



General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/41/PV.55
10 November 1986

ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 4 November 1986, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. CHOUDHURY (Bangladesh)
later: Mr. FERM (Sweden)
(Vice-President)

— Statement by the President

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

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: Before taking up the item on our agenda for this morning, I should like to say a few words about the fact that today, 4 November 1986, marks the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). On this occasion, as President of the General Assembly at its forty-first session, I should like to pay a special tribute to UNESCO for its accomplishments, since its inception, in many vital areas of human concern. The United Nations is indeed proud of the record of success of UNESCO as a member of the United Nations family. I should like to commend the dedicated hard work of the officials of the organization, which has made this possible.

For many in the developing countries, UNESCO has a special meaning. The work it has done in the fields of technical education, vocational training for women, educational planning and the preservation of ancient monuments has won it universal recognition. The projects in which UNESCO is engaged world-wide are many, but what is more important is the impact the projects have had on the people where they are undertaken. For the millions of children who have been educated by teachers trained by UNESCO, whether they are in Asia, Africa or Latin America, life is no longer the same. Similarly, UNESCO has achieved much in the fields of science, culture and communication.

As we observe this anniversary throughout the world, let me express the hope that those member nations which were recently obliged to leave the organization will find it possible to return within its fold.

AGENDA ITEM 26

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

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

The PRESIDENT: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today, 4 November 1986, at 12 noon. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe themselves as soon as possible.

I now call on His Excellency Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, to introduce draft resolution A/41/L.12.

Mr. YAQUB-KHAN (Pakistan): For the eighth time, the General Assembly is considering the tragic and critical situation in Afghanistan. For the eighth time, the overwhelming majority of sovereign nations of the world will condemn the subjugation of a sovereign, non-aligned State whose territory has been occupied and whose religion, culture and tradition undermined. For the eighth time, this Assembly will call upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its occupying forces so that the brave people of Afghanistan can regain their freedom and independence; so that 5 million Afghan refugees, representing a third of Afghanistan's population, can return to their homes in safety and dignity, and peace and stability can, once again, prevail in our region.

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, on Christmas eve 1979, violated not only the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, but also the norms of inter-State conduct. Since then, attempts to impose an alien system and an alien ideology on the people of Afghanistan have been courageously resisted. For seven years they have waged an epic struggle with unflagging verve, indomitable faith and determination to restore the independence and freedom that the people of Afghanistan have, for centuries, preserved and cherished.

During the past year, we have taken note of Soviet offers seeking a dialogue with Afghans who find themselves beyond the frontiers of Afghanistan. The Soviets have also announced the withdrawal of six anti-aircraft regiments. We have not ignored or spurned these gestures, which need to be assessed for what they are worth, so that we can judge whether they are purely symbolic acts or carry weight and substance.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

The past year has also seen a new escalation in the intensity of operations, a marked increase in the bombing and sabotage on Pakistan soil and new manoeuvres to subjugate the Afghan people and to try to ensure the survival of an unpopular and an unacceptable régime, which has been propped up by the presence of foreign forces in Afghanistan.

It is only through peaceful means and in conformity with the will and aspirations of the Afghan people, rather than by cosmetic changes or token gestures that a solution to the Afghan problem must be sought.

The direct and indirect consequences of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan are fully evident after seven years. First of all, the violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international norms will set a dangerous precedent for the small and medium-sized States represented in this Assembly. The Soviet intervention, and the reasons advanced to justify it, could provide grounds for the violation of the national independence and integrity of any State which becomes a victim of the ambitions of a larger and more powerful neighbour. The violation of the principles of the Charter may well lead to an even more acute polarization of the world into military blocs, an erosion of the policy of non-alignment and a heightening of global tension. The categorical position adopted by the overwhelming majority of this Assembly on Afghanistan must, therefore, be reinforced and maintained.

The attempted subjugation of the Afghan people by force of arms accompanied by the false claims that this unfortunate and ravaged country was being transformed into a bastion of progress have only served to make a mockery of such claims and to reduce it to a barren wasteland. More than a million Afghans have perished in their struggle to safeguard their independence, faith, culture and traditions. The country has been emptied of one-third of its population, its soil scarred and devastated.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

The fiction of legality created by the occupying forces to mislead the international community deceives no one. The country-wide struggle against the occupying forces, which has been courageously waged by the people of Afghanistan for more than seven years, offers the most eloquent rebuttal of the spurious claim that the Soviet forces in Afghanistan are there on invitation. Neither the ruthless use of force and sophisticated weaponry, nor the onslaught of propaganda and disinformation have succeeded in eroding the will and determination of the Afghan people. Nor have these efforts succeeded in disguising the glaring reality that Afghanistan continues to suffer the agonies of military occupation in defiance of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The events of the past seven years in Afghanistan and the unequivocal international response to the Soviet military intervention in that country have brought into sharper relief the need for a political settlement of the Afghanistan issue consistent with principles. There is no military option in the search for a settlement in Afghanistan and there can be no realistic approach for such a political settlement that excludes the total withdrawal of Soviet forces. The presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan remains at the heart of a continuing conflict in that country and the key to the settlement of this seven-year old issue clearly lies in the withdrawal of these troops.

A survey of the history of the Geneva negotiations under the good offices of the Secretary-General and the intermediary of Mr. Diego Cordovez clearly illustrates this point. Each impasse in the negotiating process has been intrinsically linked to the central question of withdrawals and an apparent hesitation to address it.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

When the General Assembly considered the Afghanistan issue one year ago, the Geneva proximity talks stalled because of Kabul's unrealistic insistence on a change of format for the talks. They asserted that discussions on the fourth draft instrument, relating to the question of withdrawals, could take place only through direct talks. Pakistan's refusal to yield to this unreasonable demand and the steadfast position of principle adopted by the General Assembly on this issue, as well as the assiduous efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, enabled the negotiations to move forward towards the completion of the text of the fourth instrument. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report submitted to the General Assembly, the four instruments that will comprise the settlement are now virtually complete.

However, there is, as yet, no agreement in sight on the principal, outstanding issue: namely, an acceptable and reasonable time-frame for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. The positions taken on this vital issue reflect the divergence in the objectives and approach of the interlocutors. Indeed, the time-frame would determine whether the settlement which emerges is, in fact, in consonance with the principles espoused by this General Assembly and the world community at large.

Pakistan's position on the time-frame is consistent with this Assembly's call for "the immediate ... withdrawal" of foreign forces from Afghanistan. Pakistan's view, and that of the world community, is that the time-frame for Soviet troop withdrawals can be related only to logistical requirements for withdrawals and not to any extraneous condition.

On the other hand, an extended time-frame would imply a desire to secure a longer interval for the Soviet forces to suppress the indigenous Afghan resistance. This would amount to the imposition of a military solution in Afghanistan in the guise of a political settlement and would therefore not be

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

acceptable to the people of Afghanistan nor would it create the conditions necessary for the return of the Afghan refugees to their homes in safety and honour.

The recent publicized withdrawal of six Soviet regiments, of which three are anti-aircraft and one is armoured, is militarily insignificant. Yet, as a sign of goodwill and by way of encouraging recognition of the principle of unconditional Soviet withdrawal, Pakistan has welcomed this token withdrawal as the first step towards the total withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. However, the solution of the problem cannot be achieved through token or partial withdrawals. What is required is an acceptable time-frame for a complete withdrawal, without which the Soviet commitment to a negotiated settlement will lack credibility, and the token withdrawals will appear to be an exercise in public relations to dissipate and dilute international pressures.

The Geneva talks have already been unduly protracted. We fully support the observation of the Secretary-General that all attention must be focused now on the question of withdrawals with a sense of urgency if these efforts are to bear fruit. It will be regrettable if the Geneva process is allowed to be undermined now that its success is in sight. Delay can damage the credibility of the process and can invite the criticism that it is being exploited as yet another means to secure political and military advantage.

Let me say candidly that the intensity of military operations in Afghanistan during the past months contradicts Soviet public commitment to a political settlement and the full withdrawal of its forces. During the past year, the Soviet and Kabul forces have intensified their efforts to overcome the resistance of the people of Afghanistan. Reprisal bombings and indiscriminate destruction of villages have escalated sharply, causing thousands of civilian casualties, especially among the women and children. The recent increase in the flow of refugees is evidence of the expanding violence of military operations which does

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not square with the publicly expressed desire for a political settlement for national reconciliation within Afghanistan.

Pakistan has a vital stake in the early resolution of the Afghanistan issue. We have given refuge to over 3 million Afghans, most of them women and children. This constitutes the single largest refugee concentration in the world. We have given them succour as our humanitarian and Islamic duty, regardless of the fact that their presence has placed an enormous burden on our limited resources. We would like to see them return to their homes. They are unlikely to do so voluntarily, until the root-cause of their displacement is removed through a political settlement. Superficial appeals ostensibly designed to invite them home cannot erase the grim memories of villages that have been razed to the ground and fields that have been set aflame. The people of Afghanistan must be convinced of a change of conditions, guaranteed through a settlement, before they decide to return to their homeland. Meanwhile, because of the increased severity of the conflict inside Afghanistan, the number of Afghans seeking refuge in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran will continue to swell.

As a neighbour sympathetic to the cause of Afghan freedom, Pakistan has been subjected to intimidation and increasing threats to the safety of its borders and attempts at subverting its stability. During the past year, the air and ground violations from across the border have intensified. In 1986, there have been over 600 air violations and over 100 major ground violations against Pakistan, as compared to 197 air violations and 20 ground violations during the previous year. This has been accompanied by a campaign of sabotage and terrorism against innocent Afghan refugees and against innocent Pakistani citizens. There is, moreover, a constant barrage of hostile propaganda against the Government of Pakistan and its leaders and also a campaign to complicate our relations with our neighbours. Let me declare that Pakistan cannot be coerced into compromising its principled

(Mr. Yagub-Khan, Pakistan)

position on the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. So far, we have exercised restraint, as a display of our sincere desire for a political settlement. However, our patience and forbearance should not be taken for granted.

Nowhere is this patience and this forbearance more in evidence than in the treatment of the over 3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. This constitutes the single largest refugee concentration in the world. We have welcomed our Afghan brothers in our country as an Islamic and humanitarian duty.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

We are grateful to friendly countries and to international agencies, especially the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme, which have contributed nearly half the annual expenditure of over \$500 million required to provide food and shelter to the Afghan refugees. These resources are barely sufficient to meet the needs of the refugees. As their number grows, with the continuation of the war within Afghanistan, so does the cost of humanitarian assistance.

Today every eighth person in the two western provinces of Pakistan is a refugee. In some districts the refugee population equals or even exceeds the number of their hosts. The influx of Afghan refugees has placed enormous pressure on our administration and our transportation systems as well as on land and water resources. The damage to forests and grazing pastures is immense. All these costs cannot be computed in purely monetary terms.

The tragedy that is being enacted in Afghanistan must be brought to an early end. The voice of the world community must leave the Soviet Union in no doubt that its intervention and actions in Afghanistan are morally and politically indefensible and will continue to be universally censured until its military forces are withdrawn. The recent eighth summit Conference of the non-aligned countries has reaffirmed their call for a political settlement based on the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan. Likewise, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other international bodies have adopted a principled position in opposition to the illegal Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. International concern over the continuation of the intervention and the demand for its reversal and redress must be expressed repeatedly and with undiminished vigour.

The principled position of the world community is reflected in draft resolution A/41/L.12, entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security". I wish to introduce this draft resolution

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

on behalf of the 47 co-sponsors: namely, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Dominica, Egypt, Fiji, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, the Philippines, Qatar, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Zaire and Pakistan.

In its content the draft resolution is identical to resolution 40/12, adopted last year by the General Assembly. It embodies a constructive approach, free from polemics and recrimination, emphasizing the urgent need for a just political settlement. Like the earlier resolutions on the subject adopted by the General Assembly, the draft resolution outlines unexceptionable principles for such a settlement, which bear repetition. These are: the immediate and total withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan; preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan; the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their own economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever; and the creation of the necessary conditions which would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honour.

The draft resolution also addresses the question of the Afghan refugees in both its political and its humanitarian contexts. It calls for the creation of the necessary conditions that would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and dignity. The draft resolution renews the appeal of the General Assembly to all States and national and international organizations,

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

pending the achievement of that goal, to continue to extend humanitarian relief assistance with a view to alleviating the hardships of the Afghan refugees. It is our hope that generous assistance from the Afghan refugees will continue to be forthcoming so that their minimum needs can be adequately met.

The draft resolution expresses support for the endeavours of the United Nations Secretary-General and specifically for the negotiating process initiated by him in search of a comprehensive political settlement.

I take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation and admiration for the patience and perseverance with which the Secretary-General and Mr. Diego Cordovez have pursued the diplomatic process and for their contribution towards ensuring its progress. With full confidence in their commitment to the cause of a negotiated settlement of the Afghanistan problem, I wish to assure them of our fullest co-operation in their endeavours to advance the diplomatic process, which must be carried forward with determination.

Steadfast support by the General Assembly for the draft resolution would help the process to advance further towards the desired goal. A strong reaffirmation by the membership of the United Nations of its position on the Afghanistan issue demonstrated once again through overwhelming support for the draft resolution would send a clear message that the world community can never acquiesce in the use of military force and that it will never condone or overlook the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. The overwhelming support extended to the resolutions by the General Assembly in previous years has made a valuable contribution in ensuring progress in the negotiating process and it is vitally needed at the present crucial juncture.

This diplomatic process has made considerable progress and must be carried forward with determination. The Government of Pakistan looks forward to the forthcoming visit to the region by the Personal Representative of the

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

Secretary-General, Mr. Diego Cordovez. We shall continue to extend to him our fullest co-operation to ensure the success of his mission. It is our hope that his visit will enable the proximity talks to be resumed shortly and lead to a breakthrough on the central issue of a short time-frame for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan.

The conclusion of a comprehensive settlement on Afghanistan would be welcomed by the whole world. Its implementation would bring about the early withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, restore the independence and non-aligned status of that country and enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homes. A political settlement on Afghanistan would also help to restore political stability in the region of South-West Asia, reduce tensions between the super-Powers and their alliances and brighten the climate for agreements on other pressing international issues.

(Mr. Yaqub-Khan, Pakistan)

The passage of time must not be allowed to diminish the international concern over the continuing military intervention in Afghanistan or to weaken the powerful international demand for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from that country. If Afghanistan is allowed to be subjugated by its powerful neighbour, it would unleash an irreversible trend of decline in multilateralism. Powerful States will be increasingly tempted to use force to create new realities of their choice on the international scene. A just settlement of the Afghanistan problem, consistent with the principles of the United Nations Charter, is indeed essential for sustaining the vision of a world order based on justice and preserving faith in the ability of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): This is the eighth time that the General Assembly is being dragged into a discussion on the so-called question of Afghanistan. By now there has been left no doubt whatsoever as to its futility and even harmfulness.

The stereotype debates orchestrated year in and year out have been marked by their hackneyed rhetoric and villainous attacks on Afghanistan and its internationalist friends. The organizers and perpetrators of this exercise have provided the international community with a very distressing example of moral complacency.

What makes the whole sordid venture even more appalling, there has been a lenient attitude by many indifferent onlookers towards a superficial handling of the issues rather than a serious and genuine attempt to grasp the realities surrounding them. The saga of the coverage of the issues involved by the capitalist-controlled media monopolies has also been fantastic in the sense that it has prescribed a facile and evasive interpretation of events. In short, both the debate staged in the Assembly and the psychological war waged through imperialist

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

media have been nothing more than a low political gimmick rammed down the throats of nations.

In the situation in South-West Asia, as in any other situation involving imperialist interference, there can be no denying the pervasive difference of mind-set identifying the opposing forces and underlying their outlook. It is indeed a true reflection of the conflict between the interests of the Afghan people as manifested in the successful launching of the April 1978 revolution, on the one hand, and, on the other, the interests of United States imperialism as evidenced in its unbridled lust for mustering a formidable military presence and domination in virtually all corners of the globe.

A sober and honest glance at the sequence of events that has evolved in our subregion, and which in turn led to the accretion of the so-called situation in Afghanistan, should benefit all who have the slightest respect for facts. What really did take place in and around Afghanistan are not minor and insignificant events which could be sunk in the Lethe, although fine subtleties cannot and should not be ignored either.

The date of 27 April 1978 marked the advent of a qualitatively new era in the long history of the people of Afghanistan. On that day the centuries-old aspirations of the toiling masses of the country for emancipation from the yoke of medieval, oppressive and exploitative class relationships culminated in the uprising of the popular armed forces supported by the masses throughout the country.

The national democratic revolution which triumphed on that day was the outcome of a logical and law-governed evolution of political, economic, social and historical factors at work within Afghan society. It was guided by the supreme interests of the overwhelming majority of the Afghan people, as expressed in the platform of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, and was based on their

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potential and actual support. The enthusiasm with which our people welcomed the revolution is a fact attested to even by our hard-core adversaries.

In a matter of days, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, which had assumed State power in the name of the people of Afghanistan and on their behalf, embarked on the path of introducing and giving effect to the long-awaited fundamental transformations that are naturally expected in any revolution of a similar type and character. Initial democratic reforms were geared towards toppling the pillars on which the worn-out pre-feudal institutions were based with a view to paving the way for the establishment of a new society governed by the lofty principles of equality, freedom, prosperity and social justice for all. The April revolution thus became the quintessence of the exercise of the right of self-determination by our people in every sense of the word.

The Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, acting in the capacity of the supreme State body, decreed full equality of women and men before the law, abolished the unjust system of usury and annulled the enormous burden of debt accumulated on the shoulders of almost 11 million of our toiling peasants, initiated the process of democratic land and water reforms, and drew short and long-term socio-economic development plans which were the embodiment of our determination to consolidate our national independence by achieving the needed measure of economic self-reliance.

In its international relations the young revolutionary Government made far-reaching adjustments which were in consonance with the essence of our national democratic revolution. Fidelity to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and tenacious commitment to the philosophy and the objectives of non-alignment became the guiding beacon of our foreign policy.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Those basic changes in the domestic and foreign posture of Afghanistan put it on the side of the vast majority of our own people and of the nations of the world. It also resulted, however, in the recrudescence of hatred and hostility towards Afghanistan in the imperialist, hegemonist, and other reactionary quarters.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Losing no time, the espionage agencies of those ignoble forces surreptitiously planted their operatives in the vicinity of our territory and drew up detailed plans to subvert the revolutionary Government and prevent its consolidation.

Although the privileged elements of the Afghan populace had lost their former means of plunder and exploitation, they now opted to acquiesce in the situation created by the implementation of revolutionary democratic reforms. It is critically important to note that not a single shot was fired in any part of the country for more than half a year after the revolution took place.

Initially, the efforts of the enemies of our country were aimed at imparting momentum to the passive and bitter, albeit natural, feelings generated among the members of a tiny, exploitative stratum of the country. It was only in late 1978 that the first small band of mercenaries was organized in Pakistan and infiltrated into a remote village less than a mile from the frontier areas.

Within a short span of time dozens of mercenary training camps sprang up along the frontier belt and began to train members of the organized gangs who had escaped to Pakistan as early as 1975.

The immediate tasks facing the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which had the responsibility for supervising the operations, in close co-ordination with the Pakistan Central Intelligence Department (CID), were to create an atmosphere of terror and insecurity in the frontier villages in order to force their inhabitants to abandon their homes and hearths and then to draw mercenary recruits from the pool of forcibly created refugees.

The fall of the Shah in Iran and the subsequent blow to the CIA's extensive network in that country resulted in the wholesale transfer of the CIA's regional headquarters to Pakistan. Hammered on the anvil of Iran, the CIA was determined to seek replacements for its lost bastion. Emboldened by the over-zealous readiness of the military régime in Pakistan to attract American military, economic and

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political support for its sustenance, the CIA and CID endeavoured synergetically to expand the network of training camps and to increase the flow of large quantities of weapons and ammunition to the mercenary bands. Secret understandings were reached with China and some other reactionary régimes in the region on their participation in the armed anti-Afghan campaign.

The hideous tremors of this rapidly expanding campaign were first felt in the villages and towns in the frontier areas and then slowly spread into the interior of the country. The tactics of coercing people into exile and intimidating the young people into enlisting in the ranks of the mercenary bandits continued, accompanied by attempts to subvert the normal functioning of local State institutions. Popular targets of sabotage were mosques, schools, land-reform departments, hospitals and health centres, utility plants and other public institutions.

Parallel to the large-scale armed interference being carried on from without, criminal plots were also being hatched inside the country to defame the revolution, to divert its principled course and to misrepresent its national democratic character. Banking on the inherent simplicity of the gullible community of a pre-feudal society, those plots were aimed at further misleading the baffled average man into active hostility towards the revolution.

By the end of 1979 the scope of armed interference from outside had expanded to proportions that made it virtually impossible to contain with the meagre and insufficient means of our own national defence.

Strenuous diplomatic efforts by the Afghan Government, culminating in the visit of a high-level delegation to Islamabad on 2 July 1979, did not bring about any results that would help defuse the explosive situation.

The constant refusal of Pakistan to reverse its hostile, provocative and aggressive policy against Afghanistan left the Afghan Government with no

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alternative but to take appropriate measures to thwart the imminent threat to our national sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, and the very survival of our revolution.

The collective leadership of the Party and Government considered two separate actions as a remedy: first, to depose Hafizullah Amin, who had usurped the power after murdering the legal Head of State and, secondly, to invoke the Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Co-operation signed between the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union on 5 December 1978 to seek military assistance in the face of outside aggression. The collective self-defence measure, which was in full conformity with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, was taken after our peaceful démarches met the intransigent negation of Pakistan and its allies. Thus, the healthy leadership of the Party and Government was restored, the authentic national-democratic essence of the revolution was salvaged and the real danger of Afghanistan's dismemberment was averted.

We cannot fail to understand the reasons for the sudden outburst of anxiety and wrath, which have been both undignified and impolitic. The well-cherished and nurtured illusion of being able to undo the national-democratic revolution in Afghanistan was dealt a shattering blow by the collective-defence measure taken by Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. The dream of turning Afghanistan into an outpost of provocations and a stronghold for aggression and destabilization within the geopolitical and strategic global designs of imperialism had become a nightmare for the masterminds of expansionism and world supremacy. Such an episode naturally flustered and angered those in the White House and other allied headquarters. Wedded to the ambition of achieving unquestionable superiority, the jingoistic attitude that clouds the minds of the people in the decision-making echelons of the imperialist and reactionary capitals could not be reconciled with the results of

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the interaction and counter-action of the socio-political and economic factors active in our part of the world.

The vile onslaught of imperialism and its hegemonist and other reactionary allies multiplied and rapidly acquired the form of an outright undeclared war. The number of counterrevolutionary bases and training camps drastically increased and has now reached more than 120 in Pakistan alone. The United States itself has allocated more than \$1,500 million to escalate the war. Much greater quantities of weapons, including weapons of the most sophisticated and horrendous type, such as the Stinger missiles and chemical weapons, have been supplied to the mercenary bandits so that they can carry out sabotage, commit arson and murder anyone who will co-operate with the Government or benefit from its reforms.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Paradoxically enough, it was precisely the same diabolical forces which raised the deafening hue and cry and shed buckets of crocodile tears over the fate of the Afghan people. Since then the ignominious animosity against the people and Government of Afghanistan, far from abating, has germinated an abominable policy of fighting the war to the last Afghan. The CIA now spends more than \$500 million, or two thirds of its annual budget, for covert operations in sustaining the anti-Afghan war.

Our external enemies and their dogs of war inside the country have stopped short of no bestial and atrocious act in the course of their devilish anti-revolutionary crusade. The cost to our people of this criminal and dirty undeclared war has been enormous in both human and material terms. Acts of sabotage and destruction carried out by mercenary bandits have brought about material damage amounting to over 45 billion Afghanis.

Notwithstanding the incalculable harm inflicted upon them, our people have remained steadfast in their determination to stay the course and pursue with the utmost vigour and firmness the path they themselves have chosen. In spite of all the hurdles put in their way, outstanding victories have been scored by our people under the leadership of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

In the political field, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan has emerged as an authoritative political vanguard of the society, rallying to itself more than 160,000 active members and enjoying the trust and confidence of the masses of our people.

The National Fatherland Front, which is serving as a unifying forum for all the patriotic national, democratic and progressive forces of the country, now has a membership of over 800,000 persons, encompassing the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and other political, social, ethnic, religious and professional organizations active in the country.

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The successful holding of the Loya Jirgah, the Grand National Assembly, and the High Jirgah of the tribes and nationalities, which were major events in the life of the country, resulted in the further consolidation of our national unity.

It is with deep satisfaction that we inform the international community of the successful completion of the process of elections for the local organs of State power and administration throughout the country. A record figure of 85.4 per cent of eligible voters participated in the elections, in which 14,190 deputies were elected to serve as members of these States bodies. Of all seats put up for election, 64.7 per cent went to non-party personalities and 35.3 per cent were won by the members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. Of all deputies elected, 7,424, or 52.3 per cent, are workers and peasants; 4,338, or 30.5 per cent, represent the intelligentsia; 949, or 5 per cent, are clergymen; 752 are artisans; 527 are personnel of the armed forces; and 200 are merchants and national traders. Women have won 357 seats in these elections.

The establishment of these elected bodies ensures the effective implementation of our basic slogan, "Power to the people". The elections, which were held for the first time in a democratic and free atmosphere, proved both the increasing popularity of the party and its commitment to genuine democracy.

We take solace in the fact that the Commission for the drafting of the new constitution of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, which was established last year, has completed the first stage of its work. The text of the draft, which was considered and approved by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Party, will be discussed in the near future by the Revolutionary Council and will then be put up for public debate. Following the incorporation of the prevailing views and suggestions of the people, the text will be considered for final adoption by the National Assembly.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

A development of the utmost significance is the sincere and serious efforts of the Party and the Government to pave the way for the widest possible participation of all political forces, both within and outside the country, in the task of reconstructing our fatherland. Determined steps have already been taken in a genuine spirit of national reconciliation and harmony to put aside once and for all the divisive elements that have undermined our national unity and, in their stead, to stress and emphasize the unifying factors, in the interest of strengthening national cohesiveness and safeguarding the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of our common homeland.

Comrade Najib, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, stated in this connection on 15 October 1986:

"The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is marching ahead in its struggle for the cause of national reconciliation, nationwide peace and the firmer consolidation of the social bases of the revolution. We are prepared for the holding of constructive dialogue with all patriots and democratic forces. The Party and State of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan are inviting all the political forces lodging beyond the borders and who are prepared to participate honestly in the process of the construction of a new Afghanistan to return to their homeland. We are prepared for logical compromise and for the establishment of a national unity Government."

As a result of successful negotiations, several organized political groups have already joined the ranks of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, and talks are continuing with other political and armed groups. It is our earnest hope that the momentum which has been generated owing to the flexible and positive attitude of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan will not be lost in the fractious rhetoric that has so far brought about a low ebb in the national peace efforts.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Those are some salient features of the comprehensive and deep-rooted process of democratization in the country launched by the realistically minded collective leadership of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, which has been given a further impetus following the convening of the nineteenth plenum of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan earlier this year.

In the military field, crushing blows have been dealt to the counter-revolutionary formations; their major hideouts have been eliminated and huge quantities of weapons and explosives have been recovered from them.

Having totally lost their initiative and ability to engage in direct confrontation, the bands of renegades are now having greater recourse to the most abhorrent methods of terror and economic sabotage aimed primarily at the civilian population and civilian targets.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Unable any longer to hide in the villages and countryside, the criminal bandits are now increasingly carrying out their armed attacks from beyond the borders. There is mounting evidence of the growing participation by Pakistan's armed forces in those acts of aggression. As an example of the hundreds of such acts I shall mention the firing of 700 reactive rockets on 19 September 1986 at the small frontier town of Spin Boldak in which a woman and 60 children were martyred, 44 other persons injured, and many houses and the congregation mosque destroyed.

Ever more disillusioned members of the counter-revolutionary bands and their ringleaders are voluntarily surrendering themselves to the State authorities and resuming a normal and peaceful life. A large number of them have subsequently joined the ranks of the revolutionary defence committees and people's militia in protecting their villages against the inroads of mercenary thugs.

The strength and effectiveness of the national armed forces, police, tribal militia, revolutionary defence committees and social-order brigades have increased considerably. We can claim with great confidence that our defence and security organs are now capable not only of safeguarding our people's interests against any form of internal threat but also challenging even the threat posed from outside. It is in view of such confidence that the Governments of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have reached agreement on the return of six regiments of the limited Soviet military contingents to their peaceful country. That decision, which was fully carried out last week, serves as yet another vindication of the sincerity of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. Full stock has to be taken of that good-will gesture, if there is any desire of promoting mutual trust in the search for a political settlement.

In the socio-economic field also major achievements have been registered: between March 1981 and March 1986 the national income increased by 11 per cent,

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

while industrial and agricultural production were boosted by 28 per cent and 4.7 per cent, respectively; as a result of the implementation of the land and water reforms, over 752,200 hectares of land have been distributed to 333,800 landless and petty-landowner families; and tens of mechanized agricultural stations have been established to provide technical guidance and equipment to the growing number of peasants co-operatives and individual farmers.

More than 1.2 million of our compatriots have graduated from literacy courses which were started throughout the country immediately after the victory of the revolution. The networks of primary, secondary and higher education have also been considerably expanded so as to provide educational facilities to every single afghan child, even in the remotest corner of the country. The same measure of success is true with the provision of health services, shelter and employment.

In addition to the restoration of almost 1,026 mosques and holy shrines destroyed or damaged by natural causes or the counter-revolution, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has constructed 144 new mosques and allocated hundreds of millions of Afghans to subsidize the salaries of religious leaders, haj pilgrimage and the maintenance of religious places.

Our people are now enthusiastically engaged in the implementation of the first Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan which covers the period March 1986-March 1991. It is envisaged that at the end of that period the gross national product and the national income will increase by 25 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively.

There is no doubt that these victories would have been far greater had there not been the imposed, undeclared war which drains much of our attention and scarce resources. Conditions of peace and tranquillity inside and around Afghanistan will naturally contribute as a very positive factor towards a speedy achievement of the

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

noble and humane goals of our revolution. For that reason and in full conformity with its principled and peaceful policy, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has tirelessly endeavoured to pursue a peaceful settlement of the situation that has been created and deliberately sustained around Afghanistan by imperialist, hegemonist and other reactionary forces.

In line with our peaceful proposals of 14 May 1980 and 24 August 1981, we have followed a serious and constructive course in the process of the Geneva talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan through the intermediary of the Secretary-General's Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez. At this juncture I wish to voice once again the sincere appreciation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan for the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative.

By returning six regiments of the Soviet contingent in Afghanistan to their permanent bases in the Soviet Union we have demonstrated once again our goodwill and principled flexibility for attaining a political settlement.

We hope that Pakistan and its allies recognize the abiding need for an early settlement of the situation and put all their attention and energies at the service of serious and constructive dialogue. We believe that the present exercise in the General Assembly is undoubtedly far from that course.

The delegation of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, while expressing its deep regret at the continuation of this propagandistic and harmful debate, looks forward with reasonable hope to the next steps which will be taken shortly in the process of the political negotiations and reiterates its desire to contribute towards the success of those talks with a display of the necessary political will and constructive flexibility.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

In the meantime, we shall cast a negative vote on draft resolution A/41/L.12 and urge all realistic-minded delegations to do likewise. Since the draft resolution, if adopted, would be the outcome of an exercise that violates Article 2 (7) of the United Nations Charter, it would have no legal or moral validity whatsoever and would thus not be binding on the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

Mr. ALBAN-HOLGUIN (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Another year has passed without substantial progress towards a peaceful political solution in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union's military occupation of Afghanistan, which has lasted nearly seven years, is a flagrant violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and the rules of law governing relations between States.

My country, which has always defended the principles of the juridical equality of States and of non-intervention, once again expresses its deep concern at the aggressive action by a military Power and the persistent shameful threat to substitute force for the law and subject the freedom and independence of a small people to the military and economic onslaught of neo-colonialist adventures and imperialist aspirations. The international community cannot continue to look on with indifference as the tragedy of a people whose territory has been invaded and attacked unfolds.

Despite repeated condemnations and appeals for the withdrawal of the occupation forces and the efforts to promote a negotiated settlement leading to the restoration of Afghanistan's independence and non-aligned status, the situation remains the same. The Afghan people possesses the full right to exercise its right to self-determination, and Afghan refugees should be enabled to return to their homes and homeland in safety and honour.

This act of force against the people of Afghanistan has shaken the international community. The conflict has created a threat to the peace and stability of the region and is undoubtedly a danger to international peace and security.

The report of the Secretary-General explains at length the action taken by him and by his Personal Representative to achieve a negotiated political settlement. The process in which they are engaged should lead to the diplomatic settlement we all desire. We enthusiastically welcome the Secretary-General's statement that

(Mr. Alban-Holquin, Colombia)

valuable and indispensable work has been done and that tangible progress has been made. We commend the intensive work of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Diego Cordovez, in particular in the preparation of the text of the principles and objectives of the settlement.

We note with satisfaction that draft resolution A/41/L.12, of which my delegation is a sponsor, reiterates, as in similar draft resolutions in past years, that the fundamental elements of a peaceful solution are: first, preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan; secondly, the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic and social system free from outside intervention; thirdly, the immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan; and fourthly, creation of the necessary conditions which would enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homes in safety and honour. Further, the draft resolution appeals to States and organizations to extend humanitarian assistance with a view to alleviating the hardship of the Afghan refugees.

In this context, outstanding work has been accomplished by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other organizations in the effort to meet the most basic needs of the refugees. The human tragedy of these people is terrible, compelled to abandon their homes by the actions of a powerful nation that has destroyed their way of life, their property, their peace and their freedom. Their odyssey is an affront to the conscience of the international community; it should once again be categorically condemned by the General Assembly.

The patriotic people of Afghanistan has not for one moment resigned itself to foreign invasion or to the régime installed in Kabul. Despite the invaders' air raids against villages and civilian centres and the cruel killings, the Afghan people has met the violence of its oppressors with stubborn resistance, fighting

(Mr. Alban-Holguin, Colombia)

well and revealing to the world public the horrors of this unjust occupation. To the men and women of Afghanistan I reaffirm my country's solidarity with them.

The Afghan people has had enough bloodshed and suffering. We reaffirm our desire for the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions, for an end to the military occupation and for the achievement of an acceptable solution, so that the political and economic independence of the Afghan people may be preserved. That is the greatest wish of all States that cherish peace and justice.

Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): This year again the delegation of the German Democratic Republic must state with regret that, with the discussion of the so-called situation in Afghanistan, the United Nations is being misused for renewed interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign State which is a full Member of the United Nations. That constitutes gross disregard of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. The previous debates and resolutions on this item have helped neither to improve the situation in South-West Asia nor to promote a political solution of the problems existing in that region.

Nevertheless, the German Democratic Republic is participating in this debate, above all to speak in favour of observance of and respect for the legitimate rights of a friendly people and support for the honest endeavours of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and other progressive forces to normalize the situation in South-West Asia.

The situation in Afghanistan is one of the revolutionary development of a people controlling its own destiny and exercising its sovereign right to self-determination by constructing a society free of exploitation and tutelage. The point is not the situation "in" Afghanistan; what is imperative is that the situation around Afghanistan be improved as soon as possible. That means, above all, the cessation of the interference by well-known imperialist forces in the

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internal affairs of Afghanistan and an end to the undeclared war against that country, and the provision of guarantees that the Afghan people may embark on its own chosen road of development and that security and peace will prevail in the region.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

The draft resolution which has been submitted this year is again diametrically opposed to such demands. The German Democratic Republic therefore rejects this draft resolution as it has done in previous years, and will vote against it.

The people and Government of the German Democratic Republic follow with high esteem and sympathy the progressive developments taking place in fraternal Afghanistan.

As was convincingly pointed out by the permanent representative of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, Ambassador Farid Zarif, despite constant insidious attacks by counter-revolutionary forces inside and outside the country the Afghan people are advancing in a brave and bitter struggle on their revolutionary road. Within the short time of only eight years the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has indeed achieved considerable results in building a new human society, in particular in the fields of education and health, in the social sphere and in implementing land and water reforms. The country is systematically making headway in its first five-year plan which is to bring about the broadest possible development of the public sector and create a modern material and technological basis for its economy. The results of last year's meetings of the Loya Jirgah and the High Jirgah of the Frontier Tribes demonstrate that the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan enjoys the broad support of its population. The democratic elections held for the first time in the history of the country are eloquent proof of the confidence that all strata of the Afghan people have in these profound changes.

There is support on the part of the overwhelming majority of the Afghan people for the policy aimed at national reconciliation and the extension of the social basis of the national democratic April Revolution and to the formation of a Government with the participation of political forces which are outside the

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic
Republic)

country, but sincerely desire to participate in the overall national process of constructing a new Afghanistan.

From these few facts alone it becomes clear that all attempts made by imperialist quarters to put the Afghan people off its self-chosen course, are doomed to failure. Even ever larger amounts of dollars for financing counter-revolution and the undeclared war or equipping anti-Afghan gangs with sophisticated weapons cannot change anything. Acts of terror perpetrated by counter-revolutionaries against the peace-loving Afghan population as well as interference, threat and boycott by those forces which try to stem social progress, may temporarily hinder the progressive constructive work of the Afghan people, but in the long run social progress in that country cannot be halted.*

As is well known, the German Democratic Republic advocates the peoples' right to self-determination and independence, the prohibition of the threat or use of force, the peaceful settlement of conflicts by way of dialogue and negotiations in relations between States. Therefore, we expressly support the initiatives of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan which are aimed at a political solution of the problems around Afghanistan.

The Afghan Government considers its proposals of 14 May 1980 and of 24 August 1981 to be just as valid now as they were previously. In the view of the German Democratic Republic these proposals underline Afghanistan's interest in good relations with its neighbours. This is also apparent from the indirect talks held so far between the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and Pakistan in Geneva with the mediation of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Diego Cordovez, with a view to the political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan, negotiations which should be continued successfully.

*Mr. Ferm (Sweden), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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Republic)

We regard these talks as steps in the right direction. However, we consider direct talks, in the last analysis, to be indispensable for solving outstanding problems between Afghanistan and its neighbours by peaceful means.

We should like to point out that the temporary presence of a limited contingent of Soviet troops in Afghanistan is, in conformity with the norms of international law, the sovereign affair of the two friendly neighbouring States. The Soviet Union has started the withdrawal of its troops. The Soviet and the Afghan side have repeatedly declared that the time-table for the return of all Soviet soldiers to the Soviet Union was solely dependent on political agreements guaranteeing the inviolability of frontiers.

The German Democratic Republic reaffirms its solidarity with and support for the just and bitter struggle of the Afghan people against the policy of interference and undeclared war.

We are firmly convinced that a political solution of the situation around Afghanistan in the interest of all-Asian security is possible. Together with the resumption of negotiations on the transformation of the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, this would be conducive to strengthening security in the region and would thus be in accordance with the desire for the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security as well as the development of equal co-operation of all peoples and States in the Asian and Pacific region.

The German Democratic Republic sides firmly with the Government and people of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in its struggle for national independence, sovereignty and the protection of its revolutionary achievements.

Especially in the framework of the United Nations all States can by common-sense and a realistic approach to the situation around Afghanistan help to bring about as soon as possible a durable and just political solution to that problem.

Mr. ABULHASSAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): Since the Afghan problem emerged on the international scene as a hotbed of tension following the military intervention by its neighbour, the Soviet Union, which had adverse political consequences that constituted a threat to international peace and security; and since the friendly Afghan people initiated its struggle to safeguard its independence, prevent any foreign intervention in its internal affairs and preserve its Islamic, non-aligned character, Kuwait has participated effectively in the efforts of the international community to arrive at an equitable and peaceful settlement of the Afghan problem within the context of multilateral and bilateral action, through the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Kuwait's belief in the peaceful settlement of disputes and its respect for United Nations resolutions, which reflect the will of the international community, are such that for some time now our hopes have rested in the negotiations taking place under the auspices of the United Nations, of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative. We take this opportunity to express to the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative our gratitude for their efforts in this area.

Kuwait has always supported the elements on which the efforts to achieve a settlement of the Afghan problem are based, and which have led to considerable progress, namely: a bilateral agreement on non-intervention; a joint declaration by the parties concerned regarding international guarantees; a bilateral agreement on the voluntary return of Afghan refugees; and the conclusion of the text of an agreement defining the interrelationship of the aforementioned texts and the withdrawal of foreign troops. It is the absence of such texts that is the stumbling block in the efforts of the United Nations to settle this conflict.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

My delegation hopes that these important negotiations will be given new impetus so that outstanding problems can be satisfactorily resolved and that substance will take precedence over procedural details. As the Secretary-General has stated in his latest report (A/41/619), our efforts must be focused on the question of the time-frame and modalities for the withdrawal, and he went on to say:

The two interlocutors are in any case undoubtedly aware that they must focus their attention on this question with a sense of urgency lest all their efforts over the past five years come to naught." (A/41/619, para. 10)

Since this problem first arose Kuwait has always believed and proclaimed that its solution lies in the withdrawal of foreign troops, the return of the refugees to their homes, non-intervention by any country in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and freedom for Afghanistan to choose its political and economic system in keeping with the wishes of its friendly Muslim people. Kuwait has always declared that it opposes any attempt to exploit the situation in Afghanistan in the interest of foreigners and the regrettable rivalry between the international military blocs, which is claiming an increasing number of victims among peaceful peoples that aspire only to development. Kuwait therefore hopes that this problem will be settled peacefully so as to safeguard the relations between countries on the basis of co-operation and understanding for the well-being of mankind and universal peace.

The only way to achieve a solution to the Afghan problem, in our view, is to let the Afghan people exercise its sovereign right to self-determination in full freedom, without intervention by any other Power or foreign military forces and without jeopardizing its non-aligned status, its traditions or its beliefs.

For seven years now the blood of many hundreds of thousands of Afghans has been shed. The number of refugees has reached 5 million. That is why it is the

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

duty of the international community and our universal Organization, in conformity with its Charter and principles, to shoulder their urgent, unavoidable responsibility to solve the problems of this peaceful people on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference and save it from all kinds of hardship and tribulation.

If there is a lesson that the world can draw from the Afghan problem and past history it is that, no matter how long the trials may last, no matter how powerful the forces and the rule of those that violate the law, the peoples will finally triumph and assert their rights against all unlawful action against their interests.

My delegation has already repeatedly stated that the Afghan problem is eloquent and specific testimony to the tribulations that beset mankind and the deviation that some of the conflicts in which it is engaged represent from the principles on which our Organization was founded, and its primary purpose - to save future generations from the scourge of war. This is because those concerned resort to force in their international relations and interfere in the internal affairs of other States and violate their sovereignty.

Kuwait believes that any military intervention in Afghanistan, regardless of the motive or pretext, is a flagrant violation of the territorial integrity of that country; it is therefore incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. Like other cases of military intervention condemned by this Organization, this interference once again shows that recourse to military force creates deplorable precedents which are harmful to international relations. The small and weak countries are compelled to devote a growing part of their resources to the purchase of costly weapons instead of devoting them to their own development.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

Similarly, the persistence of the Afghan problem is a reflection of the refusal of certain countries to implement the resolutions adopted by the international community. This lack of respect for resolutions is of paramount importance when it is shown by super-Powers which bear special responsibilities with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

We desire more positive developments and action likely to increase confidence between the parties concerned so that efforts aimed at a peaceful settlement may be renewed and encouraged and a final text may be drawn up on which the negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations can be based.

We wish to express our gratitude to all the host countries of Afghan refugees, in particular Pakistan, as well as to all organizations and institutions providing them with assistance. We hope that this generous action will continue and that humanitarian bodies will increase their aid in order to alleviate the hardships of the Afghan refugees and facilitate their return to their homes.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

The year 1986 has been a year of great optimism because of certain positive signs, including the Soviet Union's initiative to withdraw six regiments from its forces in Afghanistan and also because of the achievement of relative progress as compared with past years. In fact we expected détente and the solution of the Afghan crisis, but the eighth round of negotiations came to a stop. However, the wave of optimism has persisted in spite of what has been said about the impasse, and we hope that the international community will see sincerity on the part of the parties and a desire to arrive at a solution of the Afghan problem.

My country has always given its political support to the Afghan people in its honourable struggle to safeguard its sovereignty and freedom to choose its own economic, social and political system and to preserve its Islamic secular identity, and Kuwait will spare no effort to consolidate its national position, which enjoys the support of the majority of the countries in the United Nations and of the Islamic Conference.

Before concluding, I should like to address an appeal to all the parties concerned in favour of peace, urging them to support the legitimate right of the Afghan people to safeguard its independence and neutrality.

Mr. AL-ANSI (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me first of all to associate myself with what was said by the President of the General Assembly this morning on the occasion of the commemoration of the anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. My country has suitably commemorated this important event.

We are meeting today to examine the current situation in Afghanistan. Since 1979 the subject has been one of the main items on the agenda of the various sessions of the United Nations General Assembly and other concerned international organs. In spite of a number of resolutions adopted in this context, the situation

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is, unfortunately, still suffering from numerous difficulties as well as dangerous repercussions and effects, extending beyond the purely Afghan context and generally casts its shadow over the region and the world at large.

The continuation of a large foreign military presence in men and equipment on the territory of Afghanistan is a denial of the right of the Muslim Afghan people to exercise properly their social, economic and political choices. Of necessity this leads to increasing disturbance of social life and a greater danger to international peace and security, as a result of the continued presence and use of foreign armed forces to bend the will of a free people and to force it to live with choices which are not suitable to their real circumstances. This will not serve to establish a stable regional and international atmosphere. As a matter of fact the opposite is what will happen.

The situation existing in Afghanistan for a number of years has led to increasing tension in international relations on a large scale, and the solution cannot be effectively reached without leaving the whole matter to the Afghan people, so that they may determine their own future without any external interference.

The bitter and cruel experience which the Afghan people are undergoing, in spite of the fact that they are known for their inherited patience and fortitude in the face of difficulties, affirms the enormity of this tragedy affecting the lives of the Afghan people in all their human, economic, social and political aspects. Camps are teeming with children and old men and women who have one constant hope, namely, to return to their homeland and to live free, dignified and happy lives, instead of the painfully cruel lives of millions of Afghan refugees who have been received by their neighbouring sister nation, Pakistan, and other countries. We wish to express from this rostrum our full appreciation for the noble position taken by the host countries, those that support the right of the people of

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

Afghanistan to freedom, unity, peace and security without any external interference, no matter what the source of that interference. We hope that the parties directly concerned will reach a solution of the problem and will allow the refugees to return to their homeland voluntarily in security and dignity within the framework of the efforts of the United Nations and the international rules and regulations governing such actions.

Convinced of the importance of solving international problems peacefully, we express our full appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretary-General through his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, in the search for a comprehensive and peaceful solution. The continued efforts of the Secretary-General and his assistants in the capitals of the countries concerned and the intensified Geneva negotiations will, we hope, result in an early solution and agreement and also the settling of the remaining points of difference, namely, agreement on the time-frame for the withdrawal of the non-Afghan troops from the territory of Afghanistan. These efforts, which are described in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/41/619, dated 18 September 1986, confirm unequivocally the great importance of the role of the United Nations, the appreciation of the international community for such efforts and its interest in them.

In reaffirming our support for these efforts designed to achieve an acceptable and speedy settlement of the problem which would guarantee for the people of Afghanistan the right to self-determination and the return of the refugees to their homeland in peace and dignity and also an agreed political solution which would help in establishing relations of good-neighbourliness and establishing the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, we ask that all the parties concerned to respect these efforts and show the necessary political will in order to achieve a just solution without any delay.

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

The steps taken for the withdrawal of six military regiments, estimated to amount to 7,000 soldiers out of an estimated total of 100,000 foreign soldiers in Afghanistan, are very important and could contribute to progress towards a peaceful and speedy solution. These actions support the efforts of the Secretary-General to bring about national reconciliation and we hope that they will result in satisfactory solutions which are acceptable to all the parties concerned and on which there is no misunderstanding or ambiguity. Based on Oman's firm policy, my country, which rejects interference in the internal affairs of States, also rejects the threat or use of force in international relations, and fully supports the efforts made to find a solution to this problem. We therefore join all those that have expressed their support in our international organization and called for a comprehensive solution to the Afghan problem, based on the elements clearly defined in General Assembly resolutions since the sixth emergency special session, which was held at the beginning of 1980 in accordance with Security Council resolution 462 (1980), namely: first, the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan; secondly, preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan; thirdly, the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system, so as to enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homeland in safety and honour.

My country adheres firmly to this unswerving position, which is the expression of the collective, universal will. We continue to hope that an acceptable solution will speedily be found which will lay the foundations for stability and peace in an area in which the main desire is to live in increasing peace and security.

(Mr. Al-Ansi, Oman)

Accordingly we have sponsored the draft resolutions submitted annually to the General Assembly sessions on the situation in Afghanistan since the end of the sixth emergency special session in 1980. This year, too, we have sponsored the draft resolution (A/41/L.12), before us today, which we support without reservations. We hope that all other countries will support draft resolution A/41/L.12, so that the Afghan people may achieve their noble objectives and their aspirations.

Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): This is the seventh year that the war in Afghanistan has been raging between a manifest, crystal clear right, and the blatant oppression - which is being felt from the peaks of the mountains of Afghanistan to the depths of its valleys, from cities to villages - that a super-Power, bearing fundamental responsibility for the preservation of international peace and security and compliance with the United Nations Charter has been persisting in its invasion of a people's homeland and attempting to occupy a country the nationals of which refuse to surrender to conquest and aggression.

For seven years now the Afghan people have been fighting this war against foreign invasion in defence of their homeland and their dignity. Peace initiatives are still being impeded, despite declarations of positive response from all sides. The situation is clear, and the solution is even clearer. The Soviet Army must return to its bases at home, which is its natural place, and leave the Afghan people to manage their own affairs for themselves. They are entitled to solve their own problems, and they are capable of doing so.

What is the merit of the fragile régime in Kabul in which the main actors are moved and removed by remote control and can stand on their own feet only with the support of foreign armies? Is there clearer proof of the will of the majority of

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

the Afghan people than their valiant resistance? With the simplest of weapons and under the most difficult conditions in the battlefield the Mujahidin fighters are restraining the armies of a super-Power, against which they have been waging a war for nearly seven years. And it seems that there is more to come in this direction if we do not arrive at a solution. Can any reasonable person ignore this fact?

To claim that the resistance is merely a manifestation of foreign support for the Mujahidin is to underestimate the standing and capabilities of the Soviet Army, as if it were possible for foreign help, trivial as it is claimed to be, to restrain an army such as the Soviet Army and in many cases inflict on it reverses and casualties. It is not any foreign help that the Mujahidin may be receiving, but the will of a whole nation, the faith of an entire people, the true convictions of Islam and righteousness that are gaining the upper hand. All these qualities are being demonstrated by the steadfast stand of a people with few armaments compared to the Soviet Army, resisting bravely and achieving victories every day, paying the highest costs under the harshest human conditions in order to preserve their dignity and defend their religion while struggling for the safety and independence of their country.

What is the essence of the commitment to the United Nations Charter - and here I am addressing the big Powers as well as the small? Is it not to try to give effect to its principles and adhere to its basic premises and rules? Do not its articles apply to all at a time when their implementation is demanded by others? Is not the war in Afghanistan one of the most flagrant examples of violation of the Charter since it was signed? Does anyone dispute the Afghan people's claim to their own country and their indisputable right to defend it by all possible means? Why is the Soviet Army present in Afghanistan today and why has it been there for over six years? Is it to defend the Afghans inside Afghanistan? Who attacked

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the Afghans before the Soviet invasion? Or are they there to defend a régime of darkness forged by those that conspire against the security of that country, in the stillness of the night, to impose upon its people a foreign will in a nationalist guise, military or civilian? Was it for that purpose that international conventions and norms were established?

Respect for conventions and legal and humanitarian principles is not a matter of preference or choice between one situation and another on the basis of short-term interests. The rights of people are an absolute reality, whether in Afghanistan, Palestine, Namibia or South Africa. The will of the people is an invincible force even when it is opposed by the large armies of super-Powers.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

Had the makers of war in the past and the perpetrators of conquest and aggression in the present perceived the real lessons of history outside the textbooks of Academia and in the context of the history of the human conscience, the United Nations would have been spared having now to address problems created by foreign conquests, foreign greed and disregard of the rights of peoples - in Afghanistan, in Palestine and on the African continent. The upholding of the Charter in Palestine requires compliance with it in Afghanistan. And support for the rights of the Afghan people in their country necessitates the same commitment to uphold Arab rights in Palestine. Otherwise, operating on different bases of morality and commitment will undoubtedly lead to the creation of different and opposing blocs, increase areas of conflict and ultimately lead to wars.

We are following with great concern the continuous and patient efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General in mediating between the parties concerned to arrive at a sound formula for terminating the conflict in Afghanistan and putting an end to that tragedy. We support and appreciate his efforts, as well as those of his personal representative. We note that the task of bridging differences is progressing slowly, at a pace that is not justified by the blood daily being spilt and by the sufferings being experienced by approximately four million Afghans who have fled their country in search of a sanctuary, as well as by the more than 14 million Afghans still suffering inside their own country. We very much hope that the side that is obstinately delaying agreement will realise that justice will inevitably triumph, notwithstanding the great capability its armies may possess.

We should like to reiterate here our profound appreciation of the great humanitarian role being played by the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in opening its doors to millions of Afghan refugees, a large proportion of whom are women, children and the elderly, and who constitute a great economic

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and social responsibility for the State and society of Pakistan, in spite of the requirements of that country's developing economy and urgent national needs.

I must conclude by saluting the Afghan Mujahidin, the small force that will defeat a large one by the will of God, and by reaffirming to them, in the name of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, our support for their inalienable rights as well as our great appreciation for their sacrifices. We express to them our confidence that, without any shadow of a doubt, God will assist them and will, through their struggle, liberate their country and preserve their dignity and the honour of the Islamic Nation.

Mr. MAKSIMOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): In violation of the elementary norms of international law and of the United Nations Charter, and despite the persistent and just objections of the delegation of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, the United Nations General Assembly has once again been drawn into a consideration of the so-called question of Afghanistan. As is well known, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, as well as many other States Members of the United Nations, has from the very outset strongly opposed and continues to oppose the consideration of this issue, which has been fabricated by the forces of imperialism and reaction and imposed upon the Assembly with its concomitant campaign of slander.

Today, the facts incontrovertibly show that the ill-intentioned discussion being imposed upon the United Nations and the anti-Afghan resolutions adopted in connection with it are to the advantage only of those forces seeking to legalize their interference in the internal affairs of sovereign and independent Afghanistan and to justify the escalation of their undeclared, large-scale war against the Afghan people and their democratic reforms. They are seeking to preserve the hotbed of tensions in South-East Asia for their own vested interests. They oppose collective efforts to achieve a just settlement of the problem afflicting the

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region and are trying to divert the Organization's attention from the solution of other, long-standing, vital and urgent problems. Unfortunately, among those going along with this policy, which has nothing whatsoever to do with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, are some who, willingly or unwillingly, directly or indirectly, are contributing to the continuation of the anti-Afghan campaign in the United Nations.

In the view of my delegation, which is a genuine and sincere advocate of strict compliance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, it is high time that attention was drawn to the following telling fact: the first anti-Afghan resolution was adopted in the United Nations under the influence of a storm of unworthy fabrications about the honest and just policy of the Soviet Union with respect to Afghanistan. The history of friendly relations and co-operation between the USSR and Afghanistan stretches back for many more years than does the very existence of the United Nations itself and of the overwhelming majority of its Member States.

Now, in the statements of those who created and have been particularly vociferous in perpetuating the "question of Afghanistan", we can easily detect a very substantive change. The slander and fabrications concerning events in Afghanistan now contain far more expressions of open cynicism and scorn directed against the fate of the Afghan people and other peoples of the region. Yet at the same time nothing is said about the anti-Afghan activities they have undertaken or that have been undertaken from their territories. It is an incontrovertible fact that the undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, which has been harshly and mercilessly waged by united imperialist forces, by regional reactionaries and internal counter-revolutionaries, represents the main and only source of the suffering and grief being experienced by the Afghan people and perpetuates the potentially explosive situation prevailing in the region.

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The initiator and organizer of all anti-Afghan activities is the United States of America. Wide-scale subversive activities against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan have become, according to the mass media and members of Congress, the largest such United States operation since the end of the Viet Nam war. Official Washington agencies provide the Afghan counter-revolutionary rabble with massive financial and military assistance and extend to them political and propaganda support.

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The undeclared war against the people of Afghanistan has already cost the American taxpayer \$1.5 billion, of which the lion's share has been spent in recent years. That amount is the equivalent of the entire total of the United States assessed contributions to the United Nations regular budget over the seven-year period. Sizeable amounts go to counter-revolutionary forces from imperialist and reactionary interests in Western and other States. The territory of Pakistan is a platform for operations and a refuge for various counter-revolutionary bands, with approximately 120 camps and bases in which foreign instructors simultaneously train thousands of professional terrorists and subversives.

Under the patronage of American advisers and experts, despicable gangs master the most sophisticated and ruthless types of weapons. The refinement and expertise achieved by the diversionary and terrorist training counter-revolutionaries reveal the evil hand of the CIA. The escalation of armed interference is intended to brainwash the world community and the Afghan people. The mass information media in the United States and in other Western States seek to create around those gangs an aura of martyrdom, hypocritically depicting them as nothing but patriotic resistance fighters and protectors of Islam. But for some reason they overlook the scope and ruthless anti-human nature of the actions perpetrated by these self-styled liberators. In terms of material destruction alone, the damage done to the country's economy totals tens of billions of afghanis.

Despite this persistent onslaught of reaction, the process of revolutionary reform has been successful. Experience has shown that the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, supported by the Soviet Union and other socialist and progressive forces of the world, is not only successful in its struggle against counter-revolution but is steadily pursuing its policy of wide-ranging social, political and economic reforms. The country's national income has already exceeded

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the pre-revolutionary level. As a result of land reforms, landless and small-scale farmers have been given over 340,000 hectares of land. In the course of the first Afghan five-year plan, beginning in March 1986, over 130 new economic projects have been planned with the economic and technical support of the USSR. The basic development plan for Afghanistan for the period 1986 to 1991 has been worked out. Appreciable successes have been achieved in health, culture and education.

Afghanistan's independent political system is being operated more effectively. Afghanistan intends to build its society on principles of social justice and progress. Peoples representatives have been elected to local governing bodies. Political organizations are increasing in number, in their forefront the National Patriotic Front, whose ranks include all the patriotic forces of Afghanistan.

Every day the basis of the revolution is broadened, and new steps are taken to make the State apparatus democratic. Equal rights are extended to all the nationals of the country regardless of their social rank, nationality, sex or religion. In the near future general elections for the higher governing bodies are planned, and the adoption of the new Constitution of Afghanistan.

The broadest segments of society support the revolution, as is borne out by the decisions of the Loya Jirgah and High Jirgah, which have adopted the domestic and foreign policies of the Government of Afghanistan and a policy of Afghan-Soviet friendship. The foreign policy of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, as has repeatedly been borne out by specific measures, is aimed at strengthening general peace and the development of global international co-operation. It is a policy of active and positive non-alignment, and of the development of peaceful relations with all, particularly the neighbouring States.

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The Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is doing everything possible to attain a just political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan, which would represent the key to peace in South East Asia. It is common knowledge that as a result of its steadfast efforts, and with the support of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, seven rounds of negotiations with Pakistan have already been held with the participation of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

The progress that has been achieved in those negotiations represents first and foremost the responsible, constructive and flexible approach of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to the negotiations. It is to be hoped that the other side, too, will demonstrate proper realism and responsibility and go its own distance towards a mutually acceptable understanding.

There is no doubt that a new impetus to activate negotiations on a political settlement of the problem around Afghanistan should be provided by the constructive step taken by the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in reducing the limited contingent of Soviet forces in Afghanistan. The extent to which this sincere gesture will be properly received and duly assessed will be seen in the seriousness of the approach to settling the problems of the region. The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party, Comrade Najib, expressed the conviction of the Afghan people when he said that a just settlement of the situation is possible. He emphasized that in order to make that possibility a reality the essential elements were political resolve and a responsible and realistic approach on the part of those Western leaders whose persistence had created the Afghan problem.

The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR considers the time has come for the United Nations to direct its efforts towards a genuine political settlement of the

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it
situation around Afghanistan rather than towards giving any legal acceptance to unsavoury arguments that involve dangers to the countries of the region.

In conclusion I should like to say a few words about the draft resolution in document A/41/L.12. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR considers that this draft resolution, like others on the subject in the past, disregards the objective facts of the case, is void of a sense of political realism, and would lead to sustained and aggravated tensions around Afghanistan. We strongly object to the draft resolution and shall vote against it.

Mr. OLZVOY (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): This year the General Assembly of this most authoritative world body has had imposed upon it once again consideration of the so-called question of Afghanistan. From the very outset the Mongolian delegation has come out against and continues to oppose the consideration of this question, because in its form and content it represents an attempt at interference in the internal affairs of a State Member of our Organization. We should note in this respect that the United Nations Charter strictly prohibits consideration of any issues that fall within the domestic jurisdiction of a Member State. Aside from consideration of the so-called question of Afghanistan, this represents a direct infringement on the right of the Afghan people which has chosen, as a result of its revolution, its socio-economic and political systems without any foreign interference. Violation of the right of any people to choose its socio-economic structure is inadmissible and dangerous because it is used to intimidate other peoples fighting for their national and social liberation, freedom and independence.

The People's Republic of Mongolia also bases its position on the consideration that, pursuant to generally recognized norms of international law, every State has an inalienable right to protect the independence and territorial integrity of its country in conformity with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter which enshrines the right of Member States to individual and collective self-defence.

The delegation of Afghanistan has adduced incontrovertible facts to the effect that immediately after the April 1978 revolution imperialist and reactionary forces began their evil infringement of the domestic jurisdiction of its country. The situation today is as follows: an undeclared war is being waged against that sovereign independent State. As was emphasized by the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in his statement of 29 September 1986 in the general debate:

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"The scope of the undeclared war of imperialism, hegemonism and reaction against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has been considerably widened to encompass the military, economic, psychological, political, diplomatic and other spheres." (A/41/PV.10, p. 34)

Is that not borne out by the fact that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of a major Power thousands of miles away from Afghanistan spends two thirds of its budget for subversive activities on aggression against that country? As a Mongolian proverb has it: "One cannot conceal the sun merely with the palm of one's hand." Problems connected with Afghanistan were created by those who wish to counteract a people's right to self-determination.

Let us take a look at what the April revolution has wrought for the Afghan people. It has put in the hands of that people democratic powers, freedom and independence; proper conditions have been established to eliminate in a short period of time the backwardness that was a legacy of imperialism.

A study of statistical and other data can prove even to the most cursory reader that the Afghan people has achieved appreciable results in consolidating the victories of its revolution in the economic and social fields. Many reforms have been effected in the life of the Afghan people. Socio-economic reforms are carried out in the interests of all segments of the population, first and foremost land reforms as a result of which landless and smallholders are given land free. The democratization process in political life and the life of the society is growing, and the revolution's material basis is being consolidated. Great economic and cultural successes have been achieved: both gross and per capita national income have exceeded the pre-revolution level and average salaries of government workers have risen by more than 2.5 times; and 1.2 million persons have overcome illiteracy. Those are only the first fruits of the revolution; they could

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have been much greater but for this undeclared war and imperialist interference. Thus, for example, in the years during which the undeclared war has been imposed upon Afghanistan thousands of Afghans have been killed and the overall damage to the country's economy has exceeded 45 billion afghanis.

I should like particularly to emphasize that the artificial situation created by imperialist forces not only threatens Afghanistan's sovereignty and independence but also represents a source of tension for a major part of the Asian continent. It is true that the United States and other imperialist forces use that situation to increase their military and strategic presence in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. In those conditions that policy is condemnable as is that of certain Asian States which participate in that vile, undeclared war against a neighbouring country.

The delegation of Mongolia is firmly convinced that the relaxation of tension in that region and an overall settlement of the question concerning Afghanistan requires the cessation of interference in the internal affairs of that sovereign State, respect of the Afghan people's right freely to choose its path to development, and recognition of its legal Government. Such action by the United States of America, Pakistan and others would promote peace and security for all - not only in Asia, but also throughout the world.

(Mr. Olzvoy, Mongolia)

Mongolia advocates a political settlement of the questions connected with the situation around Afghanistan and therefore supports the position of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan as set forth in the statements by the Government of Afghanistan of 14 May 1980 and 24 August 1981. We welcome and encourage in every way the efforts of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan aimed at making the most rapid possible progress in the Geneva Afghan-Pakistan negotiations, in which the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General is participating. The Mongolian delegation is pleased to note that, as emphasized in the 22 September report of the Secretary-General, "tangible progress [was] achieved" (A/41/619, para. 12) during the last round of negotiations. Further progress towards reaching an understanding on all issues requires realism, sober political will and a sense of responsibility on the part of all those concerned. We regret that some States, neighbours of Afghanistan, and the Powers supporting them have not yet oriented their efforts in that direction.

Our delegation considers that the decision to repatriate certain elements of the limited Soviet military contingent temporarily in Afghanistan at the request of the Government of that country did much to create a favourable political climate for the most recent round of the negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. This shows once again that the USSR is taking concrete action in its desire to promote a political settlement of the problem surrounding Afghanistan. The USSR and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan have repeatedly stated that all Soviet forces would be withdrawn promptly from the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan if a final settlement were reached. Now it is for the other side to take concrete, positive action to promote a solution to the problem.

Unfortunately, the draft resolution before the Assembly on this item gives an incorrect interpretation of the true situation. It disregards the legitimate rights of the Afghan people, causes inadmissible prejudice to the international

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status of Afghanistan as a sovereign State, and condones hostile interference in the internal affairs of this country. The text cannot serve the cause of peace and security in that part of Asia, or the cause of peace in general. Nor is it in the interest of the Afghan people. For those reasons, my delegation will vote against this draft resolution.

I wish in conclusion to quote a passage from the report by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and President of the Presidium of the People's Great Hural, Mr. Jambyn Batmonh, to the nineteenth Party Congress, held in May 1986:

"The Mongolian People's Republic is firmly on the side of the people of Afghanistan, which is waging a selfless struggle to defend the achievements of its April revolution, and against the uninterrupted armed interference by imperialist and reactionary forces".

Mr. de KEMOULARIA (France) (interpretation from French): As it is nearly 1.05 p.m. and as representatives are no doubt beginning to feel the pangs of hunger, I shall be brief. Yet the subject is far too serious for us not to participate in the debate.

For the eighth time since 29 December 1979 the General Assembly is considering the agenda item "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security". Almost seven years after the massive intervention by Soviet troops, which was the origin of the crisis, the occupation of Afghanistan continues, with its train of battles, brutality and suffering. Each day sees a strengthening of the foreign administrative, ideological and cultural domination over a people whose exemplary resistance clearly demonstrates how much it loathes that domination. In the circumstances, the General Assembly, reflecting the growing concern of the international community, was justified in deciding once again to include this item in the agenda of its forty-first session.

(Mr. de Kemoullaria, France)

Irrespective of the arguments put forward in an attempt to justify it, the military occupation of Afghanistan remains in the final analysis a blatant violation of a basic principle of the Charter, by which all Members of the United Nations are obliged to refrain from the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

France obviously condemns all acts of that kind, as the President of the Republic, Mr. François Mitterand, has repeatedly recalled. The Prime Minister, Mr. Jacques Chirac, for his part, recently stated from this very rostrum that the invasion of Afghanistan could only be considered as a war "of conquest belonging to another age" (A/41/PV.8, p. 66).

How do matters stand today? Internal resistance to the foreign occupation and to the authorities imposed by it continues to enjoy the widest possible support, and with heroic courage and negligible means is standing up to a contingent of over 100,000 men, armed with the sophisticated weapons of one of the world's most powerful armies.

This year again, that occupation force has launched large-scale offensives in most of the provinces of Afghanistan. These offensives have been marked by bloody clashes and accompanied by blind reprisals against defenceless civilians. In that connection, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, in his third report, submitted in March 1986, warns against the continuation of the fighting which, he says, will inevitably lead to a situation similar to genocide.

According to irrefutable testimony cited in that same report, the repression has continued to increase in Afghan towns and regions in the hands of the occupying Power. That repression takes the form of arbitrary imprisonment and many instances of torture and disappearances: in short, of systematic violations of the most elementary norms of morality and law.

(Mr. de Kemoularia, France)

Is it surprising therefore that close on 5 million Afghans - over a third of the population - should have had to leave the country and seek refuge in exile, essentially in Pakistan and Iran? Once again, France solemnly requests the responsible authorities to put an end to such practices which seriously tarnish the image of the Soviet Union.

But the dangers of the war are not confined to the territory of Afghanistan; the multiplication and aggravation of attacks against the territory of Pakistan, constitute an additional threat to peace and stability in the whole region. France firmly condemns these repeated violations of the borders of a friendly country which, by receiving nearly 3 million refugees, bears with dignity the serious consequences of an unjust war which has already lasted far too long.

International opinion is at a loss to understand how an eminent Member of this Organization, which moreover bears special responsibilities incumbent upon the permanent members of the Security Council, should so depart from the United Nations Charter and flout the resolutions of the General Assembly. Continuation of such an attitude seriously damages the image of that great Power in the world.

As recalled by Mr. Jacques Chirac in this same Hall on 24 December last:

"... France will continue to say, along with the vast majority of States, that the Soviet Union ... must, in" its "own interest and for the sake of world peace, end" its ... "ventures in Afghanistan ..." (A/41/PV.8, p. 66).

Let us say yet again: there is no military solution to a crisis resulting from the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. And we know it. That crisis, we must recall, can only be settled by political means; and as we know, the international community has spared no effort in its quest for a solution, be it within the context of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Islamic Conference or on the initiative of the Council of Europe.

(Mr. de Kemoularia, France)

The General Assembly has asked the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his Personal Representative to exercise their good offices. France follows with interest the efforts they have made and supports the mediation process in the hope that an agreement will soon be reached on a time-frame for the prompt withdrawal of all the Soviet troops. It is in this context and only in this context that the withdrawal of a few thousand soldiers recently announced by the Soviet authorities can have any real meaning.

As for the political settlement, France considers that it should be based, as insistently called for in the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, first and foremost on the complete and genuine withdrawal of Soviet troops, and, on the other hand, on the self-determination of the Afghan people, the restoration of Afghanistan's status of non-alignment and the voluntary resettlement of refugees in their homes. France considers that any settlement that departs from these premises would only lead to a semblance of a solution.

Almost seven years after the Soviet invasion, the fait accompli in Afghanistan has not acquired the force of law. Time does not lessen the injustice; it becomes even more serious. Our Assembly must therefore once again, through a massive vote, show its determination to see a true political settlement reached rapidly.

As in past years, the French delegation will support the draft resolution submitted to this Assembly for adoption.

Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): The existence and deepening of crises and hotbeds of crisis is one of the major sources of tension and instability in international relations. The causes of all the crises besetting the present-day world are, in our opinion, the use of force, intervention, threats to sovereignty and independence and the denial of the right of peoples and countries to decide freely on their destiny, the path of their internal development and their foreign policy.

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

It is, therefore, incumbent upon all of us, and upon this Organization, to make continued and determined efforts to seek lasting and just political solutions to overcome the crises and hotbeds of crisis in the spirit of the United Nations Charter. This fully applies as well to the situation in Afghanistan. A political solution to the situation in Afghanistan would therefore constitute an important step forward towards the establishment of stability in the troubled region of South-West Asia and would contribute to the improvement of the overall atmosphere in international relations.

Yugoslavia is firmly committed to the principles of the Charter on which international relations are based, convinced that only in this way is it possible to ensure lasting peace, security, peaceful co-existence and the broadest constructive international co-operation in the interests of all.

It has consistently pointed to the inadmissibility of foreign military intervention and the unacceptable imposition of foreign pressure on sovereign countries and peoples, proceeding from a deep conviction that the safeguard of their rights to self-determination, independence and freedom is the only way to overcome existing confrontations and to strengthen international security and stability.

By actively supporting the new system of international political and economic relations which would ensure the sovereign rights and interests of all peoples and countries, the non-aligned countries initiated the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty which was adopted by an overwhelming majority at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. It spells out in unmistakable terms that no country or group of countries has the right to intervene or to interfere in the internal affairs of other States in whatever form, for whatever reason or under whatever pretext.

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

Yugoslavia has always stressed that there can be no justification for the use of force, intervention or interference in internal affairs no matter by whom and where it may be resorted to. It has also pointed out that the principles of the Charter cannot be defended or applied selectively. Intervention and interference in the internal affairs of other countries cannot be justified on any grounds whatsoever.

Since the emergence of the crisis in Afghanistan, Yugoslavia has resolutely striven for its peaceful solution on the basis of an immediate and total withdrawal of foreign troops and full respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan, in strict compliance with the principles of non-intervention and non-interference. We also firmly believe that no country should and has the right to exploit the situation in Afghanistan for its own purposes and objectives. We are deeply convinced that only by a free choice of internal development, without the imposition of foreign pressure, is it possible to achieve a lasting and just solution to the crisis in Afghanistan and to other hotbeds of crisis that beset today's world.

By opposing the violation of the inalienable rights of peoples and countries to independence and to a free choice of their own destiny and way of life, the non-aligned countries expressed their profound concern at the Eighth Summit Conference in Harare over the situation in South-West Asia, that is, concerning the situation in Afghanistan, and pointed out its dangerous consequences for international peace and security. They reiterated the right of Afghan refugees to a safe and honourable return home and supported the solution of this major, and not only humanitarian, problem.

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

Unfortunately, almost seven years after the beginning of the crisis, no significant progress has been achieved in the process of finding a political solution to the situation in Afghanistan. The decisions and recommendations of the United Nations, which provide a just basis and framework for a peaceful political solution in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations in the interest of all the parties involved, are not being carried out.

However, we are encouraged by the mediation efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, to bring about a continuation of the dialogue between the parties directly involved. The involvement of the Secretary-General in the creation of conditions for a political solution on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter enjoys our full support. The ending of the crisis on this basis would constitute an exceptional contribution to peace and stability in the region and to international relations in general, as well as to the strengthening of the reputation and effectiveness of the United Nations.

Bearing in mind the irreplaceable role of our Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as the fact that it alone provides the right framework for a just and lasting solution of this problem, we consider that the United Nations should maintain the initiative in seeking a political solution to the Afghan crisis. In this sense this debate is also an important contribution to and support of the efforts of the United Nations and the international community at large.

The draft resolution submitted follows these lines and, in our opinion, contains a widely acceptable basis for a political solution of the situation in Afghanistan. By adhering strictly to the positions of the Non-Aligned Movement and the policy of non-alignment, Yugoslavia will vote in favour of the draft resolution, convinced that it is in this way making a contribution to the solution of this important international problem.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.