiatives along these lines will certainly fortify the United Nations.

25. Finally, it gives me great pleasure to reiterate my thanks to our highly esteemed Secretary-General for his assistance and co-operation, which I could always rely on in discharging my duties as President. I should also like to express my gratitude to the members of the Secretariat for their devoted and untiring work during the thirty-seventh session. I conclude by thanking all representatives most sincerely for the co-operation I have enjoyed from them.

AGENDA ITEM 4

Election of the President of the General Assembly

26. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: I now invite members of the General Assembly to proceed to the election of the President of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

27. In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations.

28. May I recall that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/138, the President should be elected from a Latin American State. In this connection I have received a communication dated 19 September 1983 from the chairman of the Group of Latin American States informing me that his Group has decided to transmit to the General Assembly the candidacies of Mr. Davidson Hepburn of the Bahamas and Mr. Jorge Illueca of Panama.

29. The ballot papers are now being distributed. I request representatives to use only ballot papers and to write the name of the person for whom they wish to vote, not the name of the country. Ballot papers containing more than one name will be declared invalid.

At the invitation of the Temporary President, Mr. Woolcott (Australia), Mr. Ott (German Democratic Republic) and Mr. Gbeho (Ghana) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

30. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: I propose now to suspend the meeting while the ballots are being counted.

The meeting was suspended at 4.05 p.m. and resumed at 4.20 p.m.

31. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: The result of the voting is as follows:

Number of ballot papers:	155
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	155
Abstentions:	2
Number of Members voting:	153
Required majority:	77
Number of votes obtained:	
Mr. Jorge Illueca (Panama)	83
Mr. Davidson Hepburn (Bahamas)	70

Having obtained the required majority, Mr. Jorge Illueca was elected President of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly (decision 38/302).

32. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: I extend to Mr. Jorge Illueca of the Republic of Panama my sincere congratulations on his election and invite him to assume the presidency.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) took the Chair.

Address by Mr. Jorge E. Illueca, President of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly

33. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I express my sincere gratitude to the members of the

General Assembly and request them to transmit to their respective Governments my appreciation for the honour and the confidence shown my country, the Republic of Panama, by electing me President of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. I trust I shall be able to discharge my functions satisfactorily. I certainly intend to abide strictly by the letter and spirit of the Organization's Charter and the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

34. I will be greatly helped in discharging my functions by having as a reference point and as an example the balanced and calm conduct of the President of the thirty-seventh session, my distinguished colleague Imre Hollai, to whom I express my admiration for his skilful management.

35. I regard my election as a triumph of the international policy followed by my country over the past 15 years. That policy was laid down by General Omar Torrijos when he led my country's long-drawn-out struggle for its inalienable rights, subsequently recognized in the Panama Canal treaties of 1977. It is today being continued with dignity by President Ricardo de la Espriella.

36. Although my function is a collective one, I must point out that I come from a Bolivarian nation of Latin America. Also, I belong to a third world country and share its problems, concerns and aspirations, as well as its efforts that have had so much influence on the course followed by the world Organization during the past three decades.

37. The Secretary-General, to whom we express our deep appreciation for his direction of the Organization's work, has emphasized, in his report on the work of the Organization [A/38/I], the urgent need to develop international institutions able to face the harsh realities of our time and to renew sincere efforts at the highest level to strengthen international co-operation, in order to meet this challenge capably.

38. The failure of the meetings of GATT and UNCTAD, the stagnation of the global negotiations and the collapse of the other meetings and forums of the North-South dialogue are the result of the negative position taken by the major industrialized countries. That makes it clear to us that the bankruptcy of international co-operation is not just a passing or quantitative phenomenon. On the contrary, there has been a decisive qualitative change: the concept of international co-operation that had been predominant since the war—a concept based on criteria of responsibility and a commitment to assistance—has been replaced by a rigid, pragmatic concept based on cold-blooded considerations of mercantile or financial advantage, in which the developing countries are asked to negotiate at the same level and to reciprocate the concessions of the industrialized countries. This is accompanied by the consequential policy of weakening and obstructing the multilateral system of relations by cumbersome legal restrictions, imposing a pattern of bilateral relations that leaves the way open to the exercise of power and influence.

39. Thus, we are witnessing the birth of a new economic order, the opposite of the one which we call for and dream of—an order in which the advantages and preferences are given by the economically most powerful countries to each other but denied to the weakest.

40. A year has passed since the meeting of the IMF in which the Latin American countries were told that subjecting ourselves to strict austerity would ensure that economic recovery would be just around the corner and that only in that way could we overcome the problem of

indebtedness. But one year later the indebtedness is increasing more and more instead of diminishing, in spite of the praiseworthy sense of responsibility with which our peoples have been making painful sacrifices to pay off their debts.

41. Particularly inequitable has been the handling of the indebtedness of the third world countries by the financial centres which charge the poorest countries rates of interest and commissions that are much higher than those charged the richest countries or their companies. This unjust treatment is based on mistaken considerations of risk. I would even describe it as irrational, because in fact risk arises when one plays with the fire of misery and the impatience of peoples that have descended to the very abyss of extreme poverty. Finally, it is naive and even dangerous, both politically and humanly, to suppose that the developing countries will postpone indefinitely their hopes for a profound change in the conditions of their existence—or, indeed, the mere satisfaction of their most elementary needs—in order to pay their creditors interest rates which they consider exorbitant and usurious.

42. It is regrettable that the United Nations system lacks any institutional machinery guaranteeing a rational solution to this problem, which is undoubtedly serious for world financial stability but even more serious for the development and well-being of two thirds of mankind.

43. The comments I have just made lead us to share the appeal made to the Assembly with the purpose of halting and reversing the erosion of multilateralism and internationalism at both the political and the economic levels and of salvaging the principles underlying the world Organization, principles that are also the basis of its credibility, its authority and its prestige, which are today being tested.

44. Consequently, we share the firm conviction of the Group of 77 that the global negotiations are a valid and useful means of finding an overall and consistent solution to the world economic crisis.

45. As stated yesterday at the conclusion of the thirty-seventh session by Mr. Sobhan, Chairman of the Group of 77, "the General Assembly must not ignore the desperate and rapidly deteriorating situation in the developing countries that is the consequence of the mounting imbalance and disorder in the global economic and financial system" [122nd meeting, para. 17]. The inclusion on our agenda of this important item reflects the wish that the Assembly should undertake the task of launching global negotiations boldly, imaginatively and pragmatically and, more important, as a matter of immediate priority.

46. As I assume the presidency of the Assembly, I wish to associate myself with the position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries as reiterated by its Chairman, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India, at the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held from 7 to 12 March 1983 at New Delhi [see A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2], when she urged the countries of the third world to resolve among themselves disputes in which they are involved through peaceful talks, as distinct from intervention by third parties. The Prime Minister also urged the heads of State or Government to attend this session of the General Assembly with the aim of considering together the principal world problems and seeking to find fair, reasonable and just solutions for each of the current problems. I hope that this noble initiative will lead to the best of results.

47. On 24 July 1983, on the bicentenary of the birth of the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, I had the honour, as the personal representative of President Ricardo de la

Esprilla and as Vice-President of Panama, to sign in the capital of Venezuela the "Manifesto to the Peoples of Latin America" [A/38/325], which was signed by the Presidents of the Bolivarian republics of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Panama, and also the Declaration of the Heads of State of the Bolivarian Republics and of His Majesty Juan Carlos I, King of Spain [A/38/323].

48. The Manifesto affirms Latin American unity and states that the destiny of Latin America lies in its own hands, thus rejecting the policy of blocs and attempts to link notions of world supremacy with the contemporary process going forward in our countries. The Manifesto also proclaims the Latin American identity of our peoples, within a universal spirit open to the ethnic and cultural contributions of all mankind. The Manifesto further stressed our unity with the other peoples of the third world in confronting underdevelopment and establishing a new international economic order.

49. The Caracas Declaration states that the historical heritage and moral example of the Liberator continue to enlighten the world and to guide it into the right path. This gives weight to the decision by UNESCO to award the Simón Bolívar Prize to King Juan Carlos I and to the South African patriot Nelson Mandela. One of them is the inspiration for the establishment and consolidation of democracy in Spain, and the other the purest example of the fight against the shame of racism through the sacrifice and martyrdom of his struggle in South Africa.

50. On the same day signatures were affixed to the Declaration on Subregional Integration by the Presidents of the Andean countries [A/38/329] which affirms the firm support of those leaders for the process of Andean integration, thus breathing new life into it.

51. The Charter of the United Nations, the fruit of a long and tenacious struggle for democratic freedoms, is a digest of humanist thought developed over centuries of culture. Its principles and purposes entail the condition and the guarantee that an end will be put once and for all to the subjection of peoples and nations to oppressive foreign Powers, and that the age-old desire for a humanity free from injustice and disaster will be brought closer to realization.

52. The well-founded hopes that the San Francisco Charter sowed in the minds and hearts of millions of men, women and children have been frustrated by the deterioration of the Organization over the years, owing to the lack of political will on the part of the super-Powers to solve the serious problems afflicting the contemporary world.

53. Frustration and suffering breed despair, and despair breeds violence. There are reasons to believe that the international tension of our times and the proliferation of conflicts have their roots in the accumulated problems which are considered by United Nations organs year after year without any solutions being found, which confirms the old adage that when the roads of hope are closed, the paths of violence are opened.

54. The United Nations must not slacken in its determination to resolve the political problems which today pose a threat to international peace and security. Among them we might highlight the urgent need to eradicate *apartheid*, racism and racial discrimination, both in southern Africa and in the rest of the world.

55. United Nations organs, especially the Security Council, must intensify their efforts for the swift achievement by Namibia of independence, with due respect for its territorial integrity, including Walvis Bay, the Penguin

Islands and the other offshore islands, without preconditions and under the political auspices of the South West Africa People's Organization, the authentic and legitimate representative of the Namibian people.

56. I consider that the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East is of paramount urgency. This cannot be brought about until the right of all States in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized borders is guaranteed and until true effect is given to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to independence and the establishment of a free, independent and non-aligned State on Palestinian territory, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the authentic political representative of that people.

57. The spirit and letter of the Charter bind us to search for peaceful and just solutions to the alarming situations which have been arising in Central America, the South Atlantic, Lebanon, Cyprus, Chad, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, South-East Asia and the areas where the fading vestiges of colonialism persist. Thus committed, we must give effect to the concept of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean and give full force to the Treaty of Tlatelolco on the denuclearization of Latin America,² as well as to plans for the denuclearization of other geographical areas.

58. Efforts to foster peace and security in Europe recently undertaken at the Madrid conference have promoted dialogue, achieving results which mark progress, since they were able to harmonize different points of view, taking into account the concerns of various Mediterranean countries. The Spanish Government, the host of the conference, deserves our gratitude, for it co-operated effectively in the creation of an atmosphere propitious for dialogue and understanding.

59. The great paradox of our time is that while privileged sectors of the world are rapidly increasing their wealth and their scientific and technological knowledge, in the other sectors material want and cultural poverty are increasing as quickly as population growth.

60. The amounts of money invested annually in the arms race have swollen to overwhelming proportions. This year they will attain \$800 billion, which, if allocated to the fundamental needs of peoples, would open the way to progress, consolidate friendship among nations and give greater dignity to man's existence.

61. Thus, it is no mere rhetoric to stress the importance we should attach to the real implementation of the resolutions on disarmament identified in our agenda as "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session" [item 50].

62. Let us not forget that last year when the General Assembly adopted its resolution on the bilateral negotiations on nuclear weapons under way at Geneva between the United States and the Soviet Union, it requested the parties "to bear constantly in mind that not only their national interests but also the vital interests of all the peoples of the world are at stake in this question" [see resolution 37/78 A].

63. Nerves have been made tense by a tragic international situation and, with trust placed in the simple effectiveness of electronic apparatus, almost any circumstance could unleash, as has actually happened, the death-dealing machinery of ultramodern weapons. In such cases the most elementary feelings of mankind give way to blind strictness in carrying out military orders. We have witnessed a psychological deformation caused by international tension, which entails as a consequence

this new reality of our time in which the lives of innocent human beings are at the mercy of computers and electronic instruments in the service of military efficiency.

64. The major Powers want to forget the obvious truth that he who plays boastfully and constantly with a sword always ends by cutting his own hands.

65. In recent weeks we have witnessed a sequence of events caused by major constellations of power which indicate that beyond the interplay of the hostile rhetoric of the cold war what is at stake is the survival of mankind in an insensate competition which takes us in giant leaps closer to a warlike explosion that will detonate a nuclear holocaust. We in the United Nations still have time to avert this.

66. It is an ominous sign that personalities of our time attribute in 1983 to the distressing case of the South Korean aircraft characteristics similar to those of the Sarajevo episode which led to the outbreak of world war in 1914. There has been a similar attitude on the part of the two super Powers with regard to leaving military decisions in areas of conflict in the hands of local commanders without requiring authorization by military and political chiefs in Washington and Moscow. It should be stressed, therefore, that it is important that there should be no restriction or extra difficulties imposed upon the opportunities for or accessibility to dialogue in major international forums both at the world level within the United Nations system and within the regional sphere.

67. The effectiveness of negotiation and the will to engage in dialogue have been demonstrated in the conduct of the Contadora Group, of which my country is a member. The unswerving efforts of the Presidents of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama have led to progress which makes it possible to foresee positive results in the not-too-distant future. The initiative of Presidents de la Madrid Hurtado, Herrera Campins, Betancur and de la Espriella can be seen today in a historical perspective as an extremely fruitful and important act in favour of peace in Central America, which is not subject to the pre-condition of a military victory on any side and does not affect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the States of the region.

68. The Organization should adhere ever more closely to its own principles to make its peace-making activities more effective. The vast majority of its Members, developing countries, must play the role of spokesmen for humanity, the instrument of its demand for peace and well-being; and the great Powers, as well as those with relatively less power, must in their turn be prepared to halt the race for predominance and heed this outcry.

69. We must now recognize that along with the tremendous upheavals in the world an institutional crisis is developing in the Organization, which means that the months and the years pass without any solution of the fundamental problems of the Organization and the world community.

70. The work embarked upon in connection with the opening of a free and frank dialogue between the major Powers is necessary both to bring about disarmament and peace and to enable the United Nations to undertake the vast enterprises the execution of which is linked with the well-being and development of peoples.

71. I realize that I am assuming the presidency of the General Assembly at a critical time in the evolution of the United Nations. We find ourselves at a crossroads, in a situation which could be viewed as a crisis of effectiveness. I say in all candour that if we evaluate objectively the criticisms levelled at the world Organization we

see that it can be described as an entity full of negatives, made up of successive groups of disputants, free in speech but restricted in action.

72. Faced with that situation, I wish to appeal to Member States that through their representatives we should act in consonance and, rejecting any pessimism, restore the United Nations to its proper place and function in the annals of contemporary history.

73. I am now dedicated to working with enthusiasm and tenacity to contribute, together with the Assembly, to the peaceful solution of international conflicts. I shall devote myself, within the framework of the Charter, to the application of methods of negotiation and compromise and to defending with you the sacred dignity of the human person. I shall endeavour to discharge my functions in the conviction that this Organization is the only mechanism through which men of reason and ethics can seek and find effective solutions that will eventually enhance human values and put an end to the use of force, destruction and death as the only means of satisfying narrow, selfish national interests.

74. I believe that we must stress the search for solutions to the problems which beset us today at this historic crossroads, problems which we can and must solve. If

we fail, I believe we will further diminish the very system of democratic procedures in the eyes of our contemporaries. The truth is that, with the deterioration of the democratic concept of social life, there will undoubtedly come the cataclysm of nuclear arms, with its sequel of destruction and death.

75. The Organization must continue, grow and endure, with the enlightened assistance of Member States and their statesmen. I fervently hope that, united, we will succeed in changing our course and advancing along a new path—the path of justice, the rule of law, ethics and an implacable will to bring about change.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.

NOTES

¹See *Report of the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence, Paris, 25-29 April 1983* (A/CONF.120/13).

²Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634, No. 9068, p. 326).