



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

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ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED
AND SIXTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 27 March 1986, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. BIERRING

(Denmark)

Members: Australia
Bulgaria
China
Congo
France
Ghana
Madagascar
Thailand
Trinidad and Tobago
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
United States of America
Venezuela

Mr. HOGUE
Mr. GARVALOV
Mr. LI Luye
Mr. ADOUKI
Mr. de KEMOULARIA
Mr. GBEHO
Mr. RAKOTONDRAMBOA
Mr. KASEMSARN
Mr. MOHAMMED
Mr. DUBININ
Mr. AL-SHAALI

Sir John THOMSON
Mr. WALTERS
Mr. AGUILAR

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The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

LETTER DATED 25 MARCH 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALTA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17940)

LETTER DATED 25 MARCH 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17941)

LETTER DATED 26 MARCH 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17946)

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken by the Council at its 2668th meeting, I invite the representative of Malta to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Poland, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Viet Nam to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Agius (Malta) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Cesar (Czechoslovakia), Mr. Endreffy (Hungary), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Azzarouk (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Noworyta (Poland), Mr. Oudovenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) and Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat (Viet Nam) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, the German Democratic Republic, India, Mongolia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yugoslavia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Maksimov (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), Mr. Oramas Oliva (Cuba), Mr. Al-Ashtal (Democratic Yemen), Mr. Ott (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Krishnan (India), Mr. Nyamdoo (Mongolia), Mr. El-Fattal (Syrian Arab Republic) and Mr. Golob (Yugoslavia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The first speaker is the representative of Bulgaria.

Mr. GARVALOV (Bulgaria): I extend to you, Sir, the congratulations of my delegation upon your assumption of the office of President of the Security Council for the current month and to wish you success in the discharge of your noble work. My delegation's congratulations go also to your predecessor, Ambassador Adouki of the Congo, on the skill and wisdom with which he guided the proceedings of the Council in the month of February.

I would like also to join those prior speakers who have congratulated the new Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and to wish him success in his work.

The Bulgarian delegation fully supports the request of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Malta, and Iraq on behalf of the Arab Group, for an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the extremely dangerous situation which has been created in the Mediterranean these days. This meeting of the Council is a result of the new, threatening turn of events in the already highly tense situation in the Middle East. What we have been witnessing today is a new attempt on the part of the imperialist forces to destabilize Libya, a country which is a staunch defender of the just cause of the Arab peoples.

(Mr. Garvalov, Bulgaria)

The events of the last three days have come as no surprise to the international community, which has been following with concern the concentration of United States naval formations in close proximity to Libya's coast. A veritable armada, consisting of three aircraft carriers with nearly 300 warplanes on board, submarines and other naval units, has been deployed in the region. The United States made no secret of its intention to provoke Libya and to show the world its might and impunity. What we are witnessing now is a clear case of open aggression against the sovereignty of an independent, non-aligned Member State of the United Nations.

The direst apprehensions of the world community have become a reality as the United States naval exercises have erupted into overt hostilities directed at Libyan targets in the region. The military conflict in the Gulf of Sidra, planned and engineered from start to finish by the Pentagon, is evidence of the irresponsibility of the United States Administration, driven by a dangerous and morbid ambition to play the role of the world's policeman and to "punish" inconvenient sovereign States, whether in its immediate geographic proximity or thousands of miles away from its shores.

The aggressive actions of the United States appear to be co-ordinated with other military actions of shocking arrogance in other parts of the world. There is unprecedented blackmail, including threats and pressure, against Nicaragua, a new acceleration of the arms race, and blatant acts of provocation against various countries - my own country, Bulgaria, included. As recently reported, United States warships once again made an incursion into Bulgaria's territorial waters, in flagrant violation of the régime of navigation and passage established by Bulgaria's national legislation and in contravention of existing international conventions. That was strongly protested by the Bulgarian Government.

(Mr. Garvalov, Bulgaria)

As The New York Times of 23 March 1986 reported, citing United States Administration officials, the afore-mentioned naval exercises are meant, among other things, to collect intelligence information and to be a demonstration of strength, which would increase the President's popularity and facilitate the passage of his astronomical military budget. Moreover, quoting the same sources, yesterday's edition of The New York Times informed us that the President personally approved the plans for military confrontation with Libya as early as 14 March 1986. We, of course, have our own evaluation of the situation and therefore will not comment on those reports. Suffice it only to point out that they belie the attempts to condone the United States actions as "legitimate", "innocent" or "defensive" in nature.

The concern of the international community over the latest tragic developments in the Mediterranean is quite justified and understandable. The aggressive armed actions against Libya could entail consequences of an uncontrollable nature, jeopardizing peace and security not only in that part of the world, but well beyond it.

Needless to say, this is not the first time the United States has launched acts of provocation against Libya. In defiance of the universally recognized principles and norms laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, the United States policy vis-à-vis independent and sovereign Libya has for many years been marked by undisguised military preparations, economic blockades and the constant presence of naval units of the United States Sixth Fleet off Libya's coast. All throughout this period, the United States has been pursuing a systematic campaign of threats and slander against Libya, including the drawing up of covert plans for the physical elimination of Libyan leaders - which, by the way, is no novelty in United States foreign policy.

(Mr. Garvalov, Bulgaria)

It seems, however, that the United States is not satisfied with that; it has embarked upon a search for a convenient pretext on which to launch open aggression against Libya. It is no coincidence that in the past few months there has been an anti-Libyan campaign of an unprecedented scope and level. All possible means have been tried to discredit that country. It is intriguing that there is a presidential directive in the United States which declares the policy and actions of Libya's Government to be as an extraordinary and singular threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

There is no doubt that this whole massive campaign should be viewed as a manifestation of the policy of assaulting the sacred right of peoples to decide for themselves their future and their road to independent development. It is this imperial and militaristic approach that the United States has adopted in its policy towards each independent and sovereign State whose foreign policy is not to the liking of Washington. Such an approach can only be qualified as State terrorism.

It goes without saying that the ambition of such a powerful State to arrogate to itself the role of guardian of the security of regions which, like the Mediterranean, are thousands of miles away from its own shores cannot but arouse the concern of the international community, because the relevant lessons of history from the not too distant past are still alive in the collective memory of mankind.

In view of the foregoing, the People's Republic of Bulgaria most emphatically rejects as unconvincing Washington's attempts to justify its imperial ambitions with the spurious and demagogic excuse of combating international terrorism and protecting freedom of navigation in international waters. We are profoundly convinced that, whatever pretext may be used in this particular instance, the United States will not be spared the opprobrium of the international community over the provocative nature of its aggressive acts. That this is so can be seen from

(Mr. Garvalov, Bulgaria)

the reaction of the international community, as exemplified by the positions of the League of Arab States and the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Sharing the deep concern of the international community, my country condemns the provocative actions of the United States against Libya and calls for an immediate end to the armed aggression against the Libyan people. Those actions are totally incompatible with generally acknowledged principles of international law, such as respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, the non-use of force in international relations, and the peaceful settlement of all conflicts.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria demands that all encroachments against sovereign and independent Libya be halted once and for all, and that effective measures be undertaken to stop all aggressive actions against it, for these can have fatal consequences for the situation in the Mediterranean and for the international situation as a whole.

In conclusion, I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express the support of the Bulgarian people for the friendly Libyan people in defence of their progressive achievements.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. ABULHASAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): It is a pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. We have already seen you conducting the work of the Council with your known efficiency and ability.

I also take pleasure in thanking the representative of Congo, Mr. Adouki, for the excellent manner in which he directed the work of the Council last month.

This Council has been convened on account of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and because of its status as the guardian of the principles of the Charter and international law, principles that must be observed by all States, small or great.

Since the day before yesterday, the United States, a Member having special responsibilities for the preservation of international peace and security and for observance and application of the principles of the Charter and international law, has been conducting military operations in the area of the Libyan Gulf of Sidra. According to the media those operations have resulted in the sinking of some Libyan patrol boats and, it is claimed, the loss of innocent lives in bombings, endangering the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an Arab State Member of the United Nations.

The United States has based these military operations on its rejection of the legal concepts pertaining to the territorial waters defined and insisted upon by Libya.

Kuwait, inspired by the principles of international law which govern every aspect of international relations, the rules of arbitration and our responsibility to contribute to the maintenance of peace and the ending of hostilities, wonders what would become of the international situation and world security and stability

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

if any country, out of its disapproval of a disputed perception, could resort to conquest and oppressive military force to impose its own perception regardless of the potential consequences.

What would our world be like today, given all the varied problems and differences of opinion and positions prevalent among States as a result of differing interests, if we relied upon the right of power and cast aside the moral and cultural notion of the power of right, which has been adopted by mankind through consultation and understanding for the peaceful settlement of disputes? We obviously do not need much imagination to envisage the anarchy the world would undergo or the perils that would wreck the world's stability and security.

The fact is that there exists a difference of opinion between two Members of the United Nations over an issue that should be regulated by international law and arbitrated through customary norms. At the same time there is a course, if not many, prescribed by the United Nations Charter and international laws and agreements for the solving of such disputes, whatever their substance, context and nature.

All States should exhaust all those resources to settle differences peacefully. They should not invoke irritants to escalate the situation and drive it to the point of unbalanced military confrontation. The United States-Libya dispute over territorial waters would never have reached the point at which the United States used military force had the matter been submitted to the competent international bodies or had the United States abandoned its policy in the region, a policy dependent upon the use of military force and deterrence within the context of its global strategy.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

Kuwait, concerned for the preservation of international peace and security and the peace and security of the region, hopes that these United States practices do not constitute a new and permanent strategy. The demonstration of force in the Mediterranean, by whatever Power - especially the major Powers, which have special responsibilities - could upset the security and stability of the area and obstruct the efforts of its States to declare it a region of security and peace free of sources of tension. This goal is the responsibility of all States, particularly large Powers possessing military capability.

Following its meeting on 25 March 1986, the Council of the League of Arab States issued a statement strongly condemning the United States use of aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and stating that continuation of that aggression posed a threat to the safety and security of the Arab countries and to international peace and security. It also reaffirmed the Council's solidarity with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and its strong backing of it.

We are convinced that that statement of the Arab League's Council reflects awareness of the danger that will arise from the continuation of such acts and reflects Arab positions and emotions in that regard.

As it watches with deep concern developments in that important part of the world, Kuwait denounces the policy targeting fraternal Libya. Our appreciation of the severe expansionist dangers of such a dispute leads us to call upon the United States to refrain from these unacceptable provocations and to set an example of self-restraint, submission to international legitimacy and respect for Charter principles, particularly those prohibiting the use of force in the settlement of disputes and providing for recourse to dialogue and negotiation instead of the use of violence and force. Those are precepts that the permanent members of the Security Council must cherish.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

Kuwait has issued the following statement:

"Based on its fundamental and declared positions towards Arab solidarity, Kuwait has denounced the bombardment of Libyan sites by US warplanes and hopes that events will not evolve in a manner conducive to any escalation, whether on the military or political level."

The Kuwaiti statement has reiterated what was contained in the Arab League Council's resolution adopted on 25 March, which expresses the collective Arab stance on this question.

We expect this Council to exercise its historic role in accordance with the Charter, to demonstrate its interest in full respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, and to call on all parties to the dispute to abide by the principles of right and justice through the legitimate institutions of the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Kuwait for his kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland): At the outset, I wish to thank the members of the Security Council for giving me the honour and opportunity to address the Council. I express to you, Mr. President, and the other members my highest consideration.

I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council. I am sure that, under your able leadership, the Council will proceed efficiently with the subject on its agenda, the grave issue of the situation in the southern Mediterranean.

Poland follows with great concern the recent developments in the southern Mediterranean caused by the provocative military actions of the United States naval fleet off Libya. The movement of United States naval units into the Gulf of Sidra

(Mr. Noworyta, Poland)

has been described in press reports as a major exercise of muscle flexing intended to teach a lesson to countries whose policies are not to the liking of Washington. It has also been indicated that it reflects a readiness on the part of the United States Government to extend the political uses of American power. We are witnessing threats to use that power in other regions of the world - for instance, against Nicaragua. It is quite evident that the United States Government arrogates to itself the right to determine the kind of policies that Governments of various countries should conduct.

The intrusion of United States naval units into the Gulf of Sidra and the military actions taken against Libyan naval units and Libyan territory constitute an aggressive action against Libya, a sovereign State, and cannot be described as anything other than acts of State terrorism on the part of a big Power against a small State which is a Member of the United Nations and of the Non-Aligned Movement. They constitute an escalation of the hostile policy towards a sovereign country, commencing, inter alia, with defamatory propaganda and the unilateral application of unlawful sanctions and economic coercion clearly prohibited in many international documents adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Their aim is to hamper the implementation of progressive social and economic transformations in Libya and the exercise of an independent foreign policy by that country.

We consider the United States action to be contrary to the basic principles of international law and the United Nations Charter. In particular, the United States actions clearly violate the essential obligations of all States Members of the United Nations enshrined in Article 2 (4) of the Charter to:

"... refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations" and fundamental norms of international law.

(Mr. Noworyta, Poland)

They constitute a threat to peace not only in the southern Mediterranean and Europe at large; they constitute a threat not only to regional security, but also to international peace and stability; and they also endanger the security of Polish personnel employed in Libya. The United States actions tend to heighten tensions and thus impede improvement of the international situation for which the peoples of the world strive so much.

It is an undisputed fact that Libya has fallen victim to aggressive action. My country expresses its full solidarity with Libya. Poland demands that hostile actions against that country cease immediately and Libya's sovereignty be fully respected. We hope that the Security Council, in exercising its responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, will take the proper action to that end.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Poland for his kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): At the very outset, I should like to extend to you, Sir, my congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to wish you every success in fulfilling your responsible task.

At the same time, I express my delegation's appreciation to the representative of the Congo, Ambassador Adouki, for the constructive and skilful manner in which he guided the Council's work during the month of February.

Permit me also to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of this august body for giving me the opportunity to set forth the position of the German Democratic Republic on the problem under consideration.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

The world is following with deep concern the aggravation of the situation in the southern Mediterranean. The people and Government of the German Democratic Republic fully share this concern.

The request for convening an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the situation and to take appropriate measures to relax tensions and restore peace in the area is therefore legitimate and imperative.

The convening of the Council to consider this question is justified also because the situation that has emerged seriously threatens peace and security in that area and poses a danger to world peace.

In a statement made by the spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic on 26 March 1986 he said,

"With great concern the German Democratic Republic has noted the intrusion of United States aircraft into the territory of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. That action is a direct threat to world peace and a challenge to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Libyan State and is bound to complicate the efforts for a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict and, consequently, for a healthier state of international affairs. Intrusion into foreign territory is patently inconsistent with both the principles of the United Nations Charter and other generally recognized norms of international law.

"It is contradictory to the will of all those States and their peoples which are committed to international détente and security.

"What is imperative, especially in this situation, is statesman-like wisdom and prudence. The German Democratic Republic will continue to work for a world free of any threat in which every people has its place just as any other."

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic
Republic)

It was agreed in Geneva last year between General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan to take steps for improving the international situation, in general, and bilateral relations, in particular, as well as steps for reaching progress in the field of disarmament and the safeguarding of peace.

This has been universally assessed as a positive beginning and an encouraging sign. Since 15 January this year, the great and constructive programme to free mankind from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000 has been on the agenda of all Governments. In the meantime the programme has found world-wide support. Recently the Soviet Union also submitted the concept of the creation of a comprehensive system of international security, showing the way to a radical turn towards improving all international life.

In the interest of peace and co-operation between peoples and States and of dialogue and understanding, the German Democratic Republic joins in the world-wide appeal directed at the United States Administration to stop the provocations along the coast of Libya and to settle all disputes by peaceful means. As a nuclear Power and a permanent member of the Security Council, the United States bears a special responsibility to banish the danger of a nuclear war, to bring about a general and complete prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests and, above all, to end the arms race on Earth and prevent its spread to outer space.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic for the kind words he addressed to me.

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

Mr. ORAMAS OLIVA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Once again the aggressive, illegal and adventurist behaviour by the United States Government has resulted in the urgent convening of the Security Council to consider deeds which

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

not only violate the independence and security of a sovereign State Member of this Organization but also endanger peace and security in a sensitive and already explosive region. Indeed, the activities carried out by United States vessels and aircraft against Libya on the night of 24 March require no additional description.

Everyone is aware of the aggressive designs of the United States Government against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. For several months now, United States aircraft and vessels have been carrying out provocative manoeuvres off the coast of Libya and on more than one occasion senior spokesmen have uttered threats against Libyan leaders. A systematic campaign of hatred plagued with lies and fairy tales is being disseminated by the United States mass media, whipping up irrational violence against that African non-aligned nation.

This is not the first time that events of this kind have occurred in the Gulf of Sidra in which Yankee aircraft have attacked Libyan vessels or airplanes. The Co-ordinating Bureau and other bodies of the Non-Aligned Movement have recently spoken out against acts of hostility and aggression perpetrated by the United States against that sister country.

The way in which events have developed, the timing, propaganda and forces deployed recall a much earlier incident that took place in the Tonkin Gulf in 1965. A naval skirmish of lesser scope, similarly provoked by the United States and totally misrepresented by the mass media, was the pretext used at that time to launch the filthy Yankee intervention against Viet Nam. Today the incidents in the Gulf of Sidra reaffirm the decision of the present United States Administration to continue to increase international tension, to intimidate developing and non-aligned nations, and to make the use and threat of force a matter of policy, and State terrorism a daily practice in international relations.

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

We cannot lose sight of the fact that all these events are taking place when the President of the United States and the State Department and the Pentagon are waging a frenzied crusade to ensure that the United States Congress channels funds into the financing of Somozist counter-revolutionaries operating from Honduras against Nicaragua. That crusade ignores and violates the most fundamental principles of relations between States and respect for the United Nations Charter; it is characterized by the use of every means available to ensure that United States public opinion supports Washington's bellicose, and interventionist activities in Central America.

The pretext put forward by the United States Government to justify its acts of aggression against Libya are all too reminiscent of those used to foment counter-revolution in the homeland of Sandino. Similarly, the news now being used to fan a crisis between Nicaragua and Honduras through the allegation of the supposed presence of Nicaraguan forces in Honduran territory is simply a crude pretext to compel that country to step up its activities against the Sandinist revolution. As evidence of this we have the patent contradiction between statements by White House spokesmen affirming this alleged presence and its denial by Honduran military spokesmen.

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

The exploitation of both situations by United States Press and Government spokesmen reveals their true objectives and exposes the brazenness with which the Yankee ruling circles are fabricating lies, in a style typical of Goebbels.

Whatever the pretext for it, the United States action against Libya is a clear violation of international law and the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Therefore, the Council should reject it as an attempt by the United States to impose its will on a sovereign State by force of arms and to undermine the right of peoples freely to determine their own future.

Cuba stands by the fraternal people of Libya, which is resisting Yankee aggression, and calls for the support of all peace-loving peoples in condemning the aggression and demanding an immediate and unconditional end to it.

As we have said before, the United States is unfolding in the Gulf of Sidra part of a global policy intended to intimidate and harass countries that do not follow Washington's dictates in international affairs, but instead choose their own path of development. Hence, today's acts of aggression against Libya are similar to yesterday's against Viet Nam and the constant acts of aggression against the Palestinian people. It is the same policy of pressure, aggression and harassment that has been applied for 27 years against the Cuban revolution and is today exacting a new toll in blood in Nicaragua.

The Security Council cannot escape its responsibilities under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. Nor can it allow one of its permanent members brutally and blatantly to violate its obligations, the norms of law governing international relations and the Charter.

Furthermore, it is inconceivable that anybody should seek to defend a so-called right of freedom of navigation in any part of the world by force of arms, using unjustified and unprovoked aggression against naval vessels and aircraft of

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

an independent sovereign State. The United States action might be seen as asserting a right of piracy, since its activities in the Gulf of Sidra cannot be regarded as anything but piracy, and no civilized country - still less the Security Council - can acknowledge or condone such a so-called right.

The history of the period since the Second World War contains, unfortunately, many examples of how, when the international community has failed to act energetically and decisively against the acts of aggression of the United States, the right of peoples to self-determination and independence has been trampled underfoot.

Latin America has suffered the direct consequences of that imperialist, adventurist policy: in 1954, in Guatemala; in 1965, in the Dominican Republic; in 1973, in Chile; and, in 1983, in tiny Grenada. Only in Playa Giron was imperialism defeated in that part of the world, as it was later in Viet Nam and as it is now being defeated in heroic Nicaragua - though not without a great deal of material damage and much loss of life.

Today the Libyan people, like our peoples in the past, is ready to shed its blood to defend the independence and sovereignty of its country. However, the Security Council has the duty and the ability to spare Libya such a heavy cost, by staying the hand of the aggressor and preventing it from acting with impunity in violation of the Charter and international law and in contempt of the wishes of the international community, which have been reiterated by many world leaders and personalities and, in this Chamber, by representatives of Member States.

In expressing my delegation's satisfaction over the exemplary way in which you have been presiding over these meetings of the Council, and wishing you success in your delicate duties, Mr. President, I again express the hope of the Cuban Government that this body will measure up to its special responsibilities under the

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

Charter by condemning the unjustified and unprovoked aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, demanding a halt to all hostile acts against that Member State by the United States Government and calling for that Government to indemnify the Libyan Government for the damage and losses caused to that country and its citizens.

In the present circumstances the international community can expect no less from the Council. Nothing less would make it possible to prevent the perpetration of similar acts in the future against Libya or any other State. The present United States Administration has proclaimed, urbi et orbi, the existence of a so-called credibility crisis at the United Nations - clearly, as a way of denigrating and weakening our Organization for its own sinister ends. This will be a case in point if the members of the Council fail to act - if we allow the erosion of the credibility of the United Nations and its capacity to defend small countries against the arbitrary, overbearing behaviour and aggression of imperialism.

A heavy responsibility rests on the members of the Council. My delegation is confident that this time justice and law will prevail.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cuba for his kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. NYAMDOO (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): My delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your assumption of of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We also express our gratitude to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Congo, Mr. Adouki, for his outstanding leadership of the Council's work last month.

We are grateful to you, Sir, and to all the other members of the Council for giving us this opportunity to speak on the item before the Council.

(Mr. Nyamdoo, Mongolia)

As previous speakers have emphasized, the world has just witnessed a new United States act of aggression against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, a full Member of our Organization. Using its enormous military machine in the Mediterranean, the United States has struck at a series of targets on Libyan territory, thus committing an act of aggression involving the loss of innocent life and serious material damage to the country. This action by the United States authorities cannot be regarded as anything but a new, specific example of the policy of State terrorism pursued by Washington against countries whose independent policy displeases the United States.

(Mr. Nyamdoo, Mongolia)

This latest act of aggression by the United States cannot be considered in isolation from its other activities: it was preceded by the American Administration's economic sanctions against Libya. The United States armed attack on Libya is, therefore, an integral part of its attempts to suppress the struggle of the Libyan people to exercise self-determination. We believe that the United States criminal acts against Libya not only contravene the norms and principles of international law but pose a direct threat to international peace and security.

Based on its position of principle, the Mongolian delegation vigorously condemns American aggression against Libya. We demand that the United States not only immediately cease its aggression against Libya but also provide compensation for all of the damage it has inflicted on that country.

Our delegation would like to express its complete solidarity with Libya, its Government and people, who are defending their freedom and independence against the aggression of American imperialism. We demand that the Security Council condemn the United States aggression and take the necessary steps to put an end to it.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mongolia for his kind words addressed to me.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): Sir, it is a particular personal pleasure for me to sit on the Council under your presidency. We have known each other for a long time and I feel entitled, therefore, to say with complete conviction that you are an outstanding representative of your Government, fair-minded, judicious, sympathetic to the needs of ordinary people and sensitive to the requirements of political situations. On behalf of the United Kingdom, a close partner and ally of Denmark, I congratulate you on your conduct of our business in this difficult month of March.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

Every month this year seems to be difficult. I should like to say how much we appreciate the way in which the Permanent Representative of the Congo handled a trying situation with great calmness last month.

Mr. President, you have already, on behalf of the Council as a whole, extended a welcome to our new Soviet colleague, but I cannot resist adding my own personal welcome to Ambassador Dubinin. I reciprocate the hope that he expressed in his speech for fruitful co-operation with all his colleagues. Truly, this Council should act in a collegial spirit.

Any breach of the peace is regrettable. The situation before us today is doubly regrettable because it stems from the flouting of fundamental principles. The main principle at stake is the right to freedom of navigation in international waters. This is a principle to which my Government has from time immemorial attached fundamental importance. As I have said on a previous occasion in this Council: as a maritime nation we are committed to freedom of navigation, including innocent passage through territorial seas. We deplore any unjustified threat to, or action against, navigation, whenever and wherever it occurs.

I stress that this principle, together with freedom of air traffic in international air space, is not restricted to the Mediterranean or to any other part of the world. It is unacceptable for any nation to arrogate to itself part of the high seas which are res communis.

It is well known that Libya has eccentric border policies which cause trouble to its neighbours in the south as well as to those in the north. In the Mediterranean Sea its neighbours are not just the countries which occupy the littoral on either side of it, but the whole international community. We all have a right to traverse international waters and no country has a right to arrogate these waters exclusively to itself. It is as if a landowner were to close off a public road close to his estate. Such an action damages the public at large.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

That is the situation which underlies our present problem. The act, as it were, of closing the public road or arrogating international waters is not only illegal, but also provocative. To declare "a line of death" is an attempt to intimidate the ordinary users of the public road. There is scarcely a country in the world that supports this "line of death". The vast majority of countries have consistently refused to acknowledge it and many have indeed made specific protests. I refer, for example, to the protest made in September last year by the presidency of the European Communities on behalf of its member States. This was a formal protest to the Libyan Government over the introduction of illegal restrictions in the Gulf of Sirte, or Sidra. The members of the European Communities reaffirmed their rejection of Libyan claims to sovereignty over the waters extending beyond the legitimate limits of the territorial sea.

I was struck by the contrast between the speeches we heard yesterday from the two countries which had originally called for an urgent meeting of this Council. Malta first took the initiative and in his speech yesterday the Permanent Representative of Malta put on record the view of his Government that they:

"... cannot accept or recognize the contention that the Gulf of Sidra south of a line drawn along latitude 32.30 North 0 as a part of Libyan territory or falls under Libyan sovereignty". (S/PV.2668, p. 17)

By contrast the representative of the Soviet Union ducked this question. He simply avoided all mention of the basic principle at issue and of the Soviet position on it. Instead, he sought to turn an incident which stems directly from a fundamental principle, which in other cases his Government supports, into an East-West issue. I suggest that the speakers this morning and the line they have taken underline the point. The Soviet harping on East-West issues was both regrettable and evasive.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

The Ambassador of the USSR said: "The Soviet Union remains, as always, on the side of Libya ..." (S/PV.2668, p. 12). In other words, Libya right or wrong.

Where does this leave the Soviet Union on the principle of freedom of navigation and freedom of air traffic in international air space? I realize that air traffic in particular has been a touchy subject for the Soviet Union. But does the Soviet Union support or does it not support the Libyan claims? The answer to that question is surely fundamental to the whole matter we are debating.

Given acceptance of the principle of freedom of navigation and the circumstances of the case, it is impossible to argue convincingly that the United States forces involved in the incident before us were doing other than exercising their right to the freedom of navigation in international waters and air space in accordance with international law. There was therefore no justification for the attack made on them by Libyan missiles on 24 March. The Libyan authorities claimed to have shot down three United States aircraft, apparently over waters which the vast majority of the world recognizes as international waters. The Libyans were apparently mistaken in their claim to have shot down the aircraft, but the fact of an attack on United States aircraft seems clear and has not been denied. There can be no doubt that the attack constituted a breach of Libya's obligations under international law, in particular Article 2 (iv) of the United Nations Charter. The United States forces, having been attacked and further threatened, exercised their right of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter. This response was proportionate and wholly justifiable. It was duly reported to the Security Council as provided for in Article 51.

The facts are clear, the principle of freedom of navigation is of great and universal importance, Libya's action in arrogating part of the high seas to itself was illegal and provocative, the attack on the United States aircraft was

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

unjustified, the United States response was proportionate and legitimate. What more is there to say? This is a clear case in which the Council should uphold the principles concerned, urge the parties to observe restraint and call for the strict observance of international law.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his very kind words addressed to my country and to me.

The next speaker is the representative of France, on whom I now call.

Mr. de KEMOULARIA (France) (interpretation from French): I do not wish to prolong the debate, Mr. President, but it is a pleasure to bow to the tradition here by telling you how happy my delegation is to see you in the Chair and how much we appreciate the moderation and tact you have shown in conducting our debates - in short, your diplomatic skill. It is the result of long experience, which, fortunately for my Mission, was acquired in particular through long residence in France, where you have left many friends.

During the presidency of our colleague and friend the Ambassador of Congo, there was a heavy agenda and many meetings, and we noted the great skill with which he resolved difficult negotiations. That is all to his honour.

Of course, I extend a welcome to our Soviet colleague. We are pleased to have Ambassador Dubinin with us here. I would note that he has a great knowledge of French matters gained over many years of his diplomatic life. He is, may I say, a confirmed Parisian. That can only facilitate our mutual contacts within the Council.

The Security Council is seized today of the situation created in the southern Mediterranean by the incidents that occurred on 24 and 25 March between units of the Libyan and United States armed forces in the Gulf of Sidra.

(Mr. de Kemoularia, France)

For centuries now, France has had multiple political, economic and cultural links with all the States in the Mediterranean region. It is consequently particularly concerned over anything that might affect stability in that part of the world. It will therefore be understood that the French Government has been following very carefully the developments in the situation in the Gulf of Sidra and is concerned for the maintenance of freedom of navigation within international waters.

In that respect, France has always taken a clear position: it attaches crucial importance to strict respect for the internationally recognized rules in that domain. In this particular case, France considers that Libya's claims to sovereignty over the Gulf of Sidra are without foundation in history and are unjustified under the 1958 and 1982 Conventions on the Law of the Sea. That position is indeed well known to the Libyan authorities, who were reminded of it by the French authorities at the appropriate time.

Moreover, France considers that any threat of armed intervention, and a fortiori any direct intervention, designed to enforce territorial claims of this kind must be ruled out. Such claims are quite particularly suited to arbitration or to international jurisdiction.

Thus, France hopes that the principles of international law, especially those relating to freedom of navigation in international spaces, will be safeguarded in a peaceful fashion, in order to avoid military confrontations the consequences of which are difficult to control.

My delegation expresses the hope that the present debate will help to ensure that this philosophy prevails.

I reserve the possibility of speaking again in the Council on this matter.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for his very kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. CESAR (Czechoslovakia): Permit me, Sir, to begin my statement by congratulating you on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. My delegation wishes to express its conviction that under your guidance the Security Council will be able to fulfil the significant tasks entrusted to it by the United Nations Charter.

At the same time, I should like to express my appreciation to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of the Congo, who presided over the meetings of the Council in February.

Since this is my first statement in the Security Council this year, I should also like to congratulate the newly elected members of the Council and to extend to them my wishes that their responsible work may contribute to the strengthening of peace and international security.

It is a fact that 1986 is the International Year of Peace. This was solemnly proclaimed by all States Members of the United Nations during the jubilee fortieth session of the General Assembly. In spite of that fact, the Security Council has already held numerous meetings this year dealing with serious cases of violations of international peace and security.

Three days ago, naval and air forces of the United States committed an armed attack against a number of Libyan targets. This amounts to a flagrant violation of the norms of international law and the United Nations Charter. It is an infringement of Libya's State sovereignty and territorial integrity and an act of armed aggression. This dramatic event is certainly not an isolated occurrence. It is yet another, highly dangerous, link in a chain of provocations and threats launched by the United States Administration for a rather long time against that progressive Arab country. It is well known that those provocations have been escalated this year to an unprecedented extent: we need only recall the United States embargo declared at the beginning of this year and the provocative military

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

manoeuvres of the United States Navy and Air Force. According to a statement by the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Shultz, at a press conference in Ankara on 25 March, since 1981 the United States has deliberately entered the Gulf of Sidra 14 times.

In spite of the fact that, at its thirty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted by an overwhelming majority a resolution condemning State terrorism, the United States has frequently resorted to State terrorism in pursuit of the aims of its foreign policy, thus acting in direct contravention of that resolution. It is our opinion that there can be no more convincing proof of the correctness of this statement than the just-perpetrated and continuing armed actions of the United States against Libya, a sovereign State Member of the United Nations.

Such an action cannot be justified by any reason or any pretext. This is all the more true in view of the fact that the United States has refused to sign the Convention on the Law of the Sea and has been applying arbitrary and selective approaches to disputed questions of sovereignty over territorial waters.

This act of piracy is to be viewed in a broader context. The eastern Mediterranean and the Near and Middle East areas have long been hotbeds of tension that pose a threat to peace and security in the region and, in the long run, the whole world. This situation has prevailed since almost the very first years of the existence of the United Nations. It is obvious that the escalation of tension, intentionally provoked military acts of aggression and an atmosphere of war psychosis can have extremely dangerous consequences for world peace and security. It is inadmissible that world peace be put at risk in a way like this under the pretext of securing the so-called vital interests or national security of the United States anywhere in the world, especially in view of the fact that the given case is obviously related to the domestic political developments in the United States and to the need to create an atmosphere that would make it possible to

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

substantiate to the American people the increased demands for armaments, from "Star Wars" to the "aid" to the Nicaraguan contras. It is inadmissible that countries that, because of the progressive orientation of their foreign policy, fall out of favour with the United States Administration be punished by military actions.

The era of colonialism, when a handful of countries arrogated to themselves the right to play the role of world gendarme, is over, and similar acts reminiscent of it are a dangerous playing with fire. Actions such as the United States act of aggression against Libya lead to nothing but an escalation of tension, thus running directly counter to the demand of the day - the need to restore the international situation to health, to reduce tensions and to develop peaceful international co-operation.

On 25 March 1986, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic issued a statement that reads, inter alia:

"The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic condemns the provocation by United States armed forces against the sovereign Libyan State. It expresses its full support for and solidarity with the Libyan people and their leadership. It demands that the United States immediately halt further actions of gross pressure and blackmail against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya."

My delegation wishes to express its conviction that the Security Council will play a worthy role, as assigned it by the United Nations Charter, and condemn the gross aggressive provocation by the United States against Libya. This will undoubtedly enhance the authority of the Security Council and of the United Nations in general, as well as the cause of peace and co-operation in the world.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Czechoslovakia for his kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. ENDREFFY (Hungary): May I begin, Mr. President, by expressing my delegation's appreciation to you and to the members of the Security Council for having given us the opportunity to express our position on the question currently on the agenda.

The events of recent days in the Mediterranean and along the coast of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the details of which are too well known to be repeated, have caused just anxiety and grave concern, not only in the countries in the immediate area, but all over the world. In view of the fact that security in Europe is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean area, this is especially true of European countries - Hungary among them.

We therefore find ourselves in agreement with the request that the Security Council, as the organ of the United Nations with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, address the grave situation in the central Mediterranean and consider appropriate action to reduce tension and restore peace and stability in the region.

(Mr. Endreffy, Hungary)

For a considerable period of time, that region has been a most explosive area, owing especially to the fact that outside forces have been trying to undermine its stability for the sake of their so-called strategic purposes. It is widely recognized that ill-advised outside intervention not only threatens the peace and security of the region, but also has serious repercussions on the international situation as a whole.

In the view of our delegation, no effort should be spared to redress the situation in that part of our globe. The Security Council has a major role to play in that regard.

The position of the Hungarian People's Republic concerning the issue before the Council is as follows: Hungary expresses its deepest concern regarding the tension along the Libyan coast. The obvious aim of the military actions undertaken by the United States is to intimidate the independent and non-aligned Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, a Member of the United Nations. This armed conflict not only threatens the peace and independence of the Libyan people, but could result in very dangerous consequences for the whole Mediterranean region and, in a wider sense, also for the cause of international peace and security. The Hungarian People's Republic stands in solidarity with the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and it expresses the hope that the United States, showing sensible self-restraint, will take steps towards the immediate cessation of all military action in order to put an end to the tension which has arisen in the region as well as to settle disputes through peaceful means.

In conclusion, my delegation cannot but support the call for the Security Council to take appropriate action to reduce the tension in the Mediterranean, and thereby contribute in an effective way to the maintenance of international peace and security.

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

Mr. BUI XUAN NHAT (Viet Nam): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am convinced that, with your diplomatic skill and vast experience, you will guide the work of this body to success.

I should like also to congratulate Ambassador Martin Adouki of the Congo on having successfully discharged his responsibilities as President of the Council for the month of February.

I wish also to express my thanks to members of the Security Council for having afforded me this opportunity to speak before the Council.

For several months now, the entire international community has been anxiously watching the United States edging towards a direct confrontation with the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The former is trying by all means to work out a pretext for the use of force against Libya.

It started off with a smear campaign launched by the United States against Libya. The United States has done practically everything to blame Libya for what it labels as "terrorism", and in the wake of that to impose a trade embargo on Libya. That poor performance surprises no one, for it is well known who is behind Israel, South Africa and some régimes in Latin America, régimes that profess State terrorism, which has been condemned by people throughout the world. This explains why even the allies of the United States seemed unwilling to go along with the trade embargo, and why the people are supporting Libya in its efforts to overcome the consequences of that embargo.

The latest developments around Libya constitute a source of grave concern for everyone. The United States began showing off its military strength by deploying thousands of troops and 30 warships, led by three aircraft carriers, in the Gulf of Sidra in what was described as a military manoeuvre. Then it complained that its

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

aircraft had been fired upon. Subsequently its warships and fighter planes struck a number of Libyan targets. But one notes that the United States armed forces should not be there in the first place. By deploying those troops off the Libyan coast on a permanent and combat-ready basis, the United States wants to intimidate the countries of the region, to threaten Libya and to seize upon anything that turns up as a pretext for flexing its military muscle against that country.

What the United States is doing off the Libyan coast is not new to us, or at least to me personally. Twenty-two years ago, it resorted to this same trick when it staged the so-called Gulf of Tonkin incident and used it as a pretext for starting its air-war of destruction against my country. An analogy can be drawn between those two cases; one can easily see the premeditated character of the Libyan incident. The heightening of tension around Libya, which is now accompanied by the use of force, is in line with the hostile attitude on the part of the United States towards that country. It is a part of the United States policy of meddling in the internal affairs of sovereign States, of creating hotbeds of tension in various parts of the world, and of threatening international peace and security so as to hinder the process of improving the international situation.

Libya is only one case in which a third-world country is endangered by United States aggression. At present, we are following with great concern the worsening situations in Central America, in southern Africa and in the Middle East, where the United States is supporting reactionary forces in an attempt to remove by force those régimes which do not bend to its dictates. Vigilance should therefore be heightened in the face of the next dangerous steps by the United States.

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

The piratic action by the United States cannot be justified under any pretext. The attack against Libya by United States warships and aeroplanes constitutes a serious act of provocation and aggression against a sovereign State. It sharply aggravates the already explosive situation throughout the region, which could have incalculable grave consequences going far beyond its boundaries. This is a living example, visible to the naked eye, of the policy of State terrorism and of total disregard for the United Nations Charter and the generally recognized norms of international law governing relations between States.

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam condemns in the strongest terms the attack by the United States against Libya and demands that it put an immediate end to its act of aggression. The United States should have learned something from the recent past. We call on the Security Council to adopt the necessary effective measures to help stop it.

On 26 March 1986 the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam issued a statement condemning the United States act of aggression against Libya and supporting the just cause of the Libyan people.

On behalf of the people and Government of Viet Nam I should like to reiterate our solidarity with the people of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. We fully support Libya in its struggle to safeguard its freedom, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and its legitimate right to self-defence. We are confident that the Libyan people will succeed in its determination to continue on the course it has chosen for itself.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Viet Nam for the kind words he addressed to me.

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

Mr. KRISHNAN (India): Allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We are aware of your diverse abilities and diplomatic acumen and are confident that under your skilful and impartial guidance the Council will be able to arrive at a speedy and satisfactory conclusion on the item before it.

May I also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to your predecessor, the Permanent Represent of a fellow non-aligned country, Congo, for the exemplary manner in which he guided the Council's proceedings last month.

(Mr. Krishnan, India)

We are meeting today at the request of Malta, the Soviet Union, and Iraq in its capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group to consider the grave situation which has arisen in the Mediterranean. At this point I should like to read out the statement made by the official spokesman of the Government of India on Wednesday, 26 March 1986:

"The recent United States manoeuvres in the Gulf of Sidra and other attacks on Libyan patrol boats, as well as a missile battery in Libyan territory in Sidra are matters of great concern. These acts pose a serious threat not only to regional security but also to international peace and stability. It will be recalled that as early as 13 January 1986, in response to anxieties expressed about the threats and possible use of force against Libya, the Government of India had expressed the hope that no precipitate steps would be taken, as situations of this kind are best resolved through dialogue and not through pressure. United States action is all the more unfortunate since by virtue of its position as a permanent member of the Security Council it has a primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and to abide by the principles of the United Nations Charter."

We have followed with careful attention the statements made by several preceding speakers. Many have highlighted the seriousness of the steadily deteriorating situation that obtains in the region and the sense of insecurity experienced by the non-aligned countries in the area. The latest disturbing developments have undoubtedly contributed towards the exacerbation of tensions, posing a serious threat not only to regional security but to international peace and security as well. We cannot but express our gravest concern.

The Ministerial Conference of Non-Aligned Countries held in Luanda in September 1985 noted with concern the continuation of bloc confrontation in the

(Mr. Krishnan, India)

Mediterranean, increased military presence, foreign bases and fleets, including nuclear weapons of the great Powers, as well as the continued existence of hotbeds of crisis, occupation and aggression in that region, above all in the Middle East, which endanger the sovereignty and independence of the non-aligned countries of that region in particular and obstruct the peaceful settlement of problems.

While calling for the transformation of the Mediterranean region into a region of peace, security and overall co-operation, the Ministers further reiterated the call on all States made at the ministerial meeting of the Mediterranean members of the Non-Aligned Movement, held at Valletta in September 1984, to adhere strictly to the principle of non-use or threat of force and urged them not to use their armaments, forces, bases and military facilities against Mediterranean members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Against the background of intensifying rivalry between the blocs and the resulting serious deterioration in the international situation, the Ministers also expressed grave concern at the military presence, activities and manoeuvres of the great Powers in the vicinity of non-aligned countries and considered these as breeding tension and instability, endangering peace and security and posing the threat of intervention in the internal affairs of these countries.

The serious developments in the Mediterranean region were the subject of consideration at a meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 6 February of this year. In a communiqué issued after the meeting the Bureau cautioned against any precipitate steps. It is a matter of deep regret and concern that the situation in the region has deteriorated further and that, notwithstanding the call for restraint and the avoidance of precipitate steps, actions have been taken resulting in a sharp escalation of tension and conflict in the region.

(Mr. Krishnan, India)

The latest developments in the Mediterranean region were again comprehensively discussed at an urgent session of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 26 March 1986, yesterday. I quote from the communiqué adopted by the Co-ordinating Bureau:

"The Bureau noted with grave concern the recent United States manoeuvres in the Gulf of Sidra and the attacks on Libyan vessels as well as Libyan territory. These acts of aggression posed a serious threat not only to regional security but also to international peace and stability.

"The Bureau recalled that the Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries meeting in New Delhi in 1983 had noted with concern that 'policies of intervention and interference, pressure and threat or use of force continued to be pursued against many non-aligned countries with dangerous consequences for peace and stability' and had called upon all States 'to abide by the principle that force or threat of force will not be used against the territorial integrity or political and economic independence of States'. It further recalled that, at its meeting of 6 February 1986, the Bureau had 'cautioned against any precipitate steps by the United States of America as such situations were best resolved through dialogue and not through pressure or use of force'.

"The Bureau also recalled the resolution adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the Arab League Council at its eighty-fifth session, held in Tunis from 24 to 26 March 1986, which had 'forcefully condemned the United States aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, considering it as a grave violation of the sovereignty, independence and safety of the Libyan country'.

"The Bureau expressed grave concern over the provocations and the use of force against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The Bureau condemned those acts of aggression, which created a dangerous escalation of

(Mr. Krishnan, India)

the situation in the Central Mediterranean and endangered international peace and security. The United States action was all the more condemnable since by virtue of its position as a permanent member of the Security Council it had primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and stability and to abide by the principles of the United Nations Charter. The Bureau demanded an urgent cessation of military operations that endangered the peace and security of the region and particularly the security and territorial integrity of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, as well as international peace and stability. It affirmed its full support for, and solidarity with, the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, a fellow non-aligned country, in safeguarding its independence, stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity."

(Mr. Krishnan, India)

The elements I have just read out represent the essence of the position taken by the non-aligned countries and I can add little to this clear and unequivocal pronouncement on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The principle of peaceful settlement of disputes is central to the philosophy of peaceful coexistence advocated by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Non-aligned countries have also advocated strict respect for the principles of non-intervention and non-interference. The Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States, contained in resolution 36/103 and adopted through the efforts of the non-aligned, was hailed by the New Delhi Summit of 1983 as a

"historic contribution by the Non-Aligned Movement to the task of ushering in a régime of inter-State relations based on mutual respect for sovereignty and independence".

We call upon all States to adhere to that Declaration and to observe its principles in their dealings with each other.

It is our profound conviction that peace in the region cannot rest on the foundation of policies of intervention, interference and intimidation, the threat or use of force, or coercive measures of any kind. For any peace to be enduring, it must be based on an acceptance of the principles of political and socio-economic pluralism by States, not only for themselves but also for the region as a whole, and a strict adherence to the principles of non-use of force, non-intervention and non-interference.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of India for his kind words addressed to me.

In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend to adjourn the meeting now. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of the item on the agenda will take place today at 3.30 p.m.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.