



President: Mr. Imre HOLLAI (Hungary).

*Address by Mr. Ferdinand E. Marcos, President of the
Republic of the Philippines*

1. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Mr. Ferdinand Marcos, the President of the Republic of the Philippines, and to invite him to address the Assembly.
2. President MARCOS: I am grateful for the opportunity of again addressing this great assembly of nations, and of reaffirming my Government's unwavering commitment to the work that brings us here.
3. From the Government and the people of the Philippines, I bring felicitations and high hopes for this thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. We extend our warmest congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the Assembly and to Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar on his elevation to the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations.
4. Under your leadership, Mr. President, this session of the General Assembly takes its place in a long series of sessions which, since 1945, have borne the mighty cause of the United Nations.
5. It is impressive to think that the United Nations is now 37 years of age. For an organization that was proclaimed "dead" by some within two years of its birth and dismissed by others "as a mere debating society which only stirs up trouble", it has proved quite enduring and resilient. Few remember the time when there was strong agitation to bring the whole structure down.
6. Notwithstanding the solid achievements, we have merely arrived at a tenuous form of world order and harmony, shaken from time to time by the conflicts and tensions of the day, and at a kind of international co-operation feeling its way, which wavers at the first sign of difficulty and stress. We have learned how difficult is the task of peace-making and peace-keeping and how formidable is the challenge of promoting the development of all nations.
7. In his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General urges us to examine with the utmost frankness the realities of the peace-keeping operations of our world body, namely that the United Nations has been weak and ineffective and that the world is perilously close to anarchy. The United Nations peace-keeping efforts, he reminds us, have real limitations, while our hopes in them are great, and they "can function properly only with the co-

operation of the parties and on a clearly defined mandate from the Security Council" [A/37/1, p. 3].

8. In a decisive and dramatic way, world events during the last 10 years have overwhelmingly riveted our attention on two primordial and related issues: the control of man's capability today for destruction and conflict, and the release on the other hand of his capability for creation and co-operation. It is the painful paradox of our time that the same force—science and technology—which holds promise for the well-being and welfare of humanity also threatens most security and life on the planet.

9. I have no wish to dramatize the facts, for they are evident and known to all. But let us emphasize here that our work must begin with the way things are in the world today and that we must break out of the impasse within which our problems today appear to have enclosed us. Every representative who has spoken before this body in recent months has invariably spoken of the grave perils to peace—and with reason, with cause.

10. In the midst of all the current conflicts and turmoil, it is no surprise that the international arms industry has emerged as the biggest, most profitable recession-proof industry in the world today with global sales reaching hundreds of billions of dollars each year. Many developing countries are its best customers, as they avidly acquire, not the implements of peace and development, but the deadly instruments that ensure human destruction. Military expenditures are now running at close to \$US 700 billion annually. Global disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, is perhaps the most crucial question confronting mankind today. Yet, even on an issue that would decide the survival or extinction of human civilization as we know it, we cannot seem to reach agreement.

11. The Assembly, which held its twelfth special session, the second such session devoted to the question of disarmament, adjourned without reaching agreement on a final document. The strategic arms reduction talks between the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as the ongoing talks between them on short-term and medium-term missiles, are proceeding without much hope of early success.

12. The quantum leap in the modernization of nuclear and conventional armaments in the past three and a half decades has reached insane proportions. The global stockpile to date, we are told, has reached approximately 50,000 nuclear bombs, of which more than 95 per cent are in the arsenals of the super-Powers. About half of these are already deployed and targeted, needing but the push of a button to hurl them into their mission of mutually assured destruction, aptly abbreviated as "M.A.D."

13. If there is one item that offers some glimmer of hope in this grim litany of perils to world peace, it is perhaps the discovery of a new technology to neutralize nuclear weapons. This is the result of the effort to arrive at the perfection of the technology for the destruction of nuclear weapons on their launching sites or in flight. It is our prayer that the super-Powers attain mutual assured destruction of hostile nuclear weapons, which would then become, from the start, useless weapons of war. This is a development devoutly to be welcomed, and there ought to be intensive efforts to employ science and technology in this direction. We must hope this will then mean a return to conventional forms of warfare, which at least hold more promise of control.

14. It is perhaps to the credit of the United Nations, as a venue for negotiation and debate, that thus far the world has been spared from another catastrophic global war. But the time for the United Nations to preside over peace-making is fast running out. The pace of the arms race will render nugatory our irresolute effort in this body towards that end.

15. In this spirit, my Government declares anew its full support in strengthening the United Nations machinery for the pacific settlement of regional conflicts, and its initiatives for global disarmament.

16. During the twenty-first session of the Assembly in 1966, I expressed the view that the Charter of the United Nations must keep itself attuned to world events and in this way be responsive to contemporary problems. The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization has for some seven years directed its energies to that same objective and has, I am happy to learn, submitted for adoption what is called the draft Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes [see A/37/33, para. 19]. That recommendation comes at a time of great turmoil, and encourages the thought that the armed conflicts we have witnessed in recent years and weeks might not have taken place and inflicted an enormous toll on life and property had the spirit of conciliation summoned by the draft Manila Declaration been available.

17. At this point, we must frankly admit that instead of progress, there is decline on this front; and instead of stability, there is disarray in international economic relations. We are in the midst of the most serious crisis in the international economy since the 1930s. The world economy is in a state of fundamental

disequilibrium, characterized by sluggish growth and historically high inflation rates and unemployment.

18. In this state of affairs, it is the developing countries which are suffering the most. Recent growth rates in the developing countries have been appreciably less than 5 per cent, which is very modest in relation to their development needs. The combined current account deficit of non-oil-producing developing countries has reached \$US 82 billion in 1980 and was expected to approach \$US 100 billion in 1981. This deficit reflects the deterioration of their terms of trade because of the impact of rising import prices, the weakening demand for their exports, and increased protectionism in world trade.

19. I had the privilege of joining 21 heads of State at the International Meeting on Co-operation and Development which was held at Cancún in October 1981, in an effort to activate new approaches and options in solving the grave problems involved in development. The meeting resulted in greater understanding of the complex problems of food, finance, trade, energy and industrialization. There was a common recognition of the need for greater international co-operation to restore vitality and equilibrium to the world economy. And the meeting agreed on the desirability of reaching a common consensus on the launching of global negotiations within the United Nations. To date, however, the global negotiations have not been launched.

20. It is the earnest hope of my Government and my people that at this thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly we can reach agreement on the launching of the very much delayed negotiations in the interest of strengthening international economic co-operation. The problems cannot wait. The price of inaction multiplies in severity for nations and the world alike. We must not allow time to vitiate our initiatives.

21. In conclusion I would like to recall a thoughtful voice at the birth of the United Nations. In 1945, when the Organization began its work, Beardsley Ruml wrote that as the years move on we will come to know that "the United Nations is the only alternative to the demolition of the world". This alternative we have come to recognize beyond doubt, and this we must now boldly carry forward.

22. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the President of the Republic of the Philippines for the important statement he has just made.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.