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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 19 November 1986, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. AL-ANSI (Oman)
(Vice-President)

later: Mr. CHOUDHURY (Bangladesh)
(President)

- Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity on the aerial and naval military attack against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya by the present United States Administration in April 1986: draft resolution /142/ (continued)

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Al-Ansi (Oman), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

AGENDA ITEM 142 (continued)

DECLARATION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY ON THE AERIAL AND NAVAL MILITARY ATTACK AGAINST THE SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA BY THE PRESENT UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION IN APRIL 1986: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/41/L.35)

Mr. MUDENGE (Zimbabwe): Although it is now over seven months since that American fighter-bombers, launched from United States aircraft-carriers and British airfields, swept down with their lethal cargoes upon the sleeping cities of Tripoli and Benghazi, the images of those devastating attacks remain fresh and vivid in our minds.

Apart from those who actually perpetrated this shameful aggression and those who lent it their enthusiastic support, the world at large was shocked and outraged by such a brazen and totally unacceptable display of brute force.

The full details of the attack and the orchestrated events which preceded it are well known and have, in any case, been reviewed for us here today by previous speakers. My delegation is more concerned at this stage with trying to understand how and, more importantly, why such events took place. For the issue here cannot be understood as merely a question of rights and wrongs, or strengths and weaknesses or of inducements and punishments. The attacks on Tripoli and Benghazi, and the Gulf of Sidra incidents which preceded them, constitute much more than a mere barroom brawl or a testing of wills.

They represent but the latest in an ongoing series of actions that have deliberately sought to undermine not only the practice but the very concept of multilateralism and overall international co-operation. As such, they constitute the most serious threat thus far to the intricate system of global checks and

(Mr. Mudenge, Zimbabwe)

balances so many of us have painstakingly tried to create through this and several other international forums.

Viewed in this way, the actual facts and assumptions that bred the specific act of aggression we are considering today, are less important perhaps than the process and ethos that led to that act. The fundamental question ceases to be "what set of facts led to this confrontation?" and becomes instead "why did those facts lead to conflict?" For conflicts, as we all know, do not just happen. They are made to happen: they are the result of conscious decisions taken by men and, on occasion, by women.

It is thus legitimate for us to ask ourselves why - when there were so many peaceful alternatives available to it - did the United States choose armed aggression?

It is not as if there were no other pacific means of redressing the situation. The Charter of the United Nations clearly provides for various means of peaceful settlement: among these are negotiation, arbitration and adjudication. Yet none of these remedies was resorted to.

The world was deeply and understandably concerned that this should be so - especially in the case of a super-Power, a permanent member of the Security Council and therefore a custodian, under the Charter, of international peace and security.

By stipulating that certain countries were to be permanent members of a body that was to have primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Charter placed an onus on those States to behave in an exemplary fashion and to ensure that they were and are the first to respect its provisions. The United States, by virtue of its position under the Charter, because of its strength and its leadership role in international affairs, should have - and indeed should always - set an example of reasonableness, moderation and full respect for the provisions of the Charter.

(Mr. Mudenge, Zimbabwe)

It is just not possible to reconcile the high expectations we have of those privileged enough to enjoy permanent membership of the Security Council with the vindictive and condemnable aggression perpetrated by the United States against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

(Mr. Mudenge, Zimbabwe)

These acts of war against Libya - for that is what they were - constitute a flagrant transgression of international law. Treaties create international law. The treaty that established the United Nations - the Charter - in Article 2, paragraph 4, prohibits the threat or use of force in international relations. The deadly air attacks against Tripoli and Benghazi were, thus, and in themselves, illegal. The entire issue becomes, therefore, a case of might being equated with right - "gunboat" diplomacy - the emergence of "Ramboism", as some would describe it, the transformation of international society into a jungle where survival of the biggest, but not necessarily the best, is the norm.

My delegation feels particularly perturbed by these events because we believe that they are part of a more general malaise within the international community and, in certain quarters, an actual assault on multilateralism. We have begun to wonder whether these "incidents", or "events", "proposals" and "studies" are random and isolated, or whether they constitute part of a carefully orchestrated onslaught on multilateralism, especially as institutionalized in the United Nations itself.

Quite apart from the open and wanton aggression perpetrated against the sovereign and independent Libyan nation - an act which deliberately and flagrantly flouted the provisions of the Charter - how else are we to interpret such actions as "withdrawing from United Nations bodies", ignoring the well-considered and highly respected opinions of the International Court of Justice, and the deliberate withholding, in violation once again of the Charter, of urgently needed funds from the United Nations budget?

Obviously there are States which feel so powerful that they find the parameters of civilized conduct too constricting and prefer, instead, a return to that jungle of which I have already spoken.

(Mr. Mudenge, Zimbabwe)

The attack against the Libyan nation and people was not only in contemptuous disregard of the statement of the Bureau of Non-Aligned Nations of 6 February 1986, but also of the solemn call made by the Ministerial meeting of the Mediterranean members of the Non-Aligned Movement, held at Valletta in September 1984, which appealed to all nations to adhere strictly to the principles of non-use or threat of force and urged them not to use their armaments, forces, bases and military facilities against Mediterranean members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

When provisions of the Charter are flouted in this way, when the solemn pronouncements of the Non-Aligned Movement are disregarded this easily, and when the wishes of the non-aligned countries of the region are thus brushed aside, the offending Member should not be surprised or angered to find itself condemned and criticized.

At the eighth summit Conference in Harare earlier this year, the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries, whilst fully supporting the request that this item should be included on the agenda of the forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly

"strongly condemned this unprovoked aggression, which constitutes an act of State terrorism and a violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations." (A/41.697, p. 99, para. 215)

The same leaders declared that the

"attack on the house of the leader of the Libyan revolution with the purpose of eliminating him and his family is considered a grave precedent in international relations and a crime that is devoid of any political or moral value." (p. 100, para. 216)

(Mr. Mudenge, Zimbabwe)

The Heads of State or Government further agreed that the American action

"endangered peace and security in the Mediterranean region and hindered the efforts designed to make that region a zone of peace, security and co-operation". (p. 100, para. 215)

They also called upon the United States

"to provide full and immediate compensation to the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for the human and material losses it has suffered". (para. 215)

It is clear that the sentiment among the vast majority of the international community is that one does not enforce one law by breaking another law. Hence, notwithstanding all their shuttle diplomacy after the bombing, and the production of what, in the end, amounted to little more than flimsy, highly circumstantial "evidence" of an equally highly questionable nature, the American action against Libya, because of the latter's alleged but unproven involvement in hijackings and bombings directed against American military and civilian personnel stationed outside the United States, was illegal and was, therefore, nothing less than a criminal act.

Mr. Shultz's recent "bodyguard of lies" remark and the admission by the current United States administration that it fabricated information about Libya so as deliberately to raise tension in that country and set it on alert for further United States aggression - merely serves to illustrate just how suspect that so-called evidence was and just how openly and arrogantly fraudulent was the American basis for the attack.

By including this item on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly, and by requesting the Secretary-General to report thereupon next year, we are hoping to maintain some kind of control - albeit only moral - over the excesses of

(Mr. Mudenge, Zimbabwe)

the current American Administration; and by drawing interest and attention to the item, we are hoping to prevent any recurrence of the brutal and totally unacceptable action which took place in April this year.

In conclusion, let me return to Rambo. As portrayed on the screen, he appears big and powerful - more than that, he wins all the time. But, is that in fact the case?

A closer look at the character which has so captured the imagination of our hosts, reveals a man - big and strong, yes - but one who can only communicate in grunts and in strange incomprehensible sounds; a man who really cannot understand the world in which he lives and one who chooses, therefore, to distance himself from that world to live in the jungle; a man who feels more at ease with the animals than he does with civilized mankind. He is, in the end, a tragic, somewhat pathetic figure. For although he is immensely strong, he is neither liked nor respected. Mistrust and suspicion, even from his own kind, surround his every move; and so he is doomed to wander alone, shunned and shunning - an outcast.

I wonder whether there is not something to think about in all that.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Twelve member States of the European Community.

The question of the military action carried out by United States forces on Libyan territory on 15 April, I have no need to remind the Assembly, was the subject of a debate in the Security Council at the time. The members of the Twelve which took part in the deliberations of the Council made clear in the debate their own positions with regard to both the United States action and the terrorist acts which preceded it. They reaffirmed in this connection their determination to take co-ordinated action in combating the scourge of terrorism. The statements they made on that occasion, which are available in the verbatim records of the Security Council, deal with the subject at greater length than I propose to do here.

In a letter addressed to the Secretary-General dated 21 August 1986, in which he requested the inscription of this agenda item, the Permanent Representative of Libya referred to the attack and went on to refer to an

"explosive issue, which constitutes a threat to peace and security not only in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, but throughout the world".

(A/41/241, p. 1)

There is no doubt in our minds as to what was the real issue underlying the events which took place in the Central Mediterranean last spring. It was the whole question of international terrorism, the part that certain States play in supporting or encouraging it and its consequences for international relations.

A number of the Twelve are in the unhappy position of having direct experience of international terrorism directed against the security of our own citizens and of others living on our soil. Our participation in this debate is therefore no accident. We have as much at stake as anybody in finding a solution to what all have agreed to be an extremely grave problem, for it is a solution that we seek,

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

not another tired repetition of unconstructive debate; the issue is too serious for that. The United Nations has an important part to play and we stand ready to contribute our share constructively, as we have consistently done in the past. The Security Council has already, on different occasions, made clear its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, wherever and by whomever committed. Almost a year ago, on 9 December 1985, the General Assembly took what we believe to be a historic step in adopting its resolution 40/61, on measures to prevent international terrorism. The terms of that resolution, which was adopted by consensus, included a reference to the deep concern of Member States about the world-wide escalation of terrorism in all its forms. It expressed concern that in recent years terrorism has taken on forms that have an increasingly deleterious effect on international relations.

Since that date we have all seen more evidence of just how deleterious an effect that can be. For one thing, it places obstacles in the way of human and cultural contacts between different States, the free flow of which is one of the best assurances of international understanding and harmony. For another, there have been hostile and ill-intentioned attempts by some to portray Europe's reaction against terrorism as an anti-Arab policy. This is plainly false. We have close and important links with the Arab world and with all the countries of the Middle East, which we remain determined to develop and strengthen. We recall the proposals the Twelve have made to give a new impetus to the Euro-Arab dialogue and we strongly reaffirm our commitment to contribute in every way we can to the search for just and lasting solutions to the region's problems. We recognize that unresolved and long-lasting political conflicts have engendered terrorism. We acknowledge the need to examine and remedy these underlying causes, in addition to taking preventive measures against terrorist violence. Needless to say, we firmly

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

believe that acts of terrorism are never justified and do not serve whatever political cause the perpetrators claim to be furthering.

International terrorism requires a political response by the world community. In view of our grave concern at the increased tension in the Mediterranean region created by acts of terrorism, the Twelve met on 14 April to concert common action. They considered that States clearly implicated in supporting terrorism should be induced to renounce such support and they called upon Libya to act appropriately. It was with the purpose of enabling the achievement of a political solution and of avoiding further escalation of military tension in the region, with all its inherent dangers, that the Twelve underlined in their statement of 14 April the need for restraint on all sides.

The circumstances which led the United States to take action against Libya on 15 April are well known. So too are the positions and concerns expressed in national statements at the time by members of the Twelve on that action, on its effects and on important questions that were raised as a result. All are agreed that such circumstances require special care and judgement in deciding upon the nature and scale of a response to acts of terrorist violence. In particular, any response has to be appropriate, proportionate and in accordance with the Charter and international law. It has also to take account of wider implications, including the consequences for international tension in a given situation.

It is in the interests of us all that effective measures be taken to put an end to the menace of international terrorism. The Member States of the United Nations have a collective responsibility to ensure that an appropriate international response is agreed upon and adhered to. Any response which does not make plain to a State clearly implicated in terrorism that such a policy is unacceptable and that it will entail severe consequences will be inadequate. We believe that this is a challenge the United Nations has only just begun to take up.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

In their statement in Brussels on 27 January the Twelve set out the principle that no country which supports or encourages terrorism could expect indulgence; nor could it expect to maintain normal relations with the Twelve. The Twelve wish to have good relations with Libya. The measures we have adopted against Libya, which have been implemented according to the particular circumstances of each member State, reflect growing concern among member States about the abuse of diplomatic privilege and the use of the Libyan People's Bureaux to conduct unacceptable activities.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

We have noted with regret the threats made by the Libyan leadership against Member States, threats which are incompatible with good relations. This public encouragement of acts of violence is totally unacceptable. We reaffirm our support for the peaceful resolution of differences between States.

The Twelve reiterate that the fight against terrorism remains a priority. In pursuing this objective we are committed to seeking the widest possible international co-operation. It is a pre-condition for each country interested in such co-operation with the Twelve to adopt a position of clear and outright condemnation of terrorism. In other words, it is necessary for a country to prove through words and deeds that it is willing to commit itself to the elimination of what we consider to be one of the greatest threats to coexistence among States and peoples.

Mr. SKOFENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic finds it appropriate that the item now under discussion should have been included on the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly. Our conviction about this was made even stronger by the very-well-founded statement of the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mr. Ali Treiki. The policy of constant coercion and force pursued by the United States against Libya and the use against that country of the enormous military machine of the United States constitute a threat to peace and security not only in the region of the Mediterranean and the Middle East but in the entire world. In its reply (A/41/486/Add.1) to the Secretary-General in regard to the item on the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region, the Ukrainian SSR noted that Washington's act of aggression against sovereign Libya has led to a further aggravation of the situation in that densely populated region of the globe and is the result of the intensive military build-up by the United States and its pursuit of the notorious doctrine of neo-globalism.

(Mr. Skofenko, Ukrainian SSR)

World public opinion has expressed its indignation and outrage at the barbaric attack on Libyan cities in April. I need only recall that the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, at their Conference in Harare, described the United States action as

"an act of State terrorism and a violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations". (A/41/697, annex, pp. 99 and 100)

This year this question has been discussed on many occasions by the Security Council. The discussion in that body has shown that there is growing concern and alarm at the neo-globalist policy carried out by Washington and aimed at interfering in the affairs of sovereign States and whipping up hotbeds of tension in various regions of the globe.

Events of recent years have compellingly testified to the fact that the United States Administration has chosen Libya as one of the targets of its aggressive policy. In the past five years Washington has on 19 occasions carried out large-scale military manoeuvres off the shores of that country, in which dozens of ships and hundreds of aircraft participated. At the same time, a real economic war is being waged against Libya.

At the end of March this year, the United States carried out an attack on a number of places on Libyan territory. This aggressive campaign culminated in the piratical raid by United States aircraft against the Libyan cities of Benghazi and Tripoli last April. From crude verbal attacks on Libya and its leadership and open demonstrations and provocations in regard to a sovereign non-aligned country, Washington shifted to overt aggression. As a result of that raid, totally innocent civilians were killed and enormous damage was caused to civilian sites.

(Mr. Skofenko, Ukrainian SSR)

In that connection it is appropriate to recall that the General Assembly, in resolution 39/159, regarding the inadmissibility of the policy of State terrorism, condemned actions of States aimed at undermining the socio-political systems of other sovereign States. We believe that it is high time to put an end to the criminal practice of interference in the internal affairs of other States, on the notorious pretext of combatting against terrorism.

By its actions against Libya, the United States has violated a fundamental principle of the United Nations, enshrined in Article 2 of the Charter, regarding the inadmissibility of

"the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations".

A similar provision is contained in the Definition of Aggression in General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX). Article 3 of that Definition states that

"Bombardment by the armed forces of a State against the territory of another State or the use of any weapons by a State against the territory of another State" (resolution 3314 (XXIX), annex, article 3 (b))

constitutes an act of aggression. It is perfectly obvious that the most recent piratical act carried out by the United States falls under the Definition of Aggression. In this regard, references to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, concerning the right to self-defence, are utterly untenable.

Completely disregarding the existence in international law of a broad arsenal of peaceful means for the settlement of thorny problems in international relations, Washington has embarked on military adventures whose consequences are extremely dangerous and difficult to predict.

(Mr. Skofenko, Ukrainian SSR)

The storm of international protests against the bandit-like raid has not died down, and yet the United States Administration is once again threatening to use force against Libya. At the end of August, military vessels of the United States Sixth Fleet were concentrated off the shores of Libya. The scandalous disinformation campaign against Libya - which is now only too well known - was launched. The press in the United States has reported that the Pentagon has prepared plans for a powerful strike against Libyan territory whose scale would exceed the armed attack last April.

The United States Administration, flying in the face of common sense and disregarding present realities, is continuing to play with fire. It should be clear that in a nuclear age all problems in relations among States must be solved by political, not military, means.

The statement by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, on 26 March this year contains an extremely concrete and constructive answer to the legitimate question of what can and should be done about the continuing explosive situation in the Mediterranean.

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Those proposals of the Soviet Union are aimed at finding a way to settle problems in the Mediterranean through the joint efforts of States to transform that region into a zone of lasting peace and co-operation; that objective would be promoted by the convening of the proposed representative meeting.

The adventurist, imperialist policy towards the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is fraught with extremely dangerous consequences for the world community, since it could make any State which pursues an independent, anti-imperialist policy the object of armed attack. Methods of coercive pressures and threats must be excluded from international relations.

The Ukrainian SSR firmly condemns the United States piratical attack on the sovereign State of Libya and expresses its solidarity with the Libyan people which is defending its sacred right to freedom and independence against imperialist encroachments. We believe that the General Assembly must most vigorously condemn this act of armed aggression against a non-aligned State and demand the immediate cessation of such acts in the future. That is why our delegation has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/41/L.35, submitted by a number of non-aligned and socialist States.

Mr. ABULHASSAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): For the first time the General Assembly is discussing at its current session the item entitled "Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on the aerial and naval military attack against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya by the present United States Administration in April 1986". The fact that this question has been referred to the General Assembly reflects the international community's disappointment that the Security Council, the body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, failed to adopt a resolution sponsored by the non-aligned countries in

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the wake of the United States air raid on Libyan territory last April owing to its use of the veto to kill that draft resolution.

Our debate today derives special significance from that reality and, as the international community, we must shoulder our responsibilities and preserve and defend the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, and make them the beacon that guides us in solving our differences by peaceful means, in conformity with international covenants and norms.

The Charter did not stop at proclaiming, in its preamble, the determination of the world's peoples not to use force in international relations but went on, in Article 2 (4), to stipulate explicitly and as a basic rule: "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force ...". That same Article clearly defines the methods to be used in settling disputes among countries by stressing the need to settle international disputes by peaceful means so that peace and security will not be endangered.

It is clear that the Charter grants Member States the right to self-defence, but it certainly did not intend that that sacred right should be used in an unrestricted manner. Thus the Charter stipulates conditions for invoking that right to protect it against unjustified use as a pretext for resorting to force, especially by major Powers.

In Kuwait we believe that force is a serious responsibility and must therefore be used accordingly and in a wise manner in accordance with the noble principles and purposes of the Charter. Force, however great it might be, can never be used to acquire rights; if misused, it is something ignoble.

The members of the League of Arab States are bound by a Convention, joint agreements and treaties that aim at enhancing co-operation among them and strengthening their peace and security. The League's Convention and other

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multilateral agreements implies a collective Arab commitment, motivated by the desire to strengthen Arab security and solidarity and to fend off external threats. Guided by its national obligations and responsibilities, which are derived from the Convention of the League of Arab States and the Charter of the United Nations, Kuwait totally rejects any act of aggression against an Arab country and upholds the principle of Arab solidarity with the country attacked. In that context Kuwait reaffirms its solidarity with Libya in its struggle to defend its territory, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The collective Arab commitment is necessary in present conditions in order to shield our region against foreign conflicts and perils and to maintain the independence of our countries and peoples.

The international support and sympathy received by the Libyan Jamahiriya since the United States air and naval attack on its territory are a reflection of the unanimous international acknowledgment of where the truth lies and a candid expression of the international majority's condemnation of that attack. The world community found in these events an example through which it can unequivocally reject the arbitrary charges of terrorism that have been made and attempts to hold certain countries responsible for the irresponsible acts of individuals. The international community has legitimate means of verifying such charges.

It is quite clear that those raids are high up on the list of negative international events which cast a shadow over the horizon of world peace and render the law of the jungle a dangerous threat to the international principles and laws enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

In its latest annual study, published this month, the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, in the course of reviewing existing tension in the region of the Middle East and North America, rightly cited the United States raid on Libya as one of the leading negative factors in the region. The dangers of those raids were also clearly reflected in the reactions of the African Summit Conference and the Eighth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries.

(Mr. Abulhassan, Kuwait)

Together with the overwhelming majority of Member States, we rejected the legal arguments used by the United States to justify its attack. We still view such attempts to overturn the logic of international law and circumvent its true connotations as a dangerous threat to the sanctity of international law and its significance for the structure of international relations and the delicate fabric of multilateralism, which we all energetically seek to preserve and maintain through our Organization.

While discussing the item for the first time here, we cannot fail to repeat what Kuwait has frequently reiterated before - our condemnation of terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations: individual, group and State terrorism, the most dangerous of all. In our view, terrorism is devastating to all the bonds and values of civilization and society. We are in favour of all measures that restrain terrorism. We shall co-operate with, and strictly enforce, such measures. But we must be very careful not to confuse this matter with the right of any people living under the yoke of occupation, and denied their basic rights, to achieve freedom and sovereignty and end the occupation of their country. Most of the world's nations have had that experience, the experience of sacred struggle, which is endorsed by all international laws and is today being experienced by the peoples of Palestine, Namibia and South Africa.

We hope that the General Assembly will express the international community's collective will by putting the matter in its proper place for the sake of ensuring international peace and security.

Mr. AL-ALFI (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): The inclusion of the question of the United States aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on the Assembly's agenda at this session reflects the will of the international community, as expressed by the majority of States members of other

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Yemen)

international bodies, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Those bodies have condemned this blatant act of aggression and refused to let it pass without condemnation, after some States, permanent members of the Security Council, had prevented the Council from assuming its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, by abusing the right of veto and thus preventing the adoption of a draft resolution condemning that aggression.

On 15 April this year the United States perpetrated an act of armed aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, when it launched brutal, indiscriminate air raids against the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi, raids which targeted private and public institutions and residential areas. This act of aggression claimed the lives of many civilians among the fraternal Libyan people and inflicted severe damage on buildings and installations.

It is to be hoped that in debating this act of aggression the Assembly will take into account a number of facts, which can be summarized as follows.

First, this act of aggression by the United States stemmed from premeditated designs against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, its people and its Government. It was preceded by a series of provocative acts, the imposition of a cultural and economic boycott and the freezing of Libyan property and assets. The aggression also constitutes a flagrant violation of the Charter and the principles of international law, especially that of the non-use of force or the threat of its use in international relations and the inalienable right of peoples independently to choose their socio-political systems, without intervention, coercion or constraint.

At their Eighth Summit Conference, the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries affirmed their rejection of any pretext invoked to justify

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the use or threat of force and intervention in the internal affairs of Mediterranean countries and the placing in jeopardy of the sovereignty and independence of non-aligned countries in the area.

Secondly, this act of aggression was an act of terrorism by the current American Administration against our Arab peoples, and it clearly reveals the Zionist-American aggressive objectives, the intention to undermine security and stability in the area and to subject the Arab peoples and countries to imperialist and Zionist hegemony. The American military arsenal has always been a major supplies and source of support for Israel's wars of aggression in the Arab region. At the same time, it is the source of direct armed aggression against our Arab peoples.

In 1983, the American Navy shelled Beirut. Moreover, the United States was the only State that publicly endorsed Israel's act of aggression against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Tunisia in 1985. It also contributes directly to the liquidation of the Palestinian Arab people and the denial of its legitimate national rights to return to its homeland, to achieve self-determination and to establish its own independent State on its national soil. These principles have been endorsed by the international community as a prerequisite for a just peace in the Middle East.

Thirdly, this act of armed aggression was accompanied by a campaign of disinformation against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and our Arab peoples in general. That campaign deliberately distorted our culture and values, to help Zionist designs in the area and to implement the global expansionist, aggressive strategy pursued by Zionist and imperialist circles against our Arab peoples and countries, in order to restore colonialist hegemony over their destinies and resources.

Fourthly, this blatant act of aggression against the sovereignty and

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independence of a State Member of the United Nations was perpetrated by a major power, a permanent member of the Security Council, the United States, which thus appointed itself as an international gendarme, in disregard of the responsibility entrusted to it under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. Rather, the United States threatens the peace and security in the Mediterranean and obstructs efforts to transform that area into a zone of peace, security and co-operation.

Democratic Yemen strongly condemns this act of armed aggression by the United States against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and reiterates its full solidarity with the fraternal Libyan people and its Government in defending the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and in their struggle against all imperialist conspiracies aimed at jeopardizing Libyan national sovereignty and defeating the 1 September Revolution.

(Mr. Al-Alfi, Democratic Yemen)

Democratic Yemen supports the Eighth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries' call on the United States of America to provide immediate and full reparations to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for the material and human losses it incurred. Democratic Yemen also calls upon all States, especially the European States located in the Mediterranean basin, to respect the provisions of the Valletta Declaration and, in particular, to abide strictly by the principles of the non-use or threat of force, to refrain from using their arms, forces, bases and military installations against non-aligned countries situated in the Mediterranean basin, and not to allow foreign forces to use their territories, waters or airspace to wage acts of aggression against the non-aligned countries in the region, including the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

We salute the steadfastness of the Libyan people and its Government in the face of the American aggression and the various conspiracies and acts of aggression to which it has been subjected. We affirm that the sophisticated American war machinery, cruisers and planes will never succeed in defeating the will of our Arab peoples and in suppressing their legitimate rights to liberation and progress.

Mr. KAMAL (Bangladesh): My delegation has been in the past, and still is, a staunch advocate of peace. There is no dispute that cannot be resolved, given political will and determination. There is no conflict that should be allowed to escalate. And most of all, force must never be employed as a means of settling disputes. That is the principle that is enshrined in the United Nations Charter. That is the principle which is for my delegation a matter of firm conviction.

Earlier this year we witnessed a serious deterioration of the situation in the southern Mediterranean resulting from the bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi. We viewed the events with dismay and concern. The people of Bangladesh expressed an abiding solidarity with those of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Libya is a fellow

(Mr. Kamal, Bangladesh)

Muslim country and a fellow member of the Non-Aligned Movement. The use of force against a State Member of the United Nations cannot be condoned. We appeal to all concerned that such acts, which only lead to human tragedies, do not recur.

Bangladesh reaffirms the principles of the Charter which guarantee the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all nations. We support the prohibition of the use or the threat of use of force in the settlement of international disputes. We wish to pledge our commitment to contribute to the global programme for combating terrorism.

We wish to join the clarion call for peace in every region, throughout the world.

Mr. MARDOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The statement that the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) gave in connection with the military attack on the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, perpetrated by the United States with the support of the Government of the United Kingdom in April 1986, has given a principled assessment of this act, one which caused great loss of life among the civilian population, including women and children, and has caused Libya significant material losses. It has been classified as an aggressive, deliberate, totally unprovoked act which is not only a dangerous precedent but also a brazen act carried out in violation of the principles of international law.

The fact that this piratical action was undertaken literally a few hours after the Security Council had met in order to prevent the critical situation in the central Mediterranean region from developing in a direction dangerous for the cause of peace, characterizes it as a crude challenge, unprecedented in its cynicism, to the entire international community and showing haughty disregard for universally recognized norms of international law and a trampling under foot of universal morality.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

What is also an outrage to the provisions of the Charter and United Nations decisions, is the fact that this aggressive action was perpetrated in 1986 which was proclaimed by the United Nations as the International Year of Peace, the motto of which is that of safeguarding peace and the future of humanity. By perpetrating this act, the United States has ignored the demand of the United Nations that it immediately cease military actions and start settling disputes through negotiations and other peaceful means, and that it undertake to refrain from the threat or use of force and from any interference in the internal affairs of other States. The United States is not complying with General Assembly resolution 40/9 of 8 November 1985.

The use against Libya of an enormous military machine equipped with the most modern technology for waging war attests to the utter disregard of the United States for the sovereignty and interests of small countries and peoples.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

The present American Administration has made violence, aggression, the instigation of regional conflicts and the perpetuation of confrontation and brinkmanship norms of its policy.

Why does official Washington so fiercely hate Libya? Why is it organizing and carrying out against it a large-scale, hostile campaign that includes military action, an economic blockade, a stream of threats, slander and disinformation and secret plans for the physical elimination of Libyan leaders? The answer is clear. It is because the Libyan people are carrying out their chosen programme of social and political transformation and because their leadership takes an independent, anti-imperial position in the international arena. That is why the objective of that campaign is to intimidate the leadership of Libya and destabilize the situation in that country. That approach is nothing new.

Washington, in particular its present Administration, in carrying out this policy of neo-globalism, is acting against the national liberation movements and against all those that do not agree with or do not accept its aggressive foreign policy. It is impossible not to be aware of the net of intrigues and threats which is being woven in Washington with regard to countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement in an attempt to sow discord in their ranks and to prevent them from adopting decisive measures to protect their national interests, curbing the neo-colonialist aspirations of the imperialists, and condemning the shameful system of racism and apartheid.

Washington, apparently, has not yet grasped a very simple truth. Nowadays peoples waging a just struggle for peace, freedom and independence, will have the support of their faithful friends, of all honest people on this earth who do not wish to accept violence, blackmail and sabre-rattling, those characteristics of the policy of imperialism. A clear example of this is the political support given by

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

the international community to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya at a very difficult point in its history.

The Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, meeting at their eighth Conference, in Harare, among other things condemned not only the military attack but the economic pressure on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in pursuit of political objectives and called on the United States Administration to lift those measures forthwith. They affirmed their solidarity with the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in resisting those measures, the objective of which was to undermine its plans for social and economic development and threaten the sovereignty and independence of its people. They condemned the neo-colonialist aspirations of the United States and its allies, the policy of constructive engagement with the racist régime of South Africa and the aggressive action of the American military clique in various regions of the globe. They reaffirmed their readiness to act in solidarity with all those that demonstrate, not in words but in deeds, their concern for the fate of the world and already to participate actively in thwarting the aggressive designs of the forces of reaction and imperialism. This is all clearly stated in the final documents of that Conference (A/41/697).

The international community's concern with regard to the tragic developments in Libya is fully understandable in so far as such actions can lead to uncontrollable consequences that threaten peace and security not only in the region in question but far beyond its borders.

The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, emphasized that by its armed attack on Libya the American Administration revealed the essence of its approach to fundamental international problems. He said:

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

"That action, which cannot be justified by any argument, is a link in the chain of defiant and provocative actions undertaken by the United States in response to the peaceful initiatives of the Soviet Union with the aim of impeding the efforts to bring about an improvement in international relations and dashing the positive hopes that emerged as a result of the Geneva meeting."

The international community must raise its voice in defence of the cause of peace and the improvement of the international situation and must do all in its power to thwart the evil designs of the Washington hawks who aspire to the role of master of the destinies of other peoples. The need for such action is extremely pressing, particularly at this time, when once again in Washington new and threatening statements are heard regarding the adoption of measures against yet another sovereign State, the Syrian Arab Republic, on the trumped-up pretext of the struggle against terrorism.

The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR firmly condemns the acts of aggression by the United States against Libya and demands that their repetition in the future be prevented. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR, together with other delegations, is a sponsor of draft resolution A/41/L.35. We firmly believe that the draft resolution forms a reasonable basis for the just settlement of the dispute and for the prevention of such disputes in the future.

The draft resolution, inter alia, calls upon the Government of the United States to refrain from the use or threat of the use of force in the settlement of disputes and differences with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and to resort to peaceful means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. It also calls on other countries to refrain from extending any kind of assistance or facilities for the perpetration of acts of aggression against Libya and affirms the right of Libya to

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

receive appropriate compensation for the material and human losses inflicted upon that sovereign State.

We hope that the international community will demonstrate the necessary political will and support this draft resolution as an indispensable basis for the solution of this critical situation, the maintenance and strengthening of peace on our planet and the protection of their own interests.

Tyranny against one country, that is not uncondemned today, tomorrow may be turned against any other State.

Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia): In speaking on the item before us, my delegation is inspired and guided solely by the fundamental precepts of the Charter and our sense of shared responsibility to contribute to a world of greater peace and justice, as enjoined in our constitution.

For quite some time now Indonesia has observed with deepening concern the progressive deterioration of the situation in the Mediterranean. Aggravating factors, such as the ever escalating military presence and concentration of the military forces of extraregional Powers, heightened bloc confrontation, the exertion of political, economic and other forms of pressure on the non-aligned countries in the area and increased resort to the threat and use of force have turned the region into a seed-bed of crisis, fraught with the risk of uncontrollable developments with far-reaching consequences for peace and stability in the Mediterranean and beyond.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

A most disturbing development in this regard was the premeditated aerial and naval military attack against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya last April, which resulted in the death and serious injury of scores of innocent civilians and extensive material destruction. At the time when this shocking incident occurred, my Foreign Minister, addressing the Co-ordinating Bureau Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement in New Delhi, stated:

"Indonesia strongly deplores the attacks by United States military units against the territory of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, a fellow member of our Movement. These acts are in complete contravention to the most fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and of international law. Indonesia has always condemned every act of aggression or military intervention against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of any State anywhere and under whatever pretext. We express the hope that the United Nations Security Council will take urgent and effective action to prevent the repetition of such acts. We also believe that conditions must be created as soon as possible so as to enable the peaceful resolution of this conflict situation".

It was a matter of deep regret to my delegation, therefore, that subsequently the Security Council, as the most appropriate forum to deliberate and decide on the question, was prevented from discharging its responsibilities owing to the negative votes cast by certain permanent members.

The profound concern of the international community over this incident is fully understandable given the dangerous precedent that it establishes and the far-reaching ramifications that it entails for regional as well as international security and stability. The fact that it was a permanent member of the Security Council that perpetrated the attack makes it even more deplorable in view of its special responsibilities and obligations in the maintenance of international peace and security and in upholding the principles of the Charter.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

The rationalization and purported justification for the attack has been that it was an act of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter, in response to alleged involvement of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in terrorist activities. We note, however, that the Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has on several occasions explicitly stated its readiness to have recourse to the Security Council or to the International Court of Justice with a view to investigating the veracity of such allegations. Moreover, the notion of "pre-emptive self-defence" is non-existent in international law and certainly unacceptable under the Charter, as Article 51 clearly stipulates that armed attack has to precede any act of individual or collective self-defence.

At any rate, it is the firm conviction of my delegation that in any dispute between States recourse to military force has never, and will never bring about durable or equitable solutions, and indeed will inevitably render their solution more intractable. The underpinnings of a stable and just international order would be fatally undermined if legally unsubstantiated claims or perceived wrongs are made a basis to sanction the use of armed force by one State against another. Nor should we allow the authority and writ of the United Nations, and the international peace and security system it represents, to be eroded or compromised by unilateral action based on might rather than right. The principle of peaceful settlement of disputes is central to Indonesia's foreign policy as it is to the philosophy of peaceful co-existence between countries of differing political and economic systems adhered to by all members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Indonesia, therefore, reiterates its solidarity with the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in safeguarding its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and reaffirms the inalienable right of all States to determine their own socio-political systems, free from any outside interference, coercion or subversion.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

Indonesia, and for that matter the entire Non-Aligned Movement, has consistently condemned all acts of terrorism, whether committed by individuals, groups or States. This scourge has grown into such alarming proportions as to threaten the lives and material well-being of citizens of all nations, and indeed jeopardize the very security and territorial integrity of States. It is for these reasons that my delegation unhesitatingly endorsed General Assembly resolution 40/61 last year, and my Government is fully committed to co-operate with the international community in combating this world-wide menace. At the same time, however, it should be stressed that the legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial, racist and all other forms of foreign domination and occupation, in particular the struggle of the peoples of Palestine, Namibia and South Africa, for self-determination and independence, cannot in anyway be equated with terrorism. Indonesia believes that the violence unleashed by frustration, alienation and anger at the persistent denial of the basic human rights of individuals and nations can only be resolved by effectively addressing its underlying root causes.

In conclusion, I should like to say that our main purpose in participating in this debate is not to look backward and simply to bemoan or condemn what has happened. Let us rather look and move beyond the present and collectively apply ourselves with even greater resolve to the search for new avenues for peace and constructive relations between the parties to the dispute and among all nations of the Mediterranean. Towards this end, let us work to create the conditions in which mutual recrimination and confrontation can be substituted by reasoned dialogue and negotiation, thus opening the way to the transformation of the Mediterranean into a region of peace, security and mutually beneficial co-operation.

Mr. ABDOUN (Sudan) (interpretation from Arabic): The topic under discussion today, namely the perpetration by a major Power such as the United States of America of an act of aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, a small State which lies thousands of miles away from it, has been and remains a source of real concern. This is because the action posed a serious threat to international and regional peace and security. The Security Council considered this act of aggression soon after it took place, in mid-April of this year, but was not able to take any action in line with its responsibilities, which was further cause for concern. The Security Council was prevented from dealing with a question that concerned a threat to international peace by the United States veto.

This concern has spread over a wide area, especially in the third world, and has been reflected in several forums - in Africa, last July at the twenty-second summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity, in Harare, Zimbabwe, last September at the Eighth Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the League of Arab States in Tunisia, at the Fez meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and in New York, where the Security Council met to discuss the same question as we are now discussing here in the General Assembly.

The action was condemned and denounced here and in all the other forums, particularly those to which I have just referred. Hence, there is nothing new to add to what was stated in the Security Council at the time on the basis of the preamble to the Charter, specifically, the determination of the peoples of the United Nations not to use force in their relations with other States, and Article 2, paragraph 4, which sets forth the basic principle that Member States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force. Thus, Sudan, in a statement by its Government, denounced that aggression as soon as

(Mr. Abdoun, Sudan)

it took place and the peoples of the Sudan took to the streets to protest against it, as reported in the international and national media.

All this happened in the past and we are here not to go over the past but to call attention to the gravity of that action and its consequences for peace and security in the area and in the entire world, and to make sure that it will never be repeated.

Experience of this Organization has taught us that the veto, to which we object, renders our Organization impotent and prevents it from playing the positive role it should play in many emergency situations. Experience has also shown that armed aggression cannot repress thought and that the small States, which have become large through their membership in the international community, no longer submit to aggression or threats. Therefore, it has always been our belief that persuasion and the settlement of differences between Member States, no matter how large those differences may be, must be achieved through understanding and by peaceful means, in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Charter. We hope that understanding will prevail in this and many other similar situations. We believe that many Member States, particularly in our area, share our belief in this constructive approach.

The concepts that prevailed when this international Organization was established were those concerning international peace and security and the solution of problems by peaceful means. Contemporary events have shown that those concepts tend to be undermined by the individual actions of Member States. We believe that the major Powers should set an example to the small and weaker States and should be more careful than any others to safeguard and not undermine the concepts and principles of the United Nations, thus earning the respect and appreciation of the smaller States.

(Mr. Abdoun, Sudan)

We have been watching the current campaign against Libya. Events have proved that the aim of the disinformation campaign carried out against Libya before and during the aggression against it was to terrorize and intimidate Libya. But the free nature of the American society and its deeply rooted sense of democracy have rendered futile this policy of disinformation against Libya and other countries. There should be a new way of dealing with what is called terrorism in the Middle East. In the case of Libya, it was this so-called terrorism that was used to justify the aggression against it. In dealing with this question consideration should be given to the causes, not the outward appearances. Actual, proved facts, not suspicions and allegations, should be the basis of this new approach. The struggles waged by liberation movements to free themselves from the yoke of imperialism, coercion, oppression and domination can in no way be branded terrorism. Those are legitimate struggles, which are supported by countries that desire justice among nations.

The best way to solve such problems, particularly in the Middle East, is to find a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the question of the Middle East that will guarantee the fundamental rights of the Palestinian Arab peoples, under the leadership of their sole, legitimate representative. In that way we can safeguard lives and property, American or other.

The United States could play an effective and positive role in solving the Middle East question if it were to become totally neutral and give up its one-sided bias towards one party to the dispute. It would be more becoming to do that than to give way to violent reactions and take the law in its own hands. It should go calmly and deeply into the real heart of the matter.

(Mr. Abdoun, Sudan)

The experience of the man of our time in the free world has shown that military repression is not an effective weapon, for it does not really succeed in stifling opinions and beliefs, and that military force may be able to subdue certain outward manifestations but does not deal with or remedy the real, inherent causes of conflict.

In conclusion, we must stress once again that the United States Naval and Air Force action against the two Libyan cities of Tripoli and Benghazi, in mid-April was a clear act of aggression against a small developing country. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya must be appropriately compensated for the loss of life and the material damage it suffered. The threats to repeat such attacks in the future must end.

Mr. AGIUS (Malta): The delegation of Malta would like to state its views on the agenda item which the Assembly is now considering.

We strongly believe that, just as we expect restraint in military confrontation, so we should expect restraint in the use of harsh words if we are to pour oil on troubled waters.

From the outset, we should like to state that Malta strongly believes that more emphasis should be laid on preventive diplomacy especially in the present era, when the media play an important role in our daily life, much more attention is being given to military acts that threaten peace and security than to the efforts to prevent such acts - or to what is commonly known in United Nations circles as preventive diplomacy.

In this respect our record both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council is testimony to our policy of upholding this principle. Our first ever two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council during 1983-1984 left no doubt where Malta stands.

(Mr. Agius, Malta)

On 12 September 1983, the President of the Security Council issued a note which, among other things, stated:

"Members reaffirmed the need to strengthen the effectiveness of the Security Council in fulfilling its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, including procedures for promoting more systematic use of the Council. (S/15971, para. 7)

"Members of the Council also stressed the importance of, and sensed positive prospects in the future for, timely and appropriate action by the Council to prevent, under the relevant provisions of the Charter, aggravation of particular situations or disputes." (para. 11)

On 28 September 1984, in accordance with a decision taken in the course of consultations held on that date, the President of the Security Council issued another note which, among other things, stated:

"A consistent theme in the presentations made was the importance of a renewed dedication by Member States for strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and the Charter itself, whose vitality and validity were strongly reaffirmed, as well as the consequent obligation of all members to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council.

"Due emphasis was given to the special responsibility of the Council, acting on behalf of the international community, in collective maintenance of peace and security. In this connection, members again stressed the need for prompt, relevant and current information on matters before the Council.

(Mr. Agius, Malta)

"The primary responsibility of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as its responsibility for the prevention of international conflicts, and the Council's corresponding powers and functions under the Charter, were also emphasized." (S/16760, paras. 6-8)

Malta was a very active party to those consensus texts during 1983 and 1984 because we believed in their content and spirit, and, although Malta is no longer a member of the Council, we continue to adhere to and uphold their objectives in spirit and in practice. Our efforts the international forums, in particular the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth, are Malta's genuine contribution to world peace and security.

This tangible contribution to world peace and security was amply tested in April of this year when tension in the Mediterranean grew and escalated to such an extent that it not only preoccupied the littoral States of the Mediterranean but caused grave concern to the international community as a whole. The chain of events which culminated in the incident now being discussed brought a potentially explosive situation which threatened the security not only of the Mediterranean region but of the whole of Europe and beyond.

Malta's endeavours to stave off armed conflict in the Mediterranean region are now on record.

Since early January 1986 Malta has embarked upon an intensive exercise with the primary goal of easing the escalating tension in the region and bringing the situation back to a state which would allow all nations to renew efforts to foster lasting peace and security in the region. In this regard the Government of Malta had consultations with the Governments of the United States, the Soviet Union, Libya and Italy, among other countries, on the increasing tension between the

(Mr. Agius, Malta)

United States and Libya. At the same time the Maltese Foreign Minister invited the regional non-aligned Foreign Ministers to meet to review the situation and publicly reiterate pledges of non-aggression. That invitation did not, unfortunately, elicit the response it deserved.

On 15 January 1986 the Maltese Prime Minister invited the Prime Ministers of Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Libya, Tunisia and Yugoslavia to a meeting to discuss and agree on the necessary undertakings concerning the non-use of force and the non-use of bases and to desist from giving any assistance to terrorist activities. Only one Government, that of Libya, accepted the proposal for that meeting. Unfortunately the response of the other countries invited was not encouraging, with the consequence that the meeting was not held. Malta's initiatives were also brought to the notice of the Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, in Stockholm, by the Maltese Foreign Minister at the end of January this year.

Immediately the confrontation between the United States of America and Libya started in the Gulf of Sidra at the end of March, Malta called for an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council to discuss the grave situation which had arisen in the central Mediterranean region and to consider what appropriate action could be taken to reduce tension and restore peace and stability in the region.

Malta tried, through informal consultations, to get support for a draft resolution in which the Council would reaffirm the obligation of all Member States to refrain from the threat or use of force, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, and call on the United States to desist from carrying out further military manoeuvres in disputed waters close to the Libyan mainland and to refrain from making any attacks on Libyan ships or territory.

(Mr. Agius, Malta)

What Malta sought was not a condemnation but the averting of a worsening situation and the cessation of those acts that gave rise to the tension. Unfortunately, again, Malta's efforts towards an agreement were unsuccessful. The draft resolution was not officially submitted as the majority needed to obtain a consensus in the Council was not reached, and therefore no positive results were attained.

On 12 April 1986 - that is, three days before the actual attack - Malta requested the immediate convening of the Security Council again to consider and take appropriate and urgent action to stop the repeated threat of the use of force, as well as the imminent resort to armed attack in the Central Mediterranean. This time Malta officially submitted a draft resolution. In that draft resolution Malta requested the Security Council to express its deep concern at the massive mobilization of naval forces in the central Mediterranean in preparation for a military attack on Libya. It called on the Security Council to reaffirm the obligation of all - I repeat, all - Member States of the United Nations to refrain from the threat or use of force in the settlement of disputes, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. It also called on all the parties concerned to desist from every other action which could lead to the use of armed force in the central Mediterranean and requested the Secretary-General to take immediate appropriate action with the parties concerned to ensure that only the peaceful means envisaged in the United Nations Charter would be utilized to reconcile any differences between them.

(Mr. Agius, Malta)

At the same time, the Prime Minister of Malta sent an invitation to the Prime Ministers of the Mediterranean countries, urging the convening of an early meeting to review the situation and take the necessary action to avoid a worsening of the situation. Unfortunately, all our efforts proved futile, and in April 1986 Libya was attacked.

On 21 April 1986 Malta again addressed the Council in order to draw its attention to the initiatives taken by Malta during the year in its strenuous efforts to avert the present crisis in the Mediterranean. Malta did not condemn any country. On the contrary, it once again appealed to the Security Council to urge the sides involved in the Mediterranean crisis to desist from using force and resort only to peaceful means to reconcile their differences.

Notwithstanding that setback, the Maltese Government continued its endeavours and left no stone unturned to defuse the critical situation developing in the Mediterranean and work for peace in the area.

In April 1986 the Maltese Foreign Minister, attending the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Council of Europe, restated Malta's position that the problems of the region, including the problem of international terrorism, could be solved only through peaceful dialogue between European and Arab States. He proposed that a contact group at the ministerial level be formed - consisting of four States Members of the Council of Europe and four Arab countries - to discuss all issues related to the question of terrorism. There was agreement among the Ministers on the principle that a dialogue between European and Arab countries must be established. The Maltese Foreign Minister's proposal was considered, and it was decided that further discussions were required on the subject.

The relentless search for peace, security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region is amply demonstrated by a statement made by the Maltese Prime Minister to the European Community Council of Ministers at the Charlemagne

(Mr. Agius, Malta)

Headquarters of the Council on 12 May 1986. Among other things, the Prime Minister said:

"For Malta, a policy for regional peace and co-operation is an integral part of the policies it pursues for its national development. Our status of neutrality and non-alignment, in directly contributing towards the lessening of tensions around us, helps consolidate our process of national development. In its turn, a healthy national development process provides durable conditions which guarantee the maintenance of our status of neutrality.

"On a wider level we find that our status of neutrality and non-alignment permits us to take significant initiatives at both the bilateral and the multilateral levels for regional peace and co-operation.

"Our strategy for peace in our region has two dimensions: On the one hand we seek to encourage, with others, projects for functional co-operation, as a basis upon which an eventual process of political co-operation could be founded. The other way is to tackle directly the issues which are themselves the cause of tension and confrontation in our region."

We must now recognize that this is not the time to say that Malta was right, that Malta was reading the minds of Member States: it is the time for reflection, sobriety, fair judicial judgement, exercise of utmost restraint, lessening of tension and, above all, negotiation, understanding and dialogue among all parties concerned.

In submitting the draft resolution contained in Security Council document S/17984, the delegation of Malta believed that it was a fairly balanced text, a text which advocated "preventive diplomacy". The "call" in operative paragraph 1 was addressed to "all parties concerned", without any distinction, "to desist from all further action which could lead to the use of armed force in the Central Mediterranean". Today more than ever before we consider the text of our draft

(Mr. Agius, Malta)

resolution to have been appropriate and justified. Unfortunately, events overtook its contents - that is true - and we find ourselves in a situation which could have been averted if the Council, in its wisdom, had taken immediate action. On this point, it must be stated that the majority of States members of the Security Council had informally welcomed our draft, and, along with certain delegations, we were in the process of considering appropriate amendments to the text.

Notwithstanding the Security Council's inability to act on our draft resolution, we still have full confidence in the Council. We believe that it can, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, create a better atmosphere for all parties concerned to sit down together and, through dialogue and negotiation, bring about a settlement of this dispute, which is still full of danger not only for the Mediterranean region but beyond it as well.

Mr. BAGBENI ADETTO NZENGEYA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): In speaking on item 142 of the agenda, my delegation wishes first and foremost to refer to General Assembly resolution 40/61 of 19 December 1985, which unequivocally condemned, as criminal, all acts, methods and practices of terrorism wherever and by whomever committed, including those which jeopardize friendly relations among States and their security. The loss of the lives of innocent human beings because of these acts of terrorism has been repeatedly deplored.

Operative paragraph 5 of the resolution to which I have just referred invites all States to take all appropriate measures at the national level with a view to the speedy and final elimination of the problem of international terrorism, such as the harmonization of domestic legislation with existing international conventions, the fulfilment of assumed international obligations, and the prevention of the preparation and organization in their respective territories of acts directed against other States.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya,
Zaire)

The objective of that important resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its fortieth session - the session commemorating the 40th anniversary of the United Nations - was, among other things, to call upon all Member States to fulfil their obligations under international law to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in terrorist acts in other States, or acquiescing in activities within their territory directed towards the commission of such acts.

Thus, Member States are called upon to co-operate with one another more closely, especially through the exchange of relevant information concerning the prevention and combating of terrorism, the apprehension and prosecution or extradition of the perpetrators of such acts, the conclusion of special treaties or the incorporation into appropriate bilateral treaties of special clauses, in particular regarding the extradition or prosecution of terrorists.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya,
Zaire)

In the last few years, the international community has witnessed acts of violence and massacres of innocent persons who have had the misfortune to be in public places such as airports, hotels, ships and passenger aircraft which have come under armed attack, and have thus fallen victim, to those attacks.

It is in that context that the General Assembly is being asked to take a decision on the attack on Libya on 15 April 1986 while the Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries was taking place in New Delhi. In opening that Ministerial Meeting the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Radjiv Gandhi, then President of the Non-Aligned Movement, launched an appeal for the immediate cessation of international terrorism during his opening statement, which was adopted as an official document of the Conference because of its relevance and the depth of its moral and spiritual strength.

The Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Countries, as it was finishing its work, drew attention to the resurgence of terrorism and pointed out that the elimination of terrorism could be achieved only with the assistance of all Member States, which were asked to take the necessary measures to throttle terrorism at the national and international levels, and also to seek the progressive elimination of the underlying causes of terrorism, which should not be confused with the struggle of liberation movements.

During the last summit of the non-aligned countries, held in Harare, the Heads of State of the non-aligned countries noted with profound concern that in recent years the use of force and acts of aggression have increased, that many of them have resulted in considerable loss of life and material damage to the countries involved and have created a threat to international peace and security.

The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries at their Eighth Conference declared that they were deeply perturbed by the escalation of terrorism,

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Zaire)

including State terrorism, and in all its forms, which throughout the whole world endangers or takes innocent human lives, jeopardizes fundamental freedoms, has an increasingly deleterious effect on international relations, and may endanger the very territorial integrity and security of States. They condemned all terrorist activities, whether committed by individuals, groups or States, and resolved to counter them by every legal means possible.

Since we are trying to fight terrorism, should we take the law into our own hands, use the same violent means, and thus sink to the same psychological level as the terrorists? At this time when tension is continuing to mount among States, my delegation would like to see all the attempts made up to now to settle disputes among nations through violence, and in particular through terrorism, rejected in favour of positive measures based on the peaceful settlement of all disputes between Member States.

My delegation would like to emphasize that this principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes must be respected by all Member States without exception, whether the question is the aerial and naval military attack of April 1986 against Libya by the present United States Government or the attacks against the Republic of Chad and the occupation of half its territory by armed Libyan forces.

My delegation therefore regrets the American act of aggression against Libya, since it considers it an act of the very terrorism against which the whole international community is fighting, but it also opposes all the subversive activities encouraging terrorism in many parts of the world which Libya seems to be supporting. The illegal occupation of part of Chad's territory by Libya is one eloquent example. The General Assembly should commit itself to inducing the two parties to make an effort to settle their dispute peacefully, just as it should persuade Chad and Libya to seek a peaceful solution to their conflict.

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya,
Zaire)

All Member States which give any kind of assistance to terrorists or support terrorist activities against civilians and civilian targets should cease doing so. It is only by establishing the right conditions for the establishment of a climate of confidence among all States that the Members of our Organization can work together to put an end to international terrorism, because if we do not succeed in eliminating terrorism the future of the international community as a whole will be endangered and fraught with increasing violence.

If the United States has felt obliged to resort to armed action in response to terrorist acts, it is quite possible that other threats or resort to violence may follow from various quarters. In resorting to the use of arms when there should have been recourse to mediation, negotiation and conciliation, a circle of violence is created that is likely to lead to escalation.

The General Assembly must act to end this cycle of violence and work to reduce tension among States. That is the way my delegation approaches the consideration of the question now under discussion.

Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso) (interpretation from French): My country's position on this agenda item has been clearly defined in the Security Council during its consideration of the question of the aerial and naval attack perpetrated by the United States against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in April 1986.

In this connection, it should be noted that Burkina Faso was among the very first States Members of the Organization to request, in view of those deplorable circumstances, the immediate convening of the Security Council to consider the matter. Our attitude was prompted by our faith in and our commitment to uphold and defend the fundamental principles governing relations among States.

(Mr. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

The question under consideration is of great importance to Burkina Faso and the international community, because we are faced here with nothing less than a situation involving a threat to international peace and security.

The primary concern of the United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security. It is not only deplorable but a subject for condemnation when a State, and an important State, a founding Member of the United Nations and a permanent member of the Security Council, resorts to the use of threats and force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another State, in violation of the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

Since the attack, and even before it, the United States has been following a policy that has only heightened tension and aggravated the conflict in the region, by making increasing use of campaigns of vilification and disinformation against Libya and its Head of State, Colonel Qaddafi.

The Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at their twenty-second Conference in Addis Ababa and the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the current session at the request of the Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries at their eighth Summit Conference certainly testify to the concern of all those Heads of State and Government over the most recent events in the Mediterranean.

The statements of previous speakers have refuted today, as in the past, attempts to justify the attack on the pretext of legitimate self-defence or reprisals for terrorist acts that Libya had allegedly committed or intended to commit. I say allegedly, because so far no formal proof has been provided to substantiate these allegations in any way. On the contrary, Libya has demolished them, because it has always declared itself to be against terrorism and all terrorist acts. Since then, we have learned from the media that acts attributed to Libya by the United States authorities are now attributed to another State in the region by the same United States authorities, which proves that the allegations made were merely a long-sought pretext.

Acts of political and economic pressure - the trade embargo and the freeze of assets - together with the United States military action against Libya can be seen only as part of a much broader objective, namely, the destabilization of the régime of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Compensation for such acts is called for.

All States should use peaceful means to resolve their disputes. That is our conviction, which is in accordance with the Charter.

(Mr. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

I wish to conclude by referring to an equally important principle of the Charter: the right of peoples to choose, without outside interference, the social and political policy and system that ensures their well-being and the full exercise of their sovereignty. Therefore, Burkina Faso remains convinced that, despite the severe test to which it was put during the aggression of April this year, Libya will continue to follow the path its great people has chosen - the path of the Libyan Revolution - so that the Libyan people may live and prosper in a free Jamahiriya.

Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros): Terrorism is the greatest enemy of humanity. My Government and the people it represents utterly abhor and condemn terrorism in all its forms. State-sponsored or group terrorism is something that can under no circumstances be tolerated or condoned. Those who aid and abet terrorism have to realize that it has no eyes and that it feeds on the blood of innocent bystanders. Any one of us is a potential victim of unholy acts of terrorism. Consequently, we should all declare war on terrorism.

Since we all agree that terrorism is the enemy of humanity, there should be a collective response by the international community to it. My delegation cannot condone the use by any country whatsoever of the pretext of fighting terrorism to launch a military attack against another country, thereby causing the death of innocent people and the massive destruction of property.

The aerial and naval attacks on the territory of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in April 1986 by a super-Power is unacceptable and therefore should be condemned. We are not in a position to accept as valid the reasons given to justify the attack.

The attack on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya created a very dangerous precedent and violated the principles of the Charter, which requires that States should settle their differences by peaceful means. The international community has the

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

right to be assured that such behaviour will not be repeated, and other Powers should not regard it as a precedent.

We consider that the claims of the people of Libya to appropriate compensation for their losses are valid.

Mr. PITARKA (Albania): The subject of the aggressive military acts of the United States of America against Libya, which is being discussed under agenda item 142, is one with which world public opinion is very well acquainted. It has already been considered by the Security Council and other international and regional bodies. Those acts have thus been drawn to the attention of - and condemned by - world public opinion, because they were of a truly aggressive nature and were carried out against an independent, sovereign country, where residential areas, hospitals, civilian buildings and other buildings were indiscriminately bombed in a surprise attack and tens of people, including children and the elderly, were killed while they slept.

The people and Government of Albania have more than once resolutely condemned, with profound indignation, those aggressive acts by the United States against the freedom, independence and sovereignty of the Libyan people. The military intervention against Libya, on top of many similar acts of aggression by United States imperialism against other peoples and countries, is further evidence of what our Government and country have constantly pointed out - that United States imperialism, just like Soviet social-imperialism, today represents the most aggressive power of our time, the most ferocious enemy of the freedom and independence of peoples. Flagrant violations of the sovereign rights of peoples, frenzied aggressiveness and brutality, disregard of the norms and principles of international law and disregard for international public opinion are all basic features of the policies and activities of United States imperialism - features

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

which have always been apparent, and not only in the case of the acts of aggression against Libya.

The adventurism of the United States knows no bounds. Its traces are to be seen in every part of the world - in the Middle East, Central America and elsewhere. In unleashing its attack on Libya, Washington once again showed the world that it stops at nothing, however cruel, atrocious and abominable it may appear to peace-loving peoples and countries and to public opinion in general.

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

As in other instances, United States politicians are trying their best to disguise their aggressive acts against Libya, their unbridled State terrorism, and in general, the whole inimical policy that they are actually pursuing against Libya in the guise of the fight against terrorism. The position of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania against terrorism is clear and known to all. It must, however, be stressed that it is a great irony that a big, aggressive Power such as the United States should talk about war against terrorism. Of course, here the United States is resorting to its preferred methods. It endeavours to put the seal of terrorism on the struggle of the Libyan people to defend their national sovereignty and integrity. It has done, and continues to do, the same with regard to the liberation struggles of the Palestinian people and other freedom-loving peoples that have waged and are waging a fight against foreign invasion, oppression and exploitation, for national liberation and emancipation. But peoples cannot and will never reconcile themselves to the State terrorism practised by United States imperialism, Soviet social-imperialism or any aggressive Power. Peoples will never submit to it.

A grave situation has been created not only around Libya, which is being kept under constant threats by United States imperialism, but in the whole of the Mediterranean and the Middle East in general. The United States is accompanying its threats about teaching a new lesson, so called, to Libya with all-round psychological war, political and diplomatic pressure, economic blockade, and overt demonstrations of force in the Mediterranean and near Libyan waters. The situation that has been generated presents great dangers for all the peoples and countries of that region, which has been turned into an area of war and of tension that escalates with each day that passes because of the rivalry of the two super-Powers and the increasing presence of their military-naval fleets.

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

The leader of the Albanian people and Party, comrade Ramiz Alia, at the Ninth Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania, which was convened at the beginning of this month, pointed out that

"The American military operations against Libya demonstrated that the situation in the Mediterranean has become ominous and is fraught with great dangers for all Mediterranean countries."

The Libyan people, like the other Arab brothers, have bitter experience of the policy and activities of United States imperialism in the Middle East and in the Mediterranean. Therefore, they forcefully and resolutely oppose it; and they are right. We are convinced that, as always, they will be vigilant and ready to smash every military intervention, no matter by whom, as well as the plots which the super-Powers hatch against their just cause.

Mr. ORAMAS OLIVA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): On 15 April this year United States warplanes indiscriminately bombed civilian sectors of the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi, in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, causing dozens of casualties, both killed and wounded, and thereby demonstrating the aggressive character of the present United States Administration.

For several months the United States had been carrying out provocative naval and aerial manoeuvres just off the Libyan coast in the area known as the Gulf of Sidra. At the time it was engaging in a sophisticated campaign to persuade people that Libya was the centre of international terrorism, resorting for that purpose to all kinds of conceivable and inconceivable means. Now, months later, it turns out that all of these psychological actions were part of a campaign of disinformation orchestrated by agencies of the United States Government. In other words, bogus information was put to work to make the people of the United States and the world public believe that the Libyans were at the centre of certain evils and thereby

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

justify the barbarous action of 15 April, the sinister purpose of which was the assassination of the leader of the Libyan revolution, Colonel Mu'ammār al-Qaddafi.

In order to justify that act of aggression the United States Administration invoked Article 51 of the Charter. There could hardly be anything more offensive to the international community than such mockery not only of the spirit but of the very letter of Article 51 of the Charter, which specifically sets forth

"the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations ..."

What is so dangerous and so profoundly serious in all this is that fairy stories have been thought up, fabrications have been used and the norms of international law that should govern relations among States have been invoked in a distorted manner in order to apply a sinister policy of State terrorism, and that this has been done by a permanent member of the Security Council, which has an obligation

"To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples ..."

In that connection, the Foreign Minister of my country stated the following:

"The unmistakable absence of military aggression against the United States wholly invalidates Reagan's attempts to find legal support for his sinister act of aggression. That is why it was impossible for the White House to win the support of its NATO allies, which not only repudiated his action but prohibited the overflight of their territories by the aggressive Yankee war planes, thus compelling the United State Air Force to make an unexpectedly long trip and carry out in-flight refuelling."

This is the pathological hatred of all social change, of all those that do not wish to follow the dictates of Washington, which has unleashed the fury to destroy it.

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

This is the policy applied to the Nicaraguans, the Angolans and all peoples that have decided to be master of their own destiny.

Our peoples want peace and wish to devote their energy to building a better future, because, as we have said repeatedly, we all have an equal right to life, regardless of the latitude in which we were born or the colour of our skin. What matters is that we are all human beings.*

*The President took the Chair.

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

Our peoples do not want to be victims of further strikes by the wounded eagle, nor do they want a peace of the kind advocated by the writer George Bernanos in his book The Great Cemeteries Beneath the Moon.

From the bottom of our hearts, we trust that the consideration of this item will induce those who once ordered the bombing of Libyan civilian areas and the elimination of the leader Qaddafi, to ponder these sinister and terroristic policies and to decide, for the sake of history, to sit down together with the peoples in the great venture of building a weapon-free world, of a world in which all resources will be used to provide food for the hungry, medicine for the sick and education for the illiterate, a world in which we will all be truly human beings and in which the blind selfishness of wealth and lust for power and conquest will be things of the prehistoric past.

The imperialists should not for one moment believe that their acts of aggression frighten the peoples of the world, nor that the spirit of Rambo, brought into politics, will have the same ending as in the film. On the contrary, the peoples will make sure that there will only be one final symphony, that of justice.

Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu): This is one of those items on the agenda of this session of the General Assembly on which small countries such as Vanuatu could find it convenient, or expedient, to remain silent. Conversely, it also happens to be one of those items on which small countries such as Vanuata dare not remain silent.

Some may ask, "Why concern yourselves?", "The Mediterranean region is too far from the South Pacific for you to concern yourselves", we have been told. "Be careful", we have been warned, "this question involves the military actions of a super-Power and is, therefore, too complex and too sensitive". "In this instance,

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

it is better to look the other way", some have said. "Terrorism must not only be condemned, but must also be punished", we have heard, and we agree.

However, the fact remains that none of us is the law unto himself or herself. Either we stand by the principles of our Charter, and abide by its words, or we stand for nothing and abide by nothing more than what, for the moment, seems to be convenient or expedient.

As we have stated on many occasions, no region in the world is too far from our own when it comes to matters of such fundamental principles. To adopt such a posture would be to shirk our duties and responsibilities as a Member of this world body. To adopt such a posture would be to ignore our own history, to compromise our own political independence, and to minimize our own ability to think and reason as rational human beings.

Might does not always make right. In fact, the opposite is often true. History is replete with examples. More often than not, excessive military power brings with it a shocking lack of humility and understanding of other peoples and other cultures. This and the frequently unquenchable thirst to dominate others are what have led to so many wars and conflicts throughout the ages.

Forty-one years ago this Organization was founded in the hope that mankind finally understood the limits of power and the folly of war. All over the world, people hoped and prayed that justice could be obtained and peace maintained. Five nations assumed permanent seats on the Security Council and with those seats special duties and responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and security. How then can the rest of us possibly look the other way in a matter such as this? How can we ignore the actions of a nation we have entrusted to be a guardian of peace? It is the very complexity and sensitivity of this issue that commands the careful thought and analysis of us all.

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

Terrorism is indeed a crime against humanity - all forms of terrorism without exception. There is no justification, none whatsoever, for random and senseless violence committed against innocent civilian non-combatants. However, terrorism is not a recent phenomenon. Nor is every accusation of terrorism tantamount to irrefutable proof of actual criminal conduct.

Let us remember that we have agreed to be governed by the rule of law. Mob rule or street justice have no place in modern international relations. We must not lose sight of the fact that a lynch mob is just as criminal, and often more so, than its intended victim. No society in the world condones a party taking the law into its own hands. How then can we, the nations of the world, accept one of our own Members doing so with such horrible consequences?

For the moment, let us simply, for the sake of argument, accept as true the very serious accusations which have been made against the political leadership of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. In actuality, we do not accept those accusations. However, even if we did, how does that then justify the killing of admittedly innocent civilians in Libya in April of this year? What theory of justice, what legal principle, what moral right, permits the taking of innocent lives because other innocent lives were taken elsewhere by those who may have had no connection, or, at best, a very remote connection, to the second set of victims?

Who gave any nation here the right to act in this manner? Who here is comfortable with such a precedent? What nation seated here today is willing to tell its own citizens that they can act similarly if they should feel aggrieved? Never mind following established legal procedures. Find someone who simply lives in the same city as the person you believe committed a wrong and exact random retribution. How long would such a society last? How long will our own community of nations last if all of us become vigilantes?

(Mr. Van Lierop, Vanuatu)

As a small nation, and as a thinking nation, Vanuata is vitally concerned about this subject. Silence on the military attack against Libya means acceptance of one more dangerous precedent in international relations. The gradual erosion of the rule of law serves none of us. If, as has been stated, the evidence against Libya is so overwhelming, why not openly produce that evidence? Let us all see what proof there is. As in other instances, let us all judge whether Libya has engaged in criminal activity or whether it has merely troubled, irritated, and antagonized a very powerful member of the world community.

For our part, we are prepared to examine any objective evidence. We are prepared to listen to any lucid argument. We are not, however, prepared to abdicate our responsibilities and to accept precipitous unilateral military action against Libya, a fraternal, small and rather vulnerable non-aligned State, or any other country.

Finally, we must also ask why such drastic action is deemed appropriate when it comes to Libya, while even the mildest of measures are deemed excessive when it comes to the arch-terrorist, illegal apartheid régime of South Africa? I confess, we can neither fathom nor accept the logic of this inconsistency.

Mr. SAEMALA (Solomon Islands): On 15 April 1986 the whole world was shaken by the United States air strike against Libya. Even the people in many remote areas of Solomon Islands who had radios were told that a country in North Africa by the Mediterranean Sea was bombed by the United States Air Force. The old people of Laulasi Island in Solomon Islands were reminded of the nightmare they had suffered on 7 August 1942 when their island, which was then outside the war zone, was devastated by United States bombs - by mistake, it was claimed. During the days and nights following the 15 April attack, the neighbouring countries were in a state of uncertainty as to whether or not the situation would escalate. Indeed, the Mediterranean region was momentarily destabilized. Peace and security in that region, as well as internationally, were threatened.

This scenario is given to show that in my delegation's view the subject before us deserves discussion under Article 11, paragraph 2 of the Charter. We do not subscribe to the view that the General Assembly has been meeting here since this morning at the behest of one particular member. The General Assembly is meeting to discuss a matter which has important implications for international peace and security. We are meeting to give testimony to the principles and purposes of the Charter which should guide each Member State's conduct in its international relations.

Thus, my delegation is approaching this debate from the point of view of considering the basic elements of draft resolution A/41/L.35. And we do this because Solomon Islands is a friend to all and enemy to none. If our views might appear over-simplified to some delegations, it is because we do not wish to cloud the issues of the resolution, as we see and understand them in their relation to the relevant Charter provisions.

Having examined the draft resolution, we have found these points to be fundamentally important. The resolution calls for: first, the reaffirmation of

(Mr. Saemala, Solomon Islands)

the principles and purposes of the Charter; secondly, condemnation of the military attack; thirdly, the non-use or threat of the use of force in the settlement of disputes; fourthly, non-extension of facilities for perpetrating acts of aggression; and, fifthly, compensation for the damage and loss of life resulting from the 15 April attack.

There are, of course, arguments that the attack was made in self-defence for terrorist attacks on United States citizens. Solomon Islands has deplored and condemned those acts of terrorism. Solomon Islands will continue to condemn terrorism in all its forms because we do not see it as a responsible, human and humane means of putting right the presumed or proved wrongdoings of others.

On 24 April 1986, my Government issued this statement:

"The Solomon Islands Government wish to make it clear that they condemn and deplore all forms of violence in international affairs. It follows that they deplore the deliberate sponsorship and practise of terrorism by the Libyan Government, and at the same time they also feel bound to deplore the way in which the United States Government has resorted to force, whatever the provocation. The Solomon Islands Government wish to see a rapid end to the bloodshed and misery suffered by innocent victims."

This statement was officially transmitted to both these Governments.

The Solomon Islands position is thus clear in spite of the justifications that have been pronounced in relation to the air strike of 15 April 1986. Furthermore, we do not regard the application of Article 51 of the Charter as relevant in these circumstances. In our view, based entirely on the public evidence of the United States air strike, the armed attack occurred against Libya. But the pursuance of this by Libya would be prevented in the Security Council by the use of the privilege of the veto by the United States.

(Mr. Saemala, Solomon Islands)

Leaving Article 51 aside, because it can be interpreted in so many ways by different people, my delegation would wish to look more at the key words in the statement quoted earlier. In that statement it was declared unequivocally that the Solomon Islands Government felt "bound to deplore the way in which the United States Government has resorted to force, whatever the provocation."

These words make it abundantly clear that the Solomon Islands Government regards the explanations that have been offered by the United States Government for its use of force as unacceptable.

Mr. KIKUCHI (Japan): In considering agenda item 142 before us, we believe that Member States should consider all elements which might lead to the escalation of a conflict. I mean that particular attention should be paid to international terrorism, especially terrorism sponsored or supported by States, which frustrates peaceful efforts towards the resolution of conflicts.

It is in this context that my Government welcomed the historic consensus adoption of General Assembly resolution 40/61, which condemns all forms of terrorism as criminal. However, can we say that in the past year acts of international terrorism have been effectively prevented? Contrary to our hopes, unfortunately, we have witnessed a series of terrorist incidents, including the bombing attacks at the airports in Rome and Vienna.

It would, of course, be wrong to maintain that international terrorist incidents are unrelated to various long-standing problems plaguing the international community. Of all the issues demanding our attention, the Middle East problem is the one in which visible progress towards a peaceful solution would have significantly reduced acts of international terrorism.

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

The international community has for a long time given serious consideration to specific measures to prevent international terrorism. Efforts to devise such measures have been made both within and outside the United Nations. The collective will of the international community has been expressed in the adoption of instruments which embody clear and specific principles in dealing with such areas as hijacking, the protection of diplomats and other internationally protected persons, and hostage-taking. Moreover, we welcome the fact that this year the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) are undertaking new initiatives for the suppression of terrorism in the areas of their respective jurisdictions. Nevertheless, it is extremely regrettable that acts of terrorism, whose victims are innocent people, continue unabated. It would probably be incorrect to place all responsibility for such acts on a small group of exceptionally criminal individuals; many international terrorist incidents are carried out in a highly organized and well-planned manner.

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

I should like to re-emphasize that it is generally recognized by the international community that international terrorism, in whatever form, must not be tolerated. In adopting General Assembly resolution 40/61, all the Members of the United Nations reaffirmed this recognition. In particular, operative paragraph 6 of that resolution, in referring to the obligation of Member States to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in terrorist acts in other States, or acquiescing in such activities within their territory, reflects the rules clearly enshrined in the Declaration on Principles of International Law on Friendly Relations, which is annexed to General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV). Member States should regard the provisions contained in that paragraph as a basis for their consideration of their fundamental obligations to prevent international terrorism.

An attempt made in the 1970s by the United Nations to undertake a comprehensive study of international terrorism failed because of political difficulties. On the other hand, by focusing its attention on various aspects of terrorism, the United Nations has made progress in devising a specific and concrete approach to control it. What has been made clear in that process are, first, the necessity of close co-operation among countries to prevent terrorism, and secondly, the obligation of all countries to refuse sanctuary to the perpetrators of terrorist acts. If we accept these two points as indisputable premises, then we must conclude, even without invoking specific provisions of specific treaties, that countries which conspire in acts of terrorism or actively abet such acts, represent a serious challenge to law and order in the international community. Indeed, unless this is acknowledged, our consideration in various forums of measures to prevent terrorism will suffer a setback.

(Mr. Kikuchi, Japan)

The Government of Japan interpreted the consensus adoption of General Assembly resolution 40/61 as an assurance that, at least among United Nations Member States, there is no country that supports terrorism. We wish we could assert with confidence that this is the case.

We were greatly shaken, however, by the recent series of well-organized and planned incidents of international terrorism, involving a certain State.

In this regard, the position of my Government is well reflected in the statement on international terrorism issued in Tokyo, May 1986, which is available in United Nations document A/41/354.

My Government reaffirms its condemnation of international terrorism in all its forms. The international community should take all possible and appropriate measures to deter such terrorism.

Regarding the appropriateness of measures which a State may be obliged to take against a State that supports terrorism, we understand that there are circumstances in which a Government may be compelled to take decisive action in order to protect the lives and property of its own nationals. However, in order to eliminate the possibility that such circumstances may arise, it is necessary to establish as soon as possible a system through which the international community can deal collectively and resolutely with the State supporting terrorism.

What is necessary now is not a debate on the appropriateness of measures which a Government was compelled to take in the past to combat terrorism sponsored or supported by States. But rather, the international community as a whole should renew its determination to take every possible measure to eradicate all forms of terrorism, including terrorism supported or sponsored by States.

Mr. McLEAN (Canada): My delegation has listened carefully to the statements made this morning and this afternoon on the item brought to this Assembly by Libya. We believe that this item does not, however, reflect the broader underlying problem that should be our specific concern at this time. We are, therefore, in the time given to use to intervene, moving from the specifics of Libya's charges because of Canada's concern about international terrorism, and especially our deep concern about State-sponsored terrorism.

Canada believes that co-operation in multilateral organizations provides the best hope for defeating international terrorism. It is, of course, relatively easy for two like-minded States to agree on an anti-terrorist resolution, and to find concrete ways to combat that threat. But agreement becomes more difficult as more parties are added to such agreements. However, as resolution 40/61 demonstrated only one year ago, progress is possible within the United Nations community.

Members will recall that at the General Assembly session last year, we all assisted in demonstrating the direction of the future. Victory lies, however, not only in our adopting that resolution unanimously, but in proceeding from that condemnation of international terrorism, to the point of ending it. Resolution 40/61 was an important step. But, surely it was only one of many steps to be taken.

There is important anti-terrorist work being done elsewhere in the United Nations family. I think, for example, of events at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, where Canada recently sponsored a resolution. That resolution will provide for the extradition or prosecution of persons who commit acts of violence at international airports. As I speak as a parliamentarian, I have in mind two of my constituents who died over the Atlantic in the Air India disaster which, we have reason to believe, was caused by an act of terrorism. The ICAO resolution is only one of many steps to be taken. But we

(Mr. McLean, Canada)

believe that it is by taking such steps, not through attempting dramatic actions, that the victory will be won. At the same time, in the words of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney: "Canada considers that terrorism cannot permanently be eradicated without resolving the root political problems which give rise to it."

For several years, Canada has co-operated closely with the other six nations of the Economic Summit Group in facilitating the work of our counter-terrorist experts. Only last May, the Summit Seven expressed concern about Libya's identification with acts of State terrorism. Such steps, by specialized forums, we believe, are essential. We will continue to support their anti-terrorist work. But we believe that important future victories will come from progressively larger groups of nations, as the consensus against unacceptable behaviour continues to grow and grow. We are encouraged by trends, indicating that this is the case at present.

(Mr. McLean, Canada)

We see promising signs of the day when the United Nations will no longer simply condemn international terrorism but take concrete steps towards eradicating it. Already terrorists are finding that there are fewer and fewer places in which their presence will be tolerated. Their acts are unacceptable almost everywhere across our globe. When this process of gradual isolation is complete and when the international legal régime allows terrorists no bureaucratic means by which to avoid prosecution, then and only then the battle will have been won.

We do not delude ourselves that the enemy will be overcome easily. It will be only through the dogged persistence of the international community that we shall see the end of this intractable problem. Canada will continue to support every step that is seriously intended to move us in that direction. Unfortunately, the draft resolution before us on this item would not help in that respect.

Mr. POTTS (Australia): It has been 14 years since the Secretary-General of this Organization, in response to a series of brutal terrorist attacks, requested the United Nations to consider

"measures to prevent terrorist and other forms of violence which endanger or take innocent human lives or jeopardize fundamental freedoms".

Since that time there have been a number of notable successes in the struggle to control violence of this kind, including the 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons including Diplomatic Agents, and the 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages. Last December the Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution condemning terrorism in all its forms. Other important measures have been and are being taken by organizations such as the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization.

(Mr. Potts, Australia)

Yet during the same period the world has seen a proliferation of terrorist groups and a dramatic increase in the frequency and scope of terrorist attacks. The number of casualties from such attacks continues to mount despite all the efforts to prevent them. Only last September we witnessed the bloody hijacking of a Pan American aircraft in Karachi and the slaughter of innocent worshippers in a synagogue in Istanbul. Bombs have exploded in cities as far apart as Paris and Seoul.

It is of particular concern that the increased level of violence in recent years stems in part from the involvement of certain States Members of this Organization which have seen terrorist tactics or the employment of terrorist surrogates as a means of extending their foreign policy options beyond the boundaries of accepted international behaviour. Such a development not only threatens individual lives and liberties but also weakens the fabric of international relations on which depend the security and well-being of all States.

The issue that has now been brought before the General Assembly under agenda item 142 was debated in the Security Council in April of this year. On 16 April, during that debate, the Australian representative on the Security Council said that his Government accepted that there was a substantial body of evidence pointing to Libyan involvement in acts of international terrorism. For Australia it was a matter of deep regret that the conflict had taken place and that the situation had reached the point where the United States felt compelled by Libyan provocations to take military action.

The Australian representative in the Council went on to say that it was an absolute and essential requirement that Colonel Qaddafi terminate his Government's direction of, export of and support for terrorist activities against civilians and civilian targets such as had been directed against the United States. That would mean, as a consequence, that the United States should desist from attacking Libya.

(Mr. Potts, Australia)

Our efforts should now be directed towards ensuring that the situation which gave rise to the action is not repeated. Australia fully recognizes the difficulty of reaching agreement in this forum on a constructive approach to the problem of terrorism. This Organization must continue to show resolute opposition to terrorism, as it did with its consensus adoption of resolution 40/61.

For its part, my Government unequivocally condemns terrorism of all kinds, wherever it may occur and by whomsoever it may be committed. We are committed to doing whatever we can to combat this problem and have already joined with others, in the United Nations and elsewhere, in efforts to prevent terrorism and to punish those responsible.

In our own region, the South Pacific, there is a strong tradition of respect for democracy and self-determination and a disdain for terrorism and violence. Speaking for Australia, we have a particular determination to ensure that the scourge of terrorism is not exported to the South Pacific.

The events of last April also serve to highlight the urgent need for the Member States of this Organization to commit themselves to a more determined effort to follow the avenues which are available to them under the Charter for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

It is often argued that it is not possible to distinguish between a terrorist and a freedom fighter; that the use of one particular label is a purely subjective assessment depending on one's support for or opposition to a particular cause. However, there is a distinction. It is questionable to describe as terrorists those who seek the overthrow of a cruel and repugnant régime through the use of force when all other efforts to achieve peaceful change have failed; but violence can never be justified if there are alternatives, nor can the threat of violence

(Mr. Potts, Australia)

against innocent civilians ever be condoned. Such actions are those of the terrorist and, regrettably, such actions are a regular feature of life in the Middle East.

How can responsible societies seek to prevent the rising number of incidents of terrorism which are committed on their territory and against their citizens? It is, of course, necessary to seek to solve as well as prevent the problem of terrorism. The primary objective must be the removal of the causes of terrorism. There may well be a legitimate cause for grievance, but that does not mean that we acknowledge the right to resort to terrorism.

If the potential for future terrorist violence is to be significantly reduced there must be a greater effort on the part of the international community to resolve the fundamental root causes of extremist violence. Often, terrible behaviour springs from terrible causes. It is unrealistic to expect that all sources of terrorism can be eliminated, but where there are legitimate grievances these must be addressed. There is a need for more effective diplomacy and more imaginative solutions to the world's many complex problems. Above all, efforts must be made to rebuild the confidence of States and others in diplomatic processes and meaningful negotiations as the best means fairly, peacefully and sympathetically to achieve change. For unless peaceful negotiations are seen as a real option terrorist and other forms of international violence will continue, to the harm of us all.

Mr. OGOUMA (Benin) (interpretation from French): Fortunately, the General Assembly followed the recommendation made by the Summit Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held respectively in Addis Ababa and Harare, that the question of the aerial and naval military attack against Libya by the Government of the United States in April 1986 should be thoroughly considered and analysed by the international community at the present session.

Seven months ago, despite appeals from all sides for moderation and restraint, despite meetings held by the Security Council on several occasions, at the request of various countries, everyone in the world was an astonished or conniving witness to the airborne attack against Libya. That armed attack, aimed at certain strategic targets, including the very person of the Libyan leader, Muammar Qaddafi, caused loss of human life, particularly among civilians.

Let me recall that, as was stated in The New York Times on 27 April 1986, 33 United States bombers of various types participated in that co-ordinated attack; some of them took off from a United States base in the United Kingdom, and others from United States aircraft carriers off the coast of Libya.

This premeditated armed attack, which claimed so many victims among civilians - including even a child of Muammar Qaddafi, the leader of the Libyan Revolution - and which caused such material damage and loss of life among the Libyan population and the foreign community, was the culmination of a long process of provocation and intimidation. Faced with that, the international community should have asked itself the following questions, in particular: Why was not the situation around the Gulf of Sidra the subject of direct peaceful discussions between the parties concerned? Why was it necessary to launch the attacks of 24 March 1986 and the escalation which took place on 15 April 1986 and which in

(Mr. Ogouma, Benin)

fact was simply unprovoked armed aggression against Libya? Why does one country accuse another of being terrorist or of promoting terrorism when the former is itself pursuing a policy of State terrorism? Why is a super-Power, a permanent member of the Security Council, engaging in military aggression against a sovereign country, on the pretext of combating terrorism? Why let loose war machinery and armed violence in order to eliminate the cause of a certain type of violence? Finally, why and how does a small country like Libya, located thousands of miles from the United States and with 3.5 million inhabitants, represent a threat to a super-Power with more than 235 million inhabitants?

Of course, the Security Council was not able to reply directly to all those questions by condemning, as it should have done, this airborne armed attack, this outright armed aggression against Libya, this serious threat to international peace and security. Although the Security Council, paralysed by the use of the veto, was not able to meet the world-wide expectations, it must be recognized that the overwhelming majority of countries and Governments in the world unequivocally condemned this heinous, inexcusable act.

In that connection, it should be recalled also that the overwhelming majority of representatives who took part in the debates in the Security Council on this question were very clear in repudiating and condemning the unfounded and unjustified recourse to Articles 2 and 51 of the United Nations Charter - and particularly to the right of self-defence - to defend its thesis of armed aggression.

The armed aggression committed against Libya was a well-thought-out act, programmed with various scenarios, of which the target was not only Libya but, indeed, other countries of the region which must be weakened, dominated and vanquished in the overall framework of a strategy to acquire control of the region so that no voice may be raised in the Mediterranean region to influence or impede

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the implementation of a Middle East policy that is not favourable to the peoples directly concerned, particularly the Palestinian people. The emergence on that side of the Mediterranean of a Libya opposed to the Camp David Agreements cannot be tolerated.

That is the context in which Libya, active in the anti-Zionist struggle, fully supporting the national liberation movements and struggling to become a self-sufficient military, economic and political force, has become a favourite target.

The same reproach is directed at Libya as at Nicaragua and so many other countries that want to remain the sole masters of their fate and to build the society of their choice.

In the light of all that, it is easy to understand why a coalition and organized disinformation were required in order to wage a campaign of slander against Libya, why it was necessary to discredit Libya. It was felt that this would provide an alibi that would justify, in the eyes of the international community, barbaric aggression and continued attacks on the security of the Libyan Government and its continuity of action.

All those actions with which we are so familiar, all those provocations represented by the large-scale military manoeuvres off the coast of Libya, the fights in the Gulf of Sidra, the verbal attacks against the Libyan leaders, the blockade, the freezing of Libyan assets in United States banks and, finally, the armed attack of 15 April 1986, have the same goal: to weaken, dominate and vanquish the indomitable Libyan people.

The same can be said about heroic Nicaragua, which is washed by the waters of the Pacific and the Atlantic. That is why, to our minds, the region of the Gulf of Sidra cannot be separated from the Central American region. In one place Libya is the target, in the other it is Nicaragua.

(Mr. Ogouma, Benin)

By speaking in this debate my delegation wishes simply to state again here one of the cardinal principles on which our Organization is based - that is, that States must refrain in international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other States, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the Organization.

The Government of the People's Republic of Benin will, for its part, always abide in matters of foreign policy by the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and the peaceful settlement of disputes. That is why our Government and our people strongly oppose any policy based on force or the threat of force in international relations. We are opposed to any form of terrorism, whatever its origin, to settle political questions.

The aerial and naval attack against Libya on 15 April 1986 was inexcusable and reprehensible. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and its people must be compensated for the great material damage caused by that attack.

We wish to ask a question that we have already asked in the Security Council: what will happen if the strongest and the most powerful are allowed to harass the weakest with impunity, in order to wrest from them what they value the most: freedom and national sovereignty?

Mr. RAJAIE-KHORASSANI (Islamic Republic of Iran): American armed

aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is one of the exceptionally strange military developments unique in the history of warfare. In this operation United States air and naval forces attacked the Libyan cities of Tripoli and Benghazi in a series of operations and reportedly killed at least 100 civilians. They bombarded a care centre for the disabled and killed a few of those helpless patients - a few persons who could not move, could not run away, and probably could not even cry out to ask for help.

The number of aircraft that took part in the operation is not known; but, according to reliable and unofficial reports, eight of them were shot down. American officials have not yet revealed the exact number of aircraft lost in the operation.

Among the casualties were many women and children: 30 children were reported to have been killed, one of them President Qaddafi's daughter - a one-and-a-half-year-old girl who was crushed under the boots of President Reagan of the United States.

That military showdown by the American super-Power was therefore not really a genuine combat operation. It was a desperate act of cowardice. It was not an act of self-defence but, rather, an act of genocide, a major criminal act indeed - a crime carried out with modern sophisticated technology, but still a crime. It was not a defence operation at all; it was and remains beyond all doubt an act of State terrorism.

The American armed aggression against Libya remains unique in the history of warfare in many respects. The United States is well known as a super-Power with the greatest military capability known to the world; it has a population of 220 million - and everyone knows the privileges of that huge population: the universities, air bases, industries, technology, facilities, roads, trains, buses,

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the City of New York and the whole gigantic panoply of the American modern entity. It has all the technology in the world. In addition, it has plundered from North Africa alone many times Libya's total assets, without mentioning the incomes of American corporations throughout the Muslim world and the fortunes that American oil companies are making from the oil of the Arab Muslim States. Nevertheless, they are ready to start a third world war with the expectation of securing a flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. American fighting power is 10 times greater than American thinking power; yet, at least technologically or militarily speaking, it is a super-Power. We should therefore view the situation as an aggressive confrontation between a super-Power and a small independent third-world nation whose population is hardly 2 per cent of that of the United States. In this respect, it is indeed an unequal confrontation.

The United States dispatched Third Air Force F/B111 fighters over 2,800 nautical miles from their base in England, used carrier-borne attack bombers and carrier-based attack aircraft and simply killed women and children and some disabled persons. Very courageous, is that not so? It was heroic in a sense. United States might was mobilized against a small country which is only accused of having bought too much weaponry for its self-defence. The United States Administration wanted to be tough, as some American film stars sometimes indicate. Instead it proved miserable. Yes, it was miserable. Everybody knows that it fell short. It failed - and that is all that is unique about that fiasco. Why and how did it fail?

After the incident, a very well-informed American scholar came to my office to solicit my advice on a book that he claimed he was writing about the Middle East. In the context of that conversation, he said:

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"Everybody knows that we failed in Libya. We could actually force the Government of Honduras to request the assistance of the United States in transporting its troops to the Nicaraguan border, but we could not do anything to Qaddafi... Our objective was not to hit a missile base or to kill innocent people in Libya; our aim was to topple Qaddafi, but we failed."

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Islamic Republic of Iran)

The person who made that comment is a genuine American scholar, whose views are taken very seriously. According to him, there was speculation that with the attack on civilians Libya's internal stability would crack and then, even if Qaddafi physically survived, his régime would easily be toppled, thanks to a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) covert operation. All those calculations, which were also based on some intimate whisperings and consultations between some American officials and some Arab rulers, turned out to be totally wrong. Qaddafi survived and gained strength and further stability, the unity of all the people of Libya was strengthened, and the United States conspiracy flatly failed. The people of Libya stood firm behind their leader.

In the middle of chaos, created by the United States bombardment, President Qaddafi exploited a slogan most intelligently and most successfully. He simply came to the crowd and with the rest of the people of Libya shouted "Death to America" - and he won. Bravo! It was an excellent move. Third-world countries do not have aircraft carriers; instead, they have God-given wit and wisdom, and therefore they win.

How interesting it is that anyone who begins with the slogan "Death to America" is a winner! Why is that so? Does it not convey any warning to the American public about the way in which their Administration conducts foreign policy? Should this really be the state of affairs in a super-Power? Is it not embarrassing to those ladies and gentlemen who are supposed to represent the official position of the United States in international forums to see that the slogan "Death to America" is a talisman of political victory over the United States?

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Islamic Republic of Iran)

The American intelligence machinery can, of course, conceal from the American public the demise of American pilots killed during the operations. Their bodies, if discovered at all, unlike the corpses of some other American soldiers that are exploited for the purpose of influencing public opinion in the United States, will not be received at the airport by the President, with bands and a guard of honour. Rather, they will simply be anonymously buried in some no-man's-land. Otherwise, the American public would have had to be informed of the number of American pilots killed in the operation.

But there is something more alarming in this fiasco - alarming for the people of the United States. It has to do with the reason why the whole operation was conducted.

Representatives will remember very well that the professed justification for the United States military aggression against Libya was the allegation of Libyan support for terrorism. First, that allegation is still awaiting substantiation. All that we have heard from American official and unofficial sources concerns a telephone conversation which they claim had been held between some Libyan mission and somebody else. Interestingly enough, after the perpetration of the terrorist attack on Libya the same sources claimed that Syria, not Libya, was responsible. These are only some of the clouds that surround those silly, baseless allegations.

However, the actual incidents which at one time Libya was claimed to have been responsible for or to have supported, and at another time others were claimed to have been responsible for or to have supported, were the attacks at the Rome and Vienna airports, which were actually carried out not against any United States airline, but against El Al, the Zionist airline. Therefore, the United States has been acting - in all its heroic operations against the care centre for the disabled

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in Libya - as the puppet of the Zionist base occupying Palestine. It was, and still is, fighting a proxy war on behalf of the criminal non-entity that so far has brought the American people and the people of the Middle East nothing but division, discord, death and misery. Sadly, the great super Power is behaving just like a contemptible puppet, dancing to the tune of the Zionist lobby, and for this sinister, bewitching-tune the good-hearted American people are paying the price.

After the incidents at the Rome and Vienna airports, the rulers of the Zionist non-entity occupying Palestine openly ordered the American Administration to heed its "responsibilities", its international responsibilities, because the Zionists' attack on refugee camps in Tunisia had already disclosed their ugliness and had brought them the infamy and opprobrium they deserved. Their best choice, therefore, was to issue a warrant to the obedient super-Power to shoulder that unholy burden for them.

In return, the Zionist lobby promised propaganda amounting to simply shouting to the audience from outside the wrestling ring how savage and powerful their beast in the ring was. "We must use force against the terrorist", the representative of the illegitimate entity told the United Nations and, on repeated occasions, the media. Nobody asked who the "we" were and who were the terrorists. We all agree that we must use force against terrorism and against the terrorists, but who are "we", and who are the terrorists? This question has still not been answered.

A situation that essentially resulted from the illegal occupation of Palestine was misrepresented to the American public by the Zionist representative as a fundamentalist antagonism towards the West. All representatives have heard that claim made on television.

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Islamic Republic of Iran)

He put the occupation of Palestine totally out of this context and hid himself behind the West, as if the Zionist occupation is equal, to the entirety of the West, whereas the enemy of the Muslims is not the West but the Zionist entity itself. All the problems of the United States in the Muslim world at large stem not from its being in the West, but rather from its loyalty to the Zionist lobby. We sincerely hope that sooner or later the American public will recognize the real source of its common problem with the Muslim world, and the rest of the world. Nevertheless, it is really sad to see a super Power behave like a monster in the hands of a satanic minority, which is also occupying our beloved Palestine.

In order to make the criminal operation look justifiable in the eyes of the people inside and outside the United States the Zionist-imperialist media launched a campaign of disinformation - and the Assembly knows the role of the media. This sinister role is still continuing. The actions against Libya are also transformed from momentary short-term armed actions to long-term economic, technological and cultural sanctions. Libyan assets are still frozen and technical assistance, even for medical purposes, are withheld from Libya.

The Permanent Representative of Libya has seriously challenged all United States and Zionist allegations of support for terrorism by declaring the readiness of his country for an international investigation. To the best of my knowledge, that declaration still stands, while no response has been heard from the claimants. Why? Simply because Libya is right and the United States is wrong. Otherwise, the best way to ascertain the truth of the situation would be an investigation. We therefore appeal to the international body to see the situation objectively and firmly and not to permit the United States and the Zionist lobby behind it to perpetuate such awful crimes against the Muslims of the Middle East and North Africa. This will befall all of you if you remain silent. Syria one

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day, Libya the next, then Iran and sooner or later it will be at your door. To the extent that the third world countries wish to remain independent from American influence and intervention, they suffer from American plots and problems. Please take collective action against American State terrorism, which is perpetrated always in the interest of the Zionist base occupying Palestine. Please do not condone American State terrorism, because of the advanced and sophisticated technology with which it is equipped. Terrorism is terrorism whether carried out from the air or at sea.

My Government condemns the United States armed aggression against Libya. We strongly condemn the Zionist conspiracy which is the main agent behind United States crimes in the region. We appeal to the American people to make a distinction between the interests of the United States in the world and the sinister Zionist objectives.

Let us hope that the super Power will prove capable of liberating itself from the Zionist bewitchment. We sincerely ask the General Assembly to acknowledge the responsibility of the United States with regard to all the losses, material and human, incurred by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. We hope that our collective action will finally control international terrorism, always launched by the Zionists and the Zionist entity against the Muslim world and primarily against Palestine.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, I now call on the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): The General Assembly has heard a lot today about the facts, about the aggression, about the details, about the legal aspects, so I shall try to spare them hearing the same statement, but I would rather discuss the aspect of this item that we are debating, which is the

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

United States aggression against Libya, from perhaps a different aspect and a different perspective.

A few days ago we witnessed a hot debate on our little television screens. The item was terrorism or how to fight terrorism, or something along those lines. The panelists were prominent persons representing different departments in the Washington Administration. Naturally, one of the panelists, who incidentally was given a privileged position and spoke at length, was the representative of Israel, a client State or a special department in the Washington Administration. So we are not surprised to really note the sort of trend that was followed during that debate.

I agree that at the outset the debate proceeded along the lines adopted in General Assembly resolution 40/61, condemning as criminal all acts, methods and practices of terrorism wherever and by whomever committed, and deploring the loss of innocent human lives which resulted from such acts of terrorism. But, the question arises as to what is meant by "whomever", and this really needs a little bit of clarification.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Is it not an act of aggression - aggression as defined by the General Assembly - when the act results in the loss of innocent lives? Is it not an act of terrorism, of State terrorism? And when a major Power, a permanent member of the Security Council uses its military might and air force to commit such an act of terrorism, does not such an act fall within the purview of resolution 40/61, unanimously adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1985?

The debate I referred to was, moreover - and this is an important point - steered towards the exclusion of the element in that resolution which called for the study of the underlying causes of those forms of terrorism and acts of violence, and so on.

Are we to conclude then that a victim of aggression, of usurpation of rights, who has been robbed of his home and property, who is a refugee as a result of occupation and of every kind of discrimination, who discharges his duty and exercises his right of legitimate struggle in defence of his people's inalienable right to self-determination and independence, who is a freedom fighter, is to be condemned as a terrorist, while we are called upon - or at least in this case the media and the TV screen were trying to call upon the viewers - to uphold the alleged right of States to commit acts of terrorism resulting in the loss of innocent lives? They called it self-defence regardless of whether it was self-defence or not. This is a travesty of justice and a denial, a negation, of the norms of international law and the rules that govern relations between and among States.

The aggression by the United States against Libya has no justification. It is an outright act of State terrorism. It is a flagrant violation of the principles enshrined in the Charter. This nonchalant behaviour and policy of the United States Administration is nothing but the arrogance of power.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

If the United States had any reason whatever to take action against Libya, the Charter prescribes the procedure to be followed. But, unfortunately, the gunboat mentality and policy remains the beacon guiding the actions of the Reagan Administration.

It was sad to note that on that TV show a representative of the United States asserted that the attack was launched against Libya simply because Libya is an easy target. Easy target or not, aggression is aggression, and that act of State terrorism resulted in the loss of innocent lives. In our view, it was incumbent upon the Western States to dissociate themselves immediately from that act, not to acquiesce, far less to provide facilities.

There is no need here to undertake a study of the underlying causes of that form of State terrorism that is practised by the Government of the United States. It has been very well publicized. The policy of the current Administration is aimed at the continued destabilization of the region, and continued armed conflict in the area, since they thrive on the blood of others, and of course they thrive on undermining the development of the developing third world.

Are we to believe the beautiful recitations of good will and defence of the cause of peace and stability at a time when the United States is openly offering supplies to the enemies of properly institutionalized governments, like those of Nicaragua and Angola. I refer to that overt supply in those two countries only by way of example to show to what extent the United States believes it can insult the intelligence of the international community.

But in the case of the aggression against Libya, it was more than a covert or overt act; it was full scale, undeclared war.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

We can still remember a few things we were taught at school. An American founding father told us: "You can fool all the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time". As we have seen in the last few days, the credibility of the United States has gone down the drain. Sad, but this is a fact. But the question is: is Libya the only target? United States policies and actions are directed against the Palestinian people and the Arab nation, in addition to their policy of destabilization. Here I wish to refer only to the direct action taken by the United States against my people. Thousands of millions of United States dollars' worth of lethal and super-sophisticated weaponry were utilized to achieve the purpose of eliminating, physically eliminating, thousands of innocent Palestinians and Lebanese.

We have to recall the holocaust and the act of genocide in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila. What brings this to mind at the moment is the fact that the Israeli army general who was in charge of the region was indicted by an Israeli court of inquiry and dismissed from his post in the Israeli army for his complicity in the crime. Recently, he was reinstated in the Israeli armed forces. And as a reward for those atrocious crimes that he committed and the acts of genocide that were carried out under his supervision, what did he get? He was welcomed as the new military attaché at the Israeli embassy in Washington D.C. Did the United States really have to come out so overtly and openly to condemn itself in the public eye and also to assert its complicity - indirectly it may be, but it is complicity in that act of genocide and the holocaust of Sabra and Shatila.

Let us hope that this debate will help to put an end to such acts and crimes. But that end to such acts and crimes can only be achieved through addressing the causes. In almost all cases those causes are political. We should jointly try to resolve those problems, preferably by political ways and means.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Of course, in this Assembly, in this Organization, there must be a remedy for this evil. I wonder, is it wise of us to consider that the general condemnation of the United States aggression as voiced in this Assembly will bring a message to the Administration in Washington? Will it bring a message to the American people? Will it bring a message that will make the Reagan Administration think twice before it decides to strike again, will make it realize that this is 1986 and that gunboat policies are rejected by the international community, and, what is more, that those gunboat policies will be opposed by all means? Will this message reach those who were accessories in helping the United States to commit that crime, before, during or after the aggression against Libya?

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

What, then becomes of the Charter, if the United States is to take the law into its own hands? There would be no Charter, no International Court of Justice; maybe there is no need for us to be here.

We are delighted to note that, as was stated earlier this evening, the 12 members of the European Community believe that

"acts of terrorism are never justified and do not serve whatever political cause the perpetrators claim to be furthering". (supra, p. 13)

I only wish that statement had included a little insertion to the effect that acts of terrorism, even when committed by States, are never justified, for it is the acts committed with the use of supersonic planes that do much greater damage in the world. To the representative who spoke on behalf of the Twelve we say that we are confident that the Twelve will contribute to the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the problems afflicting the Middle East, particularly - and we would say solely - through a just solution to the question of Palestine, the core of the conflict. The General Assembly will be addressing that issue on Friday, and we look forward to the objective and positive contribution of the Twelve.

The PRESIDENT: I call now on representatives wishing to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): In the debate this morning the

Permanent Representatives of Libya and Syria made a number of insulting and false allegations against my country. For some reason it was felt necessary to allude to the Heathrow Airport case of April this year. There is conclusive evidence of official Syrian involvement in that attempted act of terrorism. Nothing either Libya or Syria has said either here or elsewhere has in any way undermined the damning evidence accepted in court. Rhetoric does not alter facts.

The Permanent Representative of Libya sought to present, in stark contradiction of recent history, a picture of peace-loving, law-abiding Libya. Unfortunately, facts, including some admitted by the Libyan Government, show that that Government does not live up to General Assembly resolution 40/61, which

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

If Libya and Syria want friendly relations, they must make their actions conform to that norm of international behaviour.

Mr. TREIKI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): The former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau once said it was difficult being the neighbour of an elephant. I do not think he was wrong. Clearly, it is equally difficult to be the friend or ally of an elephant. Being the neighbour of an elephant means following the elephant's orders and instructions, and that is even more so for the ally of an elephant.

Today this Assembly heard statements by representatives of the peoples of the world - the non-aligned world, the Islamic world, Africa, the Arab nation and the developing countries. All those statements unequivocally condemned the United

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States' act of aggression. As the Non-Aligned Movement so clearly stated in Harare, the United States has committed an act of State terrorism.

We have heard some strange statements from some of the allies and neighbours of the elephant, who of course gain benefits and dollars from that elephant. In those statements they tried to obfuscate the truth and conceal it from the Assembly. Even those whose relationship with the elephants started in the charred ruins of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have tried to turn up the volume of their transistor radios to drown the sound of the atomic explosions that destroyed those cities.

As for the representative of the United Kingdom, I must say with all due respect that his memory seems short. He has attempted to lecture the peoples of the world about terrorism. Yet I know that he has a thorough and objective knowledge of the history of his own country. He knows the crimes his country has perpetrated against many peoples, in South Africa, India, Palestine and the rest of the Middle East, and also against the people of Libya. We would like to hear from the representative of the United Kingdom about the sentences passed by British courts on Ben-Gurion and Begin, who were denied entry to the United Kingdom. However, I am sure his memory will fail him there.

We are not discussing the question of terrorism here - although we are quite prepared to do so - but the question of aggression: the aggression perpetrated against Libya, and the children who fell victim to that aggression. We should have liked to hear Britain's views on that subject. But what could Britain say? It was a party to terrorism and was used as its tool. The British representative spoke of the affair of the attempt to blow up the aircraft. As to that, I have read the statement of the French Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac, as reported in The New York Times, in his admission to the Washington Post that Mossad was in

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Jamahiriya)

fact behind the conspiracy against the plane at Heathrow Airport. Was Mr. Chirac lying? Were officials of the Federal Republic of Germany lying? I should like to hear from Sir John Thomson's lips that the West Germans have lied, that the French have lied, that Jacques Chirac has lied.

We all condemn terrorism, and are prepared to co-operate in fighting it, but we condemn it in its widest sense. Do Sir John Thomson and the other friends and allies of the elephant really condemn the Sabra and Shatila massacres, and others of which the Palestinian people have been victim? Perhaps Sir John Thomson would say the Palestinian victims were merely Arabs and were therefore not really human, while the British are supermen, as witnessed by the fact that in the past they had the right to occupy so many territories belonging to other peoples. Now that the United Kingdom has become a smaller State and no longer an Empire, it wants to teach us lessons. It wants also to preserve its alliance with the elephant, the super-Power, and carry out the designs of that Power.

Where is the logic in all that? What does the representative of the United Kingdom really think about the dozens of victims - including women and children - who have been massacred? We could show him photographs; he could add them to other evidence of the crimes perpetrated by the British Empire, on which the sun used never to set.

(Mr. Treiki, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The United Nations is no longer what it was in the past. The United Nations is the conscience of the world - the kind of world that has vanquished the British Empire and put an end to it. We should like to know what he thinks of South Africa, his Government's abstention and its refusal to support the struggle of the peoples of southern Africa.

We should like to hear Japan say that it, too, supports the peoples of southern Africa. But, unfortunately, the excuse of the United Kingdom, its allies and the neighbours of the elephant is that the creature is powerful, it can crush them, and perhaps it would be better to stay away from it. One day the elephant will lose its tusk, as it did in Viet Nam.

Mr. AL-ATASSI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation did not intend to speak at this late hour, but the representative of the United Kingdom has in fact compelled me to do so.

This morning I spoke about the Government of the United Kingdom and the role it has played as a partner of the United States in the aggression against Libya. I said that the United Kingdom in fact stood behind all the problems of our region and we would have liked an answer from the representative of the United Kingdom focussing on those objective issues. Instead he spoke of Heathrow Airport, and I must therefore once again refer to my country's position with regard to the incident at that airport.

In my country we firmly condemn terrorism. The following is a paraphrase of a statement by President Al-Asad: In Syria we firmly condemn terrorism for many reasons, in the first place because terrorism is something which we reject and, secondly, because we are one of the countries which have become a target of terrorism more than any other in the world. In just one terrorist operation we lost 144 victims, and 149 were injured.

(Mr. Al-Atassi, Syrian Arab Republic)

While the representative of the United Kingdom told us that he was upset because 315 passengers might have been victims of an attack, he has still not told us what he thinks of terrorism aimed at us.

I have said that we are for liberation. We stand together with popular resistance movements against occupation and colonialism throughout the world. The fine line that distinguishes terrorism from liberation is very clear to us: the terrorist is a criminal, a mercenary, someone who very often acts far away from his country and State. He has nothing to do with the freedom fighter, who defends the cause of his own people. What is more we challenge the representative of the United Kingdom to supply one single proof of the allegations he has made.

President Al-Asad has proposed the establishment of an international committee to formulate a definition of "terrorism". He has said that the campaigns undertaken against us in the name of terrorism are themselves a form of terrorism - indeed, terrorism in its worst form.

Israel introduced terrorism in the Middle East, but the musketeers of the campaign against terrorism in Washington and London have not said anything about that.

Let me now refer to what the representative of the United Kingdom said. It seems that he wanted to defend his country's dignity - dignity that has been disregarded several times today. It seems as though he is living in the past century when the sun never set on the British Empire. Let me assure him that the sun set a long time ago. His country is weak now; it can no longer play an active role in international relations. British sovereignty is now in the hands of the White House and Zionist Tel Aviv.

The representative of the United Kingdom did not attempt to defend his country's dignity when the Israeli intelligence services - Mossad - violated

(Mr. Al-Atassi, Syrian Arab Republic)

British sovereignty and kidnapped Vanunu from a British hotel. Margaret Thatcher's Government was silent and did not say a word about Mossad's activities in the British capital. That was in no way considered to be an affront to British dignity; it is, however, a violation of international law.

In his statement on behalf of the Twelve this afternoon, the representative of the United Kingdom said that those 12 States wished to find a just and lasting solution for the area. Let me say to them that the violent invasion of Lebanon by Israel and the indiscriminate bombing of Beirut for 90 days were not considered terrorist acts by the United Kingdom; those acts had no effect on the relations between the United Kingdom and Israel. The raid perpetrated by Israel against Tunisia was not condemned by the United Kingdom and its relations with Israel did not suffer in any way because of it.

Moreover, when the States members of the European Economic Community (EEC) refused to provide facilities for United States bombers to attack Libya, the United Kingdom came forward and offered such facilities for those bombers. That was complicity in a terrorist act.

(Mr. Al-Atassi, Syrian Arab Republic)

The United Kingdom did not consider the hijacking of a civilian aircraft with a high-level Syrian delegation on board to be terrorism. Again, the relations between Israel and the United Kingdom did not suffer in any way. The United Kingdom, a permanent members of the Security Council, said not a word about that incident, clearly not believing that form of hijacking to be an act of terrorism.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): I think the last two speakers have amply borne out my original comment, that my country was the object of insults. I might have intervened on a point of order as to the relevance to today's debate of some of those comments, but I did not do so, partly because we have a saying in my country that those with a guilty conscience protest too much.

I shall make just two points. I am delighted to hear the Syrian delegation firmly condemning terrorism, but I have not yet heard it condemn the attempted act of terrorism at Heathrow Airport. The second point is that it is not only insulting but also untrue to suggest that the United Kingdom is the enemy of the Arabs. That, surely, is not a very sensible thing to say; nor is it something that is borne out by history or by the current attitude of my Government. I suggest that those that make these wild statements should at least read the records of the Security Council.

Mr. AL-ATASSI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I wish simply to say that tomorrow I shall place before the General Assembly a record of past relations between the United Kingdom and the Arab countries. I shall speak of the entire history of the relations between the United Kingdom and the Arabs and show that the United Kingdom has always been an enemy of the Arabs.

The meeting rose at 7.35 p.m.