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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH MEETING

**Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 4 November 1986, at 3 p.m.**

President:	Mr. CHOUDHURY	(Bangladesh)
later:	Mr. HENAR (Vice-President)	(Suriname)
later:	Mr. THOMPSON (Vice-President)	(Fiji)

- The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for International Peace and Security:

- (a) Report of the Secretary-General**
- (b) Draft resolution**

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 26 (continued)

THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/41/619-S/18347)
- (b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/41/L.12)

Mr. HAKTANIR (Turkey): As at the previous sessions of the General Assembly since 1979, Turkey is co-sponsoring once again the draft resolution on the situation in Afghanistan. Our reasons for doing so are very clear. It has been recognized from the outset by the international community that this problem has serious implications both for regional and international peace and security.

The situation in Afghanistan has for seven years continued to be a major cause of tension in international relations and in the East-West context in particular. General Assembly resolutions on the situation in Afghanistan have aspired to promote a just political solution which has to be in full accord with the inalienable right of the people of Afghanistan, including millions of Afghan refugees, to determine their way of life and their political system in freedom without external interference and coercion.

The principles laid down in this context by the General Assembly for a political solution have enjoyed the widest support. We have always held the view that a peaceful solution in Afghanistan would not only bring peace to this Islamic nation, but would also be beneficial to regional stability and have a favourable impact on the general course of international relations.

Besides its implications on international peace and security, the crisis in Afghanistan has been a particular cause of anguish and concern because of the immense human suffering it has entailed. It is too difficult to portray adequately this suffering. The great loss of life, the displacement of the population of a

(Mr. Haktanir, Turkey)

country and its devastation to such an extent are staggering. We have deeply felt the wounds inflicted on this nation with which we have always maintained deep-rooted ties of historical friendship. The time has come to bring an end to the tragedy of the Afghan people and to give them the chance they need so much to begin a process of reconciliation.

During the past year, as the proximity talks have developed and the substantive elements of a political solution have taken shape, the actual situation in Afghanistan, unfortunately, has not improved. On the contrary, more extreme military measures have been taken against the freedom struggle of the Afghan people. The unceasing military campaign directed more and more against the civilian population of Afghanistan in the context of indiscriminate warfare cannot be justified on any ground.

The Afghan resistance, which has endured seven years of military struggle, represents the invincible character and the pride of the Afghan people. This people has shown that it will never accept alien domination and the imposition of a set of values which does not reflect its own free choice. This has been a struggle against great odds, and it has entailed great sacrifices. But we are confident that those sacrifices will not have been in vain and that the situation in Afghanistan will be resolved in accordance with the wishes of the Afghan nation.

Moreover, the pressures which Pakistan has had to withstand cannot be overlooked. We note with particular concern the escalation of the violation of Pakistan's airspace and territory from the Afghanistan side, causing considerable loss of life and damage to property. Pakistan has wisely resisted provocation. But the dangers inherent in such violations should be taken into account.

(Mr. Haktanir, Turkey)

Pakistan and Iran continue to face the humanitarian problem of five million Afghan refugees who have been driven from their country during the past seven years. This is an alarming figure which represents one third of the population of Afghanistan. The continuation of this flow of refugees is even more alarming and that situation bears testimony to the conditions prevailing in the country. It is clear that the resolution of that grave humanitarian aspect of the problem is firmly tied in with a comprehensive political settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. That is one of the main reasons why there is an urgent need for a comprehensive settlement before the social fabric of Afghanistan is further abused.

The elements of a comprehensive political settlement have long been identified and developed into political instruments through the laudable efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative. The report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan draws attention to the progress that has been made this past year towards a negotiated political settlement. Indeed, a flexible approach to certain procedural questions, which have, during the past two years, had a negative impact on the diplomatic process, has enabled the parties to address all substantive questions. The arrangements for the effective implementation of the settlement and the time-frame and modalities for the withdrawal of troops have remained the two issues that must be resolved satisfactorily in order to reach a final agreement. We wish to express our appreciation for the determined and patient manner in which Pakistan has sought an equitable political settlement to this question.

(Mr. Haktanir, Turkey)

We have also taken note of the expressed intention to speed up a political settlement. What is required now to substantiate this intention is a prompt finalization of a comprehensive settlement and its effective implementation. The world is watching to see if this will be possible without further delay.

Therefore, the Geneva negotiations on Afghanistan have become a testing ground for the chances of a transition from military confrontation to political realism. This process has reached a crucial point which requires firm steps to be taken towards an overall agreement. We hope the strong wish of the international community for an early solution in Afghanistan will be respected, and that it will be possible to restore the independent, sovereign and non-aligned status of Afghanistan and make possible the return of millions of Afghan refugees to their country in safety and honour.

Mr. EGGAR (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the twelve Member States of the European Community.

Nearly seven years after the invasion of Afghanistan the General Assembly will need no reminding of the consequences of the large-scale military intervention by the Soviet Union in 1979. That act of force remains one of the most serious violations of the Charter of the United Nations since the founding of the Organization. It is a living proof of the determination of the Soviet Union to pursue its own ends by the massive and sustained use of military power.

The occupation of Afghanistan continues. The Assembly has rejected on many occasions and by an overwhelming majority the attempt to impose on the people of that country a régime set up and kept in power by force. Year after year, the General Assembly has condemned the occupation. It has called for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops and a negotiated settlement that would make it possible to restore to Afghanistan its independence and its non-aligned status.

(Mr. Eggar, United Kingdom)

The Soviet Union has made much of its withdrawal of six regiments in October, which was announced by General Secretary Gorbachev in his Vladivostok speech in July. But that will have minimal, if any, military significance. Three of the regiments were anti-aircraft; the Afghan resistance has no aircraft. A fourth was a tank regiment of little relevance to the fighting in Afghanistan's mountainous terrain. Moreover, serious doubts have recently arisen over the genuineness of the withdrawal of the two motor-rifle regiments. The fact is that the Afghan people are still left with an army of over 110,000 Soviet troops occupying their country. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan is as unpopular as ever. Instead of continuing to prevaricate over the real issue, we urge the Soviet Union to agree to a speedy and complete withdrawal of its troops in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

Military operations are not confined to the territory within the borders of Afghanistan. The bombing of Pakistani territory has continued to increase. Those activities constitute a clear threat to peace and stability in the region as a whole. The Twelve utterly condemn them.

The Soviet invasion and occupation have led to unprecedented hardship for the Afghan people. The human misery now being endured in Afghanistan is enormous. Innocent men and women continue to lose their lives and their homes. The occupying forces attempt to suppress a most courageous resistance using all the military might of a super-Power. The Twelve strongly condemn the brutal attacks, especially those made from the air, which are taking place against the civilian population of Afghanistan. Those attacks have led to the destruction of villages, rural infrastructure and crops. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced; millions have fled abroad. The attacks are irreconcilable with the norms of international behaviour. They violate the fundamental rights of a people struggling to retain

(Mr. Eggar, United Kingdom)

independence and freedom. There is, however, no sign of any weakening of resolve on the part of the Afghan people, and the alliance of resistance parties formed last year is able to inform the international community of what is really taking place inside Afghanistan.

In 1984 the human rights situation in Afghanistan led to the appointment by the Commission on Human Rights of a Special Rapporteur. Mr. Ermacora's second report to the Commission, submitted in February of this year, paints a further picture of gross violations of human rights, including massacres and indiscriminate bombing. The report comments that systematic brutality characterized the conflict in 1985. It estimates that civilian casualties reached some 35,000. Mr. Ermacora also warned that continued fighting will "lead inevitably to a situation approaching genocide".

The Twelve are appalled by this. We await with particular interest the Special Rapporteur's further interim report to the Assembly. We intend to participate actively in the debate that will shortly take place in the Third Committee on the question of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Afghanistan.

Another illustration of the seriousness of the situation within Afghanistan is the continuing and massive exodus of refugees to neighbouring countries. About a third of the Afghan population has now been forced to flee the country. It is estimated that there are now over four million Afghan refugees. About three quarters of them are currently in Pakistan. They constitute the greatest concentration of refugees anywhere in the world. They place, of course, a very heavy burden on the limited resources of the host country. The European Community and its member States have made a significant contribution to international relief efforts. We will continue to provide that assistance for as long as it is necessary.

DE(Mr. Eggar, United Kingdom)

The Twelve wish to pay tribute to the hospitality and generous assistance provided to the refugees by the Government of Pakistan, to its fortitude in the face of increasing violations of its border and to the assistance provided by other countries through the relevant international relief organizations. But this can never be more than a temporary palliative. The refugees want to go home. The Twelve urge the Soviet Union to respect the will of the General Assembly, to comply with its resolutions and to create the conditions that will allow them to do so in peace and safety. That will, above all, necessitate the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan.

(Mr. Eggar, United Kingdom)

The Twelve have read with interest the report presented to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General on 18 September. They welcome the assurance that those involved in the negotiating process in Geneva are now actively engaged in the consideration of practical measures to resolve the problems which remain to be addressed before a solution can be reached.

The Twelve favour any proposals put forward for a political solution to the problems of Afghanistan to the extent that those proposals are based on the principles of United Nations resolutions. We shall continue to support the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez. We hope that it will be possible to reach agreement on the outstanding issues. As the Secretary-General has said in his report, political will is of the essence if a solution is to be reached. The international community expects that this will be forthcoming in the months ahead. An agreed time-table for the rapid withdrawal of all Soviet troops is of crucial importance. The Twelve regret the continued wide gap in positions reported by the Secretary-General. As long as there is no progress in that area, which is the key element to any solution, the Soviet Union will not have made the necessary contribution which will allow the Secretary-General's efforts to succeed.

The continuing occupation of Afghanistan is a threat to the stability of the region and a constant danger to international peace and security. This debate is a reminder of the importance the international community continues to attach to the question of Afghanistan. We cannot allow the present situation to be accepted as a fait accompli. The Twelve are confident that the General Assembly will once again confirm by its vote on this issue the importance it attaches to a genuine solution to the problems Afghanistan faces. As my Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, said on 23 September, the success of the Secretary-General's efforts - and soon - can prevent further suffering.

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(Mr. Eggar, United Kingdom)

Consistent with their stand against aggression and foreign occupation, the Twelve look to the Soviet Union to demonstrate its commitment to international peace and security. It must comply with the successive United Nations resolutions on the situation in Afghanistan and with its obligations under the Charter. It must withdraw all its troops from Afghanistan.

Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): The delegation of Zaire became one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/41/L.12, on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, because of the important developments which have taken place since the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly within the context of the implementation of resolution 40/12 of the General Assembly, adopted on 13 November 1985.

Indeed, the praiseworthy efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, through his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, since the end of the fortieth session of the General Assembly, which took the form of direct contacts with all interested parties with a view to finding a political solution to the serious situation prevailing in Afghanistan, deserve to be encouraged.

My delegation, as a sponsor last year of draft resolution A/40/L.11, therefore welcomes the fact that a diplomatic process has finally been embarked upon with a view to drafting four instruments which are to be part of the agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan and which deal with non-interference and non-intervention, the return of refugees, international security guarantees and the time-table and modalities for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.

In considering the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international and security, there is no doubt that the most encouraging factor is the statement made on 28 July 1986 in Vladivostok by His Excellency

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya,
Zaire)

Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, who formally announced the decision of the Soviet Government that before the end of this year, 1986, six regiments, together with equipment and arms would be repatriated from Afghanistan.

These units consist of an armoured regiment, two motorized infantry regiments and three anti-aircraft regiments, which will consequently be returned to their permanent bases in the Soviet Union before the end of 1986 in such a way that all interested parties may easily ascertain that they have done so.

Needless to say, such a decision, taken and announced by the high authorities of a great Power, will certainly be followed up and that its implementation will demonstrate the goodwill of that great Power.

The consultations carried out by the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Diego Cordovez, from 7 to 18 March 1986 in Islamabad and Kabul made it possible to find a way out of the impasse that for two years had hindered the diplomatic process.

The agreements thus concluded between Islamabad and Kabul may rightly be considered a concrete manifestation of their sincere desire to reach a political settlement, especially since the two designated guarantors, the United States and the Soviet Union, confirmed those agreements - on condition, of course, that there is a comprehensive settlement with which they will comply.

We note, moreover, that the seventh round of negotiations between 31 July and 8 August 1986 centred on arrangements to be made to ensure the effective implementation of the settlement on the time-table for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.

The seventh round of negotiations is continuing during this session of the General Assembly, as indicated by the Secretary-General in his report.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya,
Zaire)

As may be seen, tangible progress has been made this year, 1986, and my delegation consequently wishes to express the hope that these talks will lead to a final agreement that will at last enable the Afghan people to exercise its inalienable right to decide the form of its government, to select its own political, economic and social system without any form of outside interference, subversion, coercion or constraint.

I would add that I am speaking in this connection as the representative of a country that owes its national reconciliation, unity, peace and cohesion to the efforts of the United Nations immediately following my country's independence.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya,
Zaire)

This is to express my delegation's deep belief and faith in the United Nations, which is constantly providing appropriate solutions to problems brought about by the interference of States in the internal affairs of other States and armed intervention by foreign forces inside other States. Consequently my delegation believes that the whole international community should support the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General, and we wish in particular to congratulate his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, for the work of mediation and good offices that he is constantly pursuing among all the interested parties in this problem with the aim of promoting a political solution and a comprehensive and reasonable settlement of the question.

All neighbouring countries, in particular Pakistan, which grant asylum to Afghan refugees and lend them humanitarian assistance should receive from the international community appropriate assistance in dealing with the situation.

The delegation of Zaire wishes to reaffirm that the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned status of Afghanistan is essential to a peaceful settlement of the problem, and consequently hopes that the draft resolution it has joined in sponsoring on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, in document A/41/L.12, will be given the unanimous support of all Member States.

Mr. BADAWI (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): Since 1980 the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority, seven resolutions laying down the bases for a durable and just political settlement of the problem of Afghanistan. We have therefore, come to this rostrum today to add our voice to those who call for compliance with and implementation of those resolutions, to permit reaching the settlement for which the Afghan people looks in order to retrieve its legitimate rights and to enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homes in their own country.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

We call for the intensification of peacemaking efforts, in a spirit of optimism this time, in view of the positive developments and the specific progress achieved in the proximity talks that are taking place under United Nations auspices. The Secretary-General, in his report to the current session, states:

"Procedural questions have been laid aside to enable all substantive problems to be tackled. The four instruments that will comprise the settlement are virtually complete. Agreement has been reached on a very large number of extremely complex issues, any one of which could have become a major obstacle to the finalization of the settlement." (A/41/619, para. 12)

To that we must also add what the Secretary-General reported on the agreement of the guarantors - the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - on the instrument on international guarantees, which is of course conditional on the achievement of a comprehensive settlement that the two super-Powers can support.

The Secretary-General's report proves once again that he and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, have spared no effort since 1980 in their contacts with all the parties concerned in the search for a just, durable and peaceful settlement to the problem of Afghanistan. After reading that report I must express our deep appreciation to Mr. Perez de Cuellar and his Personal Representative. I also take this opportunity to renew Egypt's support of their efforts.

We agree with the Secretary-General that political resolve is of the essence and that the international community no doubt expects that political resolve to be shown in the coming months. Egypt is convinced that the General Assembly will fulfil its fundamental duty by reaffirming the elements of a just and, durable political settlement of the problem of Afghanistan, and by supporting the Secretary-General's efforts and assisting him in his mission.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

Egypt was among the first States which supported the Afghan people in its legitimate struggle to regain its inalienable rights. Today Egypt reaffirms its solidarity with that brother nation. Egypt's position is merely the continuation of a firm policy based on respect for the rules of international law, the provisions of the United Nations Charter, and on the principles of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Islamic Conference - all of which prohibit interference in the internal affairs of other States and the use of force in international relations, and guarantee to peoples their legitimate rights and fundamental freedoms, the first and most important of which is their right of self-determination. What Egypt calls for today in respect of Afghanistan is indeed what it has always called for in respect of all peoples which have not yet been able to exercise that right. We look forward to the results of current contacts within the United Nations framework. We hope that they will be successful so that the world may finally witness the end of the Afghan people's suffering.

The delegation of Egypt has followed most carefully the statement by Mr. Yaqub-Khan, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan. On this occasion we should like to add Egypt's voice to those who have expressed their appreciation for the position of the Republic of Pakistan, which in previous years has always shown its desire for a just and comprehensive settlement of the problem of Afghanistan. We fully appreciate its intensive efforts in that respect.

In this connection we must make mention, also with appreciation, of the precious contribution of the High Commissioner for Refugees to relieving the plight of Afghan refugees. We call on all States and on all international, national and non-governmental organizations to continue providing assistance to those refugees.

For all those reasons, in line with its actions at previous sessions Egypt joins in sponsoring the draft resolution submitted in document A/41/L.12. It is an expression of our support for international efforts to seek a just political settlement to the problem of Afghanistan.

Mr. FISCHER (Austria): Almost seven years have passed since the military intervention in Afghanistan. Austria remains deeply concerned about the continuing occupation of that traditionally non-aligned country. That intervention and occupation defy basic principles of the United Nations Charter, such as the non-use of force, respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, and the right of self-determination.

A political solution to this problem - and we believe there should be no other kind of solution - would not only contribute to the restoration of regional stability but would also considerably improve the overall climate of international relations. Furthermore, and above all, it would certainly ease the horrible plight and misery of the Afghan refugees and the civilian population, who have already suffered far too long.

The efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative to achieve such a political settlement seem to continue to be the most promising approach. Austria has therefore studied carefully the report of the Secretary-General, which is before the Assembly, and would like to commend him and his Representative on their work. We have noted with interest the assessment that "There is no doubt that tangible progress has been made during the past year" and that "The four instruments that will comprise the settlement are virtually complete" (A/41/619, para. 12).

We have also noted, however, that according to the same report there is still a wide gap on what is perhaps the most important of the outstanding questions, namely the time-frame and modalities for the withdrawal of foreign forces.

Austria appeals to all those concerned to redouble their efforts and to demonstrate the necessary political will in order to finalize the settlement, lest, in the words of the Secretary-General's report, "all their efforts over the past five years come to naught" (para. 10).

Mr. KIKUCHI (Japan): At the outset I wish to make it clear that my delegation has been steadfastly supporting United Nations resolutions on Afghanistan and will support the draft resolution before the Assembly this year.

It is public knowledge that the Soviet Union has been waging a ruthless war against the people of Afghanistan for almost seven years now. Its military aggression and political occupation are being fiercely resisted by the Afghan people and have been condemned almost universally by the international community. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union's hold on its small neighbour country remains as firm as ever: the situation in Afghanistan is basically as grim today as it was during the 1979-1980 New Year season when the first Soviet troops marched across its borders.

Although there have been some developments in Afghanistan recently, the international community still has reason to believe that its cries of outrage hurled at the Soviet Union in this and other international forums have fallen on deaf ears.

We note that General Secretary Gorbachev announced in his speech at Vladivostok towards the end of July that six regiments would be withdrawn from Afghanistan. Now it is reported that those troops have in fact been withdrawn. But lest we be tempted to commend that action as a first step, taken in good faith, towards the complete withdrawal of troops, it should be noted that three of those regiments are composed of non-essential personnel and that there are also indications that reinforcements had been sent in before the other three regiments withdrew.

As we consider the Afghanistan situation in its regional context, we must also conclude that here too nothing has changed. In fact, during the past year the number of armed incursions into Pakistani territory has increased, claiming many innocent lives and violating that country's sovereignty. The ever-growing refugee population also adds to regional instability.

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

It is therefore imperative that Member States of this Organization continue to focus attention on this tragic situation. We must not allow ourselves to accept the situation as a fait accompli. To do so would render hollow and empty our commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly the principle of non-use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. Member States must continue to express their outrage, lest the Soviet Union underestimate international opposition to its foreign aggression and thus be encouraged to act in a similar manner whenever or wherever it pleases.

We must also continue through our debates in this General Assembly Hall to stress the need for the Afghan people to determine their own political, economic and social system free from outside coercion. Furthermore, our debates here should serve to encourage Pakistan to persevere in its efforts towards a peaceful settlement of the problem. I believe our deliberations in this forum can also be useful in sending a clear message to the Soviet people. The military intervention in Afghanistan is costly to the Soviet Union as well as to its neighbours, in terms of the countless lives lost in the fighting and of the precious resources that could otherwise be allocated to the enhancement of the living standard of the Soviet Union's own people.

Although conditions of repression, injustice and violence continue to prevail in Afghanistan, there have been some promising developments towards a political settlement on the diplomatic level, owing in large part to the efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, and his Personal Representative. We note the recent developments in the proximity talks he has conducted in Geneva and in the negotiations with other parties concerned, including talks which have taken place for the first time on the draft text of an instrument on the effective

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

implementation of the settlement and on the time-frame for withdrawal. That the two designated guarantors, the United States and the Soviet Union, have indicated their support for these diplomatic efforts and, more specifically, their acceptance in principle of the text of the instrument on international guarantees constitute an encouraging sign.

My Government appreciates all these diplomatic efforts, and particularly those of the Secretary-General. We should like to call upon the parties concerned to co-operate with him and to demonstrate the political will necessary to achieve a satisfactory political settlement. At the same time we should guard against undue optimism. The environment in which these efforts are being pursued is extremely fragile; they could easily end in deadlock. Moreover, it is essential that while these efforts are being pursued the international community maintain pressure on the Soviet Union to end its illegal occupation of Afghanistan.

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

The Afghan refugees in Pakistan represent the largest concentration of refugees in the world. Although exact figures are not available, it is estimated that 2.7 million Afghans have fled to that country. In addition, 1.9 million Afghans have sought refuge in Iran. Their numbers grow as the fighting continues unabated.

This situation not only imposes an enormous burden on Pakistan but also is a serious destabilizing element in the region. Japan recognizes that Pakistan is experiencing many difficulties in accommodating such a large number of refugees. We pay a high tribute to the humanitarian efforts that the Pakistan Government has made to cope with the situation. For its part, Japan has extended active co-operation to Afghan refugee relief activities in Pakistan through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme, as well as through other organizations. Since last year my country has also extended assistance to Afghan refugees in Iran. Japan will continue to co-operate in this way, both for humanitarian reasons and for considerations of regional peace and stability.

The withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan is an absolute prerequisite for a political settlement of the problem. Member States have gathered in this General Assembly Hall every year since 1980 to call upon the Soviet Union to end its intervention in Afghanistan and restore to the Afghan people their right to self-determination. The chorus of voices is swelling each year, reflecting a growing consensus in the international community that the situation in Afghanistan is intolerable.

Before concluding, let me repeat that Japan strongly supports draft resolution A/41/L.12, which affirms basic principles for a peaceful settlement. We strongly hope that it will be adopted by an even greater majority than were previous resolutions on this question.

Mr. BELONOGOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The armed intervention against a sovereign and independent State, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, has been going on for more than seven years now. And throughout all these years the United Nations General Assembly has been embroiled in a debate on the so-called Afghan problem, which is not in any way conducive to the adoption of proper steps to put an end to that intervention and achieve a political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan. The Soviet delegation is obliged once again to draw attention to the fact that the discussion in the United Nations of matters within the exclusive purview of any particular State Member of the Organization, despite the clearly stated position of that State, is a violation of the Charter and the rules and principles of international law.

Essentially, what we are witnessing here is an attempt to determine what the State and social system in Afghanistan should be; and that is to justify interference in the affairs of that State for the purpose of destroying the benefits to the Afghan people of the April Revolution. It was for this reason that the Soviet delegation, in strict conformity with the logic and the well-founded position of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan opposed the inclusion of the question of Afghanistan in the agenda item for the present session. That is why we shall vote against the draft resolution which is before us, which does not reflect the real situation and is intended to protect the interests of those forces that are seeking to restore the old order in Afghanistan.

This draft resolution, which is repeated from year to year, is also designed to gloss over the armed intervention, the undeclared war, which has been unleashed against Afghanistan and to divert the attention of the United Nations from other dangerous hotbeds of tension in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America,

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

to whitewash to policy of State-sponsored terrorism against newly independent States and thus, so to speak, to lay the blame at somebody else's door. The harm resulting from such draft resolutions consists in the fact that they encourage subversive activities against popular democratic régimes, in this case the régime in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and promote the maintenance of tension in various parts of the world.

Another aim of these draft resolutions is to cast aspersions at the policies of the Soviet Union, which provides internationalist assistance to Afghanistan at the request of its legitimate Government, and attempt thereby to play down the significance of constructive and far-reaching steps taken by the Soviet Union in order to resolve the key issues of the present day.

The draft resolution now before us - which is so strongly espoused by the "champions" of freedom for the Afghan people, first and foremost Washington Administration officials - is a direct justification of United States policy of escalating tensions around Afghanistan and attempting to justify the interference in the internal affairs of that country. The mass media in the West have long been reporting this interference openly and without embarrassment. Those in certain circles even boast about the assistance which they give to the bandits operating in the territory of Afghanistan and boast about the murders and acts of terrorism which are being committed on the suffering soil of Afghanistan.

At the same time the United States does not even try to hide the fact that the aid in question is supplied through all kinds of channels, both military and so-called humanitarian. In particular, in 1986, according to The Washington Post, United States military aid to the Afghan counter-revolution will amount to \$500 million - I stress military aid - while in the past two years, 1985 and 1986, so-called humanitarian aid from America to the so-called freedom fighters in Afghanistan totalled only \$23 million.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

A simple comparison of these two figures - \$500 million and \$23 million - is eloquent testimony to the purposes of those that dare to talk so grandly about their desire for a peaceful settlement of the so-called Afghan problem. It brings out even more clearly the policy of the United States and its Western and regional allies with regard to developments in and around Afghanistan when we learn that total American assistance to the so-called Mujahidin was in excess of \$1.5 billion, and that millions of marks and pounds sterling have been put at their disposal by the Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

We need only add that various authorities in the Federal Republic of Germany have already allocated over 350 million Deutsch marks for the conduct of the undeclared war in Afghanistan and that in the future they intend to make a further 150 million Deutsch marks available for that purpose.

How should one interpret the American press reports that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has undertaken against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan the largest operation it has carried out since the war in Viet Nam? What store should one set by the statements of United States officials who contend that the United States is simply supporting the right of the Afghan people to determine their own destiny?

In his statement the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations, Ambassador Farid Zarif, gave a detailed and convincing picture of the so-called assistance to the hired assassins who are operating in the territory of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the atrocities and acts of terrorism they have committed. There is therefore no reason to repeat the whole list of those crimes. I shall confine myself to saying that the declarations by the advocates of freedom for the Afghan people about their concern for human rights in Afghanistan do not square with reports about the terrorist acts being committed in Kabul and other cities of the country against innocent people, including women and children, about the bombing of civilian targets such as mosques, schools, hospitals and children's institutions, and about other crimes which are being perpetrated by counter-revolutionary bands on Afghan soil.

I will quote a recent example. In October this year, in Kabul, there was an explosion as a result of which several Afghan schoolchildren died. The link between those who carried out those terrorist acts and their foreign patrons has been quite clearly established.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

Over the years of the undeclared war, thousands of innocent Afghans have been killed and the total damage to the Afghan economy has exceeded 45 million afghanis, which is more than \$1 billion. The United States Congress long ago legitimized deliveries of all forms of aid to the counter-revolutionaries, including military aid such as rocket shells, ground-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft missile complexes. The question is, to what lengths of cynicism and hypocrisy must one go to be able to talk about the need to fight terrorism while at the same time increasing the military aid to the counter-revolutionary bandit units in Afghanistan? At the same time they raise a hue and cry about the occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, who in fact, by providing international assistance to the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, defend at the cost of their lives the peaceful labour of the Afghan people and prevent subversive acts against the popular democratic system of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

Special reference should be made to the role of Pakistan in creating and maintaining the tense situation in and around Afghanistan. It is well known that Pakistan long ago became the main bridgehead for the undeclared war against Afghanistan. On the territory of that country over 120 military-sabotage training centres for training Afghan counter-revolutionaries have been set up. At those centres foreign - mainly American - instructors teach how to kill, to blow up, to poison or to set fire to targets. This is not done selflessly. Having received from the United States over the last four years, under the heading of the so-called Afghan problem, \$3.2 billion in the form of military-economic aid, Pakistan expects to get another \$4.2 billion over the next four years. Those figures speak for themselves. The money is used to buy modern weapons by means of which the Pakistani military regime is hatching ambitious plans to become one of the militarily most powerful countries of the region.

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All this, however, has another aspect: it ties Pakistan even closer to the United States strategy in Asia and makes it an instrument for carrying out that strategy, which is fraught with grave consequences for the whole country. In this context, too, we should like to emphasize once again that our fundamental evaluation of Pakistan's position remains as before, namely, that only a renunciation of aggression against sovereign Afghanistan could have a positive influence on Soviet-Pakistani relations and provide an impulse for their reactivation and development. Unfortunately, a difficult situation also exists on some other sectors of Afghanistan's borders.

In an attempt to stifle the voice of truth regarding Afghanistan, the enemies of the revolutionary-democratic system in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan are trying in every possible way to conduct a slanderous campaign about the events occurring in and around Afghanistan. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are being spent in the United States to train Afghan counter-revolutionaries for work in special information agencies, the aim of which is to falsify the situation in Afghanistan and to present it in terms favourable to the imperialist and reactionary forces. Heaping slander upon slander, the mass information media in some Western and reactionary States have set themselves the task of poisoning the minds of uninformed people and painting a distorted picture of what is happening - in other words, deceiving world public opinion and the Afghans themselves, including those who are now abroad. In some capitals, the leaders of the Afghan counter-revolution are received with ceremony, in an attempt to portray them as an alternative to the popular government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

However, the revolutionary process in Afghanistan is irreversible, although it has not proceeded without some difficulty due to the extensive armed intervention in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the

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tremendous financial, military and propaganda support rendered to the Afghan counter-revolution by the United States and its allies. Nevertheless, the political situation in Afghanistan has demonstrated a clear-cut trend towards stabilization and tangible changes for the better are taking place. A telling blow has been struck against the bandit formations and in a number of provinces their positions have been weakened.

There is an ongoing process of sealing off the borders of the Republic against infiltration from outside. The social and political base of the Afghan revolution is being noticeably expanded and consolidated. The land and water reform is beginning to bear real fruit. Influential quarters within the private sector and the Muslim clergy are ever more actively supporting the progressive economic and social initiatives of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. The election of the local bodies of the people's authorities has been successfully completed and preparations are under way for a nation-wide discussion of a new constitution - the country's fundamental law.

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All these developments have created a favourable atmosphere for constructive dialogue, inter alia, with those social and political forces and individuals that have a negative attitude towards the April revolution. The appeal by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan for national reconciliation is addressed both to the Afghans living in the country and to those who, because of circumstances, find themselves abroad. Such a policy is already beginning to yield its first results: a group of non-party individuals have been admitted into the government and local authorities; the Revolutionary Council has been expanded to include some persons who originally fought against the people's rule but then decided to join the revolution; and a national reconciliation commission has been established. As a result, in the past four months alone 3,000 people have laid down their arms. As was stated by Comrade Najibullah at the press conference in Kabul on 19 October:

"What is involved here is national reconciliation on a patriotic and democratic basis. We want Afghanistan to be a strong, independent and developed State. We shall have nothing to do with those who are against it; but with those who aspire to similar goals we want to have a constructive dialogue."

The Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan consider the Geneva process of political settlement, which has been conducted through Mr. Cordovez, the Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, to be one of the main channels for resolving the Afghan question. Over the six rounds and two stages of the seventh round which have taken place in those negotiations, tangible progress has been achieved in drawing up the relevant documents. The main guarantee for such progress has been and remains the flexible and constructive position of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and its realistic and well-intentioned approach. The United Nations Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session on the question of a

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political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan also shows that a great deal has been achieved in that direction. In particular, it confirms that tangible progress has been made at the Geneva negotiations and it states:

"Agreement has been reached on a very large number of extremely complex issues". (A/41/619, para. 12)

However, not everything depends here on the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. In this context, the Secretary-General's report directly states that the latest developments, including the statement made by Mr. Gorbachev in Vladivostok regarding the withdrawal of six Soviet regiments from Afghanistan,

"should encourage all the Governments concerned to pursue the efforts towards a political settlement with renewed vigour. ... For that same reason, and as a means of restoring good-neighbourly relations, the Governments of the region should promote the finalization of a settlement." (para. 13)

Pakistan and the United States should, in their turn, demonstrate common sense and a realistic approach and evince their sincerity and interest in a settlement. As for Iran, we should like it too to alter its attitude towards this question. If Iran were to join in the negotiations, that would be regarded highly as a very judicious step on its part.

Thus what is essential is to explore mutually acceptable ways of resolving the outstanding issues. In his statement at the forty-first session of the General Assembly, Mr. Shevardnadze, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, stated:

"They have a clear-cut programme for a peaceful settlement of crisis phenomena, and all that is needed is not to hamper that positive process.

Here again, the Soviet Union is in favour of seeking new solutions and a fresh approach, unobscured by prejudice, that would help to identify ways of solving the problem with due regard for the legitimate interests of the Afghan people and of its friends and neighbours." (A/41/PV.6, p. 59-60)

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It is very strange that, in spite of the acknowledged progress that has been achieved in the process of political settlement, the draft resolution on Afghanistan continues to be biased and one-sided and does not reflect in any way the positive changes and moves towards a settlement recently made in that process. Specific confirmation of our policy with regard to a political settlement is provided by the agreement with the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to withdraw six Soviet regiments from that country. This represents a further gesture of good will, designed to speed up the process and to give it fresh impetus. It was designed to persuade those who encourage, organize and carry out the aggression against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to understand it properly and, in response, to proceed to the termination of their interference. Unfortunately, so far that has not occurred. After all, it is precisely the continuing interference that is making it difficult to return all the Soviet troops to their homeland.

Those who hinder a settlement, who arm and direct the counter-revolution against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, should definitely be condemned. It is high time they understood that nobody can turn back the Afghan revolution or turn the Afghan people from its chosen path. Those representatives of the journalistic corps of Western and developing countries who were present at the ceremony at the time of the departure of six Soviet regiments from Afghanistan were eye-witnesses of the sincere and friendly links between the Soviet and Afghan peoples and became aware of how highly the Afghans value the internationalist and fraternal assistance of the Soviet Union.

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The Soviet delegation strongly objects to the draft resolution before us and regards it as another manifestation of interference in the affairs of the Afghan people. Once again we call upon the United Nations and its Members to assist in the elimination of the tension existing around the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, which has been the result of the undeclared war being waged against the Afghan people. It is precisely by ending that war and the bloodshed caused by it that the so-called Afghan problem can be resolved politically.

Mr. RANA (Nepal): For the eighth time in seven years the General Assembly is taking up consideration of the agenda item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security". Despite the concern and the indignation expressed year after year by the international community, the situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate under foreign military presence and persecution. The country is now torn apart, resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths and displacements of people too proud and too patriotic to accept alien direction and domination.

The mountain paths once traversed by caravans of commerce have become routes for ferocious assaults and ambushes. Other trails have become one-way exits for an estimated five million Afghans - nearly one third of Afghanistan's total population - who have been forced to take refuge in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran. While there are several striking and disturbing parallels between the developments in Kampuchea and Afghanistan, my delegation views the Afghan situation with greater alarm not only because of the obvious factor of proximity, but also because, unlike Kampuchea, the interventionist State in Afghanistan is a super-Power, which not only bears special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter, but also has the capacity for unlimited military destruction. Moreover, the military involvement and activities of one super-Power always raises the dreaded possibility of a direct confrontation with the other thus leading to wider escalation and expansion of conflicts.

The position of my country on the situation in Afghanistan has been stated plainly on previous occasions from this rostrum. It is conditioned as much by our commitment to the basic principles of inter-State relationship as by our humanitarian concern for the fraternal people of Afghanistan. The current

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state of affairs in Afghanistan thus runs counter to our attachment to the underlying principles of the United Nations Charter and our deep and abiding concern for and commitment to peace. Most prominent among them, in our view, is the right of all States, including the small ones on the periphery of larger and stronger neighbours, to live in permanent peace and freedom. That is why Nepal has, as a matter of principle, consistently opposed foreign military intervention and occupation whenever and wherever it has occurred, whatever its form, whatever its duration, and under whatever excuse it may have been unleashed. This has been underlined time and again, on questions concerning international peace and security and has been borne out, we believe, by our voting record on those issues in this very Hall in the more than three decades of Nepal's membership in this world Organization.

Nepal supports any initiative for a political solution to the Afghanistan problem that results in the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Afghanistan; respects the rights of all Afghan people to freely determine their destiny without outside interference or coercion; respects the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan; and creates conditions conducive to the voluntary return of all Afghan refugees in safety and honour.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express our profound sympathy and support to the Afghan people, with whom we have had close and co-operative relations, at this hour of their trial and tragedy. I should like to record our appreciation to all countries and relief organizations, especially Pakistan, for having responded so generously in meeting the urgent relief and rehabilitation needs of millions of displaced Afghans. We call upon all concerned to continue such noble and needed humanitarian endeavours.

My delegation is deeply appreciative of the continuing efforts by the Secretary-General to seek a political settlement of the problem in Afghanistan. We

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are encouraged to note that in his latest report the Secretary-General has stated that tangible progress has been made in negotiations for a comprehensive statement. Convinced that the first move in that direction must be the withdrawal of all foreign forces, we have taken note of the recent withdrawal of six regiments of the Soviet forces. We hope that this token withdrawal will lead to a total withdrawal before too long.

In emphasizing the need to pursue efforts towards a political settlement in Afghanistan, we hope that draft resolution A/41/L.12 now before us, which Nepal has the honour to co-sponsor, and which contains all the essential elements for a just and peaceful settlement to the Afghan problem, will be adopted by an overwhelming majority.

Mr. LI Luyue (China) (interpretation from Chinese): This is the eighth time that the United Nations General Assembly considers the situation in Afghanistan. The military occupation of Afghanistan by foreign aggressor troops has grossly trampled on the United Nations Charter and the norms governing international relations and has met strong condemnation from the international community over the past years. The foreign military occupationist authorities, however, have turned a deaf ear to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and world public opinion in general. While procrastinating on troop withdrawal, they have intensified their military operations and suppression against the Afghan people fighting against aggression, forcing several million Afghans to leave their homeland and live as refugees in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran. At the same time, the Kabul régime, with the backing of a foreign Power, has stepped up its intrusions into Pakistan's territory and airspace, thus posing a serious threat to the peace and stability of the region.

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

Recently, the Soviet authorities announced that they would withdraw six regiments from Afghanistan starting from 15 October. It would be a welcome move if it truly indicates their readiness to abandon their military occupation of Afghanistan.

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Most regrettably, however, one has not yet been able to reach such a conclusion. Six regiments are insignificant as compared with the overall force of more than 100,000. And, should the troop withdrawal be carried out at such a pace, no one knows how many years it would take to complete the total withdrawal. It is even more doubtful because the foreign military occupationist authorities have declared openly that so long as they see the so-called foreign interference in Afghanistan continue they will never abandon their neighbour in its hour of trial. Does this not mean that even the troops already withdrawn may return at any time?

During our debate we have heard the arguments that the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan by foreign troops were aimed at helping that country to "safeguard its own sovereignty", while countries that uphold justice and oppose military intervention against Afghanistan are accused of "outside interference" in the internal affairs of that country. But everyone knows that before the foreign invasion of 1979 there had been no foreign troops in Afghanistan and that even the Power responsible for the overthrow of the then Afghan Government had recognized its legitimacy and maintained good relations with it. Is that not a fact? As for the so-called support for the "democratic revolution" and "democratic process" in Afghanistan, it is nothing but a subterfuge to cover up hegemonism. Were we to accept the military occupation of one country by another as legitimate and even describe it as a good deed, would we not be allowing total chaos in the world?

It is the inviolable, inalienable, sacred right of each State to defend its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries is the most fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter. There will be peace and tranquillity in the world only when that principle is upheld, and no country commits interference and aggression of any form against other countries. How can anyone believe the words of those who claim to be champions of international justice while casting the aforementioned principle to the

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winds on such questions as Afghanistan? By such inconsistency between words and deeds they are merely courting trouble for themselves.

The Afghan issue has dragged on for a long time and it is high time that it was solved. The Afghans are an indomitable people and any attempt to subjugate Afghanistan by military means is doomed to failure. If the Soviet Union is really sincere about a political settlement it should implement the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on the Afghan issue, work out a reasonable timetable for withdrawal of its troops through consultations with other parties concerned and pull all its troops out of Afghanistan without further delay so that the Afghan people can make their own choice concerning the future of their country free from outside interference. Only in this way can the return of the Afghan refugees in safety and dignity to their homeland be assured, the sufferings of the Afghan people be brought to an early end and peace and stability be restored in South-West Asia.

China is a close neighbour of Afghanistan and the two countries have always lived in amity. It has consistently respected the independence and sovereignty of Afghanistan and resolutely supported the just struggle of the Afghan people. China cannot but be concerned over the serious situation in Afghanistan caused by foreign armed intervention.

The Government of Pakistan, upholding the fundamental principles of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, has called strongly for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and persisted in its efforts to seek a political solution to the Afghan question. We appreciate that just stand and support Pakistan in its untiring efforts to seek a just settlement of the Afghan question. In the meantime, we appreciate and admire the humanitarianism shown by Pakistan, Iran and other countries that provide relief to the Afghan refugees. The draft resolution entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications

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for international peace and security, which is sponsored by Pakistan and 46 other countries, represents a renewed effort this year to find a fair and reasonable solution to the Afghan question. The Chinese delegation fully endorses that draft resolution and calls upon other Members to give it their support.

Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): For seven years the States Members of our Organization have been discussing the so-called question of Afghanistan. That question has been foisted upon us by those in certain imperialist circles and is, as has been frequently emphasized, quite simply tantamount to illegal intervention in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. It is a gross violation of the United Nations Charter, Article 2 of which states:

"Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State".

Eight years ago, as the result of the April Revolution, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was proclaimed and set itself the tasks of protecting the national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, consolidating the achievements of the revolution and ensuring the broad and active participation of Afghan workers in national democratic reforms. Throughout those years the Afghan people have been constructing their lives on principles of social justice, democracy and progress. Radical reforms in all spheres of life are being made within the country.

In the statement made by the Afghan Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dost, in the general debate, as well as in today's statement by the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Mr. Zarif, the facts pertinent to the situation in Afghanistan were clearly set forth, convincingly demonstrating that the political situation in that country is becoming stabilized and that tangible changes for the better have

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occurred. A favourable atmosphere for nation-wide dialogue among differing social and political forces has been created. In this connection, in our view, of particular significance is the appeal of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan for national reconciliation, which has been directed first and foremost to Afghans who have left their country.

The policy of the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is in accordance with the vital interests of the country's population and enjoys the support of the broad masses of the Afghan people. That is indicated by the successful conclusion of elections to local government bodies.*

*Mr. Henar (Suriname), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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It is also borne out by the results of the Loya Jirgah and the High Jirgah of the frontier tribes. The ultimate purpose of this policy, as stated by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, Mr. Najib, is "to guarantee appropriate conditions for the people of Afghanistan to build a new life in conditions of peace and freedom". As is emphasized in the message of the members of the National Patriotic Front of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan this task on the occasion of its fifth anniversary, is intimately connected with the unwavering foreign policy of the country, which was decided upon by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and is based on principles of friendship among peoples, peaceful coexistence, non-alignment and the struggle for peace and security.

It is no secret that the revolutionary process in Afghanistan has not been smooth. History has known many such cases. The democratic processes initiated by the April revolution were not equally received by all segments of Afghan society. They met not only with warm support but in some cases with incomprehension, wariness and even non-acceptance, which is not surprising in the case of a country where most of the population is still in the grip of age-old traditions. It is precisely this that was used by reactionary and imperialist forces, and above all by the United States, which embarked upon what can only be called a crusade against the new authorities. Afghanistan became the target of foreign intervention, and in the West a hullabaloo was raised about the so-called Afghan question. Out and out subversive propaganda from abroad based on the idea that allegedly the revolution was bringing the Afghans only anguish and suffering, and that the policies of popular power were contrary to Islam, became an integral part of this undeclared war against Afghanistan.

The initiators of the topic we are now discussing have developed, and have for some years here in the United Nations been waging, an active campaign against democratic Afghanistan. In spreading all sorts of inventions about violations

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of human rights in that country, they constantly talk about their desire to offer the Afghans the possibility of "self-determination". In Afghanistan itself, they have incited the counter-revolution to engage in cruel and bloody terrorist acts against the peaceful civilian population of democratic Afghanistan and have created there an atmosphere of fear and chaos, using methods of State terrorism that have long been part of their arsenal in opposing those countries and Governments not to their liking. However, the facts indicate that reliance on terror and attempts to slander the purposes of the revolution and stifle popular power by arms are doomed to failure. Today that must certainly be understood even in the West. The real facts convince us that the situation inside Afghanistan is gradually but definitely improving.

The Afghan Government is making constant efforts to achieve a political settlement around Afghanistan and to put an end to outside interference in its affairs. In strict compliance with the provisions of its well-known declarations of 14 May 1980 and 24 August 1981, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is doing everything it can to restore the situation to normal in the interest of the peace and security of all the peoples of the area. As is emphasized in these realistic and constructive proposals, the purpose of a settlement should be the complete cessation and guaranteed non-recurrence of any armed aggression and other forms of intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

In the opinion of the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR, a political settlement of the situation prevailing around Afghanistan should be achieved through negotiations between the parties concerned. It is precisely on the basis of the peaceful initiative taken by Afghanistan, that talks have taken place with Pakistan through the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Diego Cordovez. Those talks have now reached a particularly crucial stage, and our delegation is convinced that a just settlement is possible.

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What is needed for ^{us}this opportunity to become a reality? Only one thing - political will and a responsible and realistic approach on the part of those circles in the West whose fanaticism originally gave rise to the so-called Afghan problem. The Afghan side is doing everything it can to achieve progress in these negotiations, and has demonstrated its good will and serious intentions.

The parties are very close to an agreement on non-intervention, international guarantees and the voluntary repatriation of refugees. Work is also under way on a document to co-ordinate all elements of a settlement, including the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Our delegation shares the view of the Secretary-General of the United Nations contained in his report on this item which states that "Mutual confidence, which is important now, and which will be indispensable if the settlement is to be effectively implemented, will only be promoted if the pending provisions are finalized with resolution and without further delay." (A/41/619, para.13)

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR regrets that the other party to the negotiations, Pakistan, continues to take a negative attitude and, under various pretexts, refrains from direct and constructive dialogue. The representatives of Pakistan have frequently stated their desire to promote a settlement of the situation around the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, but their actions fall far short of their stated good intentions. In trying to relate all controversial questions to the withdrawal of the small contingent of Soviet troops from the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, the Pakistan side has forgotten that this problem can be resolved only on a bilateral basis by the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. Agreement has already been reached on this point, taking into account the higher national interests of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the real situation existing around Afghanistan. The time-table proposed at the negotiations by the Afghan side for the withdrawal of Soviet troops was drawn up in accordance with that agreement.

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In October this year the withdrawal from Afghanistan to the Soviet Union of six regiments of the small Soviet contingent was completed. That step, which was undertaken in accordance with the decision of the Soviet leadership announced by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gorbachev, in his speech in Vladivostok in July 1986, provides further evidence of the genuine desire of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union to reach a speedy settlement of the situation around Afghanistan and to reduce tension in that area.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR expects the other side finally to respond in a reciprocal manner to that expression of goodwill and to demonstrate in a practical way that it is interested in settling the so-called Afghan problem. I am referring to the immediate cessation of any kind of intervention from outside in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, of the infiltration of its territory by bands of counter-revolutionary mercenaries and of supplying them with modern weapons with which to carry out subversive activities against the popular democratic authorities.

The course of events in Afghanistan and the success of the Afghan people in building a new life for themselves demonstrates the irreversibility of the achievements of the April revolution. Any attempts by the enemies of Afghanistan to turn that country back to the dark times of the past are doomed to failure. It is pointless to try to halt by force the progressive reforms carried out in the country that have been supported and defended by the people, weapons in hand. It is equally pointless to continue in the United Nations the fruitless discussion of the so-called Afghan problem.

For these reasons, the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR, as in previous years, will vote against the draft resolution now before us.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): A whole nation is dying. Even now, as we speak, innocent Afghan men, women and children are being indiscriminately slaughtered simply because they refuse to relinquish what is theirs - their homes, their land, their families, their culture, their religion and their way of life.

The Assembly has an abundance of well-documented material from many sources which describes the consequences of seven years of brutal Soviet onslaught against an entire nation. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan, whose report will be considered by the Assembly later in this session, has concluded that

"the only solution to the human rights situation in Afghanistan is the withdrawal of the foreign troops ... Continuation of the military solution will ... lead inevitably to a situation approaching genocide ..."

(E/CN.4/1986/24, para. 124)

"Genocide" is a term which means "the systematic killing of, or a programme of action intended to destroy, a whole nation or ethnic group". It is unconscionable that in today's world a situation exists that might justify characterization as genocide. Despite considerable efforts by the Soviet Union and the Kabul régime to restrict and manipulate news coverage of the war, no one - certainly no one in this Assembly - can claim to be ignorant about what is happening in Afghanistan.

Since the Soviet Union's unprovoked invasion of a friendly non-aligned neighbour seven years ago, we have gathered here to express our collective outrage at the transgressions of basic human rights being perpetrated against the Afghan people. We are all aware of the number and scope of violations of international humanitarian law being carried out in Afghanistan by the Soviet Union or its puppets. These include, but are by no means limited to, the following: the 1949 Geneva Conventions and customary international law designed to protect civilians, which proscribe murder and mutilation and the large-scale use of anti-personnel weapons; the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the 1972 biological and toxin weapons

(Mr. Okun, United States)

Convention, which prohibit the use of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases; article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which prohibits torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; and the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

That list - incomplete as it is - is impressive in its total disregard for the basic principles of human rights and decency. It is inconceivable in today's world that a country be permitted to remain unaccountable on the application of human rights. It is inconceivable that among the world community of nations represented here today there are Governments that continue to remain unmoved by the tragedy of Afghanistan - so unmoved that they refuse to vote in favour of a draft resolution that merely asks that the Afghan people be permitted to determine their own fate in peace and dignity, free from the yoke of military oppression. Abstention on an issue affecting the survival of an entire people is inexcusable.

Have we become so accustomed to massacre and torture, indiscriminate bombings and mutilation, that we no longer comprehend the full horror of what is happening in Afghanistan? Is it not crystal clear not only that the situation in Afghanistan is one of violence, death, bombings and military encounters but that it is a situation which, if permitted to continue unchecked, could result in the elimination of "a whole nation or ethnic group"?

The very fabric of Afghanistan's traditional society is being rent under force of arms: village life has been shattered, families have been separated, women widowed, babies orphaned; children are being born and raised in refugee camps with no prospect of experiencing life in their own country; and children who remain in Soviet-dominated areas of Afghanistan are being taught a distorted version of their own history viewed through the prism of Marxist-Leninist dogma.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

As the Assembly has heard today, the world's largest refugee population has been created as more than one third of Afghanistan's pre-war population has been violently displaced. As if this were not enough, the Kabul régime recently announced plans to relocate 30,000 persons from areas near the Pakistan border to sparsely populated areas in western Afghanistan. Such a policy would almost certainly involve yet another massive violation of human rights; it also indicates the lengths to which the Soviet Union must go to deny popular support to the Afghan resistance.

After seven years of a war waged by a super-Power against one of the poorest nations in the world, the Soviet Union has apparently realized that a national liberation movement cannot be conquered by conventional military tactics and weaponry. Instead it has conceived and begun to implement a much more subtle three-pronged strategy composed of military, intelligence and political measures. This military-political campaign, combining intimidation and violence with subtle bribery and a huge propaganda effort, is intended to permit the Soviet Union to proceed to consolidate its power in Afghanistan with a minimum of international outcry.

Since its invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 the Soviet Union has moved steadily towards creating a fighting force that is more appropriate to counter-insurgency; it has increased reliance on light air borne forces rather than heavy motorized columns; it has intensified ambush and interdiction operations along the border areas; and it has significantly increased the number of Soviet special purpose forces, of which there are now over 8,000 in Afghanistan - roughly four times the level in 1983.

This redefined military effort has been accomplished by a campaign to win hearts, minds and pocket-books led by the former chief of the Afghan secret police,

(Mr. Okun, United States)

Najibullah. There has been a dramatic increase in sabotage efforts in the tribal areas of Pakistan along the Afghan border. Bribery of tribal, regional, town and even religious leaders has been accompanied by threats of violence as a penalty for co-operating with the Mujahidin. Indoctrination efforts also continue, aimed at creating a loyal cadre of pro-Soviet Afghans, and thousands of children are sent every year to the Soviet Union, ostensibly to study.

Despite those efforts the Soviet Union is no closer today to consolidating its control over Afghanistan than it was on 27 December 1979 when its invading troops murdered President Amin, the man who allegedly had first invited Soviet troops into Afghanistan. The Soviet Union, despite all its efforts, cannot break the will of a people united in a national liberation struggle. The Afghan people will not, indeed they cannot, acquiesce in what amounts to their own destruction as a people and a nation. There is an old Afghan saying: "The mujahid waited 100 years for his revenge and then cursed himself for his impatience."

(Mr. Okun, United States)

The Afghan people will never surrender. The magnitude of the Soviet threat - not only militarily, but to traditional Afghan religious and cultural values - has forged a unity of purpose among resistance fighters unparalleled in Afghanistan's history. Today the resistance is co-operating more closely together than ever before, joining forces, co-ordinating attacks and sharing intelligence and battle techniques. Regular rocketing of Kabul, including the spectacular ammunition dump explosion on 26 August, testifies to mujahideen ability to penetrate even the most fortified of Soviet security rings.

It is not the brave freedom fighters of Afghanistan who have failed to adapt and to take counter-measures against this more subtle Soviet political strategy. Many of us in the world community of nations are being lulled into inaction by Soviet hints of flexibility. Many prefer to close their eyes and ears rather than acknowledge, and demand the cessation of, the horrors visited daily upon the Afghan people.

On 28 July, General Secretary Gorbachev announced the Soviet intention to withdraw six regiments from Afghanistan. This token withdrawal was hailed by the Soviets as "evidence" of their desire for a political settlement - and we have heard that statement made here today. In reality, it is intended to obscure the persistent Soviet refusal to provide a timetable for comprehensive withdrawal. Although it is militarily significant in any case, this so-called withdrawal has been unmasked by convincing evidence, which indicates that significant additional amounts of equipment and troops were introduced into Afghanistan after the 28 July speech, and introduced for the sole purpose of publicly withdrawing them. Many representatives are familiar with that evidence.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

If the Soviet Union wants to demonstrate its interest in a political settlement in Afghanistan, it need only respond to seven General Assembly resolutions which call for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces. It need only present a short timetable at Geneva for a complete troop withdrawal. That is the missing element in the search for an end to seven years of war and destruction in Afghanistan.

As we all know, the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Under-Secretary-General Diego Cordovez, have been conducting negotiations aimed at achieving a political settlement. The United States Government supports the efforts of the Secretary-General and his representative and applauds their diligence and their commitment to a just and durable settlement. We have stated at previous sessions of the General Assembly and reiterate today that the United States firmly supports that process. We have made known our willingness, in writing, to play an appropriate guarantor's role with respect to a comprehensive and balanced settlement, a settlement that protects the legitimate security interests of all concerned.

Three of the four basic documents that would comprise a comprehensive settlement have been largely completed. These include agreements on mutual non-interference and non-intervention, voluntary return of the refugees, and international guarantees. The fourth document, which was discussed for the first time in May of this year, sets forth the interrelationship of the three documents to the central issue of Soviet troop withdrawals. Although progress has been made on the format and scope of this fourth instrument, the Soviet Union has persisted in its refusal to provide a realistic timetable for the complete withdrawal of all Soviet troops.

9(Mr. Okun, United States)

The time has come for deeds, not words. The Soviet Union is apparently counting on outlasting the Afghans and those who support their fight for freedom. By prolonging the war and enshrouding it in hints and meaningless gestures, they are hoping and waiting for the world's attention span to slip, for our outrage to wane. We cannot permit that to happen. Collectively, we can and must help put an end to the carnage and destruction in Afghanistan. In voting for this draft resolution, let us demonstrate our commitment to the comprehensive political settlement which is now in sight, except for one missing element: a short timetable for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops. In voting for this draft resolution, let us demonstrate that we, the world community of nations here represented, will not permit the Afghan nation to perish from this Earth.

Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): This year again we must note with regret that the General Assembly is engaged in pointless polemics on the so-called situation in Afghanistan. The People's Republic of Bulgaria has repeatedly stated its clear and categorical position on this subject. In our view, discussion of this question does nothing to improve the situation in the region, and contributes nothing to a political solution. On the contrary, it results in heightened tension in the region.

Any objective observer can see that the ill-intentioned campaign aimed at magnifying and exacerbating - both within the United Nations and outside it - the so-called question of Afghanistan is motivated not by any concern for peace and security or for the future of the Afghan people, but rather by the desire to justify the undeclared war that has been unremittingly waged for several years against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and to obscure the attempts by certain well-known imperialist and reactionary circles to halt and reverse the development and progress in which Afghanistan has been engaged in recent years.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

We are deeply convinced that it is precisely that undeclared war which is the source of tension in the region and which represents a threat to international peace and security. That, therefore, is what we should be discussing.

The history of events and developments around Afghanistan is well known. In April 1978, under the leadership of the Afghan People's Democratic Party, the Afghan people realized its inalienable right to decide on its own future. Before the revolution Afghanistan had been among the least developed countries in the world but, with the support of the people and despite the intense struggle against counter-revolutionary gangs, the Government has been able relatively quickly to achieve undeniable success in bringing about anti-feudal and democratic change. A whole series of factors attest to the ongoing normalization and to the political stabilization of the country. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan can count on an increasingly solid socio-economic base and on the establishment of a climate conducive to constructive dialogue among the various social and political forces in the country. Industrial production has increased considerably; agrarian reform has given land to hundreds of thousands of peasants; the level of national education has been raised through a literacy programme affecting 1.2 million Afghans.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

The process of the democraticization of society is taking place with the participation of representatives of broad segments of society in the political life and in the administration of the country. As announced, the Council of the Revolution, the supreme authority of the country, has just been expanded with the election of 80 new members from all social strata.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria supports the efforts of the leaders of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to achieve national reconciliation and to expand the social basis of the April Revolution; these efforts include the establishment of a Government with the participation of political forces which, for one reason or another, are outside the country, but which sincerely desire to contribute to the building of a new Afghanistan.

The successes which the Afghan people have achieved in all areas of political and socio-economic life, clearly show that, despite enormous difficulties, the democratic process there is irreversible and that it will be impossible to force the Afghan people to depart from the path of progress and social justice it has chosen.

This is precisely what cannot be admitted by forces which, in their imperial ambitions, persist in heightening tension in the region around Afghanistan, and which encourage, train and arm mercenary counter-revolutionary gangs at a cost of millions of dollars a year.

Suffice it to say in this connection that the "secret" assistance officially appropriated by the United States Administration to finance counter-revolutionary bands is said to amount to over \$500 million this year. Thanks to this assistance they have the most modern weapons, and the networks of camps and bases around this sovereign and independent country offer the "dushmans" military training by foreign instructors or advisers. This is the how they finance the arsonists who burn down schools and hospitals and economic infrastructure; it is also in this way that

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

they finance the authors of acts of diversion and sabotage and those who murder the civilian population of the country. During the years of this undeclared war against Afghanistan, these bands have been responsible for untold losses of human lives, as well as material damage amounting to more than \$1 billion. Moreover, armed intervention against the Republic is accompanied by a vast propaganda and disinformation campaign aimed at world public opinion. It is a psychological war that is being waged against Afghanistan for the purpose of distorting the nature of the democratic changes being carried out, slandering the popular authorities, and thereby justifying the subversive activities directed against the country. I think that one has to be more than cynical to make out that the "dushmans", stained with the blood of the people are freedom fighters.

To paraphrase an Afghan saying, the sun cannot be covered up by throwing dust at it. And I would say that the most skilful of lies cannot cover up the evidence that the democratic changes in Afghanistan are irreversible and that the enemies of the Revolution are experiencing setbacks.

More than ever before the present complex international situation requires that all parties sincerely interested in a just and lasting solution to the situation around Afghanistan display a spirit of realism, responsibility and political goodwill. The Afghan Government has been displaying such goodwill and sense of responsibility year after year consistently making efforts to achieve a political settlement of the situation. Its sincere willingness in this respect found concrete expression in its foreign policy initiatives of 14 May 1980 and 24 August 1981 which set out basic principles for the peaceful settlement of the conflict, taking into account the interests of all the countries of the region.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria is following with interest and hope the Afghan-Pakistan negotiations in Geneva with the mediation of the Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Diego Cordovez. My

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

Government regards those negotiations as an expression of the positive role that the United Nations can play in the restoration of peace and security in that region. The progress recently made in the negotiations is confirmed in encouraging terms in paragraph 12 of the Secretary-General's report (A/41/619), and gives cause for optimism. We have every reason to believe that a practical basis has been found for a direct dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan. This would considerably speed up a political settlement of the situation in the region, in the interests of the Afghan people as well as their neighbours. It is also encouraging to note that most of the participants in the General Debate and many other speakers on this point have appealed for a peaceful settlement of the problem.

Against that background one can understand the interest aroused by the speech of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on 28 June 1986, in Vladivostok, where he announced the decision of the Soviet Government to withdraw from Afghanistan six regiments from its limited military contingent, together with their arms and equipment. Through this constructive step, the Soviet Union has clearly demonstrated its intention to contribute to a considerable speeding-up of the political settlement of the problem and in a tangible manner to promote the indirect negotiations in Geneva. This is not a propaganda act, as certain countries are trying to portray it, but a real step, a practical gesture on the part of the Soviet Government, made in the second half of October.

Therefore, in view of the above, and as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General which I have already mentioned:

"These developments should encourage all the Governments concerned to pursue the efforts towards a political settlement with renewed vigour."

(A/41/619, p. 4, para. 13)

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

We should like to believe that this expression of goodwill on the part of the Soviet Union will produce an appropriate reaction, namely, the cessation of interference in the internal affairs of sovereign and independent Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, a draft resolution on this problem has been once again introduced which is totally alien to this concern. On the contrary it presents a false and distorted interpretation of the facts. In essence it disregards the legitimate prerogatives of the Afghan Government and constitutes an inadmissible violation of the international status of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan by legalizing armed intervention in the internal affairs of that country. This text is not in conformity with generally-accepted norms of international law. It is contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the interests of the Afghan people, and to the principles of peace and security in the region. It is for these reasons that my country will vote against the draft resolution.

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Mr. WOOLCOTT (Australia): The continuing conflict in Afghanistan and the persistent presence of Soviet troops in that suffering country are causes of concern and disappointment to the Australian Government. It is indeed a matter for regret that for seven years now the Soviet Union has disregarded resolutions of this Assembly - resolutions which have commanded very wide support, resolutions which clearly bear the moral authority of the international community.

Participants in successive sessions of the General Assembly have listened to rationalizations by the Soviet Union of its military intervention in the affairs of a smaller neighbour. At successive sessions the General Assembly has called for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, an expression of the fact that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the continued presence of a large number of Soviet troops is unacceptable. At successive sessions the General Assembly has rejected the Soviet Union's claim that its troops entered Afghanistan at the invitation of the Government of that country.

The great majority of Members of this Organization, despite their many differences on other issues, are united in perceiving the essential facts of the situation in Afghanistan: namely, that a small, developing, non-aligned country was invaded by the Soviet Union so that a more compliant régime could be installed in Kabul. They are united, too, in believing that the solution to this tragic and continuing problem must be based on the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. Yet, as we know, the Soviet Union has refused to implement the General Assembly's resolutions on this matter, with the following seven far-reaching consequences.

The Soviet Union, as a permanent member of the Security Council, is failing in its duty to maintain international peace and security.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

The Soviet Union, which is itself often quick to criticize others for alleged failures to observe General Assembly resolutions, refuses to recognize the General Assembly's competence in this case.

The Soviet Union now finds itself ensnared in Afghanistan, where it seems clear that the great majority of the Afghan people have mounted a very effective resistance.

Inside Afghanistan the Soviet Union has attacked and bombed the civilian population and has used methods which have provoked widespread condemnation within the international community.

While the Soviet Union remains in Afghanistan, other small, developing, non-aligned countries can hardly feel secure about their own immunity from external intervention.

In addition to its tragic consequences for the people of Afghanistan, this conflict has been a major source of tension in the region and has aggravated mistrust between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Afghanistan's neighbours, Pakistan and Iran, have had to endure a severe burden in sheltering massive numbers of refugees, who have chosen and continue to choose to flee from the situation the Soviet Union has caused. The way in which Pakistan has shouldered the bulk of these responsibilities, and the role of the humanitarian relief organizations, particularly the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in relieving the sufferings of the Afghan refugees, have been commendable. Australia has contributed considerable humanitarian and relief aid to the refugees and we shall continue to bear our fair share of this burden.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

This is a depressing background against which to address the future, but we believe it is important to look forward rather than back in order to restore a climate of international confidence. This can happen only if the Soviet Union and all the parties concerned accept a political solution in Afghanistan. We believe this would, after all, be in the Soviet Union's own interests. We can only hope that a negotiated settlement, which has proved so elusive in recent years, will in the near future be achieved.

In this context, the Australian Government has continued to follow with hope and interest the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, to facilitate such an outcome. Australia commends those efforts and hopes that no new obstacles will be placed in their way.

We have been pleased to read the Secretary-General's observation in his report that tangible progress has been made, while at the same time we endorse his observation that the political will to reach a negotiated settlement is essential to carry this issue forward. It is in the interests of everyone that all parties concerned should take advantage of the progress already made to move forward, under the Secretary-General's auspices, to achieve a negotiated settlement. Those of us that, though deeply concerned about the past, are keen to see this Organization play a constructive role in the future can only wish the Secretary-General well in his continuing endeavours.

Certainly no delegation would be happier than mine to see the removal of this item from the General Assembly's agenda. Australia has sought in recent years to improve its relations and widen its contacts with the Soviet Union. This desirable process could be accelerated by genuine movement in the near future on the part of the Soviet side in the search for a political settlement in Afghanistan. It would also require more than cosmetic or very limited troop withdrawals. The Australian Government welcomed General Secretary Gorbachev's announcement in July of the

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

Soviet intention to withdraw six regiments, on the condition that this represented a genuine step towards a solution of the problem in Afghanistan. The international community will continue to monitor closely Soviet actions and test the Soviet Union's stated intentions and proposals in Afghanistan..

In the meantime, there can be no drawing back from the General Assembly's responsibility to respond to a violation of basic Charter principles and the abdication by a great Power of its special responsibilities to the international community.

The General Assembly maintains a responsibility to reiterate to the Soviet Union its accountability to the international community for its actions, and Australia will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Assembly, in the sincere hope that the Soviet Union will heed, in the near future, the moral force of the Assembly's actions.

Mr. AHMAD (Brunei Darussalam): Last year most States Members renewed their pledges and commitments to the ideals and principles of the United Nations at the commemoration of its historic fortieth anniversary. Unfortunately, the pledges and commitments were not followed by deeds. Global problems persist and in some cases, particularly those relating to violence and tensions, have escalated.

In Afghanistan the foreign occupation has entered its seventh year, and my delegation sees the necessity to reiterate its concern and indignation over the deteriorating situation in that country. More than 110,000 foreign troops are prosecuting a war against the Afghan people. Military operations were launched in various parts of the country, causing hardship, untold suffering, casualties and deaths. The foreign forces are also engaged in a deliberate and systematic scorched-earth campaign, aimed at destroying the agricultural infrastructure of Afghanistan. Famine is thus a misfortune that will befall the Afghan people if the conflict continues indefinitely.

Small countries like Brunei Darussalam, though remote from the area of conflict, are not oblivious to the escalation of tension in Afghanistan. We are deeply concerned because that once peaceful, non-aligned, independent and sovereign State has turned into one of the most explosive and volatile countries in the region. Each year the escalation of military activities aimed at eliminating the resistance forces of Afghanistan brings another wave of displaced persons from Afghanistan into neighbouring countries. Since the war broke out in 1979 approximately one-third of the 16 million Afghan people have left the country in search of safety and shelter in Pakistan and Iran. Pakistan, which hosts three million of those refugees, has to meet nearly 55 per cent of the needed annual expenditure of over \$400 million on humanitarian assistance for these refugees. Pakistan, as a front-line State, also has to suffer violations by foreign forces into its territory.

(Mr. Ahmad, Brunei Darussalam)

The Afghan people have suffered enough. It is agonizing to witness the continued suffering of the people. Further suffering must, therefore, be prevented. Every effort must be made to end the conflict. We are grateful that, aside from efforts undertaken to settle the problem through the United Nations system, other international organizations or parties have committed themselves to bringing about a peaceful solution of the problem in Afghanistan. The issue is always placed high on the agenda at the meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement and those of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. We are hopeful that substantial discussion of this issue will also take place at future meetings between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union.

My delegation is convinced that the only lasting solution to the Afghan tragedy would be the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, the restoration of Afghanistan's independence and non-aligned status, self-determination for the Afghan people and the establishment of the conditions necessary to enable Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in dignity and safety. In this context, Brunei Darussalam hopes that an agreement on the four key instruments at the ongoing proximity talks between Pakistan and the Kabul régime under the auspices of the United Nations will soon be concluded.

Brunei Darussalam would like to express its continued support for the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, in their unceasing efforts in the search for a comprehensive solution in line with resolutions starting from ES-6/2, of 14 January 1980, and continuing each successive year up to 40/12, of 11 November 1985. Regrettably, the diplomatic process has been stalled since December 1985, when the Kabul side demanded entry into direct negotiations with Pakistan before it could discuss the fourth instrument, concerning the time-frame for withdrawal of foreign troops and the interrelationship with the other three instruments. The key solution to the

(Mr. Ahmad, Brunei Darussalam)

problem remains the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. Therefore, without agreement on the fourth instrument no withdrawal could take place. However, we hope that all parties concerned, particularly the Kabul régime and its allies, will reconsider and renew their commitments so that an early settlement can take place and peace can be guaranteed in Afghanistan.

Brunei Darussalam welcomes the recent withdrawal of six regiments from Afghanistan as a positive step towards a political settlement of the problem in Afghanistan. However, we need not be reminded that 110,000 foreign troops are still actively operating in that country. In a sincere effort to find a comprehensive and durable resolution of the Afghan question, the relevant United Nations resolutions calling for immediate withdrawal of foreign troops must be implemented without delay. Brunei Darussalam, on its part, endorses the draft resolution before us today. With the adoption of this draft resolution, the sufferings of the Afghan people will cease, their self-determination will be restored, the independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan will be preserved and international peace and security maintained.

Mr. ABDUL KADIR (Malaysia): At its previous session the General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority, adopted resolution 40/12, which reaffirmed the basic principles for a peaceful solution of the problem of Afghanistan. Among other things, it strongly maintained the call for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and reaffirmed the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever.

Our appraisal since then shows that nothing has really changed. The seven-year occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops continues. In spite of the strong and repeated international pronouncements on the imperatives for peace, the Soviet-Kabul forces have continuously committed military aggression against

(Mr. Abdul Kadir, Malaysia)

the Afghan people in their attempt to liquidate the Afghan resistance. The 120,000 Soviet troops, the fearless Mujahidin and the untold human suffering as a result of Soviet military operations - these are still the tragic order of the day in Afghanistan. Since the beginning of this year we have even heard how brutal the military campaign has become. In the report on the human rights situation in Afghanistan submitted to the Commission on Human Rights last February, Mr. Felix Ermacora, Special Rapporteur, pointed out that military bombardment, shelling, reprisal massacres, booby-traps and anti-personnel mines were the main causes of deaths and casualties. Of even greater humanitarian concern were reports of torture by Khad officials and resort by the Soviet-Kabul forces to a scorched-earth policy.

(Mr. Abdul Kadir, Malaysia)

The scope of the Soviet-Kabul military campaign against the Afghan people, as my delegation sees it, has therefore been considerably widened to encompass not only the massive use of fire power but also economic, psychological and religious means. There is a yawning gap between this trend, which we deplore, as a backdrop, and the peace efforts undertaken by Mr. Diego Cordovez, the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, under the auspices of the United Nations.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/41/619) enumerates a number of movements since the fortieth session which seem consistent with the efforts towards a peaceful solution. First, I note that Kabul has projected its "sincere desire to achieve a political settlement"; secondly, the instrument on international guarantees has received the acceptance of the United States and the Soviet Union, subject to an overall settlement that they could support; and, thirdly, negotiations on the fourth instrument, regarding the arrangements for the effective implementation of the settlement and the time-frame for withdrawal, have begun. At this point, according to the report, the Governments of Pakistan and Kabul are studying a revised proposal as submitted by Mr. Diego Cordovez.

May we hope that the Soviet Union and Kabul will consider the proposal constructively to lend credibility to their desire for a political settlement and not use it as a tactical ploy? I believe that this is an important question to ask given the benefit of hindsight. First, it has been common knowledge that the finalization of the three earlier instruments last year has been largely due to Pakistan's flexibility. Secondly, there seems to have been a delaying tactic, an impasse, when the Kabul side sought to change the format for the negotiations on the fourth instrument. Thirdly, however, and most important, the Kabul side has not reciprocated Pakistan's earlier flexibility and has remained unresponsive on the vital question of the time-frame for withdrawal.

(Mr. Abdul Kadir, Malaysia)

In view of the extremely difficult attitude on the part of Kabul during past negotiations, and the situation on the ground, which continues to exact a heavy toll of the Afghan people, the announcement by General Secretary Gorbachev on 28 July 1986 in Vladivostok that six regiments would be withdrawn from Afghanistan cannot be accepted as credible. Since, according to reports, the bulk of the withdrawal is constituted by anti-aircraft regiments of the air defence system, this does not reflect any significant change in the dominant Soviet position. The Afghan freedom fighters have no air force, which leads us to believe that the Soviets are withdrawing those regiments simply because they are of no use in Afghanistan.

This reminds me of the situation in Kampuchea, where we are only too familiar with the announcements by Viet Nam of their so-called troop withdrawals. As many of us have found, the so-called troop withdrawal from Kampuchea has been no more than troop rotation as Viet Nam gets bogged down in Kampuchea as a result of its own miscalculation. It may not be farfetched to think that the statement by the General Secretary was on similar lines to the Vietnamese statement on so-called troop withdrawals.

As the Assembly has repeatedly resolved, the fundamental point is the withdrawal of foreign troops - that is, Soviet troops - from Afghanistan. That is precisely the primary objective of the intensive and tactful efforts by the Secretary-General's Personal Representative, to which - I may add - Pakistan has responded constructively and admirably. There is nothing to stop the Soviet Union and/or the Kabul side from stating their positive intention with dignity and honour, as Pakistan did at the talks convened under the auspices of the United Nations, if the withdrawal of the six Soviet regiments is to be meaningful. In the absence of any forthright and constructive statement that was consistent with resolution 40/12, we would view the announcement by the General Secretary as purely tactical.

(Mr. Abdul Kadir, Malaysia)

Our attention has been drawn, further, to the expectation of the Soviet Union that the withdrawal of the six regiments would be responded to by the curtailment of outside interference. Coming from the Soviets, such expectation is ironic indeed. Whatever the Soviets may try to convey by the term "outside interference", the fact is that it is the Soviet Union alone that has military troops stationed in Afghanistan, in gross violation of the norms of international law and of the United Nations Charter. It would therefore be absurd for the Soviet Union to expect the Mujahidin to de-escalate their resistance when their cause has been created solely by the unlawful presence of Soviet troops. There has never been a vicious circle in the conflict in Afghanistan, and the Assembly should continue to consider this agenda item and make its pronouncements based upon the clear conviction that there is none.

Draft resolution A/41/L.12 sets out clearly once again the key elements for a political solution as repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly. In particular, the draft resolution reiterates the call for the withdrawal of foreign troops and for all the parties concerned to work with a sense of urgency for a political solution as a matter of priority. Malaysia is proud to be associated with 46 other countries in sponsoring this draft resolution, which, as we stated with regard to the draft resolution submitted to the last session, we sponsor on the basis of our conviction on a number of important points.

First, the conflict in Afghanistan involves sacred principles relating to national independence, territorial integrity and self-determination which must be maintained, in the interest of the safety and security of us all. Secondly, the draft resolution signifies the political commitment to encourage the Afghan freedom fighters to continue to fight for their cause. Thirdly, it would help to reinforce the increasing support for peace and national reconciliation, thereby sustaining the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative.

(Mr. Abdul Kadir, Malaysia)

My delegation therefore urges the Assembly to give this draft resolution, like its predecessors, the widest possible support, which it deserves. We should persevere along this course until the foreign troops are withdrawn from Afghanistan.

By giving the draft resolution our strong support we would also be giving a clear signal again to the Soviet Union concerning its immoral policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan. We urge the Soviet Union and the Kabul régime seriously to reconsider their objectives, which have caused widespread and extreme suffering to the Afghan people. The fact that about 5 million Afghans are living as refugees in Pakistan and Iran and that more than 1 million have died should be sufficient reminder that all the claims of popular support for the Kabul régime must cease. It should make way for respect for human rights and the judicious application of international law, so that the perpetration of violence by Afghans against Afghans will stop and peace will take root in Afghanistan once again.

The call to the Soviet Union for peace based upon the principles enunciated in the draft resolution before us is, of course, an attempt to remind the Soviets of their important obligation to the international community. The Soviet Union's eminent position as one of the five permanent members of the Security Council should be matched by positive action to strengthen world peace and safeguard the norms of international relations. Regrettably, however, the decision it took to send its military force into Afghanistan in 1979 was in contradiction with all its moral obligations and the hopes placed in it as a permanent member of the Security Council. It is important, therefore, that the General Assembly give a clear reminder that it has undertaken a series of illegal actions in an attempt to further hegemonism by propping up puppet régimes, and that reciprocal trust and confidence among nations have been seriously jeopardized.

(Mr. Abdul Kadir, Malaysia)

The path to a reversal of the deteriorating international situation lies through clear actions. In the context of Afghanistan, the onus is on the Soviet Union alone, if it is sincere in supporting the efforts to promote peace. There should be no attempt to mislead, and issues must be faced squarely. In this connection I have carefully noted, for instance, a statement by the representative of the Kabul régime which said, inter alia:

"While expressing our gratitude to the Secretary-General and his representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, for their good offices during these talks, we wish to reiterate the desire of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan for the early and successful conclusion of the process leading to normal and harmonious relations among the countries of the region on the basis of the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, respect for the right of all States to determine their own social and economic and political systems and friendly relations and good-neighbourliness among States."

(Mr. Abdul Kadir, Malaysia)

Clearly such a statement is aimed at establishing normal and harmonious relations among the countries of that region. Whether wittingly or unwittingly, that is entirely different from the aim of the repeated United Nations resolutions, which is the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan so that the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan would be restored and preserved. Such a statement does not do justice to the untiring efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative. We hope that the Kabul side will be sufficiently capable of reorientating its position to the basic objective I have stated so as to be in keeping with its national esteem and dignity and contribute to the high ideals of peace and stability.

The road to the achievement of a peaceful settlement on Afghanistan will still be long and complex. Therefore we are deeply appreciative of the sense of dedication and the skill with which the Secretary-General's Personal Representative pursues his task, which has made it possible to achieve some limited progress. We also welcome the constructive attitude that has prevailed on all sides, and in particular the forbearance and understanding on the part of Afghanistan.

In view of the crucial juncture that the proximity talks have now reached, we should like to express our support for the good offices of the Secretary-General and his efforts to ensure that the talks expeditiously achieve the desired agreement for a durable peace in Afghanistan. As the Secretary-General has pointed out, political will is of the essence. We urge the Kabul side to look entirely within its own circle and to the long suffering of the Afghan people in order that the necessary political will be generated. We hope that, with greater understanding on the part of Kabul, we will be able to see the signing of all the four instruments, thus leading to an era of peace for Afghanistan.

Mr. DAZA (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): The General Assembly has since 1980 been considering the situation in Afghanistan as a result of the occupation of that country by Soviet troops, which constitutes a grave threat to international peace and security. The Soviet Union has refused to comply with the resolutions of the United Nations and the appeals of the international community, which is seeking peace and justice and respect for the principles of non-intervention and the non-use of force in international relations. Thus the Soviet Union continues with impunity to challenge the conscience of mankind in an act of contempt for international law and for the values that inspire the Charter of the United Nations, in connection with which we, the Member States, have entered into binding commitments.

In addition the occupation of Afghanistan has brought with it total disregard for human rights in that country, including the rights to self-determination and to a peaceful life. We wish to convey to the Afghan people, which is struggling for the preservation of these essential values, our unqualified solidarity and our hope that in the near future they will be able to attain their objectives.

The Soviet Union has brought to that peaceful country an immense and profound human tragedy. The figures emerging from the blatant act of genocide being committed in Afghanistan are mind-boggling: nearly a million dead; incalculable numbers of wounded and mutilated persons; populations destroyed by bombs; villages erased from the Earth.

In the course of the present year the Soviet offensive in the provinces of Herat, Kandahar, Uruzgan and Paktia has increased the number of victims of Soviet terror by thousands. That action has almost completely destroyed the historic Islamic city of Herat.

In analysing the case of Afghanistan, the international community experiences the tremendous nightmare of confirming that Stalinism, with its logic of contempt

(Mr. Daza, Chile)

if

for man and its ethic of death is still alive and striking at the defenceless people of Afghanistan.

The draft resolution before us (A/41/L.12) has as its sole purpose defence of the rights of a people, the principles of the Charter and international law. In addition it is a minimum token of solidarity and of our commitment to a cause we share with all peace-loving nations. Otherwise we should be shirking our moral, historic and political responsibilities. That is why my country is one of the sponsors of the draft resolution. However, we believe that it has some shortcomings, chief among which is that it does not denounce or condemn the Soviet Union; it gives the impression that particular care has been taken not to do so. That is strange in a forum in which quite often we do not balk at condemning States for matters much less serious than the responsibility incumbent upon it in the present case of the Soviet Union.

As has been argued on one occasion, it would seem that no one is guilty of this crime against peace and humanity, the gravest act committed in the international community in the last ten years. Are the invaders of Afghanistan extraterrestrials? Perhaps our failure to mention them specifically in our draft resolution is due to the fact that they are beyond our understanding as Earth-dwellers.

I cannot refrain from referring to the humanitarian activities being conducted by Pakistan and intergovernmental and private organizations in aid of the millions of Afghan refugees who have been received by the noble people of Pakistan, activities which have kept alive the hope that some day they will be able to return to their country, free of foreign interference, and make their own choice of government. To that friendly country and to those organizations we extend our appreciation and that of the international community.

(Mr. Daza, Chile)

We wish likewise to reiterate our unqualified support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez. We hope that they will achieve results and that the end solution of this conflict will ultimately bring peace to that entire region, whose stability is threatened by the intervention of a great Power that does not hesitate to crush a non-aligned country by force if to do so is in line with its own interests.

My delegation has read with the greatest interest the report of the Secretary-General in document A/41/619 of 18 September, which describes the initiatives of the Secretary-General himself and those of his representative, Mr. Cordovez, in search of a solution to the situation in Afghanistan and its consequences for international peace and security.

(Mr. Daza, Chile)

The Secretary-General informs us in his report that

"... sustained efforts have been made, with increasingly broad support from the international community, to achieve a negotiated political settlement. I am gratified that the United Nations has received in this context the full co-operation of all the concerned Governments". (A/41/619, para. 2)

He also states that the consultations held by Mr. Cordovez in Geneva, Islamabad and Kabul led to some positive results, which opened up the prospects of a political settlement. The same document informs us that this diplomatic process also received support from the designated guarantors, the United States and the Soviet Union.

Thus, it would appear that there is a series of issues on which the beginnings of an agreement have been reached and these are indicated in the report, which states:

"The interlocutors finalized, inter alia, the text of the principles and objectives of the settlement, including non-intervention and non-interference, the non-use of force and self-determination." (para. 7)

But, with respect to the principal question - that is, the time-frame and modalities for the withdrawal of the occupying Soviet troops in Afghanistan, the Secretary-General recognizes that "there is still a wide gap". There is no doubt that, until that substantive question is resolved, any progress made will be of no avail.

We welcome these negotiations, but let us not deceive ourselves. The solution of the problem lies essentially in the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghan territory. That is the problem.

An attempt is being made to distort a situation of territorial conquest, by the hypocrisy of a great Power, which often refers to compliance with Assembly resolutions but which is not complying with those adopted by the Assembly in

(Mr. Daza, Chile)

this case; by the hypocrisy of the Soviet Union, which talks to us about peace here but wages war in Afghanistan; by the hypocrisy of this great Power, whose delegations have so often tried to lecture us on the right of peoples to self-determination but which, both in Afghanistan and in respect of all of the peoples subjected to its sway, implacably rejects this right.

Consequently it is essential for the international community to take a decisive stand, which may even help the Soviet Union to solve the problem. Soviet leaders have argued that their troops entered the country to save it from an external threat and that they will remain there so long as that threat continues. There is no doubt that the Soviet Union is posing a truly metaphysical problem by requiring, as a pre-condition for taking a certain action, the cessation of circumstances that never existed.

More than 120,000 Soviet soldiers remain on Afghan territory, despite the opposition of the Afghan people. The proposal of Mr. Gorbachev, announced in Vladivostok, to withdraw six regiments not only is absurd, but also distorts the truth, since those troops had been duly replaced by others. This is a striking demonstration of the lack of any genuine interest on the part of the invading Power in withdrawing its armies.

Despite this, the noble Afghan people continue their heroic struggle, with scant resources, it is true, but with enormous determination - with the determination of those who are fighting for their survival and with the confidence they derive from the fact that they are doing so for the most just cause to which man can aspire: the freedom of their people and of their country.

Mr. BOUZIRI (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): The General Assembly is meeting once again to debate the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

In continuing for the seventh consecutive year, the debate on the question once again demonstrates the lack of decisive progress towards a negotiated solution. This demonstrates the extent to which the real desire for peace is still lacking at a time when our Organization, and multilateralism in general, have become the easy target for attacks from all sides.

The absence of such a desire is all the more deplorable in that neither the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of our Organization nor the observance of the International Year for Peace despite their solemnity, has helped to soften attitudes.

Hence the renewed commitment to peace and to the principles of international law may become a dead letter, since it is obvious that the hopes for peace and respect for the rules of law cannot go hand in hand incompatible with armed intervention and the improper and unjustified use of force. It is a matter of the greatest urgency that this situation, which has lasted far too long, should end, and that peace should be restored to Afghanistan.

Tunisia would like to recall here that the problem of Afghanistan is essentially the consequence of foreign military intervention. This has now been confirmed by the prolongation of this deadly conflict which is tearing the country apart and causing tension throughout the region. The impact is felt at the international level, thus causing further deterioration in the already strained relations between the major Powers, and compelling certain States in the region to change their priorities. These developments have taken place in a region which thus far has not been a subject of special concern, but which is now caught up in a whirlwind of violence and instability. Moreover, this situation is not an isolated case, since war broke out both in South-East Asia and in the near-by Gulf which has within a short period of time, and is still raging today, thus making the region of Asia one of the most explosive hotbeds of tension in the world.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

These local wars, which have continued now for seven years, have all become fiercer, and there is as yet no indication that they will end soon. They all involve the same risk of spill-over, with unpredictable consequences for international peace and security. As in the case of Afghanistan, events have shown that force of arms alone is not capable of determining the outcome of the conflict.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

Recent history has demonstrated that military arsenals, however sophisticated they may be, cannot overcome the will and aspirations of peoples.

In Afghanistan, the inanity of the conflict is appalling. It brings back memories of similar interventions in the past which failed because they were on the wrong side. Others, more recent, we have condemned and continued to condemn, and they should constantly be condemned by the entire international community.

My country, consequently, believes that the foreign military presence in Afghanistan can only prolong the suffering of the Afghan people and exacerbate the tension in the region, to the detriment of international peace and security. In the final analysis, it cannot impose a model of government that is alien to the culture and traditions of that country. It is appropriate to recall here that throughout its history the people of Afghanistan has fought ferociously to preserve its cultural identity and national character, despite the vicissitudes of adversity. Its independent character is reflected in the vigour with which this people opposes intervention and in the increasingly heavy sacrifices that its sons have had to make. It is inconceivable that the struggle of an entire people should be reduced in the eyes of some to subversive actions mounted by armed bands and that those that raise their voices in this Assembly to defend that people should be considered ill intentioned and slanderous. To disregard the legitimate aspirations of the Afghan resistance at a time when hundreds of thousands of Afghans have taken up arms and approximately one third of the population has sought refuge in Pakistan and Iran, would be to show political blindness and, even more serious, would challenge principles which we all committed ourselves to respect when we became Members of this Organization.

My country can only reiterate its profound concern in the face of such a situation at a time when interference in the internal affairs of States, recourse to force, and the persistence and exacerbation of conflicts are taking on

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

disturbing dimensions. Our opposition to such massive recourse to force, regardless of the leaning or conviction of the Government or Governments responsible for it, finds its justification in the inviolable principles of our foreign policy. In this Tunisia is guided by the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law which prohibit the use of force or the threat of the use of force and interference in the internal affairs of States in violation of their territorial integrity. Whatever may be the motivations and pretexts, the military intervention in Afghanistan is a grave violation of the territorial integrity of that country and thus runs counter to the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law.

Like other military interventions condemned by the international community, this unfortunately widens the breach in the edifice of law and justice which we seek to construct and consolidate, and establishes a bad precedent in international relations as well as further complicating the state of affairs between the major Powers. It is hardly necessary to state that these must fulfil their special responsibilities as the guardians of international peace and security, which they must work for and preserve. Any abandonment of those responsibilities would have a negative impact on relations among States. Small, weak countries would suffer particularly, as they would have to channel a part of their limited resources to the acquisition of arms for self-defence instead of to development projects. My country would like that costly practice, which results from a feeling of insecurity among States, to be prevented by the international community through a joint effort to reinfuse life into the principles enshrined in our Charter. Only in this way will an era of world peace and security be established, in which a true process of détente and international co-operation free of all pressures, can take place.

Our attention has been diverted somewhat from the area of confrontation to focus throughout this year on the indirect talks under the auspices of the

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez. We have followed closely the news that has reached us from Geneva, aware of the fact that the last instrument, concerning the effective implementation of and the time-frame for the withdrawal of troops, is the last stage in those talks. Tunisia would like to thank the Secretary-General for his instructive report on the progress in those negotiations, and has noted the tangible progress made since the last session. It believes that the agreement which appears to be emerging on a number of extremely complicated issues demonstrates a more realistic assessment of the situation that now prevails in Afghanistan. This represents progress that could put the parties concerned on course for a negotiated settlement. It must be remembered, however, that the instruments on which agreement in principle has already been achieved are valid only if the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan becomes a reality. This also presupposes that all interference in the internal affairs of this State, wherever it may come from, must cease, in order to enable the people of Afghanistan to begin and complete the reconciliation process that is so necessary if it is to heal its wounds and finally reconstruct its country, which has been largely destroyed by war.

This will be possible only if this dark page in the history of the region is finally turned, with honour, and with respect for the right of peoples to self-determination.

Tunisia noted with interest and satisfaction the measures and proposals set out in the statement delivered on 28 July 1986 in Vladivostok by Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It expresses the hope that in the months to come there will be a complete withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and a clear commitment in favour of a just and lasting settlement to the Afghan problem.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

Tunisia maintains with the Soviet Union mutually friendly and fruitful relations in the political, economic, commercial and cultural fields. My country knows that 20 million Soviet lives were lost during the Second World War in defence of the independence and territorial integrity of their country, a part of which was destroyed by the Nazis. Tunisia is also aware that the Soviet Union supports the right to self-determination of peoples, particularly the peoples of Palestine and of Namibia. Tunisia is also aware that all the peoples of the Soviet Union, who have suffered so much in the past from war, aspire to peace and respect the rights of other peoples to self-determination and independence.

Tunisia considers itself a friend of the Soviet Union. It now makes a friendly, urgent appeal to the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. Indeed, the continuance of the war in Afghanistan not only produces ever-increasing destruction in that small country, which has been seriously afflicted by seven years of conflict, claims more and more victims among the Afghan civilian population and the proud Afghan fighters and Mujahidin, increases the already huge number of refugees and drains the country of its inhabitants, but also brings death to more and more young, innocent Soviet men, plunging their families into misfortune and mourning and jeopardizing the fundamental principles of the Charter.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

The Soviet Union, need it be recalled, is one of the founders of our Organization and one of its most important Members which, because of its permanent membership in the Security Council, has special responsibilities for the maintenance of peace in the world.

In conclusion, I should like to say that Tunisia can only sympathize with the growing mass of refugees forced over the years to leave their country because of the hostilities. Although we recognize the inestimable humanitarian services rendered them by Pakistan, Iran and the international community, those refugees and displaced persons, who are a daily reminder of the scope of the Afghan tragedy, can overcome exile, deprivation and suffering only when the causes of their exodus will have finally been removed.

Tunisia considers that the draft resolution in document A/41/L.12 reflects the concerns of the overwhelming majority of the Members of this Organization. As in the past, Tunisia is one of the sponsors of this draft and hopes that all genuine peace-loving countries that truly believe in the self-determination of people will support it.

Mr. OSMAN (Somalia): For seven years a super-Power has continued to dominate the small, peaceful, non-aligned and Muslim country of Afghanistan. While we hear statements about a political solution, about the efforts of the special representative of the Secretary-General and even the claim that six contingents of foreign troops have been withdrawn, the goal of a political solution to the problem is not in sight. Brutalities committed against the Afghan people are increasing in scale and gravity day after day. It has recently been reported that new types of weapons such as tanks, field guns, mines and more sophisticated helicopter-gun ships and huge rockets are used against a defenceless resistance and that special forces and commando type formations and parachutists are sent to the devastated land of Afghanistan.

(Mr. Osman, Somalia)

In view of these grave developments, we should be concerned more than ever before about the extremely serious situation in Afghanistan, a Muslim, non-aligned and third world country. As a Muslim country, Afghanistan has done a great deal for Islam by propagating the faith in Asia throughout the ages and by giving to the world of Islam the greatest philosophers, Fugaha, Ulama and intellectuals in all fields. As a non-aligned country, Afghanistan was one of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement and indeed participated in the first non-aligned meeting in Belgrade. In fact, it has practised a non-aligned and neutral policy since the nineteenth century and was indeed one of the oldest independent Islamic countries that retained its neutrality during both world wars. Until it was invaded, it never joined any military pacts or allowed any military bases of any country on its territory.

After 1919 when Afghanistan received its full independence and had established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, the first country to do so, it received an official letter from the Soviet leader at the time, part of which reads as follows:

"Your country is the only independent Muslim State in the world, and fate has bestowed upon the Afghan people the great historic task of gathering around it all enslaved Muslim peoples and leading them on the road to freedom and independence."

That letter was from V. I. Lenin.

Therefore today, when most of the Muslim countries have achieved their independence, Afghanistan as an old independent State with a great history, should not lose its freedom and integrity. Afghanistan's sovereignty should be restored and the destruction of its cities, villages, schools and hospitals must be stopped. The one-third of its population that has taken refuge in neighbouring countries should return to their country of origin in safety and with honour.

(Mr. Osman, Somalia)

Seven years - two years longer than the Second World War - is a long time for the suffering of a peaceful nation and one million casualties are too many for a small and independent State to bear. We salute the bravery of the Afghan people who are defending their freedom and faith in a war being fought on unequal terms. All of that shows that the spirit of Jihad of the early Muslims still prevails.

It has recently been announced that an attempt is being made to withdraw some foreign military contingents from Afghanistan. We hope that such a withdrawal will not be a tactical reorganization and the strengthening of the foreign troops in Afghanistan. The super-Power involved should prove to the world that its declarations are not mere propaganda but a concrete reality truly and genuinely aimed at settling the conflict in Afghanistan.

(Mr. Osman, Somalia)

There is a growing urgency for a political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. In the absence of anything but cosmetic talk of troop withdrawals and indirect negotiations without the participation of the genuine Afghan representatives and without the recognition of all the fundamental principles of independence, territorial integrity, and the right of self-determination as basic principles enshrined in the Charter and international law and the return of all refugees to their country in peace and with honour, the tragedy of Afghanistan will remain unsolved. While we commend the efforts of the Secretary-General and his representative we also call for the acceleration of the ongoing efforts by the parties concerned to achieve an effective political solution.

We believe that the situation in Afghanistan has reached a point where it may soon be in the interest of all the parties to the conflict to seek in earnest a political accommodation so as to end the agony of the Afghan people. Indeed the essential prerequisite is that all the principal parties to the conflict with the support of the major Powers, find the political will to end the present tragedy in accordance with General Assembly resolutions which we all adopted in the past seven years. My Government trusts that the matter will remain in the forefront of our agenda until sooner rather than later an amicable and appropriate settlement is attained.

In the meantime, as a sponsor of draft resolution A/41/L.12, my Government expresses its full support for the restoration of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Afghan people.

Ms. FROST STERRI (Norway): Almost seven years have elapsed since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The occupation is continuing despite the rejection each year by the overwhelming majority of the General Assembly of the attempt to impose on the Afghan people a régime established by the use of force. Regardless

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of United Nations resolutions calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops and for a political solution, the situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate.

The military intervention by the Soviet Union remains a most serious violation of the fundamental norms and principles governing relations among States. The Soviet occupation has brought widespread suffering to the Afghan people and the disintegration of their society. About 4.5 million Afghans have fled to neighbouring Pakistan and Iran. As many as 2 million may be displaced within Afghanistan itself. The brutal war has led to the destruction of villages and crops, the result being hunger and starvation. Human rights are clearly being violated, as was pointed out last year in the report to the General Assembly by the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. This situation cannot and must not be allowed to continue.

My Government believes that the core of the problem in the Afghan conflict is the unwillingness of the invaders to address seriously the question of a realistic time-table for a complete troop withdrawal. What is important now is the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops, not only 8,000. We reiterate our strong appeal to the Soviet Union to contribute in a decisive way to a settlement by terminating its occupation of Afghanistan. A complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan is the necessary first step in the process of restoring the independence of Afghanistan and enabling the refugees to return home. The positive effects that a comprehensive settlement would have on other important international issues, in particular on East-West relations, are obvious. After almost seven years of firm resistance the régime in Kabul must also be aware that its efforts to subjugate the Afghan people are futile.

My Government is also concerned about the adverse impact the Soviet military invasion has had on the situation in the region. Armed incidents along the common

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border of Pakistan and Afghanistan have led to increased tension in the area. We strongly urge restraint in order to prevent further escalation of the conflict.

A solution to the conflict can be brought about only by political means. Norway has paid close attention to the tireless and constructive efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative to promote a peaceful solution of the conflict. In his report the Secretary-General states that there has been tangible progress in the so-called indirect negotiations between the interlocutors. Yet he notes that on the critical issue - the time-frame and modalities for the withdrawal of troops - there is a wide discrepancy between the positions of the parties concerned.

The right of the Afghan refugees to be repatriated in safety and with honour has been identified as one of the essential elements of a settlement. This can be made possible through the implementation of the other three main ingredients in the draft resolution before us: complete withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan; restoration of an independent and non-aligned status for Afghanistan; and self-determination for the Afghan people.

The draft resolution constitutes, in our view, a reasonable and practical framework for a comprehensive political settlement. The draft resolution and the determined efforts by the Secretary-General merit the full support of the international community.

In conclusion, the vulnerable position of Pakistan is of grave concern. Besides violations of its border and air space, Pakistan carries the tremendous burden of being the host country to the largest refugee population in the world today. The way in which Pakistan has handled the influx of 3.5 million refugees from Afghanistan deserves our respect and support. We should also like to pay

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tribute to the humanitarian relief organizations working in the area, in particular the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross, for their efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Afghan refugees.

Norway has, for its part, over the last six years provided 230 million Norwegian kroner, that is, approximately \$31 million, in humanitarian assistance. We stand ready to continue our assistance to the Afghan refugees.

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Mr. BUI XUAN NHAT (Viet Nam): Once again our General Assembly is debating the item on the situation in Afghanistan, on which the position of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has more than once been explicitly expounded. This time my delegation would like to limit its remarks to one issue only, namely, the will for a comprehensive political solution to the situation in South West Asia and for the establishment of relations of peace, stability and friendship between the peoples in the region.

One wonders why the tension in that region continues to persist and why a political settlement has not yet been possible, although everyone seems to recognize the need for the early achievement of such a political settlement.

Like other peoples, the Afghan people are deeply attached to peace, and need peace to develop their country and overcome centuries of backwardness. By carrying out the April Revolution, they threw off the chains of slavery and servitude and freely chose the path of development - the path of national independence, friendship and genuine non-alignment. But no sooner had the April Revolution been successful than the imperialists, expansionists and international reactionaries unleashed an undeclared war on the Afghan people, which consequently placed in danger the existence of the young Republic, thus forcing the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to ask its friends for help and assistance. Obviously, the root cause of the prolonged tension around Afghanistan since April 1978, and the immediate reason for it, is the plot of the imperialist, expansionist and reactionary forces to undermine the Afghan revolution and to prevent the Afghan people from moving forward on the path of their own choice.

That abnormal situation would have been brought to an end had its real authors acted in good faith for the early achievement of a political settlement of the issues of the region. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. For certain people, confrontation is a national policy. They are applying it not only in South

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West Asia but also in southern Africa, the Middle East, Central America, the Caribbean and other parts of the world. They are training and financing not only the Afghan counter-revolutionaries attacking the Afghan people, but also the UNITA attacking the Angolan people, the contras attacking the Nicaraguan people, and so on.

They keep talking of political solutions and dialogue but they are interested only in continued stalemate and confrontation. Over the past seven years they have used the Afghan question as a pretext to justify the cold war and major military programmes, to delay the convening of the international conference on the Indian Ocean and to reinforce their fleets in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. Their ally in the region needs the continuation of tension and turmoil in the region in order to fish in troubled waters, and to ask for more weapons, including those of the most sophisticated type such as F16 aircraft.

On the one hand they demand the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, while on the other they do everything they can to make that impossible. That explains why recently when the Soviet Union, with the consent of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, withdrew from Afghanistan six regiments of the Soviet limited military contingent - a step widely welcomed by public opinion - the Secretary of Defense of the United States was so prompt in rejecting it as mere troop substitution.

The delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam believes that many of us here really mean it when we refer to a political settlement. When we mention humanitarianism we mean profound sympathy for the Afghan civilians who are having to live outside their country. When we speak of the right to self-determination of the Afghan people we do so out of sincerity and respect. But there cannot be any such champions of the right to self-determination of the Afghan people as the present United States Administration, which is aiding and abetting the South

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African racist régime and the Israeli aggressor to trample upon that sacred right of the peoples in southern Africa and the Middle East. The champion of the right to self-determination of the Afghan people can hardly be an Administration which sent American Marines to invade Grenada, a tiny island country tens of thousands of times smaller than the United States; nor can it be the eastern neighbour of Afghanistan, which has been actively involved in United States military alliances like the Central Treaty Organization and the South East Asia Treaty Organization and whose record of human rights violations is all too notorious.

An overall political settlement of the situation in South West Asia is indispensable. We urge all parties concerned to demonstrate their sincere determination in the search for such a settlement. In this respect we are pleased to note the significant achievements in the process of national reconciliation and development inside Afghanistan as a result of the positive steps taken by the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. We fully support the practical proposals made by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan concerning talks with its neighbours on relevant issues. We welcome the completion of the return of six regiments of the Soviet contingent from Afghanistan and consider it a very important demonstration of the political good will of the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to facilitate the early achievement of a political solution. It is evident that the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has demonstrated good will and flexibility by deeds, not just by words. We call on the other parties to reciprocate promptly and appropriately.

We highly commend the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative for the efforts and the contribution they have made in promoting the process of dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Although the results of the proximity talks, through the Secretary-General as intermediary, have been encouraging, it is our delegation's hope that more efforts will be made and that procedural obstacles

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will be overcome so that Afghanistan and Pakistan can begin to settle their differences peacefully. Again, progress depends on the political will and flexibility of the parties most directly concerned.

For the foregoing reasons my delegation is of the view that the present debate in the General Assembly on the so-called situation in Afghanistan is a futile exercise and that it profits only the political manoeuvring of certain countries. Realities have been distorted, good will has been misused. We should not allow that to happen again.

Draft resolution A.41/L.12 selectively refers to only one aspect of the issue while ignoring the others, which my delegation considers as the crux of the matter: the cessation of the undeclared war and of all acts of outside intervention in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Being a biased and one-sided draft, it would not help but rather harm the negotiation process; it would encourage not flexibility but rather intransigence.

It is high time that the General Assembly adopted a new approach so as to contribute positively to the process of dialogue aimed at defusing the tension in the region and concluding agreements on a political solution to the situation, in the interest of peace, stability and friendship between the peoples in the region and the world over.

Mr. THIOUNN PRASITH (Democratic Kampuchea) (interpretation from French):

A famous 79-year-old Afghan poet, Ustad Khalilullah, says:

"When I was young, I wrote verses about love, beauty and peace in Afghanistan. Today, at my age, unfortunately, I am writing about tears, blood and the cries of pain of the Afghan people."

Those words reflect very well the tragic situation that has prevailed in Afghanistan since 24 December 1979, when the invading Soviet forces decided to put to the sword that beautiful, formerly independent, peaceful, non-aligned country in the hope of transforming it into a vassal State.

These last years of war and invasion have killed more than a million Afghans, left more than a million mutilated or starving, displaced 50 per cent of the population of the country and transformed 30 per cent more - that is, 5 million Afghans - into refugees in Pakistan and Iran. According to Mr. Jeri Laber of Helsinki Watch:

"Entire villages are razed, sometimes in reprisal for a guerrilla attack, sometimes for no reason whatsoever. The Soviet soldiers enter the villages, choose non-combatants at random, men, women or children, and shoot them, dynamite them, behead them or burn them alive. ... Men with their hands tied are forced to lie down on the road to be crushed by tanks; grenades are thrown into rooms where there are women and children. ... Mothers are forced to watch their children being tortured by electric shocks. A young woman who was tortured in prison describes how she and others were forced to stand in water treated with chemical products that stripped the skin from their feet."

The crimes, deaths, mourning, suffering and destruction caused by the invaders and occupiers of Afghanistan are very much like those caused for almost eight years by the Vietnamese invaders and occupiers of my country, Kampuchea.

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Democratic Kampuchea)

The international community is shocked by these facts. The Commission on Human Rights appointed a Special Rapporteur, Mr. Ermacora, to study these matters, and his reports are instructive. Resolution 1986/40 of the Commission, adopted on 12 March last, expressly condemned the indiscriminate shelling of the civilian population and also military operations directed principally against villages and agricultural facilities. Similarly, it condemned

"the numerous violations of the right to life, freedom and the security of the person, including the current policy of torture and the summary executions of opponents of the [puppet Kabul] régime, as well as the increasingly frequent manifestations of a policy of religious intolerance."

All these crimes and violations of human rights have been confirmed by Amnesty International and Helsinki Watch.

Seven years of war the genocidal character of which no longer needs to be demonstrated have not succeeded in bringing the Afghan people to their knees. Despite their powerlessness, the Afghan people, who throughout their history have shown an indomitable will for independence and freedom against all foreign domination, have been conducting a heroic patriotic struggle which today is causing the invasion and occupation forces to become bogged down. The Afghan countryside now belongs to the Mujahidin, whereas the invasion forces occupy only the major towns and some strategic roads. Even in those towns the occupiers are not safe. In Kabul, the airport, the embassy and the quarter reserved for the occupiers are often attacked by the Mujahidin. Each morning people awake to the sound of the shelling of the Mujahidin around the capital. In the south, in Kandahar, the soldiers of the occupation forces no longer dare even to walk in the streets.

The army of the Kabul régime no longer wishes to fight. As is the case with the puppet Phnom Penh régime in Kampuchea, conscription can no longer fill the void left by desertions and revolts. The civilians of the Kabul régime sympathize with

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the Mujahidin. More and more families are deciding to leave the villages to escape the conscription of their children.

In the Soviet Union, in spite of the strict control of public opinion, the continuance of the war in Afghanistan is increasingly disquieting and disturbing the population. In the cemeteries more and more new tombstones may be seen bearing the epitaph: "Fallen in the fulfilment of his internationalist duty". In November 1985, at the summit conference in Geneva, the Soviet spokesman admitted that the losses incurred by the occupation forces were increasing in Afghanistan. The newspapers increasingly refer to well-placed families using their influence to prevent their sons from being sent into combat in Afghanistan. Soviet Muslim conscripts are kept apart from the Afghanistan expeditionary force, since experience has shown that they sympathize with the Mujahidin.

At the international level, each year the world-wide condemnation of the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan becomes stronger. It is reflected in the resolutions adopted by an increasing majority in the General Assembly and in the declarations of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other international forums.

Every year the heroic struggle of the Afghan people and its Mujahidin gains ground. Despite overwhelming superiority in men and equipment, the invaders are becoming increasingly bogged down in Afghanistan.

Instead of listening to the appeal to reason of the international community, which calls upon them to end their adventure in Afghanistan and let the Afghan people freely exercise their right to self-determination, the occupiers are obstinately pursuing their war of extermination and intensifying their aerial bombardments in implementation of the scorched-earth tactics, by which they seek to sow terror among the civilian population, eliminate national resistance and

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bring about a military solution. Unable to wear down the Afghan national resistance, the occupiers have turned their wrath against Pakistan, whose compassion for and solidarity with the Afghan people have made it possible to save millions of Afghan refugees in that country's territory.*

*Mr. Thompson (Fiji), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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As part of a deliberate campaign of subversion conducted by the KHAD, the secret police of Kabul directed by the RGB, several bombs exploded in the markets, offices and buildings of the provincial capital of Peshawar, transforming that north-western province of Pakistan into a front-line province. This year, moreover, there were more than 650 violations of the air space and territory of Pakistan - three times more than last year. The occupiers of Afghanistan are increasing their pressure on Pakistan to get that country to abandon its support of and solidarity with the Afghan people and their Mujahidin.

All these facts clearly indicate that the occupiers have no intention of leaving Afghanistan. They have made their Kabul puppets proclaim that the situation in Afghanistan is irreversible, just as is proclaimed by the Vietnamese occupiers in Kampuchea. The indirect negotiations that have been conducted for nearly six years under the auspices of the Secretary-General of our Organization have been used to mask their steadily increasing efforts to consolidate their military occupation of Afghanistan. The recent so-called "partial withdrawal" of six regiments of the occupying forces is simply a manoeuvre reminiscent of the so-called "partial withdrawals" of Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea, which are in fact nothing but troop rotations. It is interesting to note, however, that the invaders of Afghanistan must be in such a military and diplomatic impasse that they now feel obliged to resort to the same threadbare Vietnamese manoeuvre that no longer fools anyone. Indeed, regardless of their rhetorical or military efforts, aggression remains aggression and it can be brought to an end only by the total withdrawal of the forces of aggression.

Irrespective of the gravity and extent of the crimes committed against Afghanistan, the dynamism of the national resistance against the Soviet invasion and occupation has strengthened and expanded the heroic struggle of the people and

(Mr. Thiounn Prasith,
Democratic Kampuchea)

their Mujahidin, whose successes in the past seven years, both in the field and on the international level, bear witness to their firm determination not to be subjugated. It is time for the Soviet Union to come to the wise conclusion that it is not by using the "indirect negotiations" simply to allay world condemnation nor by changing its surrogates in Kabul, nor yet by staging so-called "partial withdrawals" of its occupation forces that it will succeed in getting the international community to accept its fait accompli in Afghanistan. A just and lasting peace can be restored in that country only on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Afghanistan and the exercise by the Afghan people of its right to self-determination without any foreign interference. So long as the advent of that peace is delayed, the valiant Afghan people and its heroic Mujahidin have no choice but to pursue their patriotic struggle in ever closer union. Pakistan, whose compassion for and solidarity with the Afghan people we admire, will have to struggle to defend its often-violated territorial integrity and threatened national sovereignty. The people of Kampuchea and the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, which are waging a similar struggle, will continue their unshakable support for and solidarity with these just struggles.

My delegation will vote in favour of draft resolution A/41/L.12 and calls upon all delegations of the States Members of our Organization to support it massively in order once again to reaffirm to the invaders and occupiers of Afghanistan the unswerving opposition of the international community to any violation of the Charter and the rules governing international relations, and also so that in this International Year of Peace, the aggressors and occupiers of Afghanistan, like those of Kampuchea and other countries of the world, may realize the futility of their crimes and their anachronistic ambitions which threaten peace and security

(Mr. Thiounn Prasith,
Democratic Kampuchea)

and bring only misfortune, suffering, devastation and ruin to innocent peoples, including their own.

Mr. PITARKA (Albania): It is seven years now since the Soviet social-imperialists unleashed their armed aggression against Afghanistan. The peoples of the world at large have condemned it as an aggression against a small freedom-loving people and a sovereign State. During this period the General Assembly was right to include the consideration of this item in its agenda.

The tragedy of Afghanistan has shown quite clearly that the aggressive policy followed by the two super-Powers has major implications for the freedom and independence of the peoples, and that it is the people who pay dearly for the intrigues placed upon their shoulders by these super-Powers and the various reactionary forces at their service. The barbarous aggression of the Soviet Union against Afghanistan has caused incalculable damage and suffering to the people of this country. At the same time the occupation of Afghanistan has created a dangerous situation and a serious threat to the freedom and peace of the neighbouring region, as well as to the international situation as a whole.

The continuation of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, with a huge military force equipped with the most modern weapons, provides clear evidence of the rapacious ambitions and expansionist aims of Soviet social-imperialism, not only in Afghanistan, but throughout that strategically important region, which has been turned into a dangerous hotbed of war and a zone of continued rivalry between the two imperialist super-Powers.

We often hear the two super-Powers openly declare that, in their talks, they have had discussions on regional problems, where Afghanistan is placed on the agenda and where other regions, peoples and countries have been dealt with.

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

It is quite clear that there is nothing good for the Afghan people in super-Power deals, because, in order to attain their hegemonistic ambitions, these super-Powers in every case sacrifice the interests of other peoples.

Through their propaganda work, the Soviets are trying to create the impression that the Soviet Army was dispatched to Afghanistan, not as an occupying army but as a "saviour", not of its own will but as "invited", and that allegedly it was made up of a limited number of soldiers and that it had no intention of a prolonged stay there.

The perfidious aggression of the Soviet Union against Afghanistan shows clearly that the occupation by force of freedom-loving peoples and countries has become an outstanding feature of the hegemonistic policy of this social-imperialist State, thus unveiling the demagogic face of this "socialist" State and so-called "friend of the peoples", of this "protector of peace", etc. The Soviet aggression against Afghanistan showed once again how the interests of other countries can be trampled upon by the imperialist Powers and how cynically the norms and principles of international law can be violated, and the voice of representatives of nations condemning their aggression ignored.

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

The Soviet aggressors are feeling ever more unsafe in this occupied country. The brave actions of the Afghan patriots are dealing them uninterrupted blows and are inflicting considerable damage not only in manpower but also in armaments, and above all are discrediting them in the eyes of international public opinion as real aggressors, compelling them to seek various ways and means to preserve and consolidate their occupation of that country.

Besides this, the continued condemnation they receive from international public opinion for this invasion, as well as the present international circumstances and existing relationships, have forced Moscow to use some new tactics and alternatives, such as that of the so-called national reconciliation in Afghanistan, the settlement of the problem through talks, the withdrawal of a symbolic contingent of troops from Afghanistan, and so on. As is known, the Soviet Union is making a big fuss about the so-called promise made in late July this year about the withdrawal of six of its regiments from Afghanistan and is still purporting to be in favour of a political solution to the Afghan problem. All this has been done with the intention of gaining time for its forces to consolidate their full occupation of Afghanistan and in order to sustain the puppet régime politically. This case has nothing to do with any kind of moderation or change in the policy of the Soviet social-imperialists towards Afghanistan. These are but new tactics to be applied in the present conditions in order to realize their notorious expansionist strategy in Afghanistan and the region around.

The Afghan patriots are doing very well in putting up a strong fight to drive out all the Soviet occupying forces from their country and consider the so-called promise of the Soviet Union to pull out six regiments from Afghanistan as a sheer deceptive trick and diversionist tactic.

The question arises: what kind of a settlement of the problem can the Afghan people expect from the "good care" of the Soviet social-imperialists? Are not

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

the Soviet occupiers those who, since the outset of their aggression in Afghanistan, have killed and massacred tens of thousands of Afghans through their massive bombardments? It is these preachers of the so-called settlement of the Afghan problem who have caused the death of nearly one million Afghans and who have turned Afghanistan into a State where thousands upon thousands of people are suffering from hunger, contagious diseases, and so on, and where some millions of Afghans are forced to flee from their own beloved country and are now leading the life of refugees in other countries.

The events that are taking place at present in Afghanistan are a clear proof of the determination of a brave and freedom-loving people against every foreign invader, to continue their armed struggle and to drive out of their homeland the very last foreign soldier.

For the people of Afghanistan it is quite clear that the only solution to their problem is the driving out of all the Soviet troops from their own territory, the establishment of their freedom and independence, and that these aspirations can be achieved only through armed struggle against foreign invaders and their stooges.

In conclusion, in participating in this debate our delegation reiterates once again the position of the Albanian Government on the problem of Afghanistan. The Albanian people and their Government will continue resolutely to condemn Soviet aggression in Afghanistan and express their feelings of sympathy and solidarity for the national liberation struggle of the people of Afghanistan. We hold that the settlement of this problem requires that an end be put immediately to the Soviet interference and aggression in Afghanistan and the ousting of the last Soviet soldier from its territory.

Mr. CESAR (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): This year once again there is on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly, an item

(Mr. Cesař, Czechoslovakia)

entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security". This has occurred despite the will of a sovereign State, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, which is a Member of our Organization and which is directly concerned in this item. The discussion of the so-called question of Afghanistan can be assessed only as an inadmissible interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan which runs counter to the fundamental norms and principles of international law. This in no way serves the cause of peace and security. Quite the contrary, it can only lead to an exacerbation of the situation around Afghanistan and throughout South-West Asia, which is an extremely sensitive region of the world.

The General Assembly continues to consider the so-called question of Afghanistan as a result of manoeuvres undertaken by forces hostile to the people of Afghanistan, which disregard its interests and will, the forces of imperialism and reaction which wage against Afghanistan an undeclared war in order to reverse progressive developments in that country. They are inspired only by one aspiration: to crush the revolutionary movement, to weaken and destabilize what exists and to apply the principle of "the worse, the better". That is the main cause of the unprecedented tension that prevails around Afghanistan and in South-West Asia as a whole.

Over eight years ago the Afghan people successfully completed its anti-feudal, national democratic revolution. The pre-revolutionary Afghanistan was one of the poorest nations of the world. Over 90 per cent of the population was illiterate. The system of health care did not meet the needs of the population and most farmers did not own their land.

Today, eight years down the road, despite the great material and particularly the human losses that were incurred as a result of the undeclared war, social programmes are being effected. Agrarian reform is being carried out which

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

redistributes water resources in strict compliance with national traditions and freedom of religion. The volume of agricultural production has exceeded the pre-revolutionary level and health care has improved for the population. Over 1.25 million Afghans have learned to read and write and, as a result of the introduction of fellowships, access to education has been afforded to even the poorest strata of the population. Growth of industrial production in the past five years has reached 30 per cent and agricultural output has reached a figure of 4.7 per cent. The State has actively developed various forms of entrepreneurship in the interests of stepping up economic development.

Of great significance are the efforts of the country's leadership to effect political reconciliation and strengthen the socio-economic basis for the implementation of democratic reforms in the country. The highest body of State authority, the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and the bodies of national administration, are elected from all sectors of Afghan society. The Afghan leadership has taken measures to include in national management affairs those political forces which are outside the country but which sincerely wish to participate in the overall national process of reconstruction of a new Afghanistan.

The successes of the Afghan people could have been greater, but the efforts of the masses are curtailed by the subversive activities of counter-revolutionary forces. Armed with the most sophisticated forms of weapons, they perpetrate terrorist attacks against national enterprises.

It(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

Approximately 2,000 schools have been destroyed as have a large number of medical facilities and basic telecommunication links. Under the banner of their motto of "Holy War" they have destroyed approximately 200 mosques and killed or injured dozens of Muslim clergy. The terrorist acts they have perpetrated would have been impossible without the direct support of imperialist forces, particularly those provided by reactionary elements in the United States that have supported the counter-revolutionaries with hundreds of millions of dollars, well aware that the weapons purchased will be used against innocent victims.

The counter-revolutionary forces are also practising overt terrorism. They deal arbitrarily and pitilessly with women and children, they burn schools and they call themselves the bearers of freedom and democracy. In spite of last year's tragic experience when the bandits used modern missiles against a civilian aircraft, the United States Administration took the decision to provide even more powerful means of destruction to those forces this year. From this rostrum the representatives of almost every State Member of our Organization have repeatedly condemned terrorism and coercion in any form. In the case of Afghanistan, however, certain States support them. For the United States, for example, acts of terrorism have become a means to achieve their political aims. The United States plans to use the destabilization of the situation in South-West Asia to increase its military activities in the Persian Gulf region, which they declare to be a sphere vital to their interests. To that end, they have set up dozens of special camps in which they are training terrorists to handle various forms of both primitive and highly-sophisticated weapons. They are now engaging in a vast propaganda campaign to detract from the significance of the withdrawal of the first contingents of Soviet troops.

(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

The presence of Soviet contingents will be necessary in Afghanistan as long as interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan continues. Those contingents are in Afghanistan at the request of that country's Government, in keeping with international law, as was emphasized by the representative of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

Czechoslovakia has always held the position that a political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan can be achieved. We have therefore always supported any initiative that respects the sovereign rights of the States directly involved. A political settlement must, first and foremost, put an end to armed and other external interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. It must create conditions to prevent such interference in the future. That will also promote a solution to the question of the free return of refugees, for which the leadership of Afghanistan has created appropriate conditions.

We fully support the ongoing negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan through the Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Cordovez. Those negotiations have already achieved many positive results, but a great deal remains to be done. We praise the serious approach, patience and flexibility Afghanistan has shown in those negotiations.

Goodwill and a desire to promote negotiations are also reflected in the decision taken by the USSR, in agreement with the Government of Afghanistan, to withdraw part of its contingent by the end of 1986. We would hope that the response to that important step will be a cessation of external interference. However, present facts attest to the contrary.

Those forces that are encouraging terrorism and coercion on all fronts nourish fond hopes that, in so doing, they can thwart the building of a new, just society in Afghanistan, in spite of the fact that the undeclared war is a tragic trial for that country. That Republic has nevertheless developed, and the people of

15(Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia)

Afghanistan, undaunted, are following the path they have chosen. The policies of the Government enjoy the growing support of the broadest strata of the population.

We must put aside the illusion that it is possible to halt the course of history. The process of democratization in Afghanistan is irreversible. There is only one path towards a solution of the Afghan problem, and that is the path of negotiations and a political settlement. That goal is not served by draft resolution A/41/L.12, which is now before us. That draft resolution legalizes armed intervention and, by the same token, it overlooks armed terrorist attacks from outside the country. Indeed, the draft resolution would impede progress and the political settlement for which the legal Government of Afghanistan is striving, with the assistance of the United Nations Secretary-General. The draft resolution, to all intents and purposes, endorses the use of the territories of neighbouring States as bases for terrorism against a sovereign State, its people and its legal Government. We consider the draft resolution unacceptable and we will vote against it.

Miss DEVER (Belgium) (interpretation from French): The representative of the United Kingdom has stated the position of the Twelve on the agenda item before us. I shall therefore confine myself to emphasizing certain points.

In 1986, we are commemorating the International Year of Peace. Unfortunately, at this very moment many people are suffering from the consequences of various wars and conflicts. One of the most distressing examples is Afghanistan, a non-aligned developing country that was brutally invaded some seven years ago by the Soviet Union.

On six occasions the General Assembly has demonstrated by a very broad majority that it does not intend to tolerate the attempt by a major Power - one which, by the way, is a permanent member of the Security Council and thus entrusted with special responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

security - to subjugate the people of Afghanistan. We cannot help but be surprised that the Soviet Union, which regularly calls for the implementation of resolutions, should be maintaining its occupying forces in Afghanistan and refusing, in this instance, to pay heed to the clearly expressed will of the General Assembly.

Last year, by 122 votes, the Assembly expressed itself in favour of a political solution and the withdrawal of troops as an indispensable condition to such a solution. The occupation continues, repression is hardening, administrative control is stiffening, the persecution of the civilian population is increasing and hostilities are becoming more brutal.

The Soviet Union's action in Afghanistan is difficult to reconcile with the policy of the non-use of force proclaimed by the United Nations and with Soviet initiatives in that connection.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

Moreover, the aggression against Afghanistan attests to a singular disregard of the essential principles of the Charter: respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty, political independence and self-determination, and for a people's right to choose its own system of government without outside interference. Respect for those principles is the indispensable foundation of peace and the free existence of small countries.

Passivity on the part of the international community can only encourage the repetition of such acts.

The heroic resistance of the people of Afghanistan facing 100,000 soldiers endowed with the most sophisticated weaponry attests, if that were necessary, to the population's rejection of Soviet occupation. Far from abating, the hostilities and repression have intensified, aggravating the suffering of the civilian population. We are witnessing a constant degradation of the situation.

That rejection of foreign occupation assumes a tragic and spectacular dimension with the exodus of 4 million refugees to neighbouring countries. That is approximately one third of the country's population: 4 million men, women and children, uprooted, fleeing pitiless occupation, living under precarious conditions, supported only by the hope that one day they may find a normal life in their own country in full freedom.

May I pay a tribute to the efforts of neighbouring countries in offering asylum to those refugees. We are aware of the problems and difficulties Pakistan is facing in the wake of the arrival of three million refugees, and the generosity and humanitarian spirit with which it has discharged its responsibilities. We therefore wish to express our appreciation to the humanitarian organizations endeavouring to alleviate the suffering of refugees in the host countries.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

To the horrors of the fighting are added flagrant and massive violations of human rights. The last report to the forty-second session of the Human Rights Commission of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan is overwhelming in this regard. It cites methods of war contrary to humanitarian norms, blind bombardments of the civilian population, systematic destruction of agricultural infrastructure, frequent recourse to torture and summary execution, and religious intolerance.

It is time for the Soviet Union to accept putting an end to a situation which from month to month becomes more intolerable and tends to spill over boundaries. Repeated bombardments of the territory of Pakistan represent an extremely disturbing development.

The people of Afghanistan must find its identity. It must be able freely to decide its future. The conditions necessary to enable refugees to return home in complete honour and security should be established.

There can be no military solution to the problem of Afghanistan. The admirable heroism of the resistance shows that armed force cannot thwart the will of a people determined to struggle to reconquer its liberty. Only a political solution is possible. In this connection we should like to express our appreciation of the action the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Under-Secretary-General Mr. Cordovez, have pursued to facilitate such a solution and to achieve a just and lasting settlement that meets the security concerns of all the parties. We hope that the essential element of an agreement, namely the establishment of a timetable for the speedy withdrawal of all Soviet forces from Afghanistan, may emerge as soon as possible.

This year our Assembly must again massively demonstrate that time does not legalize the occupation of Afghanistan and that the international community will

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

continue firmly to call for an end to that occupation, which continues to be a major source of international instability.

Hence my delegation, as in previous years, will vote in favour of the draft resolution on this item.

Mr. SARRE (Senegal) (interpretation from French): The position of Senegal on the Afghan problem is well known since it has been expressed on several occasions in this forum as well as in other forums that have been debating this question for nearly seven years. That position, which corresponds with that of the majority of Governments and peoples represented in this Hall, is dictated by three considerations.

First, by taking a stand from the outset against what has occurred in Afghanistan, we have sought first and foremost to demand respect for a cardinal principle of international relations, which in this case has been trampled underfoot. It is the sacred principle of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States large or small, powerful or weak, rich or poor.

Senegal, which has always advocated respect for the right of all peoples to decide in full freedom as to their form of government without external interference or intervention, cannot remain indifferent to the violation or disregard of that right in the case of Afghanistan, or in any other such case, whoever the guilty party may be.

Our attitude is also a concrete expression of solidarity - solidarity with the people of Afghanistan who share with us the same ardent faith in the irreplaceable values of the Islamic Ummah and of non-alignment and therefore deserve our full sympathy and active support in the legitimate struggle they are waging with admirable courage to recover their dignity by fully enjoying their inalienable right to sovereignty, independence and peace.

(Mr. Sarré, Senegal)

Finally, it is an expression of our feelings of solidarity and esteem in stating our full concern at the odyssey of these millions of men, women and children - a third of the population of Afghanistan - constrained by events to leave their homes. Given the magnitude of this tragedy, we could not fail out of humanitarian concern to join in the clamour being raised around the world demanding that appropriate aid be supplied to those millions of refugees and to the countries that welcome them, until justice is done to the Afghan people, thus leading to the region as a whole recovering its equilibrium, stability and tranquillity.

For seven years now the United Nations has, in keeping with the principles of the San Francisco Charter, established the conditions on which the solution of the Afghan problem must be based: withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan; the recovery by the Afghan people of its right to decide on its own future and freely choose the form of government it prefers, without any outside interference; and dialogue and negotiations between all parties concerned with a view to establishing the conditions allowing for a return of the refugees to their homes.

It is regrettable that the numerous efforts made since then to achieve those goals have not at all changed the situation. One more year has elapsed without tangible progress in the search for a negotiated solution to this painful problem.

(Mr. Sarré, Senegal)

The Secretary-General is courageously and devotedly pursuing his mission of good offices, which, in recent months, has achieved some positive but as yet insufficient results. We hope that the parties concerned will fulfil the good intentions that they have expressed so far, notably in terms of the seventh round of negotiations, and that they will be able to translate into reality their sincere desire to achieve a political settlement by giving their agreement to the four draft instruments initiated by the Secretary-General.

In this connection, if the withdrawal of foreign troops, to which the press has referred in recent months following the statement by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gorbachev, at Vladivostok in July 1986, is effected that will facilitate the return of peace throughout the region, in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

In the meantime, the momentum of the negotiations must be maintained at all costs, because we believe that that is the only way to get the Afghan problem out of the present impasse.

It is in this spirit that once again this year Senegal is a sponsor of the draft resolution introduced under the item on the situation in Afghanistan. The generous and objective approach urged in that draft resolution is meant to facilitate the negotiations under way between the parties concerned, while at the same time not losing sight of the fundamental principles of the Charter.

By voting in favour of this draft resolution, as they have done for similar draft resolutions for nearly seven years now, the overwhelming majority of the members of this Assembly will reaffirm their determination to restore justice, stability and peace in Afghanistan.

Mr. McDOWELL (New Zealand): The Members of this Organization remain deeply concerned by the situation in Afghanistan. It continues to represent an affront to the principles enshrined in the Charter; it is an obstacle to stability in the region and to a wider improvement of international relations.

Seven years ago the then Government of Afghanistan was overthrown and replaced by one that would collaborate with the Soviet Union. The armed forces of the Soviet Union which entered Afghanistan have been attempting ever since to suppress by force the popular resistance to their presence. Over those seven years New Zealand has joined with the international community in expressing its rejection of the situation imposed on Afghanistan through the resort to force by a large and powerful outsider. We have also been shocked by the human suffering which has been created in Afghanistan and the apparent indifference of the Soviet Union to the heavy toll in death and destruction which its presence continues to impose on the Afghan people. Thousands have been killed or maimed and over 4 million refugees have fled to neighbouring countries.

In successive resolutions of the Assembly the international community has strongly reaffirmed the basis of its concern over Afghanistan. It is a fundamental principle of the Charter that Member States shall refrain from the use of force in international relations. The clear breach of that principle cannot be tolerated. Accordingly, each year the massive majority of Member States have expressed their grave concern that foreign armed intervention continues in Afghanistan. We reject any thought that the situation in Afghanistan could somehow become more tolerable with the passage of time; it cannot. The flouting of established principles of international conduct is a matter which must remain of immediate and undiminished concern to us all. For small countries like New Zealand and the majority of other Member States, security and independence can be assured only by adherence by all countries to the principles laid down in the Charter.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

In this connection, my delegation was appalled, but not surprised, to hear the representative of a principal party to this conflict claiming in this debate earlier this afternoon that even discussion of the subject in the General Assembly is a violation of the United Nations Charter. Such a selective invocation of Charter principles by a country which has sent many thousands of troops across an international boundary in pursuit of its national ambitions is difficult to stomach.

We deplore the continuing suffering to which the situation in Afghanistan gives rise and the wider implications of the presence of Soviet troops there. The fierce resistance to the occupying military forces should have brought home to the Soviet Union that it will not achieve its objectives through a military victory. We cannot be sure that there is any such realization. Instead, tensions in the region are maintained and those neighbouring countries which bear the refugee burden face the threat of continued instability. The Soviet Union has the opportunity in Afghanistan to show by its deeds that it is committed to creating a climate conducive to the lowering of international tensions. Regrettably it has not yet done so. We continue to look for greater progress towards a political settlement.

The Secretary-General's report records the efforts which he and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, have made in seeking the achievement of a negotiated solution. We deeply appreciate those efforts and the progress which has been made, and there are some encouraging signs. We note that following intensive efforts by Mr. Cordovez it was possible to break an important negotiating impasse which, as the Secretary-General notes, had stalled the negotiations for almost two years. There has since been agreement on the principles and objectives of a settlement, including non-intervention and non-interference, the non-use of force and self-determination. The Secretary-General has also reported encouraging movement concerning the arrangements for the effective implementation of a settlement. We sincerely hope that that too will be maintained.

(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

We are concerned, however, that the Secretary-General has reported that a wide gap still exists between the designated guarantors of any settlement on the crucial question of the time-frame and modalities for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. In our view an acceptable solution must be found. Although the Soviet Union has announced the withdrawal of six regiments from Afghanistan the fact is that for the moment a very substantial army of occupation remains in that country. The principles which must be encompassed in a solution have been reaffirmed by this Assembly on many occasions. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General to finalize a solution. We express the hope that the near future will see a renewed sense of urgency to meet the important concerns about Afghanistan which are shared overwhelmingly by the membership of this Organization. For it is deeds, not words, which must be the measure of any country's commitment to international peace and security.

Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland): The evolution of the world process has brought into being many scores of nation States which have their own traditions, modes of life and understanding of spiritual and material values, and which have chosen their own social and political systems. All those States have their own achievements and difficulties and pursue their perfectly legitimate interests. However, foreign interests speculate on those difficulties and prejudices, which brings about local conflicts and creates political instability.

(Mr. Noworyta, Poland)

Since the overthrow of the feudal régime in Afghanistan and the opening of the process of progressive socio-economic transformations, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has become the object of destructive activities inside the country supported and financed from abroad. It was quite evident that these activities and covert operations were meant to undermine the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and not to allow the revolution to consolidate itself.

But in spite of these actions, the recent period has witnessed substantial progress in the process of national reconciliation in the country, as evidenced by the efforts of the present Afghan Government to widen the social base of the national-democratic revolution and the important steps that have been taken to that effect. In particular work on a new democratic Constitution, which is nearing completion, deserves mention. Other important developments in Afghanistan include a meeting of the High Council of the Tribes and elections to the local councils. Last but not least, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has extended an invitation to representatives of political forces who are outside the country to come back and to engage in political activities with a view to participating in the process of reconstruction of a new Afghanistan.

The only way to solve the situation created around Afghanistan is the political way. We are convinced that direct talks between the parties most interested, that is, between Afghanistan and Pakistan, as proposed by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, would be of particular significance in achieving a speedy political solution.

We commend the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, towards the achievement of a political solution. We take note of the report of the Secretary-General on his efforts at mediation and of certain progress which has been achieved of late at the

(Mr. Noworyta, Poland)

Afghan-Pakistani talks - due mainly to the good will and flexibility of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

We share the Secretary-General's opinion that mutual confidence and political will are of the essence for the conclusion of a settlement. We also consider that it is essential to ensure that the settlement is broadly supported and effectively implemented. Only talks conducted in all seriousness, in a constructive international atmosphere and with the good will of all the countries involved can bring closer the solution of the situation relating to Afghanistan.

In this context, the announcement of the partial withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan should be viewed as the reaffirmation of the Soviet Union's desire to accelerate the political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan. This decision is also capable of promoting a propitious political climate for the Afghan-Pakistani talks in progress in Geneva, which will be conducive to reaching concrete accords.

This should be matched by the curtailment of outside interference in the affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

Only cessation of such illegal activities can create the necessary conditions for the achievement of a political solution and enable the Afghan people to embark upon the road of peaceful construction and the rehabilitation of the country.

Mr. ENDREFFY (Hungary): It is with some reluctance that we take part again in this discussion. As we have repeatedly stated, this item, in its present formulation, implies interference on the internal affairs of a Member State, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and is therefore in contradiction with the provisions of the Charter.

My delegation considers that it is not the situation in Afghanistan that has "implications for international peace and security" - as the title of the item

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(Mr. Endreffy, Hungary)

would suggest. It is rather the armed ongoing intervention from outside against the lawful Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan that has a negative effect on the security of the region. We should therefore rather deal with ways and means of putting an end to this intervention.

I will not take up much of the time of the General Assembly enumerating all the atrocities committed by the counter-revolutionary bands with the help of their alien supporters. Suffice it to say that they can and do inflict heavy losses of life and property on the population. What they cannot do, however, is to turn back the wheels of history. The people and Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan have achieved great successes in all fields of life: economic, social, and political - despite the difficulties and hardships created by the foreign-supported counter-revolutionaries.

The democratic land and water reform is being implemented; education and health services have been expanded. In the years since the revolution more than a million illiterate people have learned how to read and write; the number of hospital beds has increased by 80 per cent. The elections to the local organs of state power and administration, the expansion of the Revolutionary Council and its Presidium illustrate the widening of the social basis of the revolution, as well as the democratization of the political life of the country.

In spite of the achievements, great tasks lie ahead in ensuring further economic and social development in Afghanistan. It is evident that the country needs peace more than anything else, as well as normal, friendly relations with all its neighbours. These are the aims served by the well-known initiatives put forward by Afghanistan.

In the absence of direct talks, the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General represent the only active mechanism for promoting a political solution. Therefore,

(Mr. Endreffy, Hungary)

we have followed the Geneva talks with both hope and interest. We are heartened to learn from the Secretary-General's report (A/41/619) that tangible progress has been made during the past year. This is all the more welcome because last year, after the virtual completion of the drafting of three of the four instruments that will comprise the settlement between Afghanistan and Pakistan, an impasse had developed. This impasse has successfully been broken, and in May of this year it became possible to consider, for the first time, a draft of the instrument concerning interrelationships.

Though there is still a wide gap between the position of the two parties, there has been a movement away from the original starting-point. We hope that another important event will give an added impetus to this forward movement. I refer to the recent withdrawal of six Soviet regiments from Afghanistan. This gesture shows the good will of both the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, as well as their desire to contribute to the solution of the problems. We hope that the other interested parties will show a similar serious attitude, and that the search for a political, negotiated settlement can be speeded up. This will surely be in the best interests of the countries of the region and would also contribute to the cause of peace on a broader scale as well.

(Mr. Endreffy, Hungary)

Let me finally say a few words about draft resolution A/41/L.12. In our view, this one-sided draft reiterates all the unacceptable elements of last year's resolution and would rather hinder than help the negotiating process. Therefore my delegation will vote against it.

Mr. VONGSAY (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): It is without any pleasure whatsoever that my delegation, like many others, is participating today in a debate on a question which falls within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, an independent and sovereign State, a Member of the United Nations and a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. But unfortunately, in disregard of the relevant provisions of the Charter which contain such a prohibitive clause, we are once again becoming involved in this type of irregular and sterile exercise.

The international community is perfectly aware of what is going on in Afghanistan, and progressive humanity, peace-loving and justice-loving humanity, has not failed to commend the triumph of the national democratic revolution of 27 April 1978. A democratic and popular régime was thus born which, inevitably and logically, implies the abolition of the exorbitant privileges of the exploiting and oppressive feudal class. An era of independence, liberty, peace, justice and prosperity has thus, for the first time in its history, been opened for the working people of Afghanistan. Revolutionary reforms in the political, economic, social and cultural fields have been effected in the general interest, changes which a handful of former landowners and oppressors of all types strongly resisted.

It is common knowledge that imperialist quarters and international and regional forces of reaction have given and are still giving material support to this band of counter-revolutionaries. It is astounding to note that it is those quarters and their friends and allies that invoke for the Afghan people its right to self-determination and independence. Should we remind them that the people of

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Afghanistan, under the enlightened and firm leadership of its vanguard party, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, has exercised all its fundamental rights ever since 27 April 1978? Its free choice must be respected; it has already opted in complete sovereignty for a democratic and popular régime. It has already liberated itself once and for all through its noble struggle from the colonial and feudal yoke.

For our part, we admire and commend what the working people of Afghanistan have achieved so far in its defence and national construction efforts.

It is comforting to note in this connection that the material and cultural living conditions of the working people of this fraternal country have improved steadily. The literacy campaign is being pursued actively throughout the country and has achieved more than satisfactory results. All social strata of the population have access to free medical care, something unknown under the former régime. What is admirable, socially and politically, is that workers, farmers, craftsmen, various nationalities, and various ethnic and tribal groups are becoming fully aware of their unity and solidarity in their heroic struggle for the defence of their homeland and for national construction. In this way they are participating actively and conscientiously through local State bodies and Administration bodies in the discussion and implementation of various political programmes, notably the objectives of the first five-year plan for the economic and social development of the country.

In this connection, we should mention that a draft constitution, the preparation of which has just been completed, will soon be submitted to the Revolutionary Council for study and approval. This will be the first constitution of the new régime, whose democratic nature is beyond question, and the entire people will be called upon to express its views and comments on the text of the constitution before it enters into force.

(Mr. Vongsay, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Also praiseworthy and laudable is the policy of national reconciliation which the Revolutionary Party and State of Afghanistan being pursued in respect of political forces living in exile in neighbouring countries. Such are the efforts and sacrifices which the hardworking Afghan people, under the resolute leadership of its vanguard Party, has made for the good of a new and progressive society in its country. Those sacrifices are worthy of our praise, admiration and sympathy.

Clearly the critics of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and its valiant people do not see it in this light, because they are allergic to anything that is progressive; they have a visceral fear of a new political and social order which proclaims justice, equality, liberty and true democracy. To justify their antagonistic conduct, the critics of the people of Afghanistan do not hesitate to invent all sorts of stratagems and pretexts; they even brandish the spectre of the "Soviet threat".

No one denies the presence in Afghanistan of a limited contingent of Soviet troops, but we must seek to learn the reasons for that presence. Those Soviet troops came at the request of the Government of Afghanistan, precisely to defend the achievements of the April revolution against subversion and the undeclared war of aggression unleashed by the forces of imperialism and world and regional reaction.

The arrival of Soviet troops is entirely in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Co-operation signed between those two sovereign countries in December 1978, as well as with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. We must therefore look at the root of the problem which is the undeclared war that has victimized the people of Afghanistan since the establishment of the new régime. People of good faith have not failed to commend the series of peace initiatives which the Government of Afghanistan has advanced for

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six years to bring about a lasting and just political solution to the situation around that country. But unfortunately the Governments of the two neighbouring countries of Afghanistan have refused to engage in direct dialogue with the Government of Kabul. We are nevertheless gratified that indirect talks have been held in Geneva since June 1982 between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan and Pakistan, thanks to the patient efforts and good offices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his Personal Representative.

The Lao Government also welcomes a new gesture of goodwill on the part of the Governments of the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. We are referring to the recent withdrawal of six regiments of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, as announced by Mr. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in his statement of July in Vladivostok. It would be desirable for the other side in turn to demonstrate its goodwill, sincerity and flexibility in those indirect negotiations with Afghanistan.

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Democratic Republic)

We shall repeat time and time again that the best approach to the problem is through direct negotiations involving all interested parties, namely, Afghanistan and its neighbours. The latter should put an end to all hostile actions against their neighbour and create conditions conducive to a return to their homes of persons who are now eking out a precarious existence in the refugee camps set up in neighbouring countries. The repatriation of those people, whose number has been exaggeratedly inflated by the other side, should clearly be allowed to occur under conditions that are not prejudicial to the peace and security of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

The forces of imperialism and international reaction should cease to support and finance this undeclared war against an independent sovereign State and its heroic people. It goes without saying that such a policy of State terrorism, aside from the fact that it seriously jeopardizes the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, flagrantly violates the principles and norms of general international and common law and of multilateral conventional law.

The Government and people of Laos wish to reaffirm their active support for and solidarity with the Government and people of Afghanistan in their determined struggle to consolidate the achievements of the April Revolution and to strengthen both regional and international peace and security.

My delegation considers that draft resolution A/41/L.12 now before the Assembly does not contain positive elements conducive to a just and lasting solution to the situation around Afghanistan. The draft resolution pays little account to the legitimate interests of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and its valiant people. My delegation will therefore vote against the draft resolution, as it has done in the past.

Mr. VELAZCO SAN JOSE (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to begin my statement by quoting the words of the President of the Council of State and of the Council of Ministers of Cuba, Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro, in his statement to the eighth summit meeting of the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries recently held at Harare, Zimbabwe. Referring to the situation in Afghanistan, he stated:

"We express our determined support for the search for a negotiated political settlement of the problem of Afghanistan based on the most scrupulous respect for that country's sovereignty."

Those words clearly express my country's position with regard to the solution of the so-called problem of Afghanistan.

We have therefore always been ready to assist in the search for a negotiated solution and in so doing to help to ease tensions in South-West Asia. At the same time, however, it continues to be our firm view that no solution can be based on the surrender of the Afghan people of their revolutionary gains nor upon a return to the conditions of utter servitude in which they laboured prior to the revolution of April 1978. That would be tantamount to reversing the course of history.

It is useful to recall that prior to its 1978 revolution Afghanistan, according to all international statistics, had an amazing illiteracy rate of 90 per cent. Its infant-mortality rate was one of the highest in the world: 23.5 per cent, and an unjust distribution of wealth that left 70 per cent of the land in the hands of some 2,000 families out of a population of more than 16 million. That was the Afghanistan of feudalism, of poverty and of backwardness, and that is the Afghanistan that is gradually disappearing thanks to the enormous efforts of its people and its Government.

However, from the very beginning of the Afghan revolution, the forces of international reaction, and of United States imperialism in particular, have spared

(Mr. Velazco San Jose, Cuba)

no effort in their attempts to undermine the events occurring in that country and to mislead and confuse the international community. Those attempts ranged from propaganda campaigns designed to denigrate the Afghan revolution to feverish activity devoted to training, arming and financing counter-revolutionary bands for the purpose of sowing terror and death and sabotage any movement towards change within the country. Hundreds of millions of dollars were earmarked by United States imperialism for that counter-revolutionary campaign and channelled through the sinister Central Intelligence Agency (CIA); as a result, more than 150 centres for the training of such bands were set up outside the country, where United States and other instructors provided schooling in murder, sabotage and destruction that has cost the lives of countless innocent civilians and caused great material damage.

In contrast with that attitude, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has maintained an attitude of negotiation and a readiness to search for solutions, emphasizing its efforts to bring about national reunification and taking steps to encourage participation by various sectors of the population in the management of the country's affairs while pursuing a policy of assistance to returning refugees. All of that highlights the fact that the social transformations that have been occurring in the country are continuing the logical process of unifying all of Afghanistan's nationalities, tribes and social groupings in spite of the United States imperialists and reactionary elements in the region who persist in blocking any agreement in an attempt to keep the so-called Afghan conflict alive.

We believe that peace and security can return to the region only as the result of a negotiated solution. Only such a solution, and not war, can lead to the creation of conditions that will foster harmonious and stable relationship among the countries of the region based upon the principles of non-alignment and the Charter of the United Nations.

(Mr. Velazco San Jose, Cuba)

Hence, we welcome the efforts being made by the United Nations Secretary-General through his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, and we encourage him to continue his work to arrive at the formulation of a comprehensive agreement and achieve the objectives for which we all hope.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to ten minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by representatives from their seats.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): I had not intended to speak in exercise of the right of reply, but, since we believe that we owe it to this Assembly that the truth be put forward, we should point out certain inaccuracies that have been reflected in the statements of some delegations. Since time is very limited, I shall concentrate on some of the points included in the statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan this morning.

He once again referred to the so-called problem of refugees, alleging that almost one third of Afghanistan's population has sought refuge in Pakistan. We have had occasion in the past to refer to certain very authoritative United Nations documents, including a very independent study that was conducted by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, which categorically rejects the allegation that 4 or 5 million Afghan refugees are residing in Pakistan. The result of that research showed that almost 80 per cent of the names registered on the list of refugees in the camps were totally wrong. Those refugees were non-existent.

We have also mentioned that there has been some double and triple registration of refugees in different camps. There has also been registration of local people as refugees so that they can avail themselves of the assistance provided to refugees. Further, there is a lot of embezzlement and fraud by the Pakistan authorities as well as by those in charge of the refugee camps, who deliberately inflate and exaggerate the number of refugees in order to pocket some of the assistance collected in the name of the refugees from international organizations and friendly countries.

That will suffice as far as the question of refugees is concerned.

It has been alleged that Pakistan's territory has increasingly been violated by our armed forces and aircraft. The facts show the contrary. It is

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Afghanistan's airspace and territory that have been repeatedly and arrogantly violated by the Pakistan armed forces and air force as well as by the counter-revolutionary elements that are harboured in Pakistan and supported, trained, organized and armed by the Pakistanis and their allies and friends.

The Foreign Minister of Pakistan endeavoured to portray the counter-revolutionary bandits and mercenaries as internal resistance. I think that by now the facts are quite evident to everybody. Much evidence has emerged since the early days of this problem that these elements are nothing but lackeys of outside forces. They are abetted and have been created, organized, trained, armed and sustained through the assistance of outside forces.

There was also an allegation in the statement of Pakistan that the whole problem started with the entry into Afghanistan of the limited military contingent from the Soviet Union. Let me quote in this connection one interview given by one of the ringleaders of the counter-revolutionary organization, who now heads the office of that organization in Kuala Lumpur. He was interviewed by the World Moslem League Journal of September 1986 and he said that the entry into Afghanistan of the Soviet forces

"took place nearly 21 months after the armed resistance, or jihad, had been started by the Mujahidin".

Obviously he refers to this undeclared war as the holy war, the jihad, of the so-called Mujahidin. But the fact remains that this war is an intervention started and escalated by outside forces and with their assistance.

I wish to quote certain newspapers and publications which are obviously hostile to Afghanistan. For example, in its issue of 8 July 1986, The Christian Science Monitor states that Pakistan has been a chief conduit for channelling

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

United States covert assistance to the Mujahidin. It further states that internal opposition arose among Pakistani politicians on that country's involvement in what is viewed increasingly as an American war.

Let me also quote the Manchester Guardian Weekly of 5 January 1986, which says:

"The Americans have been pumping in more weapons for the guerrillas, notably surface-to-air missiles. In the last year the United States has been fuelling the guerrilla war efforts as never before. This is the biggest commercial war in history. Many people are getting very rich. This is the CIA's biggest operation in the world. The 107-millimetre surface-to-surface missiles with a range of 8 kilometres have been distributed in greater numbers than before."

The Washington Post of 16 January 1986 stated:

"The Central Intelligence Agency, the Agency for International Development and the Pentagon each has its own programme. The US commitment to the guerrilla forces has grown steadily, while the level of funding for the CIA Afghan operation remains a secret. Congressional and other sources say that the House and the Senate intelligence committees initially approved \$470 million for covert military assistance last spring for the current fiscal year."

That is, 1986.

"Later there were reports that Congress had approved a supplemental \$300 million in aid over two years. Congress now has approved \$15 million in annual humanitarian assistance, which AID will administer, and another \$10 million for the Defense Department to cover the cost of transportation. Administration spokesmen defend the current programme as a major success. The spokesmen say the United States is doing all it can, given its dependence on Pakistan to funnel aid to the rebels. Congressional and other sources close

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to the resistance say ten Swiss-made 20-millimetre Oerlikon anti-aircraft canons purchased for the rebels by CIA are in use in Afghanistan. Under pressure from Representative Wilson, the CIA in mid-1984 reportedly set aside \$40 million largely to buy 40 Oerlikons, according to these sources."

Another article, in The Washington Post of 16 January 1986, stated:

"Last spring US congressional intelligence committees reportedly approved \$470 million for covert military aid to the Afghan resistance for this fiscal year, and there were reports that Congress later approved a supplemental \$300 million in assistance for two years, according to congressional and other sources in Washington. It is here, among the parched hills of Pakistan's tribal territories -

The PRESIDENT: I would remind the representative of Afghanistan that he has half a minute to conclude his statement.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): Thank you, Sir. It is here among the parched hills of Pakistan's tribal territories that the pipeline ends. Thus covered tracks roll into guerrilla bases along the Afghan border and unload arms to be cleaned and repacked on donkeys and horses for the trip into Afghanistan."

Mr. R. M. KHAN (Pakistan): We have heard a repetition of baseless allegations and assertions which do not stand the scrutiny of facts. The position taken by the General Assembly, as well as other international forums, such as the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and others, provides the most resounding refutation of allegations such as we have just heard. Indeed, an objective assessment of the situation in Afghanistan can be found only in the verdict of the international community, which has repeatedly called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Those who defy the logic of that verdict find themselves among a narrow minority trying to uphold the indefensible position of justifying a flagrant violation of Charter principles.

One may ask: If Pakistan had committed any aggression why is it that the Afghan people are struggling against the Kabul régime and the foreign troops sustaining it? How is it that the Afghan refugees find a safe haven in Pakistan and Iran? Never in history have refugees taken shelter in the territory of an invader; they run away from the scourge of invasion. That is a simple fact that points out the truth. The Afghan resistance is indigenous in its origins and motivation; it is spontaneous, spread throughout the length and breadth of the country, and struggling in the defence of the freedom lost on account of the occupation of its land.

One may also ask: Why have all the Afghan nationals living abroad in many countries all over the world - and they include scholars, academics, journalists and professionals - with one voice condemned the occupation of Afghanistan? They are all united in opposing the régime installed in Kabul by the intervention forces. Misleading propaganda can never cover up the reality that is evident to the international community and reflected in its decisions.

I shall touch very briefly on the question of the number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. It is certainly not 4 to 5 million refugees in Pakistan, but nearly

(Mr. R. M. Khan, Pakistan)

3 million. There are of course 5 million refugees who have taken shelter in both Iran and Pakistan. The refugees in Pakistan are registered, properly accounted for, and their number is also kept by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

With regard to the violations of our air space and territory, we have kept the Secretary-General and, through him, the General Assembly and the Security Council informed of these violations and the grave consequences that may arise from them. In the recent past these violations have increased and created a serious problem and a serious threat to peace and security in our area.

The PRESIDENT: In calling now on representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply a second time, I would remind them that their statements this time are limited to five minutes.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): We predicted that we would be accused of levelling baseless allegations at Pakistan. For that reason we simply quoted some remarks from the Western press - which is obviously anti-Afghan and definitely very sympathetic to the cause of the Pakistanis and their hounds of war.

I shall continue with the quotations from the Washington Post of 16 January 1986. These quotations are for the purpose of showing that interference exists and, therefore, it is a legitimate right of the Afghan people and Government to defend themselves against foreign interference in our country and aggression that emanates from outside our borders. They read as follows:

"Accounts pieced together from Afghans, Pakistanis and Westerners said that the CIA secretly buys weapons in China and elsewhere and ships them to the Pakistani port of Karachi and isolated points along the coast of Baluchistan to the west.

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"One source said shipments in recent months included 40 tons of Soviet-made equipment captured by South Africa. Once the shipments have landed, Pakistan's joint military intelligence agency takes over, transporting them to the Pakistani military installations for distribution to the Mujahidin. Pakistani military personnel advise each Afghan resistance group when to go to a particular depot to collect arms and then notify police of the tracks, routes to the groups' bases, to avoid searches along the way.

"According to two Westerners who visited different bases in recent months, up to 70 per cent of the weapons were Chinese; they included Kalashnikov assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, mortars, land mines and missiles.

"Formally Pakistan denies the very existence of the arms supply operation, but Pakistani officials admit openly that they are worried about the heavy flow of arms into the tribal territories where the pipeline ends. The flow of arms has seeped into other areas: tribesmen in Baluchistan, bandits in southern Sind province and even Sikh extremists in the Indian City of Amritsar have been reported using guns from the CIA pipeline. Whatever its problems with the corruption on the Pakistani side of the border, the CIA's arms pipeline has succeeded in delivering the heaviest and the most sophisticated weapons the resistance has had.

"One American military official says that, unfortunately, these weapons are coming to men who are illiterate peasants."

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

I could go on quoting tens and tens of newspapers, magazines and other publications printed in the West which would substantiate our claim that Afghanistan still remains an unfortunate target of criminal aggression by our adversaries. The Pakistani Government, which is in the hands of its overseas allies, has very generously been providing its territory to be used as a conduit for the supply of arms to the counter-revolutionaries, who have been recruited by the CIA for the purpose of waging a dirty, undeclared war against the people and Government of Afghanistan. This is a fact, and on the basis of this fact it is the inherent right of the Afghan people and of the Afghan Government to defend themselves in the face of aggression. Unless that interference is stopped and assurances are given to Afghanistan that it will not recur in the future, Afghanistan cannot disarm itself. We will have to replace our present military guarantees with sufficient political guarantees, which could be secured through a political settlement. And we are earnestly working towards achieving such a settlement.

Mr. R. M. KHAN (Pakistan): I shall be very brief. The repetition of falsehood, and reinforcing it with lies, does not make truth. The Kabul representative has quoted from a string of fanciful reports signifying disinformation which certainly do not change reality. As I said, if one seeks objectivity, one should refer to the verdict of the international community, which points to the fact that the Soviet troops have entered Afghanistan in flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter and that Afghanistan remains under military occupation. Even if one were to presume that the indigenous Afghan resistance is receiving arms from outside, surely there is no dearth of arms with which the Kabul authorities can be supplied by their mentor; why does it need the props of the so-called "limited military contingent" comprising 120,000 troops, armed and equipped with sophisticated weapons?

(Mr. R. M. Khan, Pakistan)

As I said, that reality cannot be covered up. The reality remains that Afghanistan is suffering under a massive military intervention. I may refer here to a report which is a United Nations document and which has been prepared by a Special Rapporteur, Mr. Ermacora. This report has very succinctly portrayed the situation in Afghanistan and has pointed out that the intervention is leading to virtual genocide, and that the country has been emptied of one third of its population, which now finds shelter in neighbouring Iran and Pakistan.

The best guarantee for the political independence, sovereignty and non-aligned status of Afghanistan can be found in respect for the resolutions adopted by this General Assembly, which have called for the immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops. This is what can bring about a political settlement and this is what is required. My Foreign Minister, in his statement this morning, emphasized the fact that an acceptable short time-frame is what is required so that we are able to reach a political settlement, so that the foreign intervention in Afghanistan can be terminated, so that the people of that country will once again be the masters of their own destiny, and so that the Afghan refugees will be enabled to return to their homes in safety and honour. This is the panacea; that is the solution for the Afghanistan situation.

The meeting rose at 8.55 p.m.