



CONTENTS

	Page
Agenda item 119: Question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia	815

President: Mr. Rüdiger von WECHMAR
(Federal Republic of Germany).

AGENDA ITEM 119

**Question of peace, stability and co-operation
in South-East Asia**

1. The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the first speaker in the debate, I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at 5 p.m. Members will recall that I announced this yesterday at the 44th plenary meeting in order to give delegations advance notice. Only after the list of speakers has been closed shall we be able to determine how many meetings will be required and to organize our work accordingly.

2. May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to this proposal that the list of speakers in the debate on agenda item 119 be closed this afternoon at 5 p.m.?

It was so decided.

3. Mr. SOURINHO (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic attaches special importance to the consideration of the item entitled "Question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia" now before the General Assembly. In calling for the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the present session [A/35/193 and Add.1 and 2], my country, like the other 14 countries which sponsored this request, was moved by a strong desire to work positively for détente and understanding in this region with a view to establishing peace, lasting stability and fruitful co-operation among all its peoples in the interest of peace in South-East Asia and the world as a whole. As we pointed out in the explanatory memorandum accompanying the request for the inclusion of this item, South-East Asia, and in particular the Indo-Chinese peninsula, has for more than 30 years been the theatre of armed confrontations brought about by foreign intervention in the domestic affairs of the countries of the area. There have been, in chronological order, armed intervention followed by occupation by the Fascists, then by the colonialists and then by the imperialists.

4. After almost 30 years of stubborn and uninterrupted struggle accompanied by untold sacrifice, the

three peoples of Indo-China in 1975 won brilliant victories over the imperialist forces of aggression and definitively drove them from the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Those striking victories of the three Indo-Chinese peoples constitute the finest page in the history of the struggle of the peoples for complete emancipation, democracy and social progress.

5. After their brilliant victory, my country, Laos, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, despite the role played by certain member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations [ASEAN] in the imperialist war of aggression against our two peoples, normalized relations with all those countries, while the unfortunately notorious Democratic Kampuchea, led by the servile gang of Pol Pot, who had usurped power, blatantly turned its back, to the detriment of its people's interests, on all the ASEAN countries and, worse still, committed acts of provocation against and violated the territorial integrity of one of them, namely Thailand, and also Laos and Viet Nam, which were their companions in arms.

6. Furthermore, the Lao People's Democratic Republic not only normalized relations with all the ASEAN countries but also maintained its relations with the United States of America by retaining the United States Embassy in Vientiane, and its own in Washington at the level of a deputy Chargé d'affaires.

7. These irrefutable facts clearly reveal the determination of our people and our Government to turn deliberately towards the future and to work together with all the countries of South-East Asia, whatever their political system, to transform that part of the world into a zone of peace, stability, prosperity and co-operation.

8. Furthermore, the people and Government of Viet Nam, acting along the same lines, have also increased diplomatic activities with the ASEAN countries through visits by their most highly placed officials to almost all those countries.

9. However, the climate of understanding established among the countries of South-East Asia, and more particularly between the three peoples of Indo-China and the ASEAN countries, suddenly darkened and veered towards confrontation when the latter countries, beginning in 1979, took up the cudgels for the genocidal gang of Pol Pot-Ieng Sary, which was overthrown on 7 January of that year by the heroic people of Kampuchea, who, in order to escape extermination, had appealed to the fraternal people of Viet Nam for assistance.

10. However, no one—certainly not the ASEAN countries and, in particular, China—is unaware that such assistance has for the past three decades been an integral part of the political life of the peoples of

Indo-China, who fought against the Japanese Fascists, the colonialists and the imperialists. Particularly with regard to China, it would seem not only that that country turned a blind eye to that practice, but that the practice was even strongly encouraged when it came to combating the colonialists and imperialists, who not so long ago it regarded as its worst enemies and the worst enemies of the peace and progress of mankind. We are in complete agreement with China on that latter point.

11. But this is where we differ—or, rather, this is what impelled the Chinese leaders to enter into open confrontation with us: after the overthrow of the criminal and genocidal Pol Pot clique that had acted as an instrument of their expansionist policy in Indo-China and South-East Asia for nearly four years, the Chinese leaders, in an attempt to resuscitate for their own purpose the rotten political corpse of the Pol Pot gang, deliberately went over to the side of the imperialists and other reactionary circles and pursued a hostile policy against the three countries of Indo-China, the main target being Viet Nam, which represents the main obstacle to their expansionist thrust towards the south.

12. In this connexion, in 1979 the Chinese expansionist leaders began a war of aggression against Viet Nam and massed a large number of their troops along the Chinese-Lao border in order to intimidate us. Even worse, in connivance with the imperialists and certain reactionary circles, they have for some time been pursuing an openly hostile policy against Laos, a very small country, by infiltrating their agents and spies to disrupt public order and tranquillity, to hatch plots and encourage uprisings against our lawful authority, to encourage our people to flee the country and, in short, to raise all manner of obstacles to our work of national reconstruction. In the same period, the Chinese leaders, still in close collusion with the imperialists and other reactionary forces, have been pursuing a policy designed to undermine the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Kampuchean people by continuing to give massive assistance and support to the remnants of the Pol Pot army and other groupings of reactionary forces operating along the Kampuchean-Thai border. At the international level, they are feverishly engaged in diplomatic activities within the United Nations and elsewhere to keep the seat of Kampuchea in the United Nations for the genocidal Pol Pot gang and thus to keep out the State of Kampuchea, represented by the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea, which alone can fulfil the obligations under the Charter of the United Nations.

13. At the present time, because of the fact that fighting continues along the Kampuchean-Thai border, because the tension caused by Chinese provocations is increasing along the Chinese-Vietnamese border, because the sabotage and subversive activities undertaken by the agents of Peking, Washington and their henchmen have created a new climate of unrest in my country, the situation in South-East Asia has become extremely tense.

14. This situation is of course less serious than that experienced by the region over the last 30 years, but it nevertheless entails a very real danger of the area being plunged into further conflicts that may this time

spread to all the countries of South-East Asia and, first and foremost, to Thailand.

15. No one should underestimate this risk—especially the ASEAN countries, which because of their geographical situation must perforce live together and in harmony, as far as possible, with the three countries of Indochina.

16. The question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia which is currently before the General Assembly is of primary concern to all the countries of that region, for it involves their common safety, safety based on the principles of respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States in the region, non-interference in each country's internal affairs, equality, mutual advantage and fruitful co-operation.

17. The rest of the international community has a duty not to stir up differences that exist between the three Indo-Chinese countries and those of ASEAN, but to smooth them out and assist the two groups to come together step by step, taking into account the legitimate—I stress "legitimate"—interests of each of the parties.

18. However, in our opinion, it is incumbent upon all the countries of South-East Asia themselves to show realism in their efforts to bring lasting peace and stability to their region through dialogue and mutual respect, setting aside for the time being those subjects that divide them.

19. In this connexion, we welcome the contacts and discussions that have taken place recently among the leaders of the countries in the region, particularly the dialogue between the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burma and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Laos during the former's visit to Vientiane on 1 September and the meeting which took place at United Nations Headquarters on 1 October this year between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam and Thailand under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General, to whom we should like once again to express our deep appreciation of his patient and tireless efforts to promote peace and understanding among all peoples. We hope that such contacts and dialogues will continue and lead to a fruitful result.

20. History has provided abundant proof that political and diplomatic victories won by large partisan and opportunistic majorities, when they are out of keeping with reality and justice, are mere Pyrrhic victories. My delegation is firmly convinced that this is not the kind of victory that the peoples of South-East Asia—at least the three peoples of Indo-China—are seeking. What they want is a genuine solution, based on reality, justice and the legitimate interests of all the peoples and all the countries of the region—a solution that could reduce tension and thereby promote better understanding and mutual trust, so that every people and country, in accordance with its own chosen political system, can develop its economy free from foreign interference and build a better future for its future generations.

21. The proper path to such a settlement certainly is not to be found, in our view, by one of the parties determining to impose its will on the other, but in a spirit of conciliation, by taking into account the vital

security needs and legitimate interests of all parties. Political, ideological or other factors which have nothing to do with the two primary elements that I have just mentioned should be set aside, if not banished.

22. In order to find a lasting settlement in South-East Asia, the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the three countries of Indo-China, held on 18 July this year at Vientiane, the capital of my country, put forward a number of proposals, the text of which has been distributed to all Members of our Organization [see A/35/347-S/14071 and Corr.1].

23. Those proposals, however, have been declared unacceptable by the countries of ASEAN, which, in turn, have submitted a number of proposals to us that we similarly have found unacceptable.

24. However, all hope is not lost, because both sides have on many occasions publicly declared that they are motivated by the sincere desire to achieve a zone of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia. In this connexion, the two parties have at their disposal impressive information in documents such as those of the Vientiane Conference and of ASEAN. In our view, those documents provide a sound basis for finding a common denominator for the two parties with a view to gradually promoting understanding and friendly relations between them.

25. But only sincere, sustained and direct dialogue between the two parties will lead to that result. Academic speeches or polemics in this General Assembly or in any other international body will only delay the so eagerly awaited settlement of the problems of South-East Asia and serve to increase foreign interference in the internal affairs of the countries and peoples of the area.

26. Once again, it is with a sincere desire to promote and strengthen peace, stability and co-operation among all South-East Asian countries that, together with 14 other countries, we took the initiative in requesting the inclusion of item 119 on the agenda of the General Assembly; we hope that the Assembly will help us clear the way for progress towards that goal.

27. Mr. KUČERA (Czechoslovakia) (*interpretation from French*): The inclusion on the agenda of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the item "Question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia" clearly shows once more that progressive forces the world over sincerely want to find a political solution to these burning issues so that peace and security in that part of the world can be preserved.

28. We consider that the time has come to take up the situation in South-East Asia in a wider context. We also believe that it is absolutely indispensable that we no longer allow our Organization to be used for the unworthy purposes of interfering in the internal affairs of a sovereign State, as was the case during the unilateral consideration of the so-called situation in Kampuchea. Besides, that item was examined against the will of the sole legal Government of that country. That is why the international community should rather participate in the efforts of those parties which are doing their utmost to maintain peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia.

29. Over the last 35 years, the fundamental rights of sovereign States to independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity have been continually violated and that has always had serious consequences for international peace and security. Throughout this period, the heroic peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea have made great sacrifices in their struggle for independence against the acts of aggression of colonialism, imperialism and expansionism. Immediately after the Second World War, the South-East Asian countries—particularly the peoples of Indo-China—fell victim to bloody wars caused by the old-style colonialism. Then, at the very time when their struggle was being crowned with victory, American imperialism launched a war of aggression against Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea, which continued for many years. After its defeat, the full scope of the expansionist aspirations of the reactionary Peking régime—which were an extremely serious threat to the independence and freedom of all sovereign States of the region—became clear. But this time it was not a question of its traditional types of interference in the internal affairs of the countries of Indo-China: it was direct armed intervention, waged in particular against Viet Nam. It seems, however, that the Peking leaders did not draw any conclusion from the failure of that "first lesson" they claimed to give the heroic people of Viet Nam but which turned against themselves. Today, using their feudal terminology, they are threatening to teach that people "another lesson".

30. Thus if we look seriously and responsibly for the causes of the present tense situation in South-East Asia, we come to a single conclusion: that region was, and remains, threatened by international imperialism, as well as by the hegemonistic and expansionist policies of China, whose present leaders are hankering after hegemony and the gradual annexation of all of South-East Asia. The efforts of the Chinese leaders are being supported by world imperialism. It is those forces which are responsible for the complex situation in the area, both by reason of their direct interference and of the way they bring their influence to bear on certain countries of South-East Asia. This is borne out, *inter alia*, by the political, material and military assistance granted by the imperialist and hegemonistic forces to the remnants of the Pol Pot gangs who, having found asylum in the border regions of Thailand, have reassembled there and replenished their weapons and medical and food supplies by diverting the international assistance provided through the United Nations and its specialized agencies. From the territory of Thailand they have been conducting subversive activities and organizing acts of sabotage against the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

31. The unstable situation which continues to prevail in South-East Asia is inimical to the interests of the peoples of the region, whether these be the countries of Indo-China or the ASEAN countries. They all have a vital stake in maintaining peace and stability in the region and hence in creating the necessary conditions to advance along the path of social progress.

32. It is both necessary and possible to find the road to security and stability in South-East Asia. But it is only through peaceful means, by negotiations among the countries concerned in the region, that we can hope to reach positive results. That was why the

Czechoslovak delegation welcomed the initiative taken at the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea, which was held at Vientiane on 18 July last. The proposals regarding the conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements among the countries of Indo-China on the one hand, and Thailand and other countries of South-East Asia on the other, dealing with non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs and peaceful coexistence, and with a view to transforming South-East Asia into a region of peace and stability and resolving their differences peacefully, are of particular importance. They also provide tangible proof of the determination to settle the present situation by peaceful means.

33. In this regard, we also attach particular importance to the specific proposals put forward by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in his statement to the General Assembly [11th meeting]. Also worthy of attention is the four-point proposal of the People's Republic of Kampuchea [see A/35/347-S/14071 and Corr.1, annex I, para. 2], concerning the settlement of the situation on the Kampuchean-Thai border. The substance of that proposal is that demilitarized zones be created on both sides of the border, a solution to the refugee problem be found, international assistance be given to Kampuchea, while scrupulously respecting its independence and sovereignty, and a settlement of the existing problems between Kampuchea and Thailand be worked out. It is on the basis of those conditions that it will be possible to transform the Kampuchea-Thailand border into one of peace and friendship.

34. The sincerity and realistic nature of all those proposals are obvious. The peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea want to build a socialist society in conditions of peace, and for that reason their foreign policies are based on the principles of peaceful coexistence and co-operation among States with different social systems.

35. Czechoslovakia resolutely condemns the attempts of imperialist and Maoist circles to destabilize the present situation in South-East Asia. We fully support the positions of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea regarding the settlement of the situation in the region in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

36. In the joint communiqué adopted after the visit of an official delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, led by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and President of the Republic, Gustáv Husák, last February, it was stated that Czechoslovakia fully supported the consistent policy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam aimed at developing relations of friendship and long-term multilateral co-operation with the countries of South-East Asia, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the joint declarations by Viet Nam and other countries of South-East Asia.

37. The proposals of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea provide, we believe a solid basis for the peaceful settlement of the situation

in South-East Asia, for normalizing relations between the countries of Indo-China and the other ASEAN countries and for improving the climate in that part of the world. If the ASEAN countries sincerely want peace and understanding, they should have the same interest in that solution as the countries of Indo-China. It is therefore necessary, as was stressed in his statement to the General Assembly by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Mr. Nguyen Co Thach [11th meeting], that the countries of ASEAN and those of Indo-China set aside all the differences of opinion which exist among them and jointly transform South-East Asia into a zone of peace, stability and co-operation.

38. However, that peace and that stability can be assured only on the basis of understanding among all States of the region and in particular between the two groups of countries—those of Indo-China and of ASEAN. Any settlement that did not take account of the interests of those two groups of countries would make the situation in the region even more complicated.

39. In order to solve these burning problems and matters of common interest it is necessary for all the parties concerned to embark on negotiations as soon as possible on the basis of respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression and non-intervention in internal affairs, and respect for each other's interests, without foreign interference. It is similarly necessary that all other States Members of the United Nations contribute positively to the consolidation of peace and stability in the region and refrain from any action that would adversely affect the negotiations among the parties concerned.

40. I should like to voice our firm conviction that, thanks to the joint efforts of all countries of South-East Asia and the active contribution of all States Members of the United Nations which sincerely wish for a settlement of the complex and dangerous situation at present prevailing in the region, it will be possible to frustrate the aspirations of the imperialist and hegemonistic forces and to turn South-East Asia into a zone of peace, stability and co-operation.

41. Mr. HA VAN LAU (Viet Nam) (*interpretation from French*): As representatives of a country which has endured the greatest sacrifices in confronting successive wars throughout the last three decades, our delegation holds the view that in examining the present situation in South-East Asia due attention should be given to the following two aspects: first, outside interference in the region, and, secondly, disagreements between the countries in the region.

42. In the past 35 years, these two factors have continuously deprived Asia of peace and stability and they are now rendering the situation there tense and explosive. This situation causes deep disquiet to the countries in the area and grave concern to other countries in the world. The countries in the region should shoulder the responsibility of reaching the wisest possible settlement so as to prevent a further worsening of the situation.

43. It should be pointed out that, although the situation in South-East Asia has been deteriorating over the past few years, it is no worse than the situation which has prevailed over the last three or four decades.

44. During the past 35 years, wars of aggression unleashed by Powers outside the area against the peoples of the Indo-Chinese peninsula have resulted in confrontations, even military confrontations, between the countries in the South-East Asian region. When the war ended in 1975, military confrontation between a number of South-East Asian countries and the Indo-Chinese countries ceased. The members of ASEAN normalized relations and established diplomatic ties with the Indo-Chinese countries.

45. However, a new and formerly latent intervention by a Power outside of the region has now clearly emerged. Especially since 1979, as a consequence of this intervention which has become a large-scale aggression, relations between the Indo-Chinese countries and the ASEAN countries have again worsened, but not to the extent of military confrontation as in the past. However, foreign intervention in the area this time differs from interventions in the past. It is characterized by the fact that a Power in Asia, in connivance with its new imperialist ally, is resorting to military threats, maintaining a tense situation, setting the ASEAN countries against the Indo-Chinese countries, exploiting the situation to penetrate deep into a number of ASEAN countries and seeking to weaken and subjugate the Indo-Chinese States in order the better eventually to attain its strategic objective of hegemony in South-East Asia. In this situation, two possible solutions can be envisaged.

46. The first is to persist in imposing a solution which is advantageous to some countries and disadvantageous to others in the region, which would lead to confrontation such as occurred last year. That solution would not solve any problems but would worsen the situation. Outside interference, far from being reduced, would be more likely to increase, thus further aggravating the situation and running the risk of uncontrollable developments.

47. Secondly, although all countries in the region share a major common interest in peace and stability, differences still exist between them. Since for the time being there is no possibility of resolving these differences or of removing the external destabilizing factor, the two groups of countries should refrain from any act that might worsen the situation. Instead they can and should enter into discussions with a view to finding measures aimed at the gradual improvement of relations between the South-East Asian countries, especially between the countries of Indo-China and the ASEAN countries, and they should take all possible action to improve the situation and restrict outside interference.

48. For the moment, we think that the second solution, if achieved, could have the following effects: it could gradually put an end to the present state of confrontation between the two groups of countries in South-East Asia and might bring them to a dialogue; it might create favourable conditions for the settlement of urgent problems and questions of common interest and might gradually improve relations between the two groups of countries; it could prevent any action that might worsen the situation; it could restrict foreign interference and gradually build up South-East Asia into a zone of peace, stability and co-operation.

49. To achieve these objectives it is necessary, in our opinion, for the two groups of countries, first, to promote mutual understanding, respect each other's legitimate interests, completely avoid and refrain from trying to impose solutions which are advantageous to one group and disadvantageous to the other. Such action only poisons the atmosphere, increases suspicion, makes it impossible to solve any problems and only benefits the expansionists and encourages their interference in the area; secondly, there should be an undertaking to respect each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and the principles of non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, mutual respect, mutually advantageous co-operation and peaceful coexistence on terms of equality; thirdly, both groups should engage in bilateral or multilateral negotiations and agree on suitable principles and formulas for the solution of problems of mutual concern.

50. For their part, the countries of Indo-China would suggest the examination of the following subjects: first, urgent questions related to the restoration of peace and stability on the Thailand-Kampuchea border and to the normalization of the situation on the Thailand-Laos border; secondly, disagreements concerning the South China Sea and the establishment of a zone of peace and stability in that region on the basis of respect for the rights of all countries over their respective territorial waters, continental shelves and exclusive economic zones and the guarantee of freedom of navigation and overflight; and thirdly, principles to promote mutual understanding and improve relations between the two groups of countries and the signing of treaties of non-aggression between the Indo-Chinese countries and Thailand and between the Indo-Chinese countries and other countries of ASEAN, thus creating conditions conducive to the establishment of a zone of peace and stability in South-East Asia.

51. We believe that if those objectives are achieved they will constitute extremely important factors for the maintenance of peace and stability in South-East Asia.

52. While we raise these problems, we do not harbour the illusion that they will be settled easily.

53. We are fully aware of the fact that the current situation in South-East Asia is very complicated and that, since outside interference constitutes a major obstacle, the disagreements between the two groups of countries cannot be solved overnight.

54. However, we believe that, if both groups of countries show goodwill, take into consideration the common interests of the region and are fully aware of and respect each other's interests, and that if countries outside the region make active contributions in a constructive spirit and refrain from actions that might cause harm to the efforts of the two groups, those difficulties and obstacles can gradually be surmounted.

55. On the other hand, we are of the view that the dialogue between the ASEAN and Indo-Chinese countries has had a good start with the recent meetings between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam and Thailand, aided by the good offices of the Secretary-General. These contacts will continue in the days

to come and it is our hope that they will bring about good results.

56. Another favourable circumstance is the fact that both groups of countries have issued important statements on the creation of a zone of peace and stability in South-East Asia. These constitute a good basis for the two sides to discover common denominators and improve the situation step by step.

57. No sooner had the United States war of aggression in Viet Nam ended than Viet Nam itself made numerous efforts to improve relations with other countries in the South-East Asian region, especially with the ASEAN countries, on the basis of the four principles on which we had agreed with each of them. The Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Mr. Pham Van Dong, and its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Nguyen Duy Trinh, each paid visits to the countries of the region, thus creating conditions favourable to the initial improvement of relations with those countries.

58. Since 1979, relations between the countries of Indo-China and the ASEAN countries have deteriorated with every passing day, but for their part the Indo-Chinese countries have always persisted in their policy of peace and friendship with the ASEAN countries. In the first months of 1980 the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam visited Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand in turn to hold discussions with the leaders of those countries and with them to seek measures to ease tension in the region. In July 1980, in view of the increasingly tense and explosive situation on the Thailand-Kampuchea and Thailand-Laos frontiers, the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the three Indo-Chinese countries was called at Vientiane, and it issued the 18 July 1980 declaration proposing concrete measures aimed at settling urgent matters, such as the easing of tension on the Thailand-Kampuchea border, the normalization of the situation along the Thailand-Laos border and the guaranteeing of peace and stability in the region, as well as other questions of common interest, with a view to finding opportunities for co-operation and the improvement of relations between the two groups of countries in the region.

59. In the spirit of the Vientiane declaration, and with the concurrence of the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has recently taken a new initiative concerning the withdrawal of a portion of the Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, the details of which were set forth in my statement of 15 October last before this Assembly [36th meeting, para. 133].

60. The request by 15 Member States, including Viet Nam, for the inclusion on the Assembly's agenda of the item entitled "Question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia" marks yet another effort of the Indo-Chinese countries to contribute jointly with the ASEAN countries and the international community to creating a climate conducive to the reduction of tension in South-East Asia and to preventing a deterioration in the situation.

61. In the last 35 years, the peoples of the world have enjoyed the longest period of peace in this century, while the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea have not known a single day of peace.

62. Peace and stability in South-East Asia are not merely the earnest aspirations of the peoples of the region; for the Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean peoples, they are also indispensable conditions for rebuilding their countries which have been heavily devastated by war.

63. The higher the price the Vietnamese people paid for their independence and freedom, the more they value the independence and freedom of other nations. This is a consistent policy of ours.

64. We hope that, for their part, the ASEAN countries will co-operate with us in bringing this debate to a positive outcome, thus responding to the aspirations of the peoples of South-East Asia for an early restoration of peace and stability in the region.

65. The PRESIDENT: I should like to remind representatives that the speakers' list for this agenda item will be closed at 5 p.m. today.

66. Tomorrow afternoon the Assembly will resume the election of one non-permanent member of the Security Council.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.