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President: Mr. Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA
(Algeria).

In the absence of the President, Mr. Banda (Zambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 25

Restoration of the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations (continued)

1. Mr. KELANI (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): After gaining its independence in 1953, Cambodia began to adopt an independent, peaceful, non-aligned policy. It refused to allow the establishment of foreign military bases or other installations on Cambodian territory. It also refused to join any military pact or alliance. But that policy, while it responded to the interests of the Cambodian people, did not win the approval of the United States, which tried to drag the new State into the South-East Asia Treaty Organization. Thus, Cambodia became a target for manoeuvres and attacks on its borders, organized and carried out by United States imperialism and the puppet Saigon government.

2. Those manoeuvres and machinations continued until, as a result of one of them, a puppet régime was installed in the capital of Phnom Penh. Thus the manoeuvre of 18 March 1970 constituted an act of foreign intervention in the internal affairs of an independent Member State of the United Nations and could not possibly be considered an internal movement, as claimed by the illegal Lon Nol régime.

3. The clearest evidence of that is the spontaneous popular movement in which the Cambodian people rose against the subversive forces and the régime imposed by the Central Intelligence Agency. That movement resulted in the death of thousands of demonstrators at the hands of the dictatorial clique, which had usurped the Government and power from the legal authorities. The result was that revolution swept over the country and the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia rose to lead the struggling people so as to regain their freedom and independence.

4. The country was subjected to an overwhelming United States military invasion, and intensive bombings, estimated to be equivalent to six atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima, were directed against the inhabitants of Cambodia and their installations. Thus Cambodia was invaded and its legitimate Government overthrown.

5. The consideration by the General Assembly of the Cambodian problem is far from being an intervention in the internal affairs of the Cambodian people or tantamount to the imposition of a certain form of government on the people. For the basic principle behind this consideration is respect for the will, sovereignty and independence of the people. On the basis of that principle, consideration of the Cambodian problem within the framework of the United Nations is limited to putting an end to foreign intervention in the affairs of the Cambodian people. Such intervention was demonstrated in successive acts of aggression by the United States, which reached their peak on 30 April 1970 in an invasion of Cambodian territory, leading to a coup in which the legitimate Government of Cambodia was overthrown in the spring of 1970. That illegal situation resulting from foreign intervention and military invasion still continues.

6. The struggle in Cambodia today is not a civil war but a struggle and a conflict between the forces of the people aspiring to liberation and independence on the one hand and the forces of invasion and foreign occupation on the other. The Lon Nol régime is but a puppet façade behind which the occupation forces shield themselves in order to achieve their purpose of making the conflict appear to be a civil war.

7. After four and a half years of struggle under the leadership of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia headed by Sihanouk, the Cambodian people has been able to score a number of victories and certain achievements in various political, military, economic and diplomatic fields. Over 90 per cent of Cambodian territory has been liberated and that 90 per cent is inhabited by 85 per cent of all the Cambodian people, amounting to 7 million inhabitants. The Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia is recognized by over 60 States, 58 of which are Members of the United Nations. The head of State, Sihanouk, participated in the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Algiers in September 1973, in which over 70 countries took part. The existence of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the liberated Cambodian territories is an indication of the continued existence of the Cambodian State with its legitimate Government and its political, military, economic, social, cultural and legal institutions at various levels. The committees of the National United Front of Kampuchea, which are elected on a free and democratic basis, manage and run the affairs of the

country in the various administrative and political sectors. The Cambodian territory constitutes one integral country in which the Government of Sihanouk exercises its various functions and discharges its various responsibilities in all fields within the framework of the possibilities open to the Cambodian people.

8. Parallel to this national régime there is in the city of Phnom Penh a puppet régime, which lives on the assistance and subsidies received from the United States in various military, political, economic, social and cultural fields. The assistance and subsidies have reached such an extent that if the United States stopped them, that illegal régime would collapse without any pressure from outside.

9. If we examine the Cambodian problem there is no doubt that the members of this august Assembly, or at least the majority of them, would agree on various principles. The first of these is respect for the United Nations Charter and refraining from violating that Charter. The second principle is respect for the right of self-determination of peoples and prevention of the violation of that right. The third principle concerns the desire to enable the Cambodian people to live as a unified, independent people in a unified country. On the basis of such principles, the continued aggression against Cambodia and the people of Cambodia by foreign forces is something that must be rejected and condemned under the Charter because it runs counter to the principles of the freedom and independence of peoples and the right to self-determination.

10. In order that the Cambodian people may exercise this right without any outside pressure or intervention, the Government of the National United Front has led the struggle of the people, which has resulted in a number of victories and achievements indicating its determination to regain its rights in various fields and particularly in the international field, in which the Lon Nol régime claims the right to represent the Cambodian people. This is a claim that is unjustified and illegitimate from the standpoint of international law and on the basis of present-day realities. The time has come to rectify the situation and these illegal conditions. The time has come for the United Nations to restore to the legitimate Government of Cambodia its rightful place in this international Organization, which is unlawfully occupied by the Lon Nol régime, in violation of the principles and spirit of the Charter.

11. Mr. KEUKY LIM (Khmer Republic) (*interpretation from French*): It was with consternation that the delegation of the Khmer Republic learned of the death of our former Secretary-General, U Thant. He was a wise man in the full sense of the word, a man who was an honour to his country, Burma, and also to Asia and the world. He was a man of culture and great delicacy; familiar with all the mysteries of politics and all those who make it, he played a leading role, to which he was brought by the confidence his colleagues placed in him as a conciliator, a mediator, which we have often admired.

12. Permit me to express to his family and to our Burmese brothers, who mourn him, as well as to the Government and the delegation of Burma, the sad condolences of the Government and delegation of Khmer. In him, the international community, the

people of Burma, Asia and the world, and the Buddhist world in particular, have lost one of their most eminent sons.

13. On 9 October, our Prime Minister launched an appeal from this rostrum [2263rd meeting], to the Members of our Organization to use all their political and moral influence to promote the restoration of peace in Cambodia.

14. This is an objective which the United Nations, in order to remain consistent with the principles which led to its establishment, can and must strive to achieve. It can do so because, quite apart from their quarrels, the Khmers feel a sincere respect for this institution, which is striving to preserve order and peace throughout the world, and they expect that, with the wisdom it has evinced in many other circumstances, it will open the way by its recommendations to a just and equitable settlement of the Cambodian problem.

15. The United Nations must do so, because indefinite pursuit of an ever more violent war in our country would inevitably overflow its bounds and end by engulfing the whole peninsula in flames, thus endangering the policy of *détente* of the great Powers.

16. The United Nations must also do this because our peace-loving people has endured undeserved suffering for almost five years. Hundreds of thousands of our fellow men have been killed or wounded. Two million of our peasants and villagers, abandoning their goods, have fled from the combat areas to seek refuge in the zones controlled by our Government. Need I say that the physical destruction is immense and our own capacity to act and provide relief is very limited in relation to the scale of the catastrophe?

17. How can the Government of the Republic, confronted with so much distress, which it cannot always relieve because the means are lacking, fail to be passionately committed to reconciliation and peace? There is no one on our side, from the President of the Republic and his Ministers to the humblest of our citizens—there is no one either, I am convinced, on the other side, except for a few fanatics—who does not shrink with horror from the prospect of an interminable military confrontation, which would end by exhausting the nation and leaving it an easy prey to every type of colonialism.

18. Because we know that, in the zones controlled by the enemy, a hatred of war and hopes for a just peace are as keen as they are in all the rest of the country, we are certain that very soon, with the slightest encouragement from the United Nations, the true patriots temporarily separated from us will come to meet us. For our part, we are prepared to go far to meet them, to treat them as brothers without bringing up the past and to give them their proper place in the national community, in the administration, the army and the Government itself. To those patriots who place the love of country above party, doctrine or personal ambition we extend our hand. If they wish it, without exclusivity and in friendship, we shall together rebuild a more democratic, just and brotherly Cambodia.

19. That then is the voice with which we speak to those on the other side, with a sincerity that asks only to be tested. What is the reply of the spokesmen of

the so-called Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia? They tell us:

“There will never be contacts, discussions or negotiations between you and us. We shall fight for 10, 20 years, if necessary, so as to remove you from power.”

20. Their intransigence is due essentially to the fact that they imagine that the United Nations will this year give decisive help by depriving us of our legitimate rights. As I am about to show, they are failing everywhere to achieve any military success, and they see that the population in their zones has become hostile to a dead-end war. Trying to prevent mass defections, they tirelessly repeat to our fellow countrymen on the other side that very soon they will be seated in our place in the United Nations. “On that day”, they maintain, “the Lon Nol régime will crumble; victory will be ours, and the peace you long for will return.”

21. That argument, which they use within Cambodia, is now being repeated for the benefit of the United Nations, through the good offices of the allies they can always count on in the General Assembly. The vast majority of the Members of our Organization sincerely want peace in Cambodia. Our adversaries have been clever enough to make certain nations—nations of good faith but which perhaps are not very well acquainted with the situation prevailing in our country—believe that the admission of the so-called Royal Government to the United Nations would *ipso facto* bring about the fall of the republican régime and the restoration of peace to our country.

22. This affirmation is nothing but pure speculation. As the representative of a great Arab Power saw, and explained to the Assembly last year during the debate on Cambodia: “It is immaterial whether or not the draft resolution before us”—the draft resolution sponsored by 33 countries, which has been submitted again this year—“will be adopted; the war will go on”.

23. The Khmer Republic has had many alerts during the past four years. It has never laid down its arms. Should further difficulties arise, it will meet them with the same determination, strengthened by the loyalty of its army, the understanding of its people, which has remained very patriotic, and the resolute and continued support of its many friends on five continents. If, in violation of the principles of the Charter, the United Nations were to admit a government-in-exile, this would in no way undermine the determined will of the Khmers to live under a national régime of their choice and not under a régime imposed from abroad. In such a situation—which I do not believe will occur—the war would only be longer and more cruel and there would be a greater risk of foreign intervention.

24. May I furthermore be permitted to recall some of the manoeuvres by our adversaries and those who guide them of which some nations have been the victims.

25. Since 1970, various persons have been trying, in order to win the support of those Governments which are still hesitating, to give credit to the idea of the imminent victory of the so-called National United Front of Kampuchea. Some here will perhaps recall that at the Preparatory Meeting of the Non-Aligned Countries at Dar es Salaam, in April 1970, the Third Conference of Heads of State or Government at

Lusaka in September 1970 and the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries at Georgetown in August 1972, the representatives of the Front forcefully affirmed that the entry of the “liberation forces” in Phnom Penh was, as they put it, no more than a matter of days. Every year, at each Communist offensive during the dry season, the leaders of the Front announced that that was the “decisive offensive”. All these announcements, made in a tone of great conviction that has deceived more than one nation, have been woefully denied by events—whether in 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973 or 1974. In the statement he made last year, one of our colleagues went so far as to predict that it was not a question of knowing whether Lon Nol would maintain his illegal authority within the limits of the city of Phnom Penh but rather of ascertaining how long it would be before he fled to seek exile in one of the countries that help him.

26. The good faith of our colleague was obviously deceived, since more than twelve months after his statement he can observe that the President of our Republic has remained at his post and that the authority of his Government today extends a great way beyond what that speaker called “the limits” of the capital.

27. Furthermore, with regard to Phnom Penh, our adversaries’ violins are badly out of tune. Whereas for four years the Khmer Rouge has announced its imminent capture, its best-known spokesman says quite the contrary. Immediately following the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Algiers, Prince Sihanouk confided to *The Guardian* on 17 September 1973 that: “Lon Nol will be able to stay many years in Phnom Penh, Alas, we will not take Phnom Penh this year, nor next year, nor for many years”.

28. Such thoughts lead me to give an account of the military situation. On 21 November last, our Prime Minister and the Commander-in-Chief of the national army gave the press an account of the operations during the dry season and during the rainy season, which demonstrates the failure of our adversaries in their attempt to broaden the area under their control or to seize any township of relative importance.

29. The losses of the Khmer Rouge since the beginning of the year—during these two seasons—substantially exceeded 50,000 killed and wounded, thus creating for the adversary a very serious problem of manning their armed forces.

30. For its part, the national army sustained far lower losses, and the fact that it has kept the initiative in almost every region of the country has substantially strengthened its morale and its will to defend its homeland.

31. Furthermore, I am in a position to give the Assembly the figure—which is enormous—of the refugees who have fled from the area of combat and have come this year to settle on the territory we control. The figure is 347,000 for the first 10 months of 1974, whereas the flow of those departing in the opposite direction is practically nil.

32. Since the beginning of hostilities, somewhat more than 2 million people have in an uninterrupted stream fled from the totalitarian zones in order to preserve their life and their freedom.

33. The Government of the Khmer Republic, although it is satisfied with these results that enable it to affirm that hopes for a military victory have changed sides, in no way wishes to prolong this armed confrontation, a confrontation that is spilling the blood of our compatriots on both sides. Now that it has restored the situation in the field and proved to the adversary that he can no longer win, the Government of the Khmer Republic considers that the objective conditions for a just peace have been reached. There are many of those fighting on the other side who believe that this is so and who, if they cannot convince their leaders that the time has come when intransigent and scornful attitudes are no longer appropriate, will themselves not hesitate to establish contacts with the republicans in order to put an end to the fighting.

34. In spite of the propaganda being disseminated, every one in my country is perfectly aware of the truth about the so-called foreign occupation troops stationed in our country. But abroad this truth is still little known. A certain number of Powers still believe that our country permanently shelters American forces. A Khmer Communist leader even gave an extravagant figure of "4,000 American military advisers on our territory". This is totally false. I solemnly reaffirm that in the entire territory of the Khmer Republic there are fewer than 200 American citizens, including the Embassy staff. For the needs of their cause, those Powers deliberately confuse the Khmer Republic with other countries.

35. As we know, some legends die hard, so I renew the offer made here on 9 October last by our Prime Minister, Mr. Long Boret [*ibid.*, para. 33], to appoint a United Nations mission as soon as possible to undertake the most complete and broad investigations on the territory of our Republic so as to discover therein the so-called American forces—or those of any other nation for that matter—which the adversary obstinately accuses us of harbouring. Those who oppose sending United Nations observers and continue to slander us would provide proof that they refuse to have the truth made known in this affair.

36. Once again we challenge our adversaries, who are so prompt to spread false rumours about us, to open, as we do, the zones they control, to the emissaries of our Organization. Those emissaries, if they have total freedom, could not fail to discover on which side the bases, training, transit and rest camps, hospitals, nursing homes and so on of the foreign forces in our country are to be found. We shall then see who, in this affair, practises the policy of an "open door" and who practises the policy of a "closed door".

37. Now I shall go on, to another aspect of the Khmer problem, which is important psychologically and politically. The Assembly has been told, and this has been unceasingly repeated, that the so-called Royal Government controls 90 per cent of the Khmer territory and 80 per cent of its population. On hearing and reading these percentages, normally serious people have come to believe that the Khmer Republic only holds its capital and a few besieged cities, inhabited by little more than a million inhabitants. Were this true, how could the Republic still continue to exist?

38. If the Assembly had before it the map of Cambodia, it would notice, to the north and north-east, four provinces covered by jungle and in mountainous terrain. Those provinces have always been sparsely inhabited. The Khmer administration, under the former régime, was represented there by only a few officers confined in district headquarters and a limited number of servicemen who occupied small posts which were often harassed. Even before 1970, the North Vietnamese infiltrated that region, they had their tracks and their bases to which the Khmers were forbidden access; they even opened fire on the officers and ministers who went there on a tour of inspection. In 1970, our fellow countrymen, realizing that resistance was impossible, went to seek shelter in neighbouring countries: Laos and South Viet Nam. The North Vietnamese thus held the field, where their very rare Khmer partisans are treated as foreigners, as in the past. Allow me to say that when the pseudo-Royal Government claims to "control" that zone it is certainly not lacking in audacity.

39. The Khmer Communists also affirm that they control our provinces in the south-east, next to the South Vietnamese frontier. It is true that they have troops and a fledgling administration there. But what authority have they when the Vietnamese comrades, for whom this region is of great strategic interest, transform it into a base of operations against South Viet Nam, requisitioning foodstuffs and settling—as though they intended never to leave—men of their nationality on lands confiscated from our Khmer peasants?

40. Actually, the major part of the territory which the Khmer Rouge claim to have liberated is under *de facto* control of the Vietnamese Communists.

41. In the part of Cambodia not occupied by the latter, there are only the mountainous regions, covered by forests and difficult of access, which constitute the Cardamômes Range, to the south-east of the country, which is actually under the authority of the Khmer Rouge.

42. There remain the plains of Cambodia, the rivers and the lakes—what might be called "useful Cambodia". Our Government exercises effective control over almost the entirety. On a part of the territory controlled by us, there are sometimes Khmer Rouge incursions. When our adversaries manage to advance a few kilometres, the entire world is informed of it. But when our national forces repel the assailants, often beyond their starting positions, no one pays any attention.

43. As regards the population living in the republican zones, I affirm, as did our Prime Minister, that it represents more than three fourths of the total population of the country. Phnom Penh alone, with its suburbs, has 2 million inhabitants, and the province of Kandal almost a million—including the innumerable refugees. The province of Battambang, where the rural population has also taken shelter, has a million inhabitants. In the other zones and in the cities remaining under our control approximately 1.3 million of our fellow men live.

44. These figures are in no way astonishing. Our territory is over-populated. That of our adversaries is under-populated. That is the truth, which it is my

duty to state here for the information of the representatives who have for too long suffered from propaganda that has lost any concern for even a semblance of truth.

45. The members of the Assembly, I assume, expect me to comment on draft resolution A/L.733 and Add.1 and 2, in which the General Assembly, recognizing that

“the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, presided over by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the Head of State, is the sole lawful representative of the Cambodian people and of the State of Cambodia”

would decide:

“... to expel the representatives of the Lon Nol group from the seat they illegally occupy in the United Nations and in all the organizations related to it.”

46. When a régime has been in office for more than four years, its legitimacy is not usually a matter for debate; it flows from its very existence. Very curiously, that is not the case for the Khmer Republic, where censors whose reasons for action are less legal than political have continued their hostility for years. Thus I find myself under the obligation to recall the following facts.

47. First, according to Prince Norodom Sihanouk:

“The Constitution of Cambodia renders it impossible to depose a head of State, once he has been appointed by the Parliament.”

Let us see what our former royal Constitution says in this respect. In article 35 it states “the person of the King is sacred and inviolable”. For this reason and by virtue of divine right, Parliament cannot depose the King. In 1955 Sihanouk himself, for reasons of political opportunism, abdicated in favour of his father. Furthermore, he solemnly promised that he would never again accept the crown. It is obvious that, since the day of his voluntary abdication, Sihanouk, while he remained a prince by blood, under the law became a citizen like any other and no longer benefited from the privileges conferred by the Constitution on a royal person.

48. This is so obvious that, in 1960, after the death of King Suramarit, Sihanouk, refusing to seek a successor to him, wished to give a certain legal sanction to the authority he exercised *de facto* by having himself appointed head of State by the Parliament. He was then neither sacred nor inviolable but elected by the representatives of the people, and they, from whom he held his power, could quite naturally withdraw that power if they deemed it appropriate. Sihanouk, then at the height of his strength, did not take into account that the mandate he had obtained could only be exercised provisionally until a new sovereign was appointed. This was never done. Nor did the Prince ever think of asking Parliament to reconfirm the mandate it had conferred on him. The Khmer State had no régime at all—perhaps only that of the Prince’s pleasure.

49. Secondly, the Prince himself recognized that “from 1960 Cambodia had become a *de facto* Republic”. We know that Sihanouk has always refused to let a prince, even from among his own children,

be chosen during his own lifetime to accede to the throne, out of fear that there would emerge in Cambodia an authority superior to or equal to his own. He was, furthermore, convinced that after him the monarchy would cease to exist.

50. The Republic, however, was not proclaimed until 9 October, more than seven months after Sihanouk was deposed, when it became obvious that our country had to have a régime that was more clearly defined than the one, neither monarchy nor republic, that had been in force for more than 10 years. Since the Prince had discredited the monarchy by allying himself with foreigners to recover his power, only the republican régime, which the élite and the young people wanted, proved feasible.

51. Thirdly, the Prince was not deposed, as he claims, by a military coup d’état. It was the National Assembly, which had been elected in 1966 during the only legislative elections for which Sihanouk did not himself designate the candidates, which, in joint session with the Council of the Kingdom, voted unanimously to depose him. The Prince was absent, and the functions of head of State were provisionally being exercised, in accordance with the Constitution, by the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Cheng Heng. He retained them on an interim basis until the presidential elections of 1972, in which Marshal Lon Nol obtained 56 per cent of the votes, thus defeating two other candidates. After 18 March 1970, almost all the Khmer civilian and military personnel were so convinced that the deposition of our former head of State was legal that they remained in their posts loyally serving the Government and the nation.

52. Fourthly and finally, those who claim that they want to “restore the lawful rights” of a “Royal Government of National Union” in the United Nations should know that one cannot restore rights that have never existed. The Government of Cambodia seated in the United Nations before the Khmer Republic was not the “Royal Government of National Union” but the Royal Government of Cambodia, whose head of State was Prince Norodom Sihanouk, and whose Prime Minister was Marshal, at that time General, Lon Nol, appointed by the Prince himself seven months before the latter was deposed.

53. What, then, is the legal basis of the so-called Royal Government of National Union with which we are confronted?

54. I would particularly draw the attention of representatives to the fact that the so-called Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia was created after the former head of State was deposed by the Khmer Parliament, which, with its unanimous vote, thus withdrew any legitimacy from the Prince. I would further point out that this “Government”, which allegedly controls the entire territory except “a few scattered enclaves”, has never organized referendums or elections in the zones it controls. On the other hand, the Government of the Khmer Republic has four times called the citizens to the ballot box: for a referendum on the Constitution; for the election of a President of the Republic; for the election of the members of the National Assembly; and for the election of the members of the Senate.

55. The only legal basis of the alleged Royal Government is that of "divine right", which our former head of State arrogates to himself—19 years after he renounced the throne. This is so true that one day, in a fit of irritation with his ministers of the Royal Government who are always putting his name forward, but do not take his views into account, the Prince told them to their faces: "Without me you would only be rebels against Lon Nol".

56. We who measure what we say would not call those on the other side rebels, even though that is what they are under the law. In spite of all the bloodshed and all the rancour born of this war, we firmly believe that reconciliation between the two Khmer parties is possible and inevitable. Those who are blood relatives and who put the interests of their common homeland before everything cannot for long act as enemies.

57. It was with this conviction that we welcomed with satisfaction draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1, which has been submitted by 23 countries. It calls on the General Assembly to urge "the indigenous parties directly concerned to hold talks, with a view to achieving a peaceful settlement of the question of Cambodia, based on respect for the sovereign rights of the Khmer people"; it requests the Secretary-General "to lend appropriate assistance to the parties", and calls upon Member States not to take any other action "until the results of these efforts are considered by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session".

58. May I express to all the signatory nations the gratitude of my Government and the Khmer people, in whichever zone fate has placed them. I am particularly happy to note that the main Powers of South Asia and the Pacific have been joined by other Powers that love peace and justice in paving the way to a peaceful settlement in my country.

59. The 23-Power draft resolution is generous. It is also wise. By refusing, in dealing with the question of Khmer representation in the United Nations to anticipate the decision of the Khmer people themselves, the draft resolution fully respects the fundamental principles of our Organization.

60. Respect for the United Nations is great, as members are aware, in small countries such as ours, which see it as their natural recourse and want its authority to be constantly extended.

61. If the General Assembly solemnly decides to recommend that the Khmer parties begin negotiations to restore peace and harmony, that decision will be welcomed with relief and hope by the vast majority of my fellow citizens. It will strongly encourage those—very numerous on both sides—who are aware of the futility and cruelty of this war. They will exercise pressure on their leaders to implement such a recommendation.

62. For our part, we are all in favour of discussions with the other side, without prior conditions. But some will perhaps claim that the leaders of the other side have always refused to talk to us and will not be more willing to do so tomorrow than they were yesterday, even if the United Nations calls upon them to do so. Such a view, if put forward, would be in defiance of the objectives of the Charter and would not take into account the real Khmer situation.

63. Among our adversaries there are, indeed, men of good sense who in no way favour armed confrontation until the last Khmer is killed. They will realize that it is morally difficult and legally untenable to refuse to comply with the recommendations of our Organization after having referred the problem of the representation of Cambodia to it. When an arbiter is agreed to, his decision must be accepted, whatever it is. I am convinced that the men of good sense, who are also patriots, are sufficiently numerous in the "Front" to oblige the ideological fanatics to review their position or else throw in their hand.

64. Finally, on the other side, there are innumerable citizens—civilians and combatants—who are profoundly weary of this dead-end war, and impatiently await the blessed moment when their country will see the storm clouds vanish, when no one need any longer go in fear of his life. As soon as they know that the United Nations seeks to put an end to their sufferings, you may be sure they will express massive support for the undertaking of negotiations.

65. Peace for the Khmer people—a peace of conciliation, not of constraint—is largely in the hands of the General Assembly. May it fulfil its noble mission of bringing back peace to a small State Member and its peace-loving people, which has already suffered too much. May the United Nations, through its spirit of wisdom and justice, assist all Khmers of goodwill to blot out the past and reunite in building their country.

66. Mr. NAÇO (Albania) (*interpretation from French*): The problem of restoring the legitimate rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations, which the General Assembly again has under consideration, is a matter of great importance and great urgency. It is directly linked with the legitimate and inalienable right of the people and State of Cambodia to be represented in our Organization, as well as with respect for the Charter and for the principles upon which the United Nations is founded.

67. As we know, this important matter, which was considered at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, was deferred until this year because of plots hatched by the United States. We can all testify to the fact that last year, at the very time when the Assembly's discussion on this matter was in full swing, its work was sabotaged by a procedural manoeuvre asking for adjournment of the debate.

68. It is quite clear that that manoeuvre was intended to ensure that the General Assembly would be unable to vote on the draft resolution submitted by 33 Member States, including my own country, and that no decision could be taken on what was requested in that draft resolution, that is: "to restore the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations, recognizing its representatives as the sole lawful representatives of Cambodia, and to expel the representatives of the Lon Nol group from the seat they illegally occupy in the United Nations and in all organizations related to it".¹

69. It must be made clear that this year, too, those who oppose consideration of the Cambodian question—the United States and other countries—are trying once again, by means of different stratagems, to prevent the General Assembly from taking a decision

on this important question. Their aim is, as it was last year, to defer for yet another year the question of the restoration of the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the only lawful Government of Cambodia, which represents the will and the lofty aspirations of the Cambodian people. At the same time they want to secure for the representatives of the Lon Nol group, their lackeys and the defenders of the interests of American imperialism in Cambodia, who are illegally occupying the seat of Cambodia in the United Nations, the right to continue to occupy it for a further year.

70. This attitude of the United States towards this question is directly linked with its entire policy of aggression in Cambodia, Indo-China and throughout South-East Asia. The events in Cambodia since last year until now have continued to show clearly that the United States, by attempting to put off the expulsion of its lackeys in Phnom Penh from the United Nations, actually intended to prolong its intervention in those countries and to further its diabolical plans for hegemony in the Asian continent. At the same time as these attempts are being made in the United Nations, the American imperialists are doing their best to ensure that the puppets and defenders of their neo-colonialist interests in Cambodia are maintained in power at all costs, thanks to the growing intensification of their multilateral aid.

71. In point of fact, in the course of last year, military, economic and financial assistance from the United States to the Lon Nol clique doubled in comparison with the previous year. In 1973 the amount was \$350 million, in 1974 the aid increased to \$700 million. It has increased the number of its military advisers, who, as is known, are directing all the military operations against the people of Cambodia as well as all the activities involved in its aggressive war in Cambodia. United States military aircraft are daily involved in all the fighting, carrying out reconnaissance missions, machine-gunning, transporting arms, supplies and troops as well as officers of the American Army to help the Lon Nol mercenary forces.

72. All this aggressive activity on the part of the United States is simply an extension of its aggression committed in 1970 against the people, the freedom and the independence of Cambodia. It has caused renewed suffering and privation for the Cambodian people. It is understandable that allowing this situation to continue as well as having the seat of Cambodia in the United Nations usurped by a clique of those who are at the service of American imperialism would be tantamount to encouraging the United States to pursue further its imperialist—colonialist war and its genocide in Cambodia.

73. Some delegations that object to a discussion of the question of restoring the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations—and a few of them are directly involved in the aggression against Cambodia, as is the case, for example, of Thailand—are once again carrying out desperate manoeuvres in order to delay the restoration of the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations by submitting draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1, which urges that negotiations be initiated

between the parties directly concerned. It is these aims which are also pursued by the recent manoeuvre of Thailand, on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution to which I have just referred, namely, the request that priority should be given to that text, a manoeuvre that is quite contrary to the rules of procedure and the practice of the General Assembly. There can be no shadow of a doubt that the United States can be seen behind that attempt.

74. The Albanian delegation, as well as a number of other delegations, believes that to agree to negotiate with the puppet régime of Phnom Penh would mean that we would be conferring upon it a legal character, which would make it possible for American imperialism to continue its neo-colonialist policy in Cambodia.

75. We are aware that the puppet clique in Phnom Penh represents nothing more than a group of traitors in the service of American imperialism. They cannot be regarded as the lawful representatives of the Cambodian people, but are rather the creation of the United States and were set up in Phnom Penh by the coup d'état of 18 March 1970, organized by the United States. They have been completely isolated and abandoned by the Cambodian people and have sought refuge in the city of Phnom Penh and in certain isolated provinces where they manage to maintain themselves, thanks to the protection and direct support of the United States, without which they would not be able to survive for a single day. But even these areas, which are provisionally controlled by the puppet clique of Phnom Penh, have been shaken by the discontent and the revolt of the popular masses who are demanding the expulsion of the reactionary régime and the cessation of the war and are demonstrating against famine and the corruption of the officials of the Phnom Penh clique. Despite the severe measures forbidding all movement out of their districts hundreds of people are reaching the liberated areas. On the international level as well, the traitorous clique sees that it is becoming more and more isolated every year. In the course of last year a number of States revised their attitude towards that régime and broke off all relations with it.

76. In effect, the proposal contained in draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1 is merely a reiteration of the proposal that was made by the Lon Nol clique, that group of hirelings prompted by the United States, with the sole purpose of confusing a section of international public opinion.

77. But the Cambodian people, its National United Front, the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia and the People's Armed Forces of National Liberation have frequently made known, through the head of State and President of the National United Front of Kampuchea, Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, that they would not agree and would never agree to enter into negotiations with a band of traitors and usurpers of constitutional power. In his statement of 5 October this year, Samdech Norodom Sihanouk said the following:

“To invite the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia to negotiate peace with the Lon Nol clique would be to lead the Cambodian people to accept a ‘pax americana’ which would no longer make it possible for Cambodia to become once

again genuinely independent and to recover its territorial, administrative and national unity."

78. The reply of the National United Front and of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia to these appeals to compromise was the best way of showing what were the actual aims of those proposals. It shows the resolve of the National United Front and the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia to struggle until final victory is achieved.

79. The Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia is the sole lawful Government of the Cambodian people. It controls and administers 90 per cent of the national territory of Cambodia and 85 per cent of the population of Cambodia—that is, 5.5 million of the 7 million inhabitants of Cambodia. All its members, with the exception of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, are working and living in the very midst of the Cambodian people, on Cambodian soil, where they organize and direct the entire life of the country, as well as the struggle of the Cambodian people for the total liberation of their country. The Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia enjoys broad support on the part of international public opinion and the majority of the Member States of the United Nations.

80. Last year it scored great successes in all areas. In the military field, the liberated territory has grown. Every year more towns, villages and strategic points are liberated. In the political field, the discontent and revolts among the people in the areas provisionally controlled by the puppet clique of Phnom Penh are now at their height against that abhorrent clique. The administrative power in the liberated areas has been strengthened and consolidated at all levels. A healthy life, brotherhood, solidarity and unity prevail in these areas. Clear progress has also been achieved in all areas: social, cultural and economic. In the economic field, despite the war, agricultural production has increased. Rice and cotton cultivation, forestry, and animal husbandry have increased and been intensified. Two or three rice crops a year are now being obtained. It is thanks to this economic policy that agricultural output and articles of clothing are now adequate for the population and the army. Last year 50,000 tons of rice were even exported. At the diplomatic level also, the number of countries that have recognized the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia has increased considerably. To date, 62 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America have recognized the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia directed by Samdech Norodom Sihanouk as being the sole legal and legitimate Government of the Cambodian nation and people.

81. As such, the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia is the only government which enjoys all the necessary attributes to represent the State of Cambodia in all instances and in the United Nations as well. It is, therefore, an urgent task of our Organization to draw the necessary conclusions and, as speedily as possible, to repair the injustice with regard to the representation of Cambodia and to expel as soon as possible the representatives of the Lon Nol group. This is a matter of principle and a question of justice directly affecting the growth in prestige of our

Organization, respect for the rights of peoples and respect for the Charter.

82. During the discussion at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, as well as in the debate that has just commenced, a number of Member States have clearly come out in favour of restoring the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations and expelling the representatives of the Lon Nol clique from the United Nations and from all the organizations related to it. In the same way, during a number of past sessions, a number of Member States considered null and void the credentials presented by the present representatives of Phnom Penh. They forcefully condemned the activities of the United States against Cambodia, its armed aggression against this country, and expressed their solidarity with the Cambodian people.

83. At present, under the favourable circumstances created for the liberation struggle of the Cambodian people, the socio-imperialists of the Soviet Union, in an effort not to be entirely unmasked and in order to achieve the aims they are pursuing in Cambodia and throughout Indo-China, are also trying to pass themselves off as friends of Cambodia, but in fact, in different ways, they continue to maintain relations with the Lon Nol clique.

84. Our delegation appeals to Member States that hold the principles of justice dear and respect the Charter, to make their contribution to the cause of restoring the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations. We should like to express our confidence that they will support draft resolution A/L.733 and Add.1 and 2, which has been sponsored by 36 Member States, including my country, and requests that the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia be restored in the United Nations by recognizing its representatives as being the sole lawful representatives of Cambodia and expelling the representatives of the Lon Nol group from the seat they illegally occupy in the United Nations and in all organizations related to it. The support given to this draft resolution will represent a positive step forward in favour of the struggle of the Cambodian people and against foreign interference in their internal affairs.

85. The Cambodian people, under the leadership of the National United Front of Cambodia, in its struggle to save its nation from the neo-colonialism of the United States, is hoisting high the flag of liberation by putting into practice the five points contained in the statement of 23 March 1970 by Samdech Norodom Sihanouk. It has risen up, a united force, and, weapons in hand, it is fighting, with heroism and with abnegation, against a fierce and cunning enemy, against American imperialism and the puppet clique of Lon Nol until a final victory is won.

86. The liberation struggle of the Cambodian people enjoys the support and the solidarity of all peoples and countries throughout the world to whom freedom is dear, because it is a just struggle to defend the noble rights of a people and a sovereign State, a Member of the United Nations, because it is an integral part of the struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism and of the efforts being made to bring about genuine peace and security in South-East Asia.

Mr. Verret (Haiti), Vice-President, took the Chair.

87. The Albanian people and the Government of Albania, which have followed, and continue to follow, with great sympathy the just struggle of the people of Cambodia for freedom and independence, are sincerely gratified at all the victories won by the Cambodian people. They will support and uphold unreservedly and until the very end the just cause of the fraternal people of Cambodia until their national aspirations are achieved—that is, the liberation of the country and the reconstruction of a free, independent and neutral Cambodia.

88. In his statement of 3 October of this year, the leader of the Albanian people, Mr. Enver Hoxha said:

“We welcome the historic victories which the valiant people of Cambodia is winning under the leadership of the National United Front headed by Samdech Norodom Sihanouk in its struggle against the imperialist aggressors of the United States and the puppet régime of Lon Nol. The Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia is the sole legal Government of the Cambodian people. It has been invested with all the necessary attributes and all authority to represent Cambodia in the international arena. We are convinced that the final victory of the Cambodian people against the foreign aggressors and the traitors of Phnom Penh is inevitable”.

89. Mr. SAITO (Japan): The death of U Thant has brought sorrow to everyone in this Organization and throughout the world. After distinguished service in the Government of his country and as Permanent Representative to the United Nations, U Thant provided a world leader during his tenure as Secretary-General. All of us here mourn the passing of the unassuming but no less valiant fighter for peace whose devotion to justice and the rights of all made him one of the great men of our time.

90. The delegation of Japan is proud that an Asian country gave him to the world. We should be grateful if the representative of Burma would convey our sincere condolences to U Thant's family and to the Government and people of his native land.

91. A year ago my delegation supported the motion to defer the discussion on this item. We did so, not because we favoured or opposed any specific Government or leaders in Cambodia, but because we believed and still believe that the right to self-determination of the Khmer people should be respected and that this Organization should not impose a premature decision regarding its United Nations representation upon a Member State while it is suffering from an increasingly serious internal struggle; a State, moreover, whose territory and population, contrary to claims by certain delegations here today, are far from being predominantly under the control of a contending party which seeks to take over Cambodia's seat in this Organization.

92. It was our hope last year that the Khmer people would soon be able to overcome their internal difficulties and work out a viable settlement in their own way. Today I am forced to say, with the deepest regret, that a year has passed and there have been no tangible developments to indicate that a peaceful

settlement of these problems can be expected at an early date. That being the case, my delegation regrets that the General Assembly is again confronted with the self-same proposal of a year ago: to transfer Cambodia's representation in the United Nations to the “Royal Government”.

93. I wish to remind the General Assembly that, at this very moment, when we are once more engaged in a debate on this issue, the cruel fighting in Cambodia has not stopped; the blood of the innocent people is still being shed and the suffering produced by that miserable situation continues without relief. Therefore, action to stop the fighting has become the most urgent of all the grave issues connected with the question of Cambodia. Can anyone here successfully dispute the fact that, more than anything else, the people in Cambodia want peace and that a mere change of representation in the United Nations would not in any way give them effective assurances for peace? I repeat: a mere change of representation in the United Nations would not in any way give them effective assurances for peace.

94. The question confronting us with the utmost urgency is, therefore, what we can do to help the Khmer people to restore peace. Japan feels strongly that this is no time to engage in further ideological debate. It is very late, but not too late for the United Nations to make immediate efforts to help put an end to the fighting, restore peace and save our brothers in Cambodia from further misery and bloodshed. I strongly appeal to the General Assembly to listen to the earnest voice of conscience as we urge representatives to concentrate all our efforts on ways to relieve the suffering of the Khmer people.

95. This is a situation of such gravity and complexity that moves to change Cambodia's representation here are simply irrelevant; far from stopping the fighting, they would make matters worse. What is needed is not a resolution changing Cambodia's representation, but an all-out effort to promote a cease-fire and eventually a fair and lasting settlement reflecting the realities in Cambodia, which will be accepted by the majority of the Khmer people and respected by all States.

96. It is out of this conviction that Japan, together with 22 other nations which also appreciate the gravity of the problem, has joined in submitting draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1, which is before the Assembly. This would move straight towards the achievement of the most urgent and basic action required: direct talks between the indigenous parties concerned, with a view to achieving a peaceful settlement based on the sovereign rights of the Khmer people. Such a settlement would, the sponsors of the proposal are convinced, put an end to the suffering in Cambodia with all possible speed and would allow the Khmer people to devote themselves to the constructive efforts required to rebuild their ravaged country.

97. Our draft resolution urges the indigenous parties in Cambodia to hold these talks, because it is only the Khmer people which can decide its own fate.

98. In the meanwhile, all States would be asked to respect the outcome of the talks—a point on which I cannot place too much emphasis. For surely we cannot expect Cambodia to enter upon a brighter

future if the settlement derived from the talks were subjected to interference by outside States, no matter which side such interference was intended to favour.

99. Finally, I turn to the method by which we trust those direct talks can be arranged. The sponsors of this proposal have chosen a time-tested method, already used on a number of occasions by the United Nations: the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to lend appropriate assistance to the parties concerned. We are fully convinced that the Secretary-General will, in accordance with the high trust that all peace-loving nations place in him, exert the utmost efforts to help bring about these peaceful talks. Let us hope that all the parties concerned will co-operate with him.

100. My delegation believes that this is the most constructive action that the Organization can take at this stage to help the Khmer people settle their problems peacefully, and it is indeed the only action that the Organization is authorized to take under Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter, which forbids it to "intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State".

101. In all earnestness, therefore, I should like to appeal again to the General Assembly not to try to impose a Government on the people of a Member State. Let us instead extend a helping hand to the Khmer people in their efforts to find peace and resolve to respect the outcome of the talks.

102. We are indeed faced with a critical decision: whether or not this Organization will give constructive help to a nation which ardently desires peace after suffering for so long from tragic internal disputes.

103. For those reasons, we urge the General Assembly to take the first decisive step in the right direction by adopting draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1, which offers perhaps the last best hope for this unhappy Asian country.

104. Mr. PETRIĆ (Yugoslavia): It was with the deepest sorrow that we learned of the passing of the former Secretary-General, U Thant. We mourn the death of that great man, a man who devoted his untiring efforts and highest qualities to the cause of peace and international co-operation. He will remain for ever in our memory as the great statesman of the United Nations, defender of the Charter, its purposes and principles and its progressive spirit. He was a man who displayed noble courage in defending peace, independence and the victims of war in times of dangerous international crises. We shall cherish his memory as a man with a deep understanding of the problems of the developing world and of peoples struggling for their freedom. It is for this reason that I feel also that the non-aligned countries in particular have lost in him a great man. We express our heartfelt condolences to Mrs. Thant and the Government and people of friendly Burma in the irreparable loss they have sustained.

105. My delegation, one of the sponsors, is asking the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/L.733/and Add.1 and 2 on the restoration of the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations.

106. We are doing this again this year because the General Assembly was prevented at the twenty-eighth

session, by a procedural manoeuvre, from expressing its position on the substance. Consideration of the item was deferred for one year, to be taken again at this session of the General Assembly. As we warned then, the year was not gained but wasted, and at a heavy cost to the people of Cambodia, because the war, instigated and aided from outside and caused by imperialist attempts to impose on the people of Cambodia a reactionary, neo-colonialist, puppet régime, continues unabated.

107. And, of course, the intervention and the efforts to maintain in power the illegal Lon Nol régime in Cambodia are a part of the very same policy aimed at maintaining in power the reactionary Saigon régime.

108. Only when the people of Cambodia is permitted to shape its own destiny can peace be established there. Only when it can be free from outside interference and have its own constitutional and sovereign authorities, not threatened from outside, can the yearning of the people of Cambodia for independence and national freedom be satisfied.

109. That is why our decision here to restore the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union, headed by Prince Sihanouk, would constitute a very important contribution towards improving the prospects for peace in Cambodia and in the region.

110. The intervening year, since last year's unfortunate deferment of a decision by this Assembly, has confirmed the following: the total inability of the Lon Nol group not only to command any respect from its own people but even to survive without huge foreign support and aid in waging war against its own people; the constantly strengthened authority of the Royal Government, which continues to enjoy the overwhelming support of the people of Cambodia and controls the largest part of its territory; the growing international support for the legitimacy and lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia reflected in the fact that 56 Member States of the United Nations now recognize it, which is a significant increase since last year.

111. When we ask the General Assembly to do its duty in this extremely important matter we do so with a sense of utmost urgency, and we should not be impressed by any attempts to confuse the issue. Much is being made of Prince Sihanouk's being temporarily outside his own country. But we should like to stress that it is not at all unique to continue—and I stress continue—to recognize heads of State who, because of a *putsch* organized from abroad, are forced to be temporarily abroad, while continuing to command the allegiance of their peoples. We have had not a few examples where the international community was eminently justified in doing this.

112. All countries attempting to live by the Charter and promote their own rights to a more secure and meaningful place in international relations should be worried and watchful, for there is a pattern in some of the *putsches* carried out in Cambodia, Chile and Cyprus and aimed at changing their independent, sovereign and non-aligned position in international affairs.

113. That is why my delegation expects the majority so concerned, and indeed appeals to it, not to fail to vote for our draft resolution, by which we should

strengthen our collective political defence against subversion and interference by force.

114. It is time to act. This is actually a continuation of last year's debate. That is why I have not deemed it necessary to repeat all that we said last year, but have limited my remarks to the points that this particular occasion requires.

115. For all the reasons I have stated here today we urge the General Assembly to redress a grave injustice and adopt our draft resolution without any delay, as a positive action that is long overdue.

116. It is in this context that we strongly oppose the motion that draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1 be given priority over our draft resolution, which was the first one to be submitted.

117. Mr. SIKIVOU (Fiji): My delegation would like to associate itself with the remarks that have been made concerning the death of our former Secretary-General, U Thant.

118. My delegation is speaking again from this rostrum on the question we are debating, with some hesitation and sadness. When we participated in the debate on the same item at the twenty-eighth session, we stressed the fact that the type of government the Khmers should have was not the business of the United Nations but that of the Khmer people themselves. This is their sovereign right, which their Constitution allows them. Lest some of us forget, the United Nations Charter itself quite clearly states in Article 2, paragraph 7:

"Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter . . ."

119. It is for this reason that my delegation deplores the action taken by the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.733 and Add.1 and 2, which would make the United Nations impose, quite against the Charter, and against the wish of the Khmer people, the so-called Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia presided over by the head of State, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, on the Khmer people.

120. Fiji's approach to the question of the Khmer representation at the United Nations, like its approach to all other political questions, is unbiased, partly because we do not belong to any of the world's political or military groupings—we are not a member of the non-aligned group—but mainly because it is the correct approach to take in important matters of this nature. It is reason rather than emotion which should determine each decision all delegations make.

121. What then are the undisputed historical facts of this case on which my delegation based its decision that we should not interfere in the internal affairs of the Khmers, including their representation at the United Nations?

122. Briefly, as many delegations know, the frontiers of Cambodia were guaranteed by the Geneva Agreement of 1954.² In 1955 King Sihanouk abdicated, and his father King Norodom Suramarit became King. His father died in 1960, and Prince Sihanouk who had promised on abdicating in 1955 never to become King

again, became head of State. In 1966, Lon Nol was chosen by the National Assembly to become Prime Minister with Prince Sihanouk's approval; he soon offered his resignation in the same year because of Sihanouk's interference in the government of the country, but was persuaded by the head of State to stay on. However, he did resign in April 1967.

123. Lon Nol was again persuaded to become Prime Minister in August 1969. There was growing discontent in the country because of Prince Sihanouk's close association with the Viet-Cong and with the North Vietnamese, who were infiltrating the country quite freely and quite illegally. There were demonstrations in the country and students and workers seized the embassies of North Viet Nam and the Viet-Cong in Phnom Penh. It was after those events that, on 18 March 1970, the Khmer Parliament acted.

124. Through their representatives in Parliament, the Khmer people withdrew their confidence in the former head of State, Prince Sihanouk, on 18 March 1970, when the two chambers of the Khmer Parliament met in plenary session and made the decision unanimously. What authority have we at the United Nations to override that decision? Which Governments of the ones represented here or, for that matter, of the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.733 and Add.1 and 2 would permit interference in their internal affairs as is proposed in that draft resolution?

125. Some delegations have called that Khmer Parliament decision a coup d'état, when in fact it quite clearly was not. But let us suppose it was. It still is no business of the United Nations to interfere in the internal affairs of the Khmer Republic. Coups and revolutions have been responsible for changes in many Governments represented here, and will continue, no doubt, to be a way of changing governments in future. What then is the justification for the United Nations to single out Khmer to be interfered with by it in the manner proposed? Allegations have been made by previous speakers that there is corruption in the Khmer Republic, that the Government is illegal, and that the decisions made by the Khmer Government are unconstitutional. Some said that the idea behind the coup d'état and support for the Lon Nol Government were and continue to be foreign. And strong words have been used against the Khmer Government and the Khmer people. My delegation wonders what is so unusual about foreign ideas and assistance causing governments to topple.

126. We wonder how many Governments represented here can claim to be entirely free from corruption, free from the denial of human rights, from repressive laws and other criminal acts that the Khmer Government is supposed to be guilty of committing. The world is so full of them that one does not have to look very far to find them, whatever part of the world one's country is in. What is so special about the Khmer Republic? There is need, my delegation thinks, for the United Nations to remind itself of the golden rule of behaviour, which says that we should do to others what we would have them do to us.

127. One other reason why this draft resolution must be opposed is that it does not in any way seek to bring peace to that country. In fact, if the draft resolution were adopted, all that would happen is that Prince Sihanouk's representatives would be seated here at

the United Nations. They will not immediately be accepted back by the Khmer people, if they are ever accepted back at all, nor will Prince Sihanouk's Government be seated in Phnom Penh. Presumably, wherever Prince Sihanouk's Cabinet members are, the United Nations representatives at present in Phnom Penh will have to be moved there. But fighting will continue since the Khmer Republic will quite rightly not abdicate simply because of the pro-Sihanouk draft resolution of the non-aligned countries.

128. My delegation has other difficulties with the draft resolution on the restoration of Sihanouk. We do not see any special virtue in the United Nations playing a leading role in the restoration of a constitutionally rejected head of State, whether a king, queen, prince or any other member of royalty. Why are the sponsors and their supporters favouring the Royal Government as against the Republic the Khmers themselves have freely and overwhelmingly chosen? Is the United Nations to restore other fallen monarchies too? Associated with this question is the matter of criteria to be used if the United Nations is to start restoring royalties to power in countries which have deposed them, beginning with Prince Sihanouk.

129. Presumably, the initiative will have to come from the non-aligned countries as in the case of Prince Sihanouk, for which they are pioneering now—although one cannot help observing that the non-aligned countries are not united on this issue. And my delegation supposes further that there will have to be a super-Power or two pushing the non-aligned countries and manœuvring them before they will initiate a move to restore a fallen monarchy. Then there are the related questions, in regard to monarchy restoration criteria, of the territorial boundaries, effective control of the part of the country that they claim to hold, and so on. The more carefully we try to examine the implications of this draft resolution, the more ludicrous it seems.

130. It is for these reasons that Fiji is a sponsor of draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1. This draft resolution is positive and constructive. It asks the United Nations not to encourage fighting in the Khmer Republic and urges the indigenous parties concerned to hold talks to achieve a peaceful settlement. And, most significantly, we think, it asks the Secretary-General to assist as appropriate in organizing peace talks.

131. My delegation considers that it is high time that the United Nations helped the Khmer people to stop fighting. The United Nations is rightly concerned when fighting breaks out in the Middle East, in Cyprus and elsewhere and does its best to stop that fighting. In the same way, we should do what we can to stop the fighting in this part of Asia, which has known no peace for so long.

132. My delegation's plea is that this august body, to which all countries large and small, Member States or otherwise, rightly look for peaceful solutions to their problems, should not offer them instead more fighting, more suffering and death by our actions. It is in accordance with the high ideals and principles enshrined in the Charter that the solution we offer to the war-weary Cambodians should be that of peace.

133. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) (*interpretation from French*): I should like to associate my delega-

tion with the words of sympathy and the expressions of condolence addressed yesterday afternoon to the family of the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, by the Chairman of the African group, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania.

134. For some of us who had the signal privilege of knowing him and co-operating with him from the moment he succeeded Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, and even after he withdrew from his responsible functions, U Thant leaves the unforgettable memory of a statesman who was able to reconcile the traditional values of the civilization which nourished him with those that a constantly changing world compels us to promote. His vision of a world of tolerance, freedom and peace will remain with us as the most precious legacy that a statesman of exceptional qualities can bestow.

135. The 10 years he devoted to the international community were marked, we all recall, by all sorts of difficulties due to lack of understanding and to inevitable confrontations, difficulties which, once overcome, were instrumental in revealing the wealth of the human wisdom U Thant displayed on all occasions, not for his personal glory—which would have been unthinkable for the Buddhist that he was—but rather for the good of the international community. In him, the third world and the entire world have lost a conscience forged from courage and integrity, a friend of truth and of mankind.

136. One hardly needs to go into long arguments to establish the legitimacy, the legality and the continuity of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, not only in the eyes of the Cambodian people but as far as the international community is concerned and, in particular, the States Members of the non-aligned movement. We did this at the discussions which took place during the twenty-eighth session. We maintain this position as a matter of principle on the basis of a rigorous political evaluation of the situation, of the provisions of the Charter and the rules of international law. We are indeed gratified that our views find justification in the growing number of States that have recognized the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia and in the support the Cambodian people continues to give to the People's Armed Forces of National Liberation of Kampuchea. These facts show that the Phnom Penh authorities have not succeeded, despite the respite their allies managed to gain for them last year, in breaking out of the alienation which is the price of their policy of submission and of shirking duties.

137. Although we are not among the closest neighbours of the region, like every Member State of the United Nations we hope that genuine peace and real stability will be established in South-East Asia in a spirit that is in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, and taking into account first and foremost the aspirations of the peoples of that area who have suffered so much and, in the most critical cases, have even lost their sense of national identity. It is understandable that, for reasons that are rooted in imperialist hegemony and neo-colonialist exploitation, certain nations—and those not the least—should have attempted to impose their peace on this area, to introduce an artificial balance and to have the

peoples share their illusions, peoples often abused by unscrupulous leaders. Such a situation might have been acceptable in a world left to its own devices; but since the international community has decided that order and law cannot result from an artificial creation serving dubious interests, it is no longer possible to admit that a region and the peoples in that region should be the playthings of the irresponsible policy of a Power which, in spite of everything, cannot claim a monopoly of truth and wisdom.

138. Peace in Cambodia, and consequently in South-East Asia, cannot be the sort of a peace which is granted; it is defended and conquered on the basis of strict respect for the right of peoples, for legitimacy and justice. Stability in Cambodia cannot be the outcome of a prescribed mixture based mainly on maintaining unnatural compromises. If it were otherwise, we would have to conclude that some, by seeking to enclose Cambodia in a sham peace and an even more fragile stability, are using the Cambodians as hostages until adequate guarantees are extorted by a Power, whose presence and whose so-called involvement in the region are suspect from the outset. The Phnom Penh authorities agree that this poor sham comedy be played out, and it is because of this acceptance that some claim there are arguments in favour of an invalid legitimacy, which allows them to gain the military, political and economic support of a foreign Power.

139. Cambodia enjoys a long tradition of unity, independence and sovereignty which the entire world has agreed to recognize. It was defended, before and after the coup d'état of March 1970, by Prince Norodom Sihanouk. It is not by proposing a vague cease-fire and negotiations under ill-defined conditions that the Cambodian people can be made to budge from the positions they hold as a matter of principle. Furthermore, if we analyse it, this cease-fire might simply be a way of making it possible for the single foreign Power involved to prepare a new disengagement, and it would be up to history to show whether or not that was done in good faith. Similarly, the negotiations advocated at this stage might only lead to a thinly veiled form of partition, which would perforce be unfair and unequal, since granting a hearing to the authorities in Phnom Penh simply means witnessing the haste with which they bow to the *diktats* of a foreign Power.

140. Thus, whichever way we turn, and whatever the arguments adduced to conceal the facts, the problem remains essentially the same: that of the undesirable presence in Cambodia of a Power which has already, on numerous occasions, excelled in its attempts at pressure, intimidation and provocation, going as far as aggression and invasion. In the face of this situation, the only choice open to the Organization is to seek for the most appropriate ways and means to thwart foreign intervention in Cambodia.

141. No Member State would dare to raise its voice in favour of foreign intervention; no State can say that the Cambodian people willingly accepted foreign domination, whether it be direct or indirect; and we would challenge anyone to prove that continuation of such a system of interference and domination can serve the genuine and long-term interests of Cambodia and the entire region. Essentially, our aims are not that

different, to the extent that they all are aimed at liberating Cambodia, thus making it possible for the Cambodian people, and for that people alone, to achieve self-determination with respect to its legitimacy and legality. It is from this standpoint that my delegation has noted that the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1, unlike what usually happened last year, have recognized that the situation in Cambodia concerns all Member States, that the United Nations has a part to play in settling the Cambodian problem, and that any solution should be channelled through the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, which is still classified, perhaps because of some false modesty, among the indigenous authorities.

142. If these premises were better clarified, if they had been logically developed in a way that would place them in an objective context, it would not have been difficult to arrive at common conclusions. But we cannot agree, if only from the point of view of formal understanding, that a prior condition should be set to the recognition of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, and that furthermore this prior condition should be the acceptance of vague talks. No Government could lend itself to such a proposal, much less the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, whose legitimacy and legality has only been seriously called into question by the usurpers of Phnom Penh and by those who persist in only regarding it as a government-in-exile. We deplore the fact that, by means of talks, a false problem has been raised which is particularly dangerous in that, in addressing itself to the "indigenous authorities", the Organization would thereby be setting out on the path of typical interference, since it is up to the Cambodian people itself to decide what it must do in its own interest, whether it does so through talks or by any other means open to it. Furthermore, if the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia had accepted the offer of negotiations made on 9 July 1974, the facts would not have been the same, but since that did not in fact happen, it is impossible for us to condone the action proposed by the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1.

143. Once again, we would point out that the question of Cambodia is not that of a civil war waged between Cambodians, but rather a question of foreign interference in an independent and sovereign country, interference which hides behind the usurping authorities at Phnom Penh. It would have been more consistent for the Organization to require the immediate cessation of that interference, for that would, *ipso facto*, have brought about the fall of the Phnom Penh régime which owes its very existence to that interference. We also regret that the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1 did not carry their convictions to the logical conclusion, because they considered perhaps that, whenever the so-called interests of a Power are called into question by the Organization, the latter is always accused of intolerable interference, and that where the representation of a State is concerned, certain rituals have to be observed which take account neither of the law nor of realities. To be more precise, we consider that the Organization can neither approve nor mend, even under the guise of generally admitted principles, the wayward actions of a Power which, furthermore, held in contempt all the principles

of the Charter when it embarked on its interventionist adventure.

144. We have certain responsibilities towards the people of Cambodia by helping it to recover its dignity, its sovereignty and its full independence, which can only be represented and defended by the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia. It is our duty also to preserve its unity, in the face of manoeuvres from outside, and to return to it its freedom of political and ideological choice. Finally, we should see to it that Cambodia, liberated from vassalhood, plays the role that has traditionally belonged to it in a reconciled Indo-China. We have already said that a commitment by the United Nations, strictly in conformity with the aims and principles of the Charter, cannot in any way be regarded as interference in the affairs of a State; but if despite common sense and law, we contrive to describe such a commitment as interference, we would say that we far prefer it to the intervention of bombers, tanks, political or military advisers, and a spurious reconciliation which would make it possible for the aggressor to ease his conscience, once the futility of his original purposes had been demonstrated.

145. There is only one reasonable and just way in which the Organization can act, but it is not to prolong the *status quo*—that is, to accept the continuation of this foreign intervention; it cannot be conceived in the context of talks which would simply enshrine the *status quo* in the semblance of a settlement designed to serve interests other than those of the Cambodian people. The only way is the recognition of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia and the restoration of its lawful rights in the Organization.

146. Only the restoration of the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union will enable the Cambodian people to put forward in the international sphere its real aspirations, and its views about the adverse consequences which foreign intervention has had on the exercise of its sovereignty and the enjoyment of its independence. It has been said that what is proposed in draft resolution A/L.733 and Add.1 and 2, of which my delegation is a sponsor, constitutes a dangerous precedent for most, if not all, of the Member States of the Organization. The danger does not lie in the nature of the precedent itself, because nothing can be born in a vacuum, even in the best-policed societies. The danger lies in the fact that the principle advocated by this precedent, namely, the right of peoples to self-determination without foreign intervention, has not yet been fully recognized, in terms of its causes and effects, by those who look back with some nostalgia to the era of spheres of influence and policies of pressure and intimidation.

147. As soon as this unhealthy nostalgia is condemned by us, there are cries of sacrilege against the established order from those who forget that this order in fact has been imposed by manipulation, intrigues and manoeuvres that have nothing to do with the idea of justice, which we here seek to re-establish in international relations by proposing that the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia recover the seat that belongs to it, so that it can be the authentic spokesman of the Cambodian people in its liberation struggle.

148. Moreover, it is claimed that, by depriving the Phnom Penh régime of a seat, we are committing an

injustice and violating the Charter. Our rejoinder to this would be that international representation cannot be reduced merely to occupying a seat, which, moreover, was usurped. It must be measured by the commitment adopted in the name of the people towards principles that cannot be derogated from. By irrevocably handing over its sovereignty and its liberty, the Phnom Penh régime has forfeited the right to speak on behalf of the Cambodian people, and instead is defending only its own interests, by submitting to a foreign authority. Hence, there can be no middle way between legality and absence of legality, between justice and injustice, between representation and non-representation, or rather usurpation, and the Organization must categorically reject any attempt to confuse positions that are irreconcilable as far as principles are concerned, and any delay, which would only hold up, at the expense of the Cambodian people, a just solution of the Cambodian problem that is in accordance with the rights of the people of Cambodia and with our protestations of non-interference.

149. Mr. SARDON (Malaysia): Once again this year the General Assembly is confronted with an item whose very inclusion in the agenda is, in the view of my delegation, in contravention of the provisions contained in Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations. I refer to item 25, "Restoration of the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the United Nations".

150. In discussing this item, let me at the very outset state that Malaysia, like so many of its neighbours in the region of South-East Asia, holds the view that the problem revolving around the Cambodian question is one which is an internal problem of the Khmer Republic and one which concerns the leadership of the Khmer people, and clearly, therefore, a problem that only the Khmer people themselves can decide.

151. Last year, in this very same hall, the United Nations was told that Prince Sihanouk and his Government were in control of 80 per cent of the national territory of Cambodia and had the loyalty of the entire population. When making this claim, the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia was operating outside its national territory—while on the other hand there is the Government of the Khmer Republic, which was operating, and still is operating, within its national territory, with its seat of Government in Phnom Penh, and is clearly the *de jure* and *de facto* Government.

152. It is not the intention of my delegation in this instance to enter into or debate the merits or demerits of each contending claim. However, one year has now passed, and it is completely beyond my delegation's understanding that a government that continues to claim to be in control of a sizable part of the national territory of Cambodia and one that continues to claim to enjoy the loyalty of the entire population should still today continue to operate in exile and outside its national territory. The only conclusion that my delegation can draw from this is that that government-in-exile neither enjoys the popular support of the people of Cambodia nor has control of the national territory it claims.

153. Let me make it clear also that Malaysia has no quarrel with Prince Sihanouk. Indeed the people of Malaysia had occasion to welcome him on a state visit

to my country. If today by popular choice he were elected or chosen by the Khmer people as their national leader we should not hesitate to respect that exercise of the sovereign rights of the people and we should have no difficulty in co-operating with the leadership they have chosen.

154. As I have stated earlier, the problem as we see it is a problem of contending national leaderships. These contending claims can be resolved only by the Khmer people themselves without any outside interference from any quarter, much less the United Nations.

155. Were we to arrogate to ourselves the right to decide for the Khmer people who their national leadership should be, we should by our action be guilty of a classic example of interference in the internal affairs of a Member State, interference of the highest order. We should by our action be guilty, in the most extreme form, of a violation of a fundamental principle, a principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, a principle we all hold to be sacrosanct. For Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter clearly states:

“Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter . . .”

156. Throughout our entire deliberations on this item we cannot afford to lose sight of that fundamental principle. Earlier in the general debate, referring to this question [2249th meeting, para. 326], I stated that the principal mandate of the United Nations is the fostering and preservation of peace and that the United Nations cannot allow itself to take positions that would be incompatible with that high ideal. I also stated that in its pursuit of peace the United Nations should not allow itself to disregard the fine lines that are drawn between positions that are permissible and positions that are not. Throughout the years the United Nations has built for itself a reputation and standing that has come to be respected and to be the hope of smaller countries for a better world order. Any action which is seen as a betrayal of that hope could lead towards the erosion of our faith in the Organization. The only way to prevent erosion of that faith is strict adherence to the principles and purposes of the Charter.

157. It is a matter of deepest regret for my delegation that that is precisely what the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.733 and Add.1 and 2 are attempting to do. By seating a government-in-exile in this hall and by restoring, in the words of the sponsors of the draft resolution “the lawful rights of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia”, the General Assembly would be committing an unlawful act. For when we begin to impose on a people a leadership not of their own choice, we begin to take away the sovereign rights of that people—in this case, the Khmer people.

158. Our dearest wish for the Khmer people is for peace and stability in Cambodia, a peace that would contribute further towards the stabilization of the region of South-East Asia, of which Malaysia is a part. We in the region have long been the victims of war and devastation. Having gone through one tragic

and devastating war in Viet Nam, we are now going through another in Cambodia, one no less tragic and no less devastating. Yet beyond this tragedy and devastation we see hope for the people of the Khmer Republic, and hope for the region of South-East Asia as a whole.

159. A salutary example has been set by the people of Laos who, through their own efforts and without any outside interference, have resolved their differences and restored national harmony in accordance with their own wishes and aspirations. It is my delegation's belief that if the people of Laos can achieve peace and national harmony for their country, certainly the people of Cambodia must be allowed the opportunity to work towards the attainment of peace and national harmony in their country without outside interference. Every encouragement should therefore be given the Khmer people to resolve their national problem peacefully and in accordance with their wishes and aspirations.

160. So long as war and peace in Cambodia hang in the balance, so long will the region of South-East Asia be subjected to the political instability brought about as a result of outside interference. Being in the region of South-East Asia, having seen the tragic events taking place in Indo-China, and having been directly affected because of our close proximity, Malaysia very early came to recognize the dangers of interference, which in the past have resulted in our being exploited by those from outside, to our terrible cost. We have come to realize, therefore, that the only way to put an end to such exploitation is for the countries of the region collectively to seek to end the region's being an arena for interference from those from outside.

161. Together with its partners in the Association of South-East Asian Nations—namely, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand—Malaysia is working to establish South-East Asia as a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality, free from any form or manner of foreign interference. We believe that the reduction of foreign involvement and foreign interference in the region would greatly contribute towards peace, stability and progress there. We believe also that through peace and stability, the right conditions would be created, and an opportunity would be given the Khmer people to resolve their problem peacefully and to set about meeting the urgent need for national development and economic progress.

162. For those compelling reasons we are firmly convinced—and our conviction is fully shared by all the other countries of the region—that the Khmer people must be allowed to resolve their problem peacefully without any outside interference. For those compelling reasons also, my delegation wholeheartedly supports draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1, so ably introduced by my colleague, the representative of Thailand, and is one of its sponsors.

163. We are convinced that the imposition of a national leader and government of the Assembly's choice would not resolve the problem or bring to an end the tragic suffering of the Khmer people. If anything, it would only intensify the tragedy they are going through, and prolong the tragic suffering and loss of life among the Khmer people.

164. There are, however, some among us who would seat an exiled Government in this hall and impose a leadership on the people of a Member State. And it does seem odd, and even disturbing, to my delegation that those among us who believe, perhaps mistakenly, that the imposition of a leadership on the Khmer people would at once end the conflict in Cambodia, are those who are distant from the area of conflict, and are therefore not directly affected by the tragic events taking place in Cambodia.

165. Let me hasten to caution the General Assembly that whatever decision it may take at the conclusion of its deliberations on this item, it must not allow itself to lose sight of the fundamental principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a Member State. And it must not allow itself to take any action that may prejudice the decision of the Khmer people themselves and prolong their tragic suffering and loss of life.

166. The United Nations, a body dedicated to the highest ideals, that of fostering peace and preservation of the sovereign rights and independence of its Members, must not now discard the customary circumspection and restraints, but must continue strictly to adhere to the purposes and principles of its Charter. If it must act, then it must act in accordance with the purposes and principles of its Charter, and encourage the contending parties directly concerned in the conflict to hold talks and negotiate for a peaceful solution of the problem. This is what draft resolution A/L.737/Rev.1 envisages.

167. There is no lack of goodwill on the part of the Khmer Republic. As they very early had come to the conclusion that they must solve their problem peacefully in accordance with the provisions set out in the Charter of the United Nations, offers for negotiation without any pre-conditions were made to the other contending party by the Khmer Republic. Regrettably these offers, made with one single motive, that of finding a peaceful solution to their problem, were rejected. Could the rejection of these offers be because the government-in-exile, knowing it does not enjoy the loyalty of the entire population of Cambodia and is not in control of a sizable part of the territory, realizes it cannot hope to demand in any negotiation a return to the role and position it was once accustomed to in the past? If this assumption is false, then it does seem to my delegation somewhat unusual that a government that professes peace should reject outright offers for peace. Be that as it may, the United Nations, a body dedicated to the preservation of peace, must not relinquish its responsibility, but must continue to encourage and assist the indigenous parties concerned in the conflict to negotiate for a peaceful solution of their problem.

168. If the United Nations is what my delegation believes it is, then it must express its genuine wish to see that peace returns to Cambodia, and now give all the assistance within its power to the Khmer people in their search for a peaceful solution to their problem and the calamity that has befallen them. My delegation therefore hopes that the General Assembly will act accordingly, and that the decision it takes will be in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and above all will take into account the sovereign rights of the Khmer people.

169. Mr. PANYA (Laos) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation would like to join in paying a tribute to a wise man, a skilled diplomat and an enlightened Buddhist, U Thant, the third Secretary-General of our Organization, who has passed away after a full and brilliant career in the service of our Organization and in the service of the entire international community. My delegation wishes to reiterate its sincere condolences to the bereaved family, to the delegation of Burma and to the Government of Burma.

170. Cambodia has a select place, an exceptional place in the heart of the Laotian people, which, like the Government of Laos, cannot be insensitive to the events that are taking place there. Those sad events, with the continued suffering and destruction they inflict upon the Khmer people, shaking the institutional and traditional structures of our neighbour, are felt by the Laotian people as though they were directly affected.

171. This is not surprising and it is easy for everyone to understand. The Khmer people and the Laotian people are neighbours by geography. The Khmer language and the Laotian language are very similar because of their origins. The same culture, enlightened by Buddhism, the state religion, has a place of honour in Cambodia as well as in Laos.

172. As far back in history as we may go, we shall seek in vain examples of conflict or hostility between the Khmer and the Laotian peoples. On the contrary, there are abundant examples where the Laotian and the Khmer peoples have helped each other in cases of difficulty due to nature or to other causes.

173. In this way, the relationship between the Khmer and the Laotian peoples has thrived to this day, for it is the result of relations based on mutual respect and reciprocal sympathy with many things in common, as well as the strict observance of the rules of good-neighbourliness.

174. If I take special care to list the many links that unite Cambodia and my country, it is with the specific purpose of showing that in the current debate we speak as friends of the Cambodian people and as close neighbours. Because of these two qualities, we feel that we are in a position to make judgements that are both objective and free of all hidden considerations.

175. There is one thing that I should like to point out first of all. As we consider the Cambodian question, every one of us must realize that the fighting on the land will spread and become more bitter and more lethal, because each party feels that it is absolutely necessary to claim success on the battlefield in order to influence the course and the result of our deliberations. The numerous echoes in the press are a sad proof of this fact.

176. It will also be difficult not to agree on the fact that this debate, requested and conducted for the purpose of contributing to the restoration of peace and to reconciliation in Cambodia, is at the moment producing contrary results. When the struggle is intensified, the suffering of the Khmer people becomes greater. And it can already be seen that, whatever the decision taken by our Assembly, it will have indisputably strengthened the two Cambodian parties in their intention to continue the struggle. It will have widened the gap between them and it will have made

more difficult the reconciliation everyone would like to see very soon.

177. I hasten to say, on behalf of my Government, that we shall not take the choice entailed in this debate. We are friends of the entire Khmer people. It is not conceivable for us that there should be conquerors and conquered within one and the same people, within one and the same nation. This is a position of sentiment and may, in the first place, be justified as such.

178. On the political level, the Government of Laos takes as its chief guiding principle the principle of neutrality. It is also because of this neutrality, which is the basis of our foreign policy, that we refuse to choose between the two Cambodian parties. Laos has constantly maintained its neutrality for more than 20 years now. The name of our Prime Minister, Prince Souvanna Phouma, is indissolubly linked to that policy, and our entire people is now grateful to him for having struggled valiantly and tenaciously, both within and outside the country, for the success of that philosophy which is appropriate to the situation of Laos and in accordance with the temperament and aspirations of its people. The people of Laos is deeply Buddhist and history has never mentioned any proclivity on its part to aggressiveness or to contracting alliances to foment trouble.

179. During the entire Indo-Chinese conflict, Laos has categorically refused to take sides or, in spite of the application of all the pressures imaginable, to allow the establishment of military bases to serve one side against the other. Laos is also fully aware that because of its geographical position it is between two worlds that are opposing each other because of their state, political and economic philosophies—in short, because of their different ways of life and systems of government. Faced with such a choice Laos definitely chose neutrality in order not to awaken the mistrust of some or the hostility of others. The people of Laos are deeply attached to neutrality and, so that no one should be ignorant of this, it is expressly stated in its supreme charter, its Constitution. This clause was repeated in the Vientiane Agreement, which put an end to the hostilities in Laos and allowed the installation of a provisional Government of national union under the presidency of His Highness, Prince Souvanna Phouma, the father of Laotian neutrality.

180. The neutrality strictly observed by Laos compels it to abstain from making value judgements against other countries. In the same way it prevents it from interfering in the internal affairs of other countries.

181. The conflict now rife in Cambodia pits one group of Cambodians against the other. In our understanding, this is strictly an internal affair. In conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and in ac-

cordance with the principle of neutrality that we have adopted, it is evident that we must abstain, even though we deplore the situation.

182. Before I conclude, I should like to thank all those delegations, which, some few weeks ago in the general debate, expressed their sympathy for my country and particularly their satisfaction at the national reconciliation, which had taken the form of the establishment of a provisional Government of national union. There is a similarity here, that escapes no one, between the situation in Cambodia and the situation that existed in Laos. For 25 years the Laotian people fought among themselves, and a number of reasons were given for this. We understand today that there cannot be peace in Laos, if the Laotian people do not agree among themselves, rejecting support from outside that has no other purpose than to serve foreign interests in Laos and no other result than to prolong hostilities and the bereavement of our people.

183. What has just been accomplished in Laos could be accomplished again in Cambodia. There do not seem to be insurmountable obstacles to such a possibility. We believe that all that would be needed would be to leave the Cambodian people to themselves and to abstain from any activity that might lead one party to believe that it is supported, which would make it more demanding. On the contrary, it would be enough to promote by all means within our power, an understanding between the parties, and to recommend negotiations, peace and reconciliation, as was done in Laos.

184. We should be extremely proud and extremely honoured if our modest example could contribute to the solution of a crisis that has already claimed many victims and continues to claim more with every passing day.

185. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I should like to inform the members of the Assembly that the representative of Saudi Arabia has submitted amendments to the two draft resolutions that we are now discussing. They will be circulated under the symbols A/L.744 and A/L.745 and will be distributed tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 6.50 p.m.

NOTES

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Annexes, agenda item 106, document A/L.714.*

² *Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Cambodia, signed at Geneva on 20 July 1954 (United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 935, No. 13295, p. 185).*