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Address by Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar, Temporary President, Chairman of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: As Temporary President, may I be permitted, by custom and tradition, for the last time to ask for your patience in order to share a few thoughts about our work and about the United Nations.

4. The thirty-fifth session has been a very hard-working Assembly. It had the longest agenda of any Assembly session to date. It had the greatest number of speakers ever to participate in the general debate last fall. It saw more Heads of State or Government and Foreign Ministers coming to United Nations Headquarters than ever before.

5. My most sincere expression of gratitude once again goes to the delegations of all 154 Member States for having honoured my country and myself by unanimously electing me President for the past year.

6. I also want to thank you all for the spirit of co-operation which you have shown on so many occasions and which has made my difficult task much easier.

7. My special thanks go to the Secretary-General and to his dedicated staff, without whom I would have failed in my duties from the very first day.

8. Our thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly has, unfortunately, also been an Assembly of frustrations: frustrations mainly for the nations of the third world, but also, I am sure, for many of the industrialized countries.

9. The United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, the problem of Namibia, the launching of global negotiations, the questions of Afghanistan and Kampuchea, the multifaceted problem of the Middle East and many, many others remain either unsolved or deadlocked.

10. In some areas the world appears to be heading towards a collision course. That is why I am deeply disturbed and why I would like to appeal urgently to all Governments to give tangible proof during this thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly of their determination to preserve peace and security.

11. We must not transfer tensions between East and West to the third world. We must, on the contrary, preserve the spirit and the concrete achievements of détente. A lessening of tension between the armed camps in East and West not only would be beneficial for all nations in Europe but would be of invaluable importance for the developing countries.

Temporary President:

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

President: Mr. Ismat T. KITTANI (Iraq).

AGENDA ITEM 1

Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: I declare open the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

2. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: I invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The representatives, standing, observed a minute's silence.

12. We are witnessing—almost helplessly—an acceleration of the arms race. Military expenditures are absorbing more and more resources without making the world more secure. This year, nearly \$500 billion are earmarked for sophisticated weapons and military hardware. Measured in pounds per person, there exists more explosive power on our planet than food.

13. An increase in official development assistance equivalent to only 5 per cent of that \$500 billion figure would be sufficient easily to attain the target set in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade to help those millions of human beings who still live in want and poverty.

14. The special session on disarmament next year will offer new opportunities to set attainable targets and to conduct negotiations so as to build up a momentum for the conclusion of substantive agreements to halt and, indeed, to reverse the arms race.

15. Let us assist the most powerful, the United States and the Soviet Union, to return to the negotiating table. I share the hope of so many among us that we may witness here at United Nations Headquarters a resumption of negotiations between Washington and Moscow on the burning question of how to limit armaments, especially in the field of strategic nuclear weapons. A summit meeting soon of the Heads of State of the Soviet Union and the United States would, in my view, reinforce our quest for peace.

16. A face-to-face round of serious talks between those who hold the ultimate key to peace in the world would undoubtedly help to remove the threat of the thunder of guns. While I am fully aware of the need to avoid exaggerated expectations from such a summit encounter, I believe the magnitude of the danger posed by nuclear war requires recourse to the highest level.

17. I fully understand that, without tangible results in negotiations on balanced reductions of arms, each side strives to match the other's increase in deployed weapons. The security of the nations in Europe seems to demand such protection. It must therefore be a prime duty of the United Nations to break this vicious circle.

18. The unchallenged international arms traffic and the continued danger of military conflicts by proxy constitute additional threats to peace and security. The United Nations must, therefore, not only devote much of its energy and time to the creation of confidence-building measures and to concrete steps towards disarmament, but must also renew its efforts to establish a more effective United Nations peace-keeping machinery. Our Charter contains sufficient provisions to increase the present limited United Nations role.

19. One important part of peace-keeping, in a wider and non-military sense, would be the orderly and agreed restructuring of international economic relations through global negotiations. I reported to the Assembly at length on that subject during the closing meeting of the thirty-fifth session yesterday.

20. I would fail in my duties, however, were I not to address today an urgent and very sincere appeal to the Government of the United States to complete its eight-

month-long review of this vital issue in the very near future and to return to consultations and the negotiating table soon after the meeting of 22 Heads of State or Government from North and South, which will be held at Cancún next month.

21. I am confident that the United States, in its review of the world economy, will not overlook the mutual political benefits which a stable world economic system will have for peaceful co-operation among nations on the basis of equal partnership.

22. I fully share the view of the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Malcolm Fraser, who recently stated that we should all accept and take seriously and sincerely the reality of the South or the Third World as a political presence on the world stage. Changes in international institutions and processes were inevitable, he said. He stressed that the question was whether those changes were to be orderly, negotiated ones or imposed by disruption and breakdown.

23. Let me add this. At times when it appears necessary to have a strong lobby in certain capitals of the world for major problems facing us all, it is deplorable that there are so few in some important countries to lobby for the Third World poor. Let this Assembly, therefore, remain the prime mover of solutions for the plight of the many millions of people who do not share in the benefits of the modern world.

24. During my tenure as President of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, I have been privileged to see at first hand the remarkably effective and valuable work of the United Nations programmes and specialized agencies in many parts of the world. Let me testify here today that all of them do an outstanding job in their specific field of competence. But let me—*pars pro toto*—pay special tribute to one of them: the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]. This organization, drawing on three decades of experience and the specialized technical expertise of the entire United Nations system, is making a dramatic and indispensable contribution to the development efforts of the countries it serves.

25. Less than two months ago, the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1981/59 reaffirmed "the central funding and co-ordinating role of the United Nations Development Programme in the field of technical co-operation". Yet at this moment, because of the failure of the international community to meet the planning target of voluntary contributions which this Assembly itself has approved [resolution 35/83], a failure compounded by unpredictable fluctuations in currency exchange rates, the resource base of UNDP, upon which its critically important work for the next five years depends, is uncertain, to say the least.

26. Governments—all Governments—have a serious responsibility to provide this proven institution, which they themselves have created, with the resources it must have if the international development effort is not to falter. I therefore urgently appeal to all Governments to increase their contributions to this unique mechanism of international co-operation, as well as to other United Nations programmes and agencies, all of which are suffering setbacks because of fluctuating currency exchange rates.

27. As the momentum towards a truly effective North-South dialogue intensifies, it would be ironic—indeed, tragic—if the vitality of one of the most effective instruments for North-South co-operation which the international community has ever created were threatened and eroded.

28. In connexion with the necessary support for the United Nations specialized agencies I would like to raise another point. During my seven years as representative of my country, I have had the privilege of being invited to many social functions held by colleagues or delegations. Often when I was myself the host I wondered, though, whether some of that money was always well spent, when one thinks of those many, many people—especially children—suffering from hunger and disease.

29. Did you know that one single dollar given to UNICEF instead would be enough to provide vaccine to immunize 50 children against tuberculosis? Are we aware that \$500 would buy a kit of equipment and medicines for a village pharmacy, and that \$3,500, a fraction of the cost of a major reception, would purchase the equipment for a main health centre—often serving an area with as many as 100,000 people—including basic clinical, surgical and diagnostic instruments and vital drugs?

30. Maybe we could start a competition among Member States willing to designate at least part of their funds for social functions to UNICEF or any other humanitarian United Nations programme, such as that of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Acting President will begin by making such a donation himself.

31. Allow me now to reflect specially on the work of our Assembly. While I look back with pride and gratitude, I must tell you—after 12 months of very specific experience—that there is room for far-reaching improvement. There is reason in some fields for concern, and even for complaint.

32. Our General Assembly—indeed, our United Nations—is being slowly suffocated by too many resolutions, too many meetings, too many subsidiary organs, far too much documentation. In short, the United Nations disease of elephantiasis must be attacked with strong surgical therapy to remove the patient speedily from the critical list.

33. Let me give you a few concrete examples to illustrate what I have in mind.

34. The total number of hours spent by the United Nations in meetings during 1980, both here at headquarters and in Geneva, was equivalent to 1,170 full days. Last year, the plenary session of the General Assembly and its main committees lost 168 hours of meeting time—or one full week—simply through late starting.

35. During the September to December period of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly a total of some 236 million pages of documentation was printed at United Nations Headquarters. Laid end to end this would cover 33,000 kilometres, or four-fifths of the equator. All the documents produced in 1980 in New York and Geneva almost reached the 1 billion mark, and laid end to end would cover 270,000 kilometres. The production of two years would easily pave our way to the moon.

36. Summary records were produced for 354 meetings of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. These records required 4,602 staff-days. The average cost of a record for one meeting was on the order of \$3,648. One page of summary record costs more than the annual *per capita* income in any of the least developed countries.

37. I do not want to be misunderstood. When I expose some of the defects of our work, I do this because I am a compassionate and dedicated believer in the United Nations. I know full well that I am furnishing fresh ammunition to cheap critics of our Organization. But they will go on criticizing in any case. What I seek is change. We are responsible for this disease ourselves. I want the United Nations to be strengthened. To be strong we have to be effective. To be effective we must drastically cut out the fat and focus on priorities. How can we attempt to manage crises in this world if we seem unable to manage our own affairs? We should take a fresh look now at where fat could be cut out, where activities could be streamlined and how the daily avalanche of paper, which I am sure it must be a horrendous task for delegations to cope with—can be reduced to a bare—and I mean “bare”—minimum. Strict austerity appears to be required so that we do not drown in a self-created sea of paper.

38. I recognize that over the past few years we have made some progress in rationalizing the work of our Assembly. Thanks to very constructive and fruitful collaboration between delegations and the Secretariat, a number of modest reforms have been introduced. Nevertheless, it is quite apparent to all of us that, with the continued increase in membership, the further growth and the size of our agenda and the inflation in documentation, a great deal remains to be done.

39. Let me make a concrete proposal. In considering how we might most successfully come to grips with these problems on a continuing basis, I suggest that there be an annual meeting of the five most recent Presidents of the General Assembly, who would represent each geographical region. The purpose would be that those who have presided over the work of this body would examine current procedures in the light of their experience, with a view to making recommendations for further improvements. This “Council of Presidents” should closely cooperate with the Secretary-General of our Organization. It does seem to me unfortunate that up to this time there has been no consistent way to draw upon the experience of former presiding officers when we review, as we should do continually, how our legislative performance might be improved. This proposal provides a relatively easy way to remedy that deficiency.

40. The Assembly might also wish to consider requesting that this council of five Presidents suggest other measures that they believe could invigorate the work of this institution. There are, of course, numerous groups of experts whose studies and recommendations are made available to the United Nations. However, there is no systematic way in which the expertise of those individuals who have had the invaluable personal experience of presiding over the Assembly can be brought into focus and shared with the membership.

41. Another concern which I would like to share with members is the non-implementation of General Assembly resolutions. We have seen an improvement in the number

of resolutions adopted without a vote—that is, by consensus. It has drastically increased during the last 10 years from 35 per cent to 59 per cent, but it is noteworthy that some Member States fail to implement fully even those resolutions for which they themselves have voted.

42. It is easy to blame the United Nations as an institution for such failures. It would be more appropriate, I think, to address criticism of the United Nations to the Governments of Member States instead. What the world is expecting from its leaders, especially from those at the helm of the most powerful Member States, is vision and compassion, determination and dedication. We have been talking so much and so often of the need for political will. The time to act and to show such political will is now; tomorrow may be too late.

43. Permit me to close my remarks with a verse by an eighteenth-century theologian, a prayer which I hope will guide us during the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly:

“God grant us the serenity to accept things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference between the two.”

AGENDA ITEM 106

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations: report of the Committee on Contributions

44. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: Before turning to the next item on our agenda, I should like, in keeping with the established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/36/502, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General in which he informs the Assembly that one Member State is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of that information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 3

Credentials of representatives to the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly*

(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

45. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: Rule 28 of the rules of procedure provides that the General Assembly at the beginning of each session shall appoint, on the proposal of the President, a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members.

46. Accordingly, it is proposed that for the thirty-sixth session the Credentials Committee should consist of the following Member States: China, Ghana, the Netherlands, Niger, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.

47. May I take it that the countries I have mentioned are hereby appointed members of the Credentials Committee?

It was so decided (decision 36/301).

AGENDA ITEM 4

Election of the President of the General Assembly

48. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: I now invite members of the General Assembly to proceed to the election of the President of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

49. In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. I remind the Assembly that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/138, the President should be elected from an Asian State.

50. Ballot papers are now being distributed. I request representatives to use only that ballot paper and to write on it the name of the person for whom they wish to vote. Ballot papers containing more than one name will be declared invalid.

At the invitation of the Temporary President, Mr. La Rocca (Italy), Mr. González Arias (Paraguay) and Mr. Kamanda wa Kamanda (Zaire) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	152
Invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	151
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	150
Required majority:	76

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. Kittani (Iraq).....	64
Mr. Kaiser (Bangladesh).....	46
Mr. Koh (Singapore).....	40

51. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: No candidate, as you will have seen and heard, has obtained the required majority on the first ballot. Therefore, in accordance with rule 93, the Assembly will proceed to a second ballot, which shall be restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes, namely, Mr. Kittani of Iraq and Mr. Kaiser of Bangladesh. I request representatives to use only the ballot papers that are being distributed and to write the name of the person—and not of the country—for whom they wish to vote. Ballot papers containing names other than those of Mr. Kittani or Mr. Kaiser will be declared invalid.

At the invitation of the Temporary President, Mr. La Rocca (Italy), Mr. González Arias (Paraguay) and Mr. Kamanda wa Kamanda (Zaire) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	152
Invalid ballots:	6
Number of valid ballots:	146
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	146

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. Kaiser (Bangladesh).....	73
Mr. Kittani (Iraq)	73

52. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: We are facing a unique situation. Rule 93 of the rules of procedure states: "If in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, and a majority is required, the President shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots".

I shall therefore proceed accordingly.

The Temporary President drew lots.

53. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT: His name having been drawn by lot, Mr. Ismat Kittani of Iraq is elected President of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Ismat Kittani (Iraq) was elected President of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly (decision 36/302).

54. I extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. Kittani and I invite him to assume the Presidency.

Mr. Kittani (Iraq) took the Chair.

Address by Mr. Ismat T. Kittani, President of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly

55. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Arabic*): I should like, first and foremost, to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for this honour and for the confidence you have expressed in me and my country, Iraq, by electing me as President of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I wish to affirm that I will do my best to live up to this confidence and to serve the General Assembly to the best of my modest abilities.

56. It gives me great pleasure on this occasion to express, on behalf of the Assembly and on my own behalf as well, sincere thanks and appreciation to Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar for the efforts he exerted during his Presidency of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly and of the special and emergency sessions held over the past year, as well as for all the related and unprecedented duties he performed.

57. As an Asian representative in this high office, it gives me great pleasure to see here among us General Romulo, the Foreign Minister of the Philippines and, I believe, President of the Security Council for the fourth time, who was the first President of the General Assembly from the Asian continent.

58. I should also like to take this occasion to recall, with sorrow, the loss of the last Asian to be President of the General Assembly, the late Shirley Amerasinghe. History will record his meritorious contribution to the work of this Organization, especially in the field of the law of the sea.

59. Two days ago, I reviewed the opening statements made by the 10 Presidents of the General Assembly who have preceded me, and I realized that all of them, when reviewing the items on the agenda, had adopted the practice of expatiating on them. Instead of following their ex-

ample and delivering a lengthy sermon to the Assembly, I believe it would be far preferable for us all to set to work, in order that this session may be devoted to implementation and follow-up, rather than a session devoted to repetitious and lengthy statements and resolutions. Everyone knows that most of the important issues contained in the agenda have been exhaustively studied and that hundreds of resolutions concerning those issues have been adopted year after year.

60. The General Assembly is not in need of new resolutions but rather a commitment to the resolutions it has already adopted and to the implementation of those resolutions by translating them into concrete actuality, thereby contributing to the principles and purposes of the United Nations.

61. For example, do we need new resolutions concerning the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State under the leadership of its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO]?

62. Must we adopt new resolutions, studies and plans concerning the illegal occupation of Namibia by an apartheid régime in order to enable its people to exercise its right to self-determination, to rid itself of foreign occupation and to preserve its territorial integrity?

63. At a time when there is an increasing number of resolutions concerning disarmament, we are witnessing the beginning of a new nuclear arms race when the annual cost of armaments is nearly \$600 billion, having thus virtually doubled over the past five years.

64. Have we not exhausted the issue of the new international economic order with studies, conferences and resolutions? How long must we wait before taking positive and realistic action to give effect to some of our decisions? In this regard in particular I promise to make special efforts in continuing the search for practical solutions conducive to the success of the global negotiations so as to ensure the attainment of the goals of the new international economic order.

65. The urgent need on this vital issue and on other issues on the agenda is to secure the minimum requirement of the political will, based on goodwill and careful consideration of the common interests of the international community, in order to achieve the goals set out in the resolutions of this Organization.

66. The convening of the present session of the General Assembly coincides with the twentieth anniversary of two major historic events, the first being the first Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Belgrade, and the second being the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 1514 (XV) on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples.

67. The General Assembly is meeting also at a time when international relations are at a critical and dangerous stage. Instead of détente we see a return to the hateful cold-war policy; instead of progress in disarmament we see a new and dangerous arms race; and instead of the new international economic order and an equitable and a

just law of the sea we see a weakening of the political will that is needed to give effect to the resolutions on which we have all agreed in this connexion. Moreover, most of the burning political problems still await solution in spite of the numerous resolutions adopted.

68. Let us aim resolutely at working together rather than just talking, in order to make this session successful and to contribute actively to lessening international tension, consolidating peace and security in the world and solving political and economic problems.

69. Lastly, allow me to make a personal observation. I have spent more than a quarter of a century working in this Organization, as a representative of my country, Iraq, and in the Secretariat. This long association has increased my faith in the principles and purposes of the Organization. It has made me believe profoundly that the non-aligned movement, whose members make up the majority of the membership of the United Nations and whose principles and purposes are in harmony with those of the Organization, offers the only means of realizing our aspirations.

70. I promise that, as President of the General Assembly, I shall be guided by its noble human purposes and principles. In conducting the proceedings I shall depend on the co-operation of the Vice-Presidents and of Mr. Kurt Waldheim, the Secretary-General, with whom, as members know, I have worked in close association for a number of years. The benefit of all this will be put at the disposal of and used in the service of this Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 20

Admission of new Members to the United Nations

71. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the procedure followed in the past, I should now like to invite the General Assembly to consider the positive recommendation by the Security Council for the admission to membership in the United Nations of the Republic of Vanuatu.

72. This special procedure has been applied previously in order to give States recommended by the Security Council for membership in our Organization the opportunity, if the General Assembly acts favourably on their requests, to participate from the outset in the work of the session. If there is no objection, we shall proceed accordingly.

It was so decided.

73. The PRESIDENT: The Security Council has recommended the admission of the Republic of Vanuatu to membership in the United Nations, as stated in document A/36/368. In this connexion, a draft resolution has been submitted [A/36/L.1]. In addition to the countries listed in that document, the following countries have become co-sponsors of that draft resolution: the Central African Republic, Guinea, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mali, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Trinidad and Tobago [A/36/L.1/Add.1]. May I take it that the General Assembly accepts the recommendation of the Security Council and adopts the draft resolution by acclamation?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 36/1).

74. The PRESIDENT: I therefore declare the Republic of Vanuatu admitted to membership in the United Nations.

The delegation of the Republic of Vanuatu was escorted to its place in the General Assembly hall.

75. The PRESIDENT: It is a great pleasure for me to welcome a new Member of the United Nations, the Republic of Vanuatu, which is represented here today by Mr. Walter Lini, the Prime Minister of Vanuatu.

76. The admission of a new Member to the United Nations is always an occasion of great pride and joy for the world community. The Organization has already grown to more than three times its original membership and is coming close to attaining universality. The participation of a large number of new States in the United Nations has helped considerably in the evolution of a global perspective on various problems and the common resolve for their solution.

77. The admission of a new country which was formerly a colonial Territory is particularly gratifying because the United Nations has repeatedly affirmed the inalienable right of colonial peoples to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the twentieth anniversary of whose adoption we are celebrating this year, as I stated earlier.

78. Vanuatu is a small country, but it has much to contribute to co-operation and development in the South Pacific and, I am sure, to the work of the international community in strengthening international peace and security.

79. I am sure that I am reflecting the sentiments of all Member States of the United Nations when I express my satisfaction at the accession by the Republic of Vanuatu to membership in the Organization.

80. Several representatives have expressed the desire to speak on this occasion, and I shall now call on them.

81. Sir Anthony PARSONS (United Kingdom): Mr. President, before I turn to the item on our agenda I should like to express, on my own behalf and on behalf of my delegation, our most sincere congratulations to you on your election to the presidency of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Your country and mine share long historical ties, and you and I personally share long ties of friendship. Nobody in my delegation has any doubt that you will conduct our deliberations with strength of character and great diplomatic expertise.

82. I should like at the same time to express the warmest thanks of the United Kingdom delegation to your predecessor in your office, Mr. von Wechmar. He comes from a country which is a partner of mine in the European Community of Ten, and it has been a source of great pride to all of us that he has held the presidency of the General Assembly throughout the past year. He has been a dynamic and forthright President throughout an exceptionally busy year of deliberations in the Assembly, and his standing among all of us was, I think, best expressed by the reception given to him on this floor yesterday evening at the closure of the previous session. We all wish

him and his wife all happiness and success in the very attractive post to which they will shortly be going.

83. In July this year it gave me great pleasure to take part in the Security Council proceedings leading to the unanimous recommendation that Vanuatu should be admitted to membership of our Organization. So I am particularly happy to welcome to this chamber, following the General Assembly's endorsement of that recommendation, the Prime Minister of Vanuatu, Mr. Walter Lini, and the Ambassador of Vanuatu, Mr. Barak Sope.

84. As Members of the United Nations are well aware, the road to independence was not easy for Vanuatu. The historical legacy of the Territory is a rich but complex one, and the people of Vanuatu could not always move as fast towards self-determination as they sometimes wished. However, with the formation of a Government of National Unity in December 1978, the course was set, and the Constitutional Conference in September 1979 unanimously adopted an independence Constitution for the Territory. The elections held following that Conference were observed by a United Nations Mission led by Ambassador Vunibobo, then the Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations. Mr. Lini was chosen in that election, by a sweeping majority, to lead the Territory to independence. It was naturally a proud day for us and for our French partners in the condominium, as it was for the people of Vanuatu, when independence was achieved on 30 July 1980 in peace and in unity.

85. Vanuatu has derived strength and richness from the diversity of its traditions, and we are confident that its people will continue to build on their strong ties of partnership and affection with France and with the United Kingdom. We warmly welcome Vanuatu as the fortieth State among our Commonwealth partners to be admitted to membership of the United Nations, and we also recognize its role as a member of the South Pacific Forum and of the Francophone Community.

86. Vanuatu is the 155th Member of our Organization, bringing a range of experience and perspectives from which we shall all benefit. We look forward to working closely with Mr. Lini and his delegation, both as old friends, with many close links to cherish, and as new colleagues, confronted with the same task of promoting the aims and ideals embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

87. Mr. LEPRETTE (France) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you most warmly on your election to the important office entrusted to you and to wish you sincerely all success in your task.

88. You represent a country with which France is pleased to have ties of firm friendship which have constantly continued to develop. Your reputation in our Organization is well established, and your brilliant qualities are known to all. We have no doubt that you will conduct our proceedings, as you have stated in your inaugural speech, with the desire to ensure that realistic solutions are found and that the interests of the international community will always prevail.

89. I also wish to express my gratitude and congratulations to your predecessor, Mr. von Wechmar, who during his year of office has proved an extremely capable Presi-

dent, devoted, conscientious and impartial. I should like to say to him, as a member of the European Community, that we are proud of what he has accomplished. I also wish him well in his future career and hope it will be equally brilliant.

90. At its meeting held on 8 July 1981 [229]st meeting], the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 489 (1981), which recommended the admission of the Republic of Vanuatu to the United Nations.

91. This Assembly has just pronounced itself on that recommendation, and my delegation is pleased that this body has approved—again, unanimously—the candidacy of the Republic of Vanuatu as a Member of the Organization.

92. Today Vanuatu is the master of its destiny, and France knows Vanuatu well.

93. Nearly a century ago, France and the United Kingdom began their contacts with that Pacific archipelago which was to become the Condominium of the New Hebrides before acceding to independence in 1980. Throughout that period, our three peoples have maintained a dialogue which, I am convinced, will continue in the future.

94. I have evoked the period of the Condominium in order the better to bring out the uniqueness of the new State of Vanuatu: heir to two cultural traditions, the Melanesian and the European, Vanuatu is set apart because it is bilingual, a fact that it was eager to enshrine in its constitution. Respectful of their traditions, but also anxious to develop further, the inhabitants of Vanuatu are rightly proud of their country.

95. The international community need hardly be reminded of the importance of the birth of this new State which is the 155th to join our Organization. The international community, moreover, has been regularly informed about the process which in recent years led the New Hebrides to full sovereignty. In this connexion, I should like to recall that in November 1979 the General Assembly sent a mission to the Territory under the leadership of Mr. Vunibobo, the former Permanent Representative of Fiji. Mr. Vunibobo, whose talent and objectivity I salute once more, was thus able to outline for our Assembly the conditions in which legislative elections were held as a prelude to accession to independence.

96. Like the United Kingdom, France is committed to strict respect for the expressed will of populations. Our international community, indeed, cannot live in peace unless each State is able to determine its own objectives and to choose the type of society that suits it. My country hopes to pursue and develop harmonious relations with the new State, relations based on commitments entered into in sovereignty. I refer to the co-operation agreements signed on 10 March 1981 which, in mutual interest and respect for the rights of all parties, set out cultural, scientific and technical co-operation between France and Vanuatu. Finally, I should like to recall the importance that we attach to the joint declaration of the two Governments, which refers *inter alia* to assurances given to their nationals who reside in either State.

97. Finally, I should like, today, on behalf of France, to greet the leaders of the Republic of Vanuatu who are present in this Hall, in particular the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Walter Lini. I should like to present to him my best wishes for success. May he rest assured of our determination to continue, in full respect for each other's sovereignty, the spirit of solidarity which is so necessary in our time.

98. I welcome the Republic of Vanuatu as the 155th Member of the United Nations.

99. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Arabic*): I now call upon the representative of Algeria, who will speak on behalf of the African Group.

100. Mr. BEDJAOUI (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): Sir, I take special pleasure in extending to you, on behalf of the entire African Group, over which it is my honour to preside this month, my warmest congratulations on your election to the presidency of the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. I should like, on this occasion, to wish you full success in dealing with the immense task and lofty burden just conferred on you by the General Assembly.

101. We are deeply pleased by the decision which brought you—a talented diplomat—to the presidency of our Assembly whose workings you know so well. The tribute thus paid you is at one and the same time a manifestation of the appreciation felt for your inestimable personal qualities and a guarantee of the success of our work, since both your great experience and your knowledge of the United Nations have amply prepared you for your high office.

102. It is also a tribute to Iraq, a brother country and a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, a movement which, since its emergence on the international scene, has unceasingly worked for the consecration of the ideals contained in the United Nations Charter.

103. You take over today, Sir, from Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar, who, with skill and talent, admirably and scrupulously fulfilled his mandate during a session and a time between sessions which were as trying as they were busy. In that way, for a year, he left the strong mark of his engaging personality on the life of our Organization. He deserves recognition by the whole international community for his untiring efforts in the solution of the major political and economic problems of our time. Our good wishes will go with him as he reaches new diplomatic horizons in the service of his country.

104. The African Group has a right to be glad to welcome Vanuatu into the great United Nations family, for while it is geographically distant from Africa, Vanuatu is none the less very close to it by reason of their joint destiny. Along with Africa, Vanuatu is rediscovering the light of history, a history which has for too long been thwarted.

105. The admission of Vanuatu as the 155th State Member of the United Nations brings our Organization closer to universality and is a confirmation of the shrinking of the areas of colonial and racial domination in the world. By the same token it symbolizes the irreversibility of the vast movement of the liberation of peoples and proclaims

for the peoples still enslaved, in Africa and the world over, that the enjoyment and exercise of the first of their rights—their right to self-determination, freedom and independence, that gift of God of which no one can deprive them indefinitely—brooks no delay.

106. The least that we as Africans can do is extend a warm and fraternal welcome to the delegation of Vanuatu, which we assure of our co-operation and at whose entire disposal we place our respective countries. I am convinced that it will be able to find in the values of its people, whose profound aspirations it reflects here, the wisdom, the commitment and the determination to enable it to play its full part in the struggle of the third world for the establishment of a just and equitable world order.

107. The delegation of Vanuatu is not without the means to do this. Tempered by the experience of struggle, imbued with a spirit open to dialogue, as it is generously open to all the rest of the world, Vanuatu, that ancient land, which has always been called by its inhabitants the land of God, will find in this universal body the framework of natural solidarity that will enhance its contribution to the solution of the problems of our time.

108. Welcome, then, to this land of God, which has finally been regained by its sons.

109. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Arabic*): I now call upon the representative of Mongolia, who will speak on behalf of the Asian Group.

110. Mr. DASHTSEREN (Mongolia): First of all, on behalf of the States Members of the Asian Group, in its capacity as Chairman of that Group for this month, the Mongolian delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the high office of President of the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

111. I also wish to congratulate the outgoing President, Mr. von Wechmar of the Federal Republic of Germany, on his successful completion of his duties and the exemplary manner in which he conducted the business of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly and the deliberations of the eighth emergency special session.

112. My delegation has the honour and pleasure on behalf of the Asian Group of welcoming heartily and congratulating the delegation of the Republic of Vanuatu, a sister country of our region, and through it the Government and people of Vanuatu on this happy occasion of its admission to the United Nations. The admission of Vanuatu to the United Nations is another step forward towards the implementation of the principle of universality of this Organization.

113. The members of the Asian Group wish the people of Vanuatu full success in their independent national development, prosperity and social progress. We also wish the delegation of Vanuatu successful and fruitful participation in the activities of the United Nations. We are confident that Vanuatu will make its own valuable, positive contribution to the work of our Organization and to achieving its noble aims.

114. We welcome the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Vanuatu and its admission to the family

of nations as yet another victory, as a reaffirmation of the sacred right of peoples to self-determination and independence and as fresh testimony to the irreversible nature of the ongoing process of decolonization. We are confident that the time is near when other peoples still deprived of their right to independence and self-determination will exercise fully their inalienable right to self-determination and become fully-fledged members of the family of nations, and that we shall soon witness other such happy and moving moments as today's admission of the Republic of Vanuatu to the United Nations.

115. In warmly congratulating and welcoming the delegation of Vanuatu, I should like to assure it that at the United Nations it will enjoy the full and whole-hearted co-operation and friendship of the members of the Asian Group.

116. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Arabic*): I now call upon the representative of the German Democratic Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

117. Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): May I congratulate you heartily, Sir, on behalf of the Eastern European Group on your election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly. We wish you success in discharging your lofty responsibilities.

118. I also have the honour of extending our most sincere gratitude to your predecessor, the President of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly and of the eighth emergency special session, for his skilful and judicious leadership of the work of both those sessions. His diplomatic talent and dynamism undoubtedly had a significant impact on the work of those sessions.

119. As the Chairman of the Eastern European Group I have the honour of and take great pleasure in warmly congratulating the delegation of the Republic of Vanuatu on its admission to membership of the United Nations. We are certain that the young State of Vanuatu will fulfil the obligations involved in admission to the world Organization in a worthy manner.

120. We note with special satisfaction the fact that the admission of the Republic of Vanuatu to the United Nations marks yet another step towards the complete elimination of colonial domination from the world and hence towards the implementation of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, as embodied in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

121. The members of the Eastern European Group have always firmly supported the full implementation of the provisions of that Declaration and will continue to do so. In this connexion I would recall that two-thirds of the present States Members of the United Nations became Members of the world Organization only after it was created. The admission of the Republic of Vanuatu into our Organization brings us closer to our goal of universality of membership of the United Nations.

122. Ever since it achieved independence, the Republic of Vanuatu has been steadfastly overcoming the burdensome legacy of its colonial heritage and has now begun a

new chapter in its history. We wish the people of the Republic of Vanuatu well in future, and we wish them an enhancement of their sovereignty and independence.

123. On behalf of the Eastern European Group I wish to assure the delegation of the Republic of Vanuatu of our steadfast determination to co-operate with them in implementing the purposes and principles of the Charter of our Organization.

124. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Arabic*): I call now on the representative of Honduras, who will be speaking on behalf of the Latin American Group.

125. Mr. CARIAS ZAPATA (Honduras): (*interpretation from Spanish*): First of all, Mr. President, allow me, on behalf of the Latin American Group, to congratulate you most warmly on your well-deserved election as President of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. We all know your wide experience in United Nations matters and the important role your country has played in the activities of the Organization. We are therefore confident that your leadership will be successful, and we assure you of our full co-operation in the exercise of your great responsibilities.

126. We also greet and congratulate Mr. von Wechmar. As President of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, he was outstanding for his devotion and energy in guiding our consideration of the complex items on the agenda.

127. The countries of the Latin American Group wish to welcome most cordially the new Member State of Vanuatu, whose admission was approved by the General Assembly a few moments ago on the recommendation made by the Security Council last July. Vanuatu accedes to independence with the blessings not only of its immediate neighbours but of the entire international community, which appreciates the contribution that that new State can make to our common endeavours, principally in the maintenance of peace and the growing development of economic co-operation.

128. Moreover, Vanuatu's experience as an archipelagic State can certainly be helpful to us in our efforts to develop a better approach to problems related to the use of the sea and its resources. As a State achieving independence after a Franco-British condominium, Vanuatu will, we know, contribute not only the legacy of its own people, but also the heritage of two other civilizations, thus adding to the wealth of this crucible of cultures, the United Nations.

129. The States of Latin America have a community of interests with Vanuatu which they will strive to develop further, and which they wish to underline on this occasion of its delegation's initial attendance at the United Nations, in the conviction that these ties of friendship will be reflected in actions and achievements of mutual benefit to our countries.

130. The PRESIDENT: I call now on the representative of Denmark, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

131. Mr. ULRICHSEN (Denmark): Permit me first, Sir, on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other

States, to congratulate you on your assumption of the high office of President of the General Assembly of the United Nations at the thirty-sixth session. For many years we have appreciated your human and personal qualities which have so clearly been demonstrated in your efforts and in your concern for this organization. Your professional qualifications in handling international problems and your extensive knowledge of this Organization provide a guarantee of your achievement of success.

132. In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States it is my privilege and great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to Vanuatu as the 155th Member State of the United Nations. The Group of countries for which I am speaking welcomed the application of Vanuatu for membership. Universality is one of the basic principles of the United Nations; the admission of Vanuatu to our Organization today can be seen as a further step in the fulfilment of this principle.

133. It is in this spirit that the Group of Western European and Other States takes this opportunity to congratulate the Government and people of Vanuatu on their independence on 30 July 1980. We look forward to close co-operation with the delegation of Vanuatu in our efforts to achieve the ideals and objectives of the United Nations Charter which we all share.

134. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Sudan, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

135. Mr. ABDALLA (Sudan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Sir, it gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, to convey to you warmest congratulations on your election as President of the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session. The Group of Arab States is fully confident that your broad knowledge and experience in both the political and diplomatic arenas, coupled with your expertise and wisdom, will undoubtedly enable you to achieve the success and fruitful results for which we all hope at this session.

136. The Group of Arab States is also pleased to express its appreciation and gratitude to your predecessor, Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar, for the highly competent and efficient manner in which he discharged his responsibilities in conducting the proceedings of the thirty-fifth session.

137. The Group of Arab States is pleased to welcome today the admission of the Republic of Vanuatu to membership in the United Nations. We also welcome Vanuatu's pledge to adhere to the provisions and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

138. The admission of the Republic of Vanuatu to the international family as an independent, sovereign country is proof that this family is advancing towards universality and the complete elimination of imperialism, and is realizing the legitimate and basic right of peoples to achieve self-determination, independence and territorial integrity in keeping with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples which was adopted in 1960.

139. The process of ending imperialism, which has been one of the major preoccupations of this Organization

since its inception, should have first priority in the work of this Organization until all the colonized and occupied countries are freed, foremost among them Palestine and Namibia. A just and comprehensive peace cannot prevail in this world without, *inter alia*, recognition of the genuine and legitimate rights of peoples to live in independence as sovereign States, free from external interference and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law.

140. The Group of Arab States, in welcoming today the admission of the Republic of Vanuatu to the international family, hopes that the admission of this newly independent country will contribute to the aims of this Organization in ending colonialism and the occupation of the territory of others by force, and to the creation of a free international community, more equitable and more peaceful, in which all peoples will enjoy liberty, equality and justice.

141. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of the host country, the United States of America.

142. Mrs. KIRKPATRICK (United States of America): First, I desire to note that, although today's election seemed uncertain, its outcome was in fact never in doubt. We were confronted by three such excellent candidates that the United Nations was certain to be the winner.

143. Secondly, I should like to extend to our new President of this General Assembly the warm congratulations and best wishes of the United States and to express our confidence that he will discharge that office with the skill and dedication for which he is so very well known in this body.

144. Next, I should like also to extend my Government's congratulations, and especially our gratitude, to the outgoing President, who performed the duties to this office with such energy and distinction.

145. Finally, I am pleased, on behalf of the Government of the United States, to welcome Vanuatu to the General Assembly. I know that the commitment in the constitution of the Republic of Vanuatu to freedom and democratic government will make it a valued 155th Member of the United Nations. I am confident that the long-standing friendly relations between our two peoples will be strengthened by our endeavours here.

146. National independence, self-government and democracy are the great values that may be enjoyed by a people. Their attainment is a proud and joyous moment, not only for the people concerned, but for all who value freedom and self-determination. The United States shares this proud moment with the people of Vanuatu, wishes them well and welcomes them to membership in this international body.

147. In recent years, a number of new nations from the Pacific region have achieved membership in the United Nations. They have brought the unique perspectives of their geography and cultural traditions, and also a commitment to democracy, development and world peace, which has measurably strengthened this Organization. We are all aware of the impressive roles played by Pacific nations in major United Nations bodies and in United Nations peace-keeping efforts. We know that Vanuatu will

also become a strong defender of the principles of the United Nations Charter and an active and valuable contributor to the work of the United Nations.

148. It is with very great pleasure that my Government extends to the people of Vanuatu our deep congratulations, our warm best wishes and our most sincere welcome to this body, to New York and to the United States.

149. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of the Solomon Islands.

150. Mr. BUGOTU (Solomon Islands): Mr. President, may I take this opportunity first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President at this thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Solomon Islands has confidence in your ability and experience, and joins with other colleagues in endorsing your leadership of this very distinguished Assembly of nations. We extend also many thanks for the leadership of the outgoing President, Mr. von Wechmar.

151. Three years ago my country, Solomon Islands, was welcomed by this august body as the youngest and 150th Member State of this great family of nations. Today Vanuatu takes on the title of the 155th Member State. The fact that five countries have joined this world forum inside the period of three years shows in many ways the pace of world change which we must all accept as inevitable.

152. Solomon Islands extends a very warm welcome to Vanuatu. As next-door neighbours in the Pacific, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands do not only share a common sea boundary, but more significantly, we share a common heritage with regard to race, history and religion. Our historical links with the past took us both to the cotton and the cane fields of Queensland and Fiji during the mid-nineteenth century, to build nations other than our own. It is my country's wish that we maintain this very close and special relationship with Vanuatu in future.

153. Today's ceremony is a reminder that we in Vanuatu and Solomon Islands have both come of age and must now, inspired by freedom and independence, build our own nations in an atmosphere of peace and harmony with other Pacific neighbours and the world at large. We are encouraged by the acclaim and goodwill shown here today by the international community.

154. The islands of the South Pacific region, like other island States of the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean, have special problems which are peculiar to small island situations and environments. Our economies are small and open, and thus are vulnerable to outside influences. We make no excuses or apologies for inhabiting these islands, but we do expect greater understanding from larger nation States and hope they will respect our way of life and culture.

155. Small as we are, we are nevertheless part of the great world, and by joining the United Nations we have pledged to live up to the same obligations, responsibilities and ideals common to all Member States of this honourable Organization, as contained in the Charter.

156. At this juncture, may I also take the opportunity to inform you of the recent change of government in my

country. We have a newly elected Prime Minister and a new Cabinet which at this very moment is settling down to new challenges and the responsibilities of Government. May I give to this honourable Assembly the assurances of my new Prime Minister and Government, that Solomon Islands' foreign policy remains a sensible and practical one, with the aim of improvement where necessary and suitable. The overriding aim of our foreign policy is the wish to be friends with all nations.

157. We continue to pledge our full support for the preservation and maintenance of world peace and brotherly love. As we said in this great Assembly three years ago, we in Solomon Islands do not believe in the use of arms as a means of achieving compromise in conflicts. We believe, however, that we have good common sense and balance of mind sufficient to allow us to contribute constructively and independently towards peace and harmony in the world should we be required to do so. Peace and brotherly love offer the only true hope and salvation for small island States such as ours, and we are aiming to cultivate those qualities.

158. In welcoming Vanuatu, may we remind the Assembly that for small island States peace is the only sure weapon for survival. The islands of the Pacific have a perpetual reminder of that, being islands of a "peaceful ocean". May we faithfully live up to that name.

159. The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Fiji, who has asked to address the Assembly on behalf of the South Pacific countries.

160. Mr. BOLE (Fiji): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to convey to you on behalf of my own delegation our warmest congratulations on your assumption of the post of President of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

161. I also wish to congratulate our outgoing President on his outstanding performance in presiding over the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

162. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this auspicious occasion on behalf of the six members of the South Pacific Forum who are Members of the United Nations. They are Western Samoa, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Australia and my own country, Fiji.

163. We have just witnessed an historic and memorable event—the admission of the Republic of Vanuatu as the 155th Member of the United Nations. The occasion is a significant landmark in the history of the young Republic, as from today independent Vanuatu will assume its rightful place in this community of nations.

164. In a wider context, the accession of Vanuatu today represents the abiding faith and confidence of an ever-widening net of nations in the valuable roles which the United Nations continues to play as the guardian of peace and security and the guarantor of freedom, equality and the rights of people the world over. That trend of increasing universality of the United Nations augurs well, in our view, for the future of this world body, which in recent years has been increasingly threatened by the confrontational nature and deterioration of international relations.

165. To be sure, nations, particularly small nations, seek membership in the United Nations because it alone can provide that neutral umbrella of peace and security that is so vital and necessary for their own much-needed socio-economic development and orderly political evolution.

166. In welcoming the Republic of Vanuatu as a Member of the United Nations we acknowledge the very real and effective role played by the United Nations, through its Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in encouraging the emergence of Vanuatu as an independent nation. In that connexion, we are proud to have been associated with the work of that Committee and no less proud to have been members of the South Pacific community of nations, which provided moral support for the decolonization of Vanuatu.

167. In saying that, we are not unaware of the positive contributions made by the administering Powers—the United Kingdom and France—in their efforts to resolve satisfactorily the problems connected with Vanuatu's unique history and dependent status. Through discussions and sound judgement, Vanuatu's independence was achieved, like that of its independent neighbours in the South Pacific, in a peaceful way, the Pacific way.

168. The principal credit for the peaceful transition of Vanuatu to independence must of course go to its chief architect—its Prime Minister, Mr. Walter Lini. He is a chief and a leader in his own right, by education and training a man of peace and by his family background a man who grew up in the service of his people. It comes, therefore, as no surprise that the independence movement, which he led from its birth and which was strongly supported by the people of Vanuatu, was able to achieve its goal, in the face of a confused historical inheritance, in the peaceful way that it did.

169. Prime Minister Lini's background, in the view of the nations that I represent, and his experience and training equip him well for the difficult task on which he has already embarked in building a new nation. They have also given him a perspective beyond the parochialism of his national boundaries.

170. Before this solemn occasion today on which the country has become the newest Member of the United Nations, Vanuatu was already a member of the Commonwealth, a member of the South Pacific Forum and a member of various other South Pacific organizations, in which it is already making an important contribution.

171. Vanuatu's membership of the South Pacific Forum and other international organizations in the South Pacific is of special significance to our region, as, apart from the fact that it re-establishes traditional links and affinities among South Pacific countries, it adds a new dimension and strength to regional organizations in their efforts to resolve their common problems.

172. As a Member of the United Nations, Vanuatu, we are certain, will bring a voice that is distinctly fresh, a voice based on its unique cultural experience and history, to the resolution of the problems which confront us here in the United Nations. Vanuatu's voice is a Pacific voice

and an island voice which we hope will serve to direct United Nations attention perhaps more than has been the case before to the special problems of the Pacific and other island developing nations.

173. In conclusion, may I therefore, on behalf of Western Samoa, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Australia and my country, Fiji, most warmly welcome Vanuatu into this community of nations.

174. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu.

175. Mr. LINI (Vanuatu): Mr. President, I wish to take this opportunity first to congratulate you on your election to your high office and to thank you for welcoming my delegation, and in doing so I should also like to thank your predecessor, Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar, for the excellent manner in which he has carried out his duties.

176. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank the Security Council for having favourably considered our application in July and submitting it to this thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

177. I wish to thank all those Member States which have sponsored our application, particularly our former Administering Powers, France and the United Kingdom, and also Algeria, which has spoken to welcome us, Mongolia, the German Democratic Republic, Honduras, Denmark, Sweden, the United States, the Solomon Islands and Fiji.

178. My delegation is deeply honoured and thankful for the many kind words expressed by various representatives at this, Vanuatu's historic occasion. It is with pride, humility and gratitude that I stand before the Assembly in the name of the people of Vanuatu, and the fact that I do so at a moment when our young republic takes its place as a State Member of the United Nations is an additional source of pride and appreciation, and I am indeed grateful for the opportunity to address the Assembly at this particular hour.

179. The Assembly has before it an agenda that is wholly representative of the spirit, principle and commitment of the Charter of this great Organization, which has since its birth been the hope for the emancipation of countless numbers of the human race. From such a high and honourable duty I should not wish to detain negotiations and it is my intention, therefore, to be brief in what I have to say.

180. Initially, I wish to confirm that my presence here is of some personal significance, for it was before this Organization's Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples that on two occasions I was granted permission to appear in order to present a case for the decolonization of my country. The chief concern and assistance of that Committee is widely regarded in Vanuatu as having made a fundamental contribution towards achieving the political freedom of our people, and that fact I gladly acknowledge now. Because of this the United Nations has a very special place in our affections and esteem—the principle rea-

son why we regard our membership as the most significant event since achieving nationhood.

181. The difficult nature of our national birth gave rise to expressions of concern by a significant number of countries represented in this Assembly, and I would take this occasion to record the debt of gratitude we owe to them. To some significant degree, the experience of Vanuatu as the final steps down the long and difficult road to independence were taken may, I respectfully suggest, contain within it an object lesson which is totally in keeping with the essential reasons for the very existence of this council of nations, which a free Vanuatu now so proudly joins.

182. We are a small country located in the vastness of the world's greatest ocean, far removed from the mainstream of international attention. It was principally because of this that we fell prey to the divisive, anti-democratic and selfish attention of those who would have interrupted our progress, our political and constitutional advancement. Such negative influences may well have succeeded but for the acts of assistance constituting a collective concern of high honour which we were given by our friends in the region.

183. It was a classic example of a unity of purpose, of coming together in the interest of the peace and welfare of a people and a region—surely, as I remarked, the essence of the task the United Nations was formed to carry out. If at times of crisis the strong assist those who often, through no fault of their own, are unable adequately to meet the situation, then and only then will it be possible for the weak to become strong and collectively, if not individually, to stand free and able to render assistance themselves when any given circumstance demands it.

184. We live at an uncertain time and in an uncertain world. So much will depend upon the success you, Mr. President, personally enjoy in your high office and, indeed, on the degree of unity of purpose generated by this Assembly. You, Sir, and the Members here assembled, can rely upon the constant prayers and good wishes of the people of Vanuatu in your endeavours. We realize, of course, that even earnestly delivered prayers are often assisted by practical actions. It is said that God helps those who help themselves, a belief to which not unnaturally—given my background—I personally subscribe. We are a small nation and a recent arrival in the family of nations, both facts of which we are most mindful. But as we take our place in the world and, in so doing, assume our national and international obligations, we would like to believe that we may be able on occasion to make a contribution, however modest, to the work of this Organization and to the deliberations of this Assembly. For, small as we are, and as new to the council of the international community as we may be, we hold our convictions and our principles with both sincerity and confidence.

185. Our difficult colonial past has also prompted in our national experience many concerns, and, with all humil-

ity, there may be occasions when a mutual benefit may be derived from those concerns being voiced here. It is the fact that some of our concerns are regional, based on support for what we in Vanuatu regard as a natural expectation held by those Pacific peoples still subject to colonial rule. Their right to be granted a free and unfettered political determination is a principle we shall not abdicate. We shall not forget that this principle is supported by this Assembly on every available opportunity, just as we shall advocate and strive with equal conviction to ensure that our Pacific Ocean be free from nuclear contamination through the practice of the dumping of nuclear waste or the testing of nuclear devices.

186. On the international scene, we shall give support with all the conviction at our command to the debate which has become known as the North-South dialogue, believing as we surely do that much depends—both in terms of justice and of international welfare—on the future relationship that will exist between the manufacturing countries and industrialized society and those who supply the basic raw materials upon which industrialized society so vitally depends.

187. May I again suggest, with respect, that no organization is better placed than the United Nations and its agencies to create an awareness that much depends on the future relationship between manufacturing nations and the raw material-producing nations. But the world must turn away from concepts of dominance and dependence to the reality of inter-dependence and to the imperatives of change that this produces. May I again suggest that the improvement in the quality of the welfare of so many who desperately need it depends on a practical recognition by industrialized society that it is in no one's long-term interest for national profit to be pursued at the expense of international poverty. The continuance of such a circumstance can only result in the inflammable structures of injustice mounting higher and higher—dread structures which do not allow half the world to earn a decent living, patterns of consumption that strain and pollute the world's resources and economic systems and which benefit the few at the expense of the many.

188. In putting forward such concerns as and when we are able, we would hope in all sincerity that we shall be making a contribution to this Organization, to which we owe so much, while at the same time upholding and furthering the high purpose of its calling. I should like to thank the Assembly for listening so kindly and so courteously to what I have had to say.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 114th meeting, paras. 3–29.