



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

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ENGLISH

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

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 17 April 1986, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. de KEMOULARIA

(France)

Members:

Australia
Bulgaria
China
Congo
Denmark
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. WOOLCOTT
Mr. GARVALOV
Mr. LIANG Yufan
Mr. GAYAMA
Mr. BIERRING
Mr. KONADU-YIADOM
Mr. RAKOTOND RAMBOA
Mr. KASEMSARN
Mr. MOHAMMED
Mr. DUBININ
Mr. AL-SHAALI

Sir John THOMSON
Mr. OKUN
Mr. AGUILAR

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The meeting was called to order at 4.35 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

LETTER DATED 15 APRIL 1986 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17991)

LETTER DATED 15 APRIL 1986 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF BURKINA FASO TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17992)

LETTER DATED 15 APRIL 1986 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17993)

LETTER DATED 15 APRIL 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF OMAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/17994)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): In accordance with decisions taken at previous meetings on this item, I invite the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to take a place at the Council table. I also invite the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to take a place at the Council table. I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Azzarouk (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) and Mr. Al-Atassi (Syrian Arab Republic) took places at the Council table;
Mr. Nengraharay (Afghanistan), Mr. Djoudi (Algeria), Mr. Ogouma (Benin),
Mr. Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso), Mr. Maksimov (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist
Republic), Mr. Velazco San Jose (Cuba), Mr. Cesar (Czechoslovakia), Mr. Al-Alfi
(Democratic Yemen), Mr. Jucker (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Andreffy (Hungary),

Ms. Kunadi (India), Mr. Damavandi Kamali (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Somvorachit (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. Nyamdo (Mongolia), Mrs. Bellorini de Parrales (Nicaragua), Mr. Al-Ansi (Oman), Mr. Shah Nawaz (Pakistan), Mr. Noworyta (Poland), Mr. Al-Kawari (Qatar), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Birido (Sudan), Mr. Oudovenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat (Viet Nam) and Mr. Sekulic (Yugoslavia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I should like to inform the Council members that I have received a letter from the representative of Bangladesh in which he asked to be invited to participate in the discussion on this agenda item. In keeping with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance 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. Siddiky (Bangladesh) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Council members will have received a photocopy of a letter dated 16 April 1986, addressed to the Secretary-General by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Madagascar to the United Nations which will be published tomorrow as Security Council document S/18013.

Mr. AGUILAR (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): Everyone is familiar with the influence which the works of the great French thinkers and the experience of the French Revolution had on our own Liberator, Simon Bolivar, and on

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the other leaders of our struggle for independence, early in the nineteenth century. Since then, France has been for Venezuela, as well as for the other countries of Latin America, a model and an inspiration in many areas and a permanent source of civilization and culture. For those reasons, it is with great pleasure that we see you, Sir, assuming the presidency of the Council and, of course, we assure you of our full co-operation in the delicate tasks which your post entails. In advance, we can anticipate the best possible outcome while you are President of the Council, because of your demonstrated wisdom, firmness, courtesy and sense of humour.

I would be remiss if I were not to pay tribute to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Denmark, Ambassador Ole Bierring, for his outstanding performance as President of the Council last month. With his very sound training and diplomatic experience, as well as his tact and invariable calm, Ambassador Bierring proved able to guide us most wisely through the various numerous and complex activities of the Council last month.

We should also like to extend our welcome to Ambassador Dubinin, our new Soviet colleague, whose many talents include a mastery of the Spanish tongue.

Yesterday, 16 April, the Government of Venezuela issued a statement in which it expressed its grave concern at the events which had taken place in the preceding hours in the Mediterranean and which had brought the United States and the Government of Libya into confrontation.

That statement went on to say that as a peace-loving country and a State which has always been dedicated to the norms and principles which make up the international legal system, Venezuela rejects the use of violence to resolve differences between nations, and any breach of the foundations of the system to which all States owe respect and which is for us the only way to spare mankind from unpredictable risks and disasters.

(Mr. Aguilar, Venezuela)

As a member of the Security Council, the Declaration concluded, Venezuela will do its utmost within this world body to foster through political and diplomatic negotiations the kind of diplomacy that will lead to a restoration of peace and the fulfilment of the duties of all Member States.

(Mr. Aguilar, Venezuela)

We sincerely believe that the Security Council can and should play a constructive role both in the prevention and in the solution of disputes which, if they persist, could endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. As we had occasion to say during the consideration of the most appropriate ways to increase the effectiveness of the Council, we share the view that one of those ways is through what is known as preventive diplomacy. Hence, we were prepared in this case to support an urgent appeal by the Council for reflexion and moderation, without prejudging the facts behind the dispute; this might have averted the events we are now deploring.

Yet it is not too late for the implementation of the provisions of Article 36 of the Charter. We think it not impossible for the Council to agree to recommend appropriate procedures or methods of adjustment as set out in Article 36 (1) of the Charter. In any event, that is the course of action we consider to be appropriate and helpful. To our way of thinking, little can come of decisions rejected by either or both parties because they fail to take into account the background or other aspects of the problem or because they do not strike the necessary balance. As has been stated repeatedly, the authority and credibility of the Security Council are weakened by repeated failure to implement the Council's resolutions. Moreover, it would be difficult to reach majority agreement on a resolution designed solely to condemn the conduct of one side or the other.

In this respect, we are reassured by the restrained and judicious statement made on 15 April by the Secretary-General, the final paragraph of which reads as follows:

"The Secretary-General believes that the resort to force is not an effective means of resolving disputes and will only lead to further violence.

(Mr. Aguilar, Venezuela)

He therefore appeals to the States involved to desist from escalating tension, to exercise restraint and to seek a resolution of this critical situation through means provided in the Charter". (Press Release SG/SM/3853)

Like other medium-sized and small countries which are non-permanent members of the Council, we are strong only in so far as we adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter and comply scrupulously with the norms of international law. We shall not, however, enter into an analysis of the legal aspects of the case before us. That task were better carried out by the International Court of Justice or an arbitration tribunal with access to all the evidence the parties can provide and also to the briefs and the arguments of qualified legal experts.

So that there will not be the shadow of a doubt about our position on the central questions that gave rise to this dispute, we wish to say that when we reject the use of violence to resolve disputes between nations - to cite again the relevant part of the Venezuela declaration of 16 April - we are referring both to armed action and to the violence carried out by individuals or groups of individuals. In that respect, we reiterate our support for General Assembly resolution 40/61, which was adopted by consensus and which

"Unequivocally condemns, as criminal, all acts, methods and practices of terrorism whenever and by whomever committed, including those which jeopardize friendly relations among States and their security". (General Assembly resolution 40/61, para. 1)

Without disregarding the effect on United States public opinion and on the Government of that country of the grief and indignation at the death of United States nationals as a result of terrorist acts - acts which, to be sure, we condemn - the United States, like the other permanent members of the Security Council, has a special responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and

(Mr. Aguilar, Venezuela)

security. Every privilege - and the right of veto is unquestionably a privilege - must have a corresponding special obligation; otherwise it would be useless and unjustifiable. Moreover, it is the general opinion that the use of military force is not the most appropriate way to fight terrorism. As historical experience has shown, violence breeds violence, and sometimes the spiral of violence goes far beyond what could have been foreseen initially.

In another forum, we join with Libya in defending interests vital for both countries, and in the United Nations, along with the other countries of the Group of 77, we are striving towards a new international economic order. Also, as a Latin American country we have a historical affinity with the Arab world, which in the past made so many contributions to Hispanic civilization and culture. We are united too with the United States by a long-standing and good friendship which began in the first years of our independence and which is strengthened by our common commitment to the values of representative and pluralistic democracy and our close trading and cultural ties.

Those ties encourage us to call upon both parties to co-operate with the Security Council and with the United Nations in general in the search for appropriate ways to put an end to a dispute which has already caused grievous loss of life and serious material damage.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Venezuela for the extremely kind words he addressed to my country and to me.

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

Mr. SIDDIKY (Bangladesh): At the outset, Sir, permit me to extend to you our warm congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April 1986. Our two countries are bound by close bonds of

(Mr. Siddiky, Bangladesh)

friendship and co-operation, and we are confident that under your able and proven stewardship the Council will be able to take concrete action at this crucial juncture.

Let me also extend our deep appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Ole Bierring of Denmark, for the admirable manner in which he guided the work of the Council last month.

The current Security Council debate is taking place at the request of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Burkina Faso, Syria and Oman, the current Chairman of the Arab group, to consider the grave developments in the central Mediterranean region due to the bombing of the capital and other cities of the brotherly Islamic State of Libya by United States aircraft. Bangladesh, along with the rest of the peace-loving world, received the news with deep shock and indignation. A spokesman of my Government issued the following statement on 14 April 1986:

"The latest United States action in Libya has been viewed with great concern and dismay in Bangladesh. This development is fraught with the serious danger of escalating the armed conflict in the already trouble-torn region. It is absolutely necessary for all to exercise maximum restraint; as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Libya, as of other independent nations, must be respected. Bangladesh, as always, firmly advocates renunciation of the use of force in the settlement of international disputes and calls upon all concerned to adhere strictly to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter."

(Mr. Siddiky, Bangladesh)

During the past weeks we have witnessed, with deep concern, a sharp escalation of tension and conflict in the central Mediterranean region owing to increasing recourse to the use or threat of use of force in violation of the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. Bangladesh has consistently underlined that all the States Members of the United Nations, powerful or weak, rich or poor, are under the obligation to refrain in international relations from the threat or use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of any other State. Similarly, all the States Members of this great world body are committed to settling their disputes by peaceful means, in such a manner that international peace and security are not endangered. It is all the more regrettable that force has been used by none other than a permanent member of the Council against a small developing country. It is also unfortunate that such a development has taken place at a time when the international community is observing the Year of Peace.

My delegation has consistently emphasized that the violation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of any State, on any pretext whatsoever, sets a dangerous precedent. Such actions, which are in direct contravention of the United Nations Charter, would if allowed to continue lead us to a situation where the rule of law would be replaced by a state of international anarchy with grave implications for all of us.

The latest United States action against Libya was undertaken at a time when the Council was seized of this question. This unfortunate development has threatened not only regional but international peace and security, and the international community has deplored it in clear and categorical terms. My delegation is deeply shocked to note that civilian areas were attacked, which

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resulted in the loss of civilian lives, including those of women and children, and caused damage to civilian properties.

We have listened with great attention to the statements made by the preceding speakers, most of whom have rejected the attempts to justify this attack by the plea of the right of self-defence or as a retaliation for terrorist acts allegedly committed by Libya. Libya has denied those charges and has also declared itself to be against all terrorist operations.

My delegation has consistently condemned terrorism in all its manifestations - individual, collective or State terrorism. It is in this context that we viewed as a positive development the adoption of resolution 40/61, by consensus, at the last session of the General Assembly. This resolution, inter alia, expressed unequivocal condemnation of all acts, methods and practices of terrorism and urged States to co-operate with one another more closely to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. We are dismayed that, instead of the fostering of international co-operation against terrorism, unilateral action has been taken on the pretext of the right of self-defence.

The prevailing tension in the region cannot be allowed to heighten any further, and we urge all the parties concerned to exercise maximum restraint with a view to defusing the situation. What is at stake at the moment is not national or group interest but international peace and security, and we do hope the parties concerned will demonstrate moderation and vision. It is our sincere expectation that the Security Council, which has been entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, will be able to take a principled stand on this issue with a view to restoring peace and security in the region. The Council cannot and must not fail - or else its credibility is bound to be eroded.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Bangladesh for the kind words addressed to my country and to me.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): All the world knows that France knows how to live well. All the world knows that the French are wise and subtle in politics. All the world admires the culture and language of the French. You, Mr. President, are a true embodiment of the talents of your country. You have brought fresh air to the proceedings of the Security Council for the year and more that you have been here, and we are all grateful to you. And if it is unusual for a Britisher to pay compliments to a Frenchman, in a spirit of rivalry you should take it all the more seriously.

I should like to say thank you very much to our common friend the Ambassador of Denmark. It seems to me that he bore an unusual burden as President in a particularly difficult and busy month. He encountered one or two problems that I am not sure any President has encountered before, and he surmounted them with great common sense and firmness.

I turn now to the subject of this debate.

The Security Council is faced with a difficult problem. Recent events force us to consider an issue which we have all been aware of for some years but which is so difficult, and to some extent so controversial, that we have shied away from dealing with it as a whole. We have tried - understandably - to avoid the central issue and to deal ad hoc with its individual manifestations. That issue is terrorism.

In one sense there is no problem: We are all agreed that terrorism is bad. More precisely, we are all agreed that terrorism is criminal. For example, on 9 October last year the President of the Security Council, speaking on behalf of the members of the Council, said:

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"They endorse the Secretary-General's statement of 8 October 1985, which condemns all acts of terrorism.

"They resolutely condemn this unjustifiable and criminal hijacking as well as other acts of terrorism, including hostage-taking.

"They also condemn terrorism in all its forms, wherever and by whomever committed". (S/PV.2618, p.2)

On 9 December last year the General Assembly adopted without dissent - I stress: without dissent - resolution 40/61. Inter alia, that resolution took note of

"the deep concern and condemnation of all acts of international terrorism expressed by the Security Council and the Secretary-General".

(fifth preambular paragraph)

In the same resolution, the General Assembly expressed its concern

"that in recent years terrorism has taken on forms that have an increasingly deleterious effect on international relations, which may jeopardize the very territorial integrity and security of States". (eleventh preambular paragraph)

In its first operative paragraph the resolution

"Unequivocally condemns, as criminal, all acts, methods and practices of terrorism wherever and by whomever committed, including those which jeopardize friendly relations among States and their security". (operative paragraph 1)

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

It further

"Calls upon all States to fulfil their obligations under international law to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in terrorist acts in other States, or acquiescing in activities within their territory directed towards the commission of such acts". (General Assembly resolution 40/61, para. 6)

A few days later the Security Council unanimously adopted Security Council resolution 579 (1985), which, inter alia, condemned unequivocally all acts of hostage-taking and abduction and called for

"the immediate safe release of all hostages and abducted persons wherever and by whomever they are being held". (resolution 579 (1985), para. 2)

Then, on 30 December, the President of the Council, speaking on behalf of the members, strongly condemned the unjustifiable and criminal terrorist attacks at the Rome and Vienna airports which caused the taking of innocent human lives. He continued that the members of the Council urged that those responsible for those deliberate and indiscriminate killings be brought to trial in accordance with due process of law, and he concluded by expressing the hope, on behalf of the members of the Council, that there would be

"determined efforts by all governments and authorities concerned, in accordance with established principles of international law, in order that all acts, methods and practices of terrorism may be brought to an end."

(S/PV.2639, p. 56)

Thus we are all agreed that terrorism is unjustifiable and criminal. That must be our starting point in any general or particular consideration of the problem and of what to do about it. On behalf of the international community as a whole the Council has established those basic principles. The General Assembly resolution that I have quoted shows that the international community has indeed

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

accepted them as principles. But having got a principle, we now have to make it work in practice. At once we encounter many difficulties.

Terrorism can and does exist within a single State. There are plenty of sad examples both in the developed and the developing world. It has political roots, but it is dealt with primarily as a criminal action. Where terrorists are caught they are tried by due process of law and if convicted punished accordingly. A wise Government will no doubt also try to deal with the political issues out of which terrorism has grown, but it must and will insist that the terrorist is treated as a criminal. I suggested that the international community should, so far as it is able, proceed in the same way.

We all acknowledge that much, though perhaps not all, terrorism is connected with political problems, whether grievance is justified or not. The Council has the primary role within the international community of dealing with political problems that get out of hand or threaten to do so. Of course, it is better if they can be resolved peacefully by negotiation between the participants, without having recourse to the Council. But the Council must insist, as any of our individual Governments would insist, that it will not negotiate under pressure and that it will not allow its judgement to be swayed by terrorism. It must insist that the principles that it has already laid down, that terrorism is criminal, should be adhered to in specific cases and that the terrorists should be punished accordingly.

I have referred to the difficulties that arise because terrorism grows out of political disputes. I shall now refer to the difficulties arising from acts of terrorism carried out not by individual people with an individual grievance but by States, as an act of policy. We are used to common murder as an occurrence that is almost as old, sadly, as mankind. We have not been able to stop it, but we know

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how to deal with it. Many of our countries, both developed and developing, have had much experience of internal terrorism. We have not always been able to prevent it, but on the whole we know how to deal with it.

The issue before us is an international one, but we must recognize it for what it is. Terrorism, which costs innocent lives, whatever its political origins may be, is an act of common murder. But when it is carried out, whether overtly or covertly, by the agents of a State or a would-be State it is of a different and worse kind; it is a deliberate act of State policy. State-directed terrorism is in fact war by another name. We must learn to treat the act for what it is - namely, murder - while dealing with the political considerations involved. A murder committed on the orders of a Government is no better than a murder committed by an individual. Indeed, it is much worse. It is worse, first, because the body ordering it and carrying it out - namely, a Government - is doing it deliberately and in cold blood. Secondly, it is subversive of confidence between nations and between peoples.

Terrorism is particularly dangerous to free societies. All terrorism, including State-directed terrorism, exploits the natural reluctance of a free society to defend itself in the last resort with arms. State-directed terrorism claims for itself all the democratic advantages of free societies while trying to undermine them and while certainly putting innocent and law-abiding people at risk and in fear of their lives. It is in fact a deliberate attempt by one State, usually an authoritarian one, to subvert by means short of war, but including murder, the free and democratic fabric of other societies.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

As I have said, it is high time the Council and the international community faced up to the hard issues of terrorism. We here have laid down the principle that terrorism is unjustifiable and criminal. We have called upon all States to fulfil their obligations under international law to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in terrorist acts in other States or acquiescing in activities within their territory directed towards the commission of such acts. Now that we have our principles we must put them into effect.

We have before us a particular and flagrant example, maintained over many years, of the use of terrorism - that is, common murder - as an instrument of State policy. That has been the practice and the policy of Colonel Qaddafi. Hitherto, perhaps for too long, we have more or less put up with it, in the hope that if he does not see the error of that policy his friends do and will persuade him to change it. That hope has been disappointed. Colonel Qaddafi's friends have a great responsibility.

I need not say much about Colonel Qaddafi's terrorist career, for many of the facts are well known, even though they probably represent only a small proportion of what he has actually been responsible for. I do not suppose there is anyone who believes Colonel Qaddafi when he says, as he did at his press conference yesterday, "We have given no orders that anyone anywhere in the world should be killed. Libya has not ordered anyone killed. We are not responsible for operations that have been carried out in Europe or anywhere else."

(Sir John Thomson,
United Kingdom)

These are lies, and even those who condemn the action the Americans have taken understand their reasons for doing so. This attitude might be summed up in a sentence from an editorial in an Indian newspaper. The Hindustan Times wrote as follows:

"Washington in the first place can be accused of bestowing the halo of a martyr on a man whose politics many of his publicly declared friends secretly find abominable."

This editorial puts its finger on a critical problem - the difference between what Governments think and what they say. Nearly everyone thinks Colonel Qaddafi abominable, but not everyone is prepared to say so, and fewer still are prepared to take action to persuade him to cease his abominable acts.

My Government has shown restraint. It is exactly two years to the day since one of Colonel Qaddafi's employees shot from a window of the Libyan People's Bureau in London and killed Policewoman Yvonne Fletcher. We handled that situation in a restrained, legal and civilized way, even though it was by no means the first gross provocation which we had received from Colonel Qaddafi, nor was it the first murder carried out by his employees in Britain.

Colonel Qaddafi has tried repeatedly to interfere in the internal affairs of my country. It is beyond doubt that Libya provides the Provisional IRA with money and weapons. The discovery by the Irish authorities on 26 January of this year of the largest ever find of arms included rifles and ammunition from Libya, even in boxes with Libyan army markings. So Colonel Qaddafi's attempts to intervene in the internal affairs of my country and indeed in those of our friend and neighbour the Republic of Ireland continue up to the present. These arms are of course used for murder. It is hard to know what Libyan interest is involved. It is harder still to understand that this intervention by Libya in the internal affairs of two

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United Kingdom)

Western countries is of any profit to the Arab cause. I leave it to Arabs to judge themselves whether that cause is best promoted by Colonel Qaddafi's interventions and terrorist acts or not.

Britain and Ireland are not the only Western countries which have suffered from Colonel Qaddafi's terrorism. For example, France expelled two members of the Libyan People's Bureau in Paris soon after a plot was uncovered three weeks ago to attack with a bomb civilians queuing for visas at the American Embassy in Paris. Americans do not need visas to come to the United States, so the casualties would have been overwhelmingly French and other non-Americans. But Colonel Qaddafi does not care.

On 6 April of this year, an attempt which we know to have been undertaken on Libyan Government instructions was made to attack the United States Embassy in Beirut. It failed when the rocket exploded on launch. This morning a rocket was fired at the British Embassy in Beirut. What conclusion are we to draw?

On 25 March instructions were sent from Tripoli to the Libyan People's Bureau in East Berlin to conduct a terrorist attack against the Americans. On 4 April the People's Bureau alerted Tripoli that the attack would be carried out the following morning. Early on 5 April a bomb killed two people and injured 230 of various nationalities. Later that morning the Bureau reported to Tripoli that the operation had been carried out successfully.

We know that more attacks sponsored by Colonel Qaddafi have been planned. Some are intended to be carried out by his own agents. In other cases he intends to make use of other Middle Eastern terrorist groups. It really appears that State directed terrorism is the main policy of the Qaddafi Government. That Government admit that they tried earlier this week, albeit unsuccessfully, to attack NATO installations on the Italian island of Lampedusa.

(Sir John Thomson,
United Kingdom)

No wonder the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the twelve member States of the European Communities said on 14 April that they considered that States clearly implicated in supporting terrorism should be induced to renounce such support and called upon Libya to act accordingly. The Foreign Ministers went on that they were convinced that terrorist attacks did not serve whatever political cause the perpetrators claimed to be furthering. Outrages like the ones recently perpetrated on the TWA aircraft and in a discotheque in Berlin could never be justified. The Foreign Ministers also rejected the threat made by Libyan leaders against Member States which deliberately encouraged recourse to acts of violence and directly threatened Europe. They warned that any action of this sort would meet with a vigorous and appropriate response on the part of the Twelve. No country which lends support to terrorism can expect to maintain normal relations with the Twelve. The Twelve concluded that they would inform the Arab States and the League of Arab States about their conclusions and would invite them to analyse jointly and urgently the issue of international terrorism.

Yesterday the Colonel announced that he was not going to escalate military operations in southern Europe. Well, good. But who can believe anything he says now? He has told us that his objectives are world-wide. In his press conference yesterday, apart from lying about not issuing orders for murdering anybody, he said in the same breath:

"We are inciting revolution. Inciting revolution and establishing popular revolution everywhere in the world is one of our aims."

Now we have all been put on notice that no one is safe from Colonel Qaddafi's murderers. This has already been well known to many Governments and popular leaders in the Arab world. It is well known to Colonel Qaddafi's neighbours in Africa. It is well known in Ireland, and now it is perhaps going to be well known

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United Kingdom)

world-wide. Something has to be done about this. The law-abiding nations of the world must co-operate to put an end to it.

There are, I admit, many differences of opinion between the Soviet Union and Britain, and I do not therefore always quote the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with approval. But when we are faced with international criminality we have much in common. Speaking at the Twenty-Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on 25 February 1986, Mr. Gorbachev said, according to the text circulated by the Soviet delegation:

"Crises and conflicts are fertile soil also for international terrorism. Undeclared wars, the export of counter-revolution in all forms, political assassinations, the taking of hostages, the hijacking of aircraft, and bomb attacks in streets, airports and railway stations - such is the hideous face of terrorism, which its instigators try to mask with various cynical fabrications. The USSR rejects terrorism in principle and is ready to co-operate actively with other States in order to uproot it. The Soviet Union will resolutely protect its citizens from acts of violence and do everything to defend their lives, honour and dignity." (A/41/185, p. 9)

My delegation finds Mr. Gorbachev's attitude very understandable, and I am not surprised since the Soviet delegation played a notable part in producing the Security Council documents about terrorism which I quoted at the beginning of my speech.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

I spoke earlier of the restraint with which my Government had met the murder of Yvonne Fletcher and the other provocations offered to us by Colonel Qaddafi. That restraint seems not to have had the desired result. This morning three bodies were found about 10 miles south-east of Beirut. They have not yet been positively identified. But, I have to say sadly, it seems likely that two of them are the bodies of Leigh Douglas and Phillip Padfield, who were kidnapped in Beirut on 24 March this year. They were in Lebanon, a friendly Arab country, teaching young Arabs who wished to come to listen to them. Now, it seems, they are dead. It is hard not to conclude that this is yet another act of State-directed terrorism. I may have more to say on this matter presently.

Much of the debate so far has concentrated on expressions of condemnation of the military action taken in self-defence by the United States against Libya following incontrovertible evidence of the Libyan Government's direct involvement in promoting terrorist attacks against the United States and other countries, including my own, and of its plans for a wide range of further attacks. My delegation supports the principles which have been invoked by many speakers, of the need to seek the peaceful settlement of disputes and to refrain from the threat or use of force, in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter. Those principles continue to apply, and they apply to Libya as to any other Member State. Can anyone declare, with a clear conscience, that Libya has refrained in its international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations, to quote Article 2 (4)? Are we to disregard the many explicit, public and official statements of the Libyan authorities threatening terrorist attacks on other States? For example, in a speech in June 1984, Colonel Qaddafi said:

"We are capable of exporting terrorism to the heart of America. We are also capable of physical liquidation and destruction and arson inside America."

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

Even without Colonel Qaddafi's own words, none of us here was in any doubt about the seriousness with which the United States rightly regarded the threat of Libyan terrorism. The Council was indeed already engaged in consultations to avert a further twist in the spiral of violence. As my delegation made clear at the time, we welcomed recourse to preventive diplomacy and wished it to be effective. Yet, as we also had occasion to make clear when the draft resolution submitted by Malta as document S/17984 was being discussed, we did not consider the text or anything like it to address the full problem and thereby contribute realistically to its solution. This one-sided approach, as before, has had the inevitable and tragic result of leading Libya to conclude it was immune from the consequences of its action.

The United States was justified in drawing the conclusion from this episode and from all that had preceded it, that Libyan defiance of the norms of international behaviour would continue. In addition, the United States has made clear that it has conclusive evidence of direct Libyan involvement in recent terrorist acts and in planning for further such acts. My own Government also has evidence beyond dispute. The United States has, as any of us do, the inherent right of self-defence, as reaffirmed in Article 51 of the Charter.

As Sir Geoffrey Howe said in the House of Commons yesterday, the right of self-defence is not an entirely passive right. It plainly includes the right to destroy or weaken the capacity of one's assailant, to reduce his resources, and to weaken his will so as to discourage and prevent further violence.

At the same time, the right of self-defence should be used in a proportionate way. That is why when President Reagan told Mrs. Thatcher last week that the United States intended to take action, she concentrated on the principle of self-defence and the consequent need to limit the action and to relate the selection of targets clearly to terrorism.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

Speaking in the House of Commons yesterday, Mrs. Thatcher said: "There were of course risks in what was proposed." Decisions like this are never easy. The British Government's answer to the American request for the use of American aircraft based in the United Kingdom was, as Mrs. Thatcher stated, that:

"we would support action directed against specific Libyan targets demonstrably involved in the conduct and support of terrorist activities".

President Reagan responded that the operation would be limited to clearly defined targets related to terrorism, and that every effort would be made to minimize collateral damage. The F-111s had an important role in minimizing such damage and in reducing casualties. In the interests of proportionality they were the right aircraft to use. If they had not been used more lives would probably have been lost, both on the ground and in the air.

We join all those who have already expressed their condolences to the families of those who have been killed in this action, knowing, as we do at first hand, of the anguish this cycle of violence causes. The death of children is particularly poignant. We, too, have had experience of that.

My country has had direct experience of Libyan terrorism. So have many of our friends in Europe and the Arab world. It is in all our interests that effective measures be taken to put an end to this menace so that no State will feel obliged to have recourse to armed force as a last resort in defence of its citizens or of its territory. In my statement before this Council on 27 March, I spoke of Libya's eccentric border policies: four of Libya's six neighbours, to public knowledge, have suffered Libyan aggression in one form or another in recent years. The problem is not therefore one for the United States alone: it is for all of us.

We must all continue to seek a peaceful solution to the central questions of the Middle East. My Government recognizes the importance of that issue. Action by outsiders cannot be a substitute for the vital steps that the parties involved must

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

take for peace. At the same time, it is right that we should address ourselves to the problems of the areas in which terrorists thrive.

Colonel Qaddafi seeks to drape his nefarious activities in the colours of Arab and Palestinian nationalism. In fact these activities do nothing but harm to the Arab and Palestinian causes. My country seeks friendship with the Arab world and justice for the Palestinians. Colonel Qaddafi is an obstacle in the way of both.

Many, including the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates here on my right, have spoken of the ineffectiveness of the Council in resolving this longstanding threat to international peace and security. I agree entirely with that thought. I would add that, as a Council, we are today as far from a solution as ever. It will continue to elude us for as long as, by our lack of resolve, Libya is led to believe that its unacceptable behaviour will carry no adverse consequences for it in the international community as a whole. Now more than ever the Council needs to show the courage and wisdom expected of it, and address itself to the task of ensuring proper respect for international law by Libya and by any other State involved in supporting terrorism.

I repeat that the central issue before us is terrorism. Since this debate began there have been horrifying reports that at least three more Britons have been killed in cold blood by terrorists, and another has been kidnapped today in Beirut by unknown persons. What is the Council going to do about this? Something or nothing?

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

As I have already said, my Government has exercised great restraint in the face of Colonel Qaddafi's many provocations, including even the murder of British citizens. We have done so in the interests of international peace and security. Can anyone assure us that this policy has worked? Have Colonel Qaddafi's friends told him to stop? Have they used their influence to make him stop? Those who have not done these things have no moral standing to speak in this debate, still less to condemn the United States for acting to protect its citizens. I recall again with approval Mr. Gorbachev's words which I quoted earlier. All should shun Colonel Qaddafi: none should act as if they were his accomplices.

The issue is terrorism. The time for action is now. Otherwise more lives will be lost and more damage done to the international community. We, the international community, have established the principles. Even Libya claims to support them. Now let us put them into effect as we would in our own countries. Let us deal with common murderers for what they are. Let us deal with the political situations in which terrorism thrives. And let us shun and deal resolutely with countries which are the home of State-sponsored terrorism. Let us, in short, live up to our own resolutions.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I was particularly touched by the words of the representative of the United Kingdom. Behind the ceremony I sensed their sincerity which did not leave me indifferent.

There are no further speakers for this meeting. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of the agenda item will be at 10.30 tomorrow morning.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.