



President: Mr. Imre HOLLAI (Hungary).

AGENDA ITEM 35

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

1. The PRESIDENT: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed on Monday, 8 November, at 11 a.m.

It was so decided.

2. Mr. VO ANH TUAN (Viet Nam) (*interpretation from French*): Developments in South-East Asia in recent years have daily highlighted the need for and the importance of an in-depth consideration by the General Assembly of the issue of peace, stability and co-operation in that region, in order to discern the causes and help to find ways of putting an end to the suffering of the people of the region, especially those in the countries of Indo-China, which have been the victims of successive wars of aggression for almost four decades.

3. South-East Asia, known for its strategic importance and its abundant natural wealth, has been and still is a prey to the greed of countries from outside the region. The rapid restoration of peace and stability is therefore an imperative necessity in the interests both of the peoples of South-East Asia and of international peace and security. However, while the international community unanimously emphasizes such a need, it is forced to note that there still exist differences of view on the evaluation of the basic causes of tension in the region and the measures which should be taken to remedy this situation.

4. For China, the United States and a certain number of countries, it is the so-called question of Kampuchea which underlies the tension in South-East Asia. But was there peace and stability in the region before 1975? And why did not peace and stability reign there during the years 1977 and 1978?

5. For other countries, including Viet Nam, it is rather the forces of hegemony and imperialism which have persistently subjugated the three countries of Indo-China and attempted to sabotage the resurgence of the Kampuchean people and reinstall the genocidal criminals in Kampuchea, who are directly responsible for the present tension in South-East Asia. Since this is a fundamental difference of view, the question quite naturally arises, how should we solve it?

6. With the exception of the Chinese delegation, all the delegations which made statements during the debate on items 3 (b) and 20 on the agenda of the present session have agreed to reject the possibility

of a military settlement and have clearly spoken in favour of the need to pursue dialogue and negotiations with a view to reaching a solution acceptable to all the parties directly concerned. The delegation of Viet Nam welcomes this encouraging and constructive attitude. Certainly the search for such a solution is not at all easy for, apart from the fact that the item under discussion is in itself very complex, forces external to the region continue to endeavour to obstruct matters. Nevertheless, we are convinced that with political good will and perseverance on the part of all countries of the region, and with the contribution of all forces wedded to peace and justice, an appropriate solution may truly crown our efforts.

7. In this connection, we think we have every right to be optimistic, for two essential reasons. On the one hand, the peoples of South-East Asia have to defend basic interests, interests which are in the long term identical. Just as in the past they struggled together against the colonial yoke for national independence, at the present time they all aspire to live in peace and to bend their efforts in the struggle against poverty and for accelerated economic and social development.

8. On the other hand, there are encouraging examples of many countries in various regions in Europe, Africa and Latin America which have managed to settle their differences peacefully. Why could not the countries of South-East Asia do that too?

9. When the countries of Indo-China, together with other countries, proposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the General Assembly, there were quite a few who called this constructive initiative a subterfuge, saying that it was an attempt to evade the so-called question of Kampuchea. Those who spoke in that way are still continuing their campaign to distort reality, to mislead public opinion and to sow confusion between black and white, between sincerity and hypocrisy.

10. Actually, South-East Asia has not enjoyed peace and stability since the middle of the 1940s because of successive wars of aggression led by militarists, colonialists, imperialists and hegemonist-expansionists. The peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea had to struggle for several decades before they won out over the aggressors and eliminated the external factors behind the war and tension in the region. Through huge sacrifices, the peoples of the three Indo-Chinese countries have made their inestimable contribution to the cause of peace and stability in that part of the globe. During that time, certain countries let themselves be drawn by the United States into a war of aggression against the three Indo-Chinese countries, even sending troops to commit crimes in Viet Nam. Subsequently, those same countries reacted with indifference to the Chinese aggression against Viet Nam in 1979, as they have

reacted to the grave threat posed by China at present to the security of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea. Those are historical facts that no one, however well-armed with the most clever sophism, can distort.

11. After its historic victory in 1975, Viet Nam was prepared to forget the past. It held out a hand of friendship to the countries that had taken part in the war of aggression in Viet Nam. It took the initiative of working towards normalization of relations with the member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations [ASEAN] by putting forward its four-point policy as a basis for the development of relations of good neighbourliness and co-operation with them. Visits were made by delegations from the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the ASEAN member countries and by delegations from those countries to Viet Nam and Laos, and they produced encouraging initial results.

12. One can only regret that just when peace, stability, friendship and co-operation in South-East Asia were about to emerge, they were quickly sabotaged once again by factors outside the region. This time it was the hostile acts of China, in collusion with the United States, with regard to the three Indo-Chinese countries, which culminated in the Chinese aggression against Viet Nam in February 1979. Once again, some countries let themselves be drawn by forces from outside the region into the current of opposition against Viet Nam.

13. Fortunately, the Indo-Chinese countries have clearly perceived the new danger threatening them and the entire region and have refused to play into the hands of the enemy, who is trying to push the ASEAN member countries into confrontation with the Indo-Chinese countries and to maintain tension in the region, in the hope of fishing in troubled waters. Thus we have spared no effort in urging the ASEAN member countries to undertake, together with us, specific activities designed to restore peace and stability in the region as soon as possible. At each of the six meetings of their Foreign Ministers, the three Indo-Chinese countries have successfully put forward a whole series of reasonable and realistic proposals with a view to settling this urgent issue. Last year, at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, on behalf of the Indo-Chinese countries, proposed seven principles to govern relations between the two groups, the Indo-Chinese countries and the ASEAN member countries.¹ It is regrettable that the ASEAN countries have shown an attitude with regard to our proposals that is hardly constructive, while taking refuge behind erroneous resolutions on the so-called situation in Kampuchea and the so-called International Conference on Kampuchea, which the Indo-Chinese countries have totally rejected.

14. To get out of the current impasse, the international community must contribute to the search for a solution acceptable to all parties. In South-East Asia there are indeed two groups of countries. Consequently, any correct solution should take into account the legitimate interests of each of those two groups. In our view, such a solution should be based on equality, mutual respect, non-imposition of one party over

the other and non-intervention by forces from outside the region.

15. The Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi in February 1981, put forward the framework for a comprehensive solution for the entire South-East Asian region and "urged all States in the region to undertake a dialogue which would lead to the resolution of differences among themselves and the establishment of durable peace and stability in the area, as well as the elimination of involvement and threats of intervention by outside Powers."²

16. This appeal was reiterated at the Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries, held at United Nations Headquarters at the beginning of last October [see A/37/540, annex].

17. It is pertinent to emphasize here that the contents and the formulation of this appeal were the result of frank, arduous and constructive negotiations between the Indo-Chinese countries and the ASEAN member countries which are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. We venture to draw the conclusion that whenever and wherever there is no interference by China and the United States, the Indo-Chinese countries and ASEAN, inspired by good will, are perfectly capable of settling their problems themselves.

18. As regards the question of peace and stability in South-East Asia, at the present time we are faced with the following alternative: either to cling to the unilateral solution that a number of countries would like to impose, the consequences of which would be to make the situation even more tense and more complex—such a situation would be only in the interests of China and of the United States; or to work together to seek a solution in the spirit of the New Delhi formula to eliminate differences gradually, to restore peace and stability, to promote friendship and fruitful co-operation between the countries of the region—such a situation would be beneficial to all the countries of the region, international peace and security will be consolidated, and China and the United States would be the only ones to suffer.

19. The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam will spare no effort to contribute to attaining the second part of the foregoing alternative by being prepared to face up to the first. In this regard, we must dispel all the illusions of those who might imagine that they could, by maintaining the confrontation, by using political and diplomatic pressure and by engaging in an economic blockade, bring Viet Nam to its knees and make it abandon its just cause. Of course, we have great economic difficulties, but they are essentially due to the results of the wars of aggression and originate in hostile intrigues by our enemies. But we have come through the most difficult times. The situation in Viet Nam is very good at present; in the three Indo-Chinese countries, it is much better than at any other previous period and their position is stronger than ever before.

20. In his letter of 15 September 1982 to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the ASEAN member countries [A/37/477, annex I], the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's

Democratic Republic, on behalf of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the three countries of Indo-China, further clarified the proposals put forward during the Sixth Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, held at Ho Chi Minh City last July [A/37/334, annex]. These proposals are entirely in keeping with the spirit of the appeal of the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi, and constitute a further expression of the good will of the countries of Indo-China in their desire to promote dialogue and negotiations with their partners in order to iron out the differences as soon as possible and settle issues that are of concern to all parties, on the basis of the universally recognized principles of mutual respect for the legitimate interests of each party, equality, mutual agreement, non-imposition of one party on another and non-interference from abroad.

21. Inspired by the aforementioned principles, this new series of proposals is designed precisely to settle the differences existing between the three countries of Indo-China and China and to meet the concerns of the ASEAN member countries in general and of Thailand in particular. Those proposals could bring the United Nations out of the present impasse and enable it to play the positive role which falls to it in the cause of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia.

22. As regards the People's Republic of China, my country sincerely desires to normalize relations between the two countries as soon as possible, because, as always, we hold dear traditional relations of friendship that bind the Vietnamese people to the fraternal Chinese people, and we consider such a normalization of relations an essential factor for peace and stability in the region. We appeal to the Chinese side to sit down once again at the negotiating table with Viet Nam to attempt to settle problems pending between the two countries and respond positively to the proposals of the Indo-Chinese countries concerning the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements of peaceful coexistence with Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea.

23. Although Chinese troops continue illegally to occupy several parts of Vietnamese territory, Viet Nam does not pose the withdrawal of Chinese troops from those areas as a pre-condition to renewing negotiations between Viet Nam and China. China, on the other hand, demands the total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea as a prerequisite for the resumption of negotiations. It is obvious that such an attitude on China's part is nothing but a pretext to avoid any response to the realistic and reasonable proposals of Viet Nam. This makes clear who sincerely aspires to peace and friendship and who is responsible for tension and confrontation in relations between Viet Nam and China.

24. Some Chinese leaders regularly proclaim that China opposes hegemonism, respects the independence and sovereignty of other countries and harbours no expansionist design, does not occupy one square inch of anyone else's land and does not have one soldier on any foreign territory. As one listens to them, one cannot fail to ask these questions: Why

do the official maps of China include, among other things, the major part of the territories of South-East Asia? Who has continued since 17 February 1979 illegally to occupy several portions of Vietnamese territory after having seized by force of arms the Vietnamese Hoang Sa Archipelago in January 1974? Who has massed 400,000 Chinese troops on the Viet Nam-China border and constantly launches provocative activities and armed operations by commands within Vietnamese territory? Who has been recruiting, training and equipping traitors coming from Viet Nam, Laos and the Pol Potist genocide clique and their consorts with a view to sabotaging the peaceful reconstruction of Viet Nam, Laos, and Kampuchea and undertaking acts of subversion against those sovereign countries? The facts show eloquently that the words of the Chinese leaders are indeed in flagrant contradiction with their acts.

25. Incontestable facts are not lacking to show that the Chinese threat does indeed exist and that the concerns of the countries of Indo-China are legitimate and well founded. During the last three years, voices have been raised asking for the total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, but this serious threat from China has been passed over in silence. Such an attitude cannot be interpreted as anything other than a manifestation of a determination to refuse deliberately to the three Indo-Chinese countries the right of self-defence which is conferred upon them explicitly by international law and to encourage China's expansionist policy in Indo-China, to take the side of the aggressors against the victims of aggression. Neither the eloquence of some nor the slander of others can conceal this incontestable fact.

26. The Indo-Chinese countries understand full well the desire of the ASEAN member countries to see all Vietnamese troops leave Kampuchea. That is why, even though the Chinese threat remains a grave one, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea took a first step as a sign of good will by deciding on a partial but substantial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea in July this year. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Nguyen Co Thach, who has just concluded a visit to Indonesia, told Agence France Presse that a further withdrawal of Vietnamese troops might be contemplated if the other party reacted positively, as had been indicated in the communiqué of the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the three Indo-Chinese countries, held in July 1982. It should be recalled that, at that Conference, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea reaffirmed that the two countries would agree on the total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea when the Chinese threat disappeared.

27. The Indo-Chinese countries have repeatedly proposed the conclusion of treaties of non-aggression and non-interference in each other's internal affairs with Thailand, a country which has common borders with Laos and Kampuchea. Nevertheless, the Thai side backed out on several occasions, stating that there was no danger of aggression by Viet Nam against Thailand. Recently, the People's Republic of Kampuchea put forward a new proposal on the creation of a security zone along the border between Kampu-

chea and Thailand in which there would be only armed forces of the People's Republic of Kampuchea on the Kampuchean side and only armed forces of the Kingdom of Thailand on the Thai side. In our view, this is a reasonable and realistic initiative which takes into account the security interests of both Thailand and Kampuchea.

28. With regard to bilateral relations between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Thailand, my delegation welcomes the fact that Laos has always scrupulously complied with the provisions of the joint Lao-Thai communiqué of 1979 making their common border one of peace, friendship and co-operation, with a view to promoting good-neighbourly relations between the two peoples. We should like to see the Thailand side adopt a similar attitude.

29. Last July, with a view to the discussion and settlement of the regional problems, the Indo-Chinese countries proposed the convening of an international conference on South-East Asia based on the principle that regional problems should be discussed and settled by the countries of the region without violating the sovereignty of any one of them or interfering in their internal affairs, and also based on principles of equality and mutual respect and without the views of one party being imposed on another. We are prepared to enter immediately into contact with the ASEAN member countries so as to come to an agreement on the formalities for such a conference. We should like to emphasize here that that conference would be convened only with the agreement of all the countries directly concerned, that is, the member countries of ASEAN and the countries of Indo-China. It would not be in any way a conference on a unilateral basis so that one side could impose its diktat on the other, as was the case with the famous International Conference on Kampuchea, which was convened in spite of the energetic protests of the major party concerned, namely, the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

30. My country ardently desires that peace and stability be restored as soon as possible so as to enable the countries of South-East Asia "to develop bilateral and multilateral co-operation in economic, technical and scientific, cultural, sporting and tourist matters . . . with a view to strengthening mutual understanding and trust and friendly and good-neighbourly relations, in the interest of the task of building up each country in accordance with its individual conditions," as stipulated in the memorandum concerning principles governing relations of peaceful coexistence between the countries of Indo-China and the ASEAN member countries submitted by the Indo-Chinese countries at the thirty-sixth session.

31. We are aware that there are still a great many difficulties to be settled on the road leading to the restoration of peace and stability in South-East Asia, for those having an interest in maintaining tension in that region are not prepared to renounce their cunning manoeuvres. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to note that throughout this year a climate of dialogue and détente has begun to emerge in relations between the countries of Indo-China and those of ASEAN, thanks to the efforts of both the countries of the region and other peace-loving countries of the world.

32. Peace, stability, friendship and co-operation—these are the aspiration and urgent demand of the peoples of the region. To our mind, the proposals put forward by the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Indo-Chinese countries last July could lead to the satisfaction of that legitimate demand, for these initiatives are moderate and realistic and take into account the interests of all the countries concerned. We express the hope, therefore, that our proposals will meet with general understanding on the part of the ASEAN member countries. We sincerely urge the international community to make its positive contribution to this common cause, or at least to refrain from any action that might cause the situation to worsen. For its part, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, together with the other countries of Indo-China, will increase its efforts to ensure the restoration as soon as possible of peace and stability in the region and the establishment of the conditions necessary for the development of relations of friendship and fruitful co-operation of all kinds, in the interests of each country and of all South-East Asia, as well as of international peace and security.

33. Mr. NAGY (Hungary): On the question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia, my Government's position is determined by the principle according to which disputes that might arise between members of the international community should be settled peacefully, through negotiations. We are firmly convinced that the nations of the world must coexist peacefully, irrespective of their social systems and differences of views on questions of mutual interest.

34. This is particularly true of the region of South-East Asia, which has been a hotbed of tension and war for the past several decades and whose peoples have long been yearning for peace and social justice. That region still remains a highly volatile area of the world, burdened as it is with problems from the past as well as from recent developments. All this has wide-ranging repercussions on the overall international situation.

35. In assessing realistically the situation in South-East Asia, we cannot fail to note that, first, there are basically two groups of countries in the region and that the countries of each group share among themselves some common values and ideals. Secondly, a number of problems afflict relations among the countries of the region, including the problem related to Kampuchea. Thirdly, the common heritage of historical and cultural bonds and the economic and geographic circumstances make it not only desirable but imperative for them to find common ground for the solution of outstanding issues.

36. My delegation is of the view that, against the background of positive elements favouring a natural rapprochement and understanding among the States of South-East Asia, we must take into account also the adverse effects of delaying a solution of long-standing problems and the continued existence of unsettled questions, which can lead only to the deepening of mistrust, the widening of confrontation and the reduction of the possibilities for the solution of the problems of the region by the countries of the area themselves, without outside interference.

37. Various efforts have been made to help ease tensions and bring about a mutually acceptable solution. We have taken note with satisfaction of, and supported, the many-sided activities and initiatives undertaken by the Indo-Chinese countries. In this respect, we attach great importance to the proposals presented by Viet Nam for normalizing its relations with the People's Republic of China. We consider equally noteworthy the recent gestures by Viet Nam in the direction of the United States, since an improvement in United States-Vietnamese relations could be a keystone in building the edifice of peace and stability in South-East Asia.

38. My delegation never fails to welcome any constructive idea put forward or any positive action taken by the member countries of ASEAN. I should also like to emphasize in this context the importance of the formal proposal made by the Mongolian People's Republic to hold an international conference of the countries of Asia and the Pacific region with the aim of arriving at an agreement on the non-use of force and non-aggression among the participating States.³ The acceptance of such a proposal would undoubtedly contribute positively to the solution of problems in South-East Asia too.

39. The Hungarian delegation is fully aware of the highly important efforts made by the Secretary-General aimed at facilitating contacts between the parties concerned and bridging the gap between their positions. I should like to underline that the activities of the Organization in this field are relevant, inasmuch as they reflect a common endeavour of the Member States, and especially of those directly concerned and vitally interested in finding a solution to the questions pertaining to South-East Asia. Actions based on decisions of the so-called International Conference on Kampuchea, which were adopted in the absence of the most interested parties, are not likely to lead us anywhere. Furthermore, these decisions play into the hands of those who seek to perpetuate tension and uncertainty in the area and to bring back the former genocidal régime to Kampuchea.

40. We sincerely hope that insistence on unacceptable premises will end and will not abort the promising start of a constructive dialogue among the member countries of ASEAN and the countries of Indo-China. No matter how important the contribution of the United Nations can be, the emerging dialogue, the personal contacts and the exchanges of views among the representatives of these countries cannot be replaced by the efforts of the Organization.

41. These direct talks between the interested parties are invaluable and irreplaceable, since they provide a negotiating forum in which all the questions of concern to the participants can be discussed in a frank, constructive and business-like atmosphere. That means that the legitimate interests and aspirations of each and every one will be respected on a reciprocal basis. This framework offers the best possibilities for understanding each other's positions and preoccupations, without trying to place some of the issues in the talks in an imaginary world, out of the context of South-East Asia. This is the case, unfortunately, with the kind of approach that seeks to identify the problems of South-East Asia solely with the issues relating to Kampuchea and to reduce the

multifarious problems of the region to the "situation in Kampuchea". In the last four years it has become increasingly evident that this issue is being kept artificially on the surface by those who are not willing to allow tension to ease and prospects of a settlement to appear on the political horizon.

42. Distortions, simplistic statements and false assertions are frequently made in the description of the root causes of developments in Kampuchea and in the characterization of events in that country since the Pol Pot régime was thrown out of power. I shall not dwell on this question because my delegation, together with other delegations, has already pointed out the differences—and that word is too weak—between the performance of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, which is now almost four years old, and the "achievements" of the Pol Pot régime. I wish to recall, however, that many delegations—not all of them recognizing the sole legal Government in Phnom Penh—have nevertheless not avoided mentioning the horrible reign of terror that the Pol Pot Government imposed on the Khmer people and have spoken objectively about the rebirth of Kampuchea, as well as about the efforts of the Phnom Penh Government to stabilize all those pillars of human society in the country which were left in a shambles by the overthrown régime.

43. The Hungarian delegation holds that the only feasible way to peace and stability in the South-East Asian region is through the acknowledgement of existing realities. I add right away that this has nothing to do with what is termed acceptance of a *fait accompli* imposed on the world community. This acknowledgement, to our mind, boils down to taking due note of the fundamental changes that have occurred in that part of the world. This acknowledgement can take different forms and shapes; it can come *de jure* or *de facto*. But the important thing for us all is to get down to work as soon as we can on the basis of some essential and undeniable facts of life, which, as always, can be to the liking of some and not at all to that of others.

44. Everybody knows that Hungary has developed long-standing friendship and co-operation with the countries of Indo-China, dating back to the period of their long and heroic national liberation struggle against colonial domination and foreign aggression and for social progress. It is natural, therefore, that my country has been following with close attention the efforts of the Indo-Chinese countries to establish peace and security in their region. In doing this, these countries obviously had to leave behind the suffering and damage inflicted upon them by some of their neighbours and overcome the distrust and even animosity that emerged as a result of the role some countries had played in that period.

45. My country welcomed with satisfaction and high hopes the ushering in of a new era of co-operation in the region. We were all the more saddened when this promising trend later suffered a setback and was halted. It was for these reasons that we noted with great interest the letter sent on 15 September 1982 by the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the ASEAN member countries. We noted in par-

particular the letter's references to a new beginning of the dialogue and détente among the countries of South-East Asia. The letter—together with the proposals put forward by the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea in July—represents a new possibility that can give a fresh momentum to the search for a mutually acceptable solution to the problems of the region.

46. Hungary is geographically far from South-East Asia, but, as a member of the international community aspiring to peace, it appeals to the ASEAN member States, with which it maintains very fruitful relations, to study carefully the concrete and flexible proposals and ideas submitted to them by the recent Conference of the three Indo-Chinese countries and expatiated on in the aforementioned letter of the Lao Foreign Minister.

47. The statement of the representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic in the general debate [15th meeting] also dwelt at some length on the proposals. These are based on the need to take account of the concerns and legitimate interests of both groups of countries in the region and on the view that disagreements between them can be settled through dialogue and negotiations. To this end, the Indo-Chinese side suggested the convening of an enlarged international conference with the participation of the ASEAN and Indo-Chinese States and of a number of other interested countries in the region and beyond.

48. It is particularly relevant to note here that the *de jure* recognition of the People's Republic of Kampuchea does not constitute a pre-condition of the talks and of the convening of such a conference and thus should not hinder progress towards a negotiated settlement of all existing problems. It is also important that Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea welcome a United Nations contribution to peace and stability in South-East Asia; but, understandably, as long as so-called Democratic Kampuchea is usurping the rightful seat of that country in the world body, the United Nations is prevented from fully carrying out the role it ought to play in the region.

49. It is regrettable that thus far the ASEAN member countries have not responded favourably to the Indo-Chinese proposals and have concentrated exclusively on questions related to Kampuchea. None the less, it is heartening that, despite the undoubtedly complex and interrelated body of questions in the area, it is diplomacy and not sabre-rattling that seems to be taking the lead at present in the quest for regional stability. My delegation hopes that this trend will develop and deepen in the future, in the interests of regional and world peace. As far as Hungary is concerned, we shall strive to contribute within the limits of our possibilities to the furtherance of positive developments in the region.

50. Mr. LÓPEZ del AMO (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): At the end of the Second World War, the process of decolonization acquired unprecedented strength, bringing to independent life scores of nations in Africa, Asia, the South Pacific and the Caribbean, and thereby leading to a three-fold increase in membership of the United Nations in the short 37 years of the Organization's existence.

51. The history of the nations of South-East Asia is an inseparable part of that contemporary process of liberation. Some of those peoples, furthermore, have only recently triumphed over the brutal military aggression of imperialism and other expansionist and hegemonistic forces, and are still faced with their hostility and must pay an even higher price in terms sacrifice.

52. To this day, neo-colonialist interests are fanning the fires of war between neighbouring countries. They export destabilization and impede fruitful coexistence among all the nations of the region. The countries of the area must find ways of achieving mutually beneficial coexistence and not allow outside interests to prevail.

53. Acceptance of the reality of political pluralism among States of the region is a requirement of the achievement of peace and stability. These are all developing countries, and they share the problems involved in overcoming the backwardness that is a legacy of centuries of colonial domination. They must travel the difficult road of development to guarantee a life of dignity for their peoples. For this purpose, it is necessary to substitute dialogue for confrontation, to allay mistrust and to lay the foundations for understanding and co-operation for the benefit of all parties.

54. In a letter dated 15 September of this year, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, on his own behalf and on behalf of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, addressed to his colleagues in the member countries of ASEAN certain proposals which deserve serious consideration.

55. No international conference without the participation of all the parties concerned can lead to a solution. Rather, it will serve to aggravate the difficulties that stand in the way of the attainment of the desired goal. An international conference of the five ASEAN member countries, the three countries of Indo-China, Burma, India, the five permanent members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General, as proposed by the Foreign Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, could open the way to real solutions.

56. The Foreign Minister also stated in his letter that dialogue and negotiation based on mutual respect for each other's legitimate interests, equality and mutual agreement, without any imposition whatsoever and without outside interference, can lead to the fulfilment of the just aspiration to turn South-East Asia into a zone of peace, stability and co-operation. In this context, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the non-aligned countries, meeting in New York last October, urged all States of the region to engage in dialogue aimed at the solution of their differences, the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the area and the elimination of interference and threats of intervention by foreign Powers.

57. This is in keeping with the interests of all the States of the region and would make a contribution to international peace and security. My delegation is confident that the peoples of South-East Asia, acting together, will succeed in winning this worthwhile struggle.

58. Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria attaches great importance to the discussion of item 35 of the agenda, entitled "Question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia". This question was first included in the agenda of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the initiative of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, supported by several non-aligned countries and socialist countries, including Bulgaria.

59. However, we are forced to note with profound concern that, this year again, the situation in South-East Asia continues to be fraught with complications and dangers. The principal reason for this can be found in the long-term strategy of forces which are trying to maintain a permanent hotbed of tension in that region, to hamper by all possible means the establishment of good-neighbourly relations and to interfere in the internal affairs of various countries in order to establish their superiority in that part of the world. Those forces thus attempt to discredit and isolate the three countries of Indo-China and to pit them against the member countries of ASEAN, doing everything possible to prevent the normalization of relations between the two groups.

60. It is precisely that policy and those actions which constitute the root cause of the exacerbation of the situation in South-East Asia—not the situation in Kampuchea, as some seek to prove. Such attempts clearly stem from the refusal of certain countries to recognize the profound social and economic changes that have taken place in that country and to accept the fact that the process of re-establishing and strengthening political structures in the People's Republic of Kampuchea is irreversible.

61. The People's Republic of Kampuchea has already chosen its course, and no political manipulation or outside factor can change its destiny. Any act going against the will of the Kampuchean people and its sole legitimate representative, the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, not only constitutes inadmissible interference in the internal affairs of free, independent and sovereign Kampuchea but also runs counter to the genuine interests of all the peoples of South-East Asia and poses a threat to international peace and security.

62. In the context of the present dangerous international situation, the question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia is of particular importance. Consequently, the Bulgarian delegation is of the view that the only just, reasonable and realistic way of solving the problems of South-East Asia is through the progressive establishment of a climate of confidence and co-operation among all countries of the region by means of negotiations based on the principles of equality, peaceful coexistence, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and mutual respect for each other's legitimate interests. Moreover, we wish to emphasize that the friendship, solidarity and multi-faceted co-operation among the three countries of Indo-China, based on the long, common struggle for national liberation, as well as their foreign policies of peace, are an important factor for the peace and stability of South-East Asia.

63. The People's Republic of Bulgaria greatly appreciates the continuing tireless efforts of those countries and their constructive proposals for normalizing the situation in the region and transforming it into a zone of peace, stability and co-operation. A further expression of the consistent peace policy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea, their realistic and constructive approach and their desire to normalize the situation in South-East Asia is reflected in the initiative taken in July of this year by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the three countries of Indo-China and in the letter of 15 September from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic addressed to the member countries of ASEAN.

64. In our view, these new initiatives are fully in keeping with existing political realities in South-East Asia, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the vital interests of the countries of the region. They are designed to bring about the establishment of a lasting peace, mutual understanding, confidence and co-operation among all the peoples and countries of South-East Asia. However, if the situation in that part of the world is to be normalized and if these proposals are to be implemented, it is necessary first to eliminate the root cause of tension and confrontation in the region—namely, interference by imperialist and hegemonist forces. One expression of the sincere desire of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to achieve a solution to the problems is the declaration made by those two countries of their willingness to proceed to the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea as soon as the danger of foreign interference is eliminated.

65. In the view of the Bulgarian delegation, a viable prospect for normalization of the situation in South-East Asia and the transformation of that region into a zone of peace, stability and co-operation is offered by the especially important proposal made by the three countries of Indo-China for the convening of an international conference to consider the problems of South-East Asia, in which the countries of Indo-China, the member countries of ASEAN, and Burma and India would participate, as well as the five States which participated in the international conferences on Indo-China—namely, the Soviet Union, the United States, China, France and the United Kingdom. This new and important proposal by the three countries of Indo-China is an expression of their good will and of their desire to undertake a frank and sincere dialogue with a view to the normalization of the situation in that part of the world.

66. Those proposals give rise to optimism and reassurance because they are based on the belief that the countries of Indo-China and of ASEAN have no real reasons for confrontation and that the mistrust and hostility leading to disputes and conflicts are the result of intrigues by outside forces which exacerbate the situation in the region deliberately and for their own purposes. For this reason, the Bulgarian delegation believes that the only constructive way of achieving normalization of the situation in that region of the world is by eliminating outside interference and estab-

lishing a dialogue between the countries of Indo-China and those of ASEAN.

67. In the view of the Bulgarian delegation, the bilateral consultations and contacts taking place between the countries of South-East Asia are encouraging; they deserve the full support of the international community and of the Organization, for they offer promising possibilities for the solution of the problems of the region, in the interests of peace, stability and international co-operation.

68. Mr. KASEMSRI (Thailand): The item entitled "Question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia" has once again appeared on the agenda of the General Assembly. Each year the representatives of the member States of ASEAN at the United Nations have agreed to meet and to hold informal consultations on the item with their Vietnamese and Lao colleagues. It remains the ASEAN view, as well as that of the great majority of the United Nations membership, which recently voted in support of resolution 37/6, that a comprehensive political settlement of the Kampuchean problem must first be found within the framework of the Declaration of the International Conference on Kampuchea⁴ and the relevant General Assembly resolutions, in order to eliminate the root cause of tension and pave the way for renewed efforts to establish a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia.

69. This view is based on the fact that peace, stability and co-operation in that region were disrupted by the situation in Kampuchea arising from the foreign invasion and occupation of that independent and non-aligned country. Unless and until the Kampuchean people are permitted to exercise their legitimate right to self-determination, free from foreign occupation and coercion, the prospects for the restoration of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia are somewhat dim and distant. It is therefore an irony that the countries which initiated the consideration of this item have continued to ignore the very measures which would brighten such prospects and make peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia a happy reality. It is regrettable that these countries are not prepared to accept that the situation in Kampuchea has been and continues to be the obstacle to their professed desire for peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia. Instead, they continue to insist that there is no Kampuchean problem, contrary to reality and the considered opinion of the overwhelming majority of the international community.

70. Since references have been made in previous statements to the so-called People's Republic of Kampuchea, I need only recall that the recent vote on the credentials issue is clear proof that it is nomenclature of a non-entity.

71. Since the General Assembly had a full debate on the situation in Kampuchea only a few days ago and the resolution under that item was adopted with a larger margin of support than in previous years, I do not intend to elaborate on Thailand's position on that item or on the various proposals from certain countries. Suffice it to say that Thailand and the other ASEAN member countries firmly believe that the total withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchea and the

right of the Kampuchean people freely to determine their own future constitute vital elements in the comprehensive political solution of the Kampuchean problem which we seek. The framework for such a settlement already appears in the Declaration of the International Conference on Kampuchea and the door is still wide open for the party directly involved, as well as for other countries which have not done so, to join in this peaceful process. My delegation earnestly believes that the restoration to the Kampuchean nation of its sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and dignity is of paramount importance to the South-East Asian region and to the world at large.

72. The gist of the argument presented by certain countries under this item is that the region should forget the situation in Kampuchea and proceed with measures to bring about the very conditions which they had themselves placed in abeyance. It is almost a mechanical truism that if the world could forget the Kampuchean problem, and perhaps other similar problems around the globe, then everything would return to normal and other efforts could continue tranquilly, regardless of principles and realities. However, we view the situation differently. The foreign armed intervention in and continued illegal occupation of Kampuchea have dealt a severe blow to the basis of mutual trust and confidence that is necessary for improved relations between the countries of South-East Asia, in an atmosphere of good neighbourliness.

73. Action taken by the occupying Power against Kampuchea has also sharpened major Power rivalry and emphasized their profiles in the region. The present situation, therefore, constitutes a clear contradiction of the ASEAN concept of the zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia. The ASEAN member countries, Thailand among them, firmly believe that, in order to achieve peace and stability in the region and thus to facilitate the establishment of a zone of peace, it is necessary that a comprehensive political settlement be found to the Kampuchean problem. My delegation sincerely believes that, provided a genuine desire exists among all the countries in the region to bring about conditions of lasting peace and stability in the region, the United Nations framework offers the most effective guarantee of durable solutions, in particular of the situation in Kampuchea. For its part, my delegation will continue to explore ways and means, including meaningful dialogues, which will move us closer to a just and lasting solution to the Kampuchean problem in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

74. Mr. NATORF (Poland): This is the third consecutive year that the General Assembly has discussed the "Question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia", included in the agenda on the initiative of the three Indo-Chinese States, which have also taken the initiative of putting forward constructive proposals aimed at improving relations between the two groups of countries of that area, restoring mutual confidence and re-establishing peace and stability.

75. The good will of the Indo-Chinese countries has been displayed more than once during the years that have elapsed since then. This good will is reflected particularly in their important proposals and initia-

tives presented both last year and this year. Proceeding from a profound analysis and assessment of the complex situation, these proposals fully reflect the realities of South-East Asia. They emphasize that all the problems of South-East Asia should be resolved by the countries of the region by means of negotiations, without pre-conditions, on the basis of mutual respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, of equality and respect for each other's legitimate interests, without the imposition of the point of view of one side on the other, and without outside interference. They underline that it is possible to create a favourable climate for the gradual elimination of differences, the improvement of mutual relations and a step-by-step restoration of peace and stability in the region.

76. The proposals formulated by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in January⁵ and June 1981⁶ concerning the establishment of a zone of peace, stability and co-operation in the region have been further enriched by the new proposals put forward this year on behalf of the Foreign Ministers of those three States in the letter dated 15 September 1982 from the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five member States of ASEAN [A/37/477, annex I].

77. The proposals contained in that letter are aimed at easing the existing tensions. They very strongly and clearly testify to the peaceful intentions and readiness of the three Indo-Chinese States to develop good-neighbourly relations with the ASEAN member countries. In this respect, they express readiness to sign bilateral treaties on peaceful coexistence with the People's Republic of China and to meet the concerns of the ASEAN member countries. Also, a new proposal, to set up a safety zone along the border between Kampuchea and Thailand and providing for the withdrawal from this zone of forces which do not belong to Thailand or the People's Republic of Kampuchea, shows very forcefully the tireless efforts of the Indo-Chinese countries to find constructive ways of meeting the concerns of their neighbours. It proves that those States are not in any way aiming at safeguarding their own interests at the expense of those of the ASEAN member countries.

78. On the one hand, the genuine desire of the Indo-Chinese States has been met with many positive responses in the United Nations. On the other hand, however, there have been reactions giving clear-cut evidence that forces exist which consider that choosing the path of dialogue is a step not in the interest of their sinister objectives. We can nurture no illusions in this respect. There are forces for which the promotion of destruction and conflict, the violation of territorial integrity, aggression, interference in the internal affairs of others and the building of tensions constitute the best methods of suiting their own strategic interests at the expense of the peoples of the region, as well as the best means of strengthening their global military posture and achieving military superiority.

79. Unwilling to reconcile itself to the loss it suffered not so long ago, the military-industrial complex of the United States is again at work to restore the positions in South-East Asia. In this upswing, there are forces which are counting on the effectiveness of alleging threats posed by the Indo-Chinese countries and on building a smokescreen for their activities that push the countries of the region towards confrontation.

80. It is hardly necessary to argue that confrontations can lead only to deadlock. They can prolong sufferings and exacerbate tensions in relations among the countries concerned. They can only add to the transformation of the entire region into a permanent hotbed of conflicts, thus creating a threat to world peace and security.

81. The policy of interfering in the internal affairs of the three Indo-Chinese States does not enhance the development of trends towards peace and agreement. The notorious roots of such interference go back to the period of the Indo-Chinese war. They should be eradicated, in the best interest of all the countries of the area, for we cannot but assess as detrimental to peace, friendship and co-operation in the region the policy of tolerating the presence of the remnants of Pol Pot's bands on one's own territory, arming them and pushing them to carry out military activities against the People's Republic of Kampuchea and to conduct sabotage and subversive operations against the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. We cannot but see as harmful certain announcements on the opening of new channels for arms and munitions supplies to the terrorist bands. This is simply a dangerous and short-sighted policy.

82. Poland has been, is and always will be in favour of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia. We have always consistently supported the approach of the peaceful settlement of the problems existing in the region. We have always maintained that the constructive approach is that of holding talks and negotiations among the countries concerned.

83. Our position as regards working out constructive solutions that could bring about the enhancement of peace and progress in relations between the States of the region has always been based on the invariable principles of our foreign policy. It has also stemmed from our experience, understanding of and familiarity with the problems of the region. It is derived from our direct and active involvement over a period of many years in the international efforts to bring about peace in Indo-China, when Poland twice served there as a member of the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Viet Nam. It has proceeded from our friendly and fraternal ties with the three Indo-Chinese States, which we have developed since the victory of their struggle for independence. Therefore, in the stand we have taken we have always considered that the only way to achieve the noble goals of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia is the way of negotiations between the countries of the region directly interested, based on the principles of equality, without any outside interference.

84. In our view, recognition of the realities of the situation, particularly in Kampuchea, but also in other

Indo-Chinese States, and the ending of interference in their internal affairs are among the basic prerequisites for establishing lasting peace and developing constructive co-operation between the countries of the region.

85. South-East Asia has known war and conflict for decades. The peoples of the region were haunted by war, which brought enormous human suffering. Now the time has come for the realistic and open-minded proposals of the three Indo-Chinese States to be met with a positive response. The United Nations must play a constructive role in this process; that is its moral obligation deriving from the Charter. The United Nations can and should do its utmost to facilitate and promote a business-like dialogue, in a spirit of realism and good will, on genuine and lasting peace. Fruitful and mutually beneficial co-operation and stability in South-East Asia will be a contribution to international peace and co-operation in the world at large.

86. Mr. NISIBORI (Japan): I wish to state at the outset that, in the view of my delegation, it could eventually be meaningful for the General Assembly to take up and fully consider item 35. Before doing so, however, there still remains a fundamental problem which, as all of us in this Hall are aware, must be resolved. I am referring, of course, to the Kampuchean problem, which is a major destabilizing element affecting not only the South-East Asian region but also the entire international community. As I stressed last month in the course of our deliberations on the situation in Kampuchea [45th meeting], the central factor in the Kampuchean problem is the continued foreign military presence in that country, as a result of which the Kampuchean people are denied their right of self-determination.

87. As Japan has emphasized on numerous occasions, lasting peace and security in South-East Asia can never be realized unless a comprehensive political settlement of the Kampuchean problem is found. In my delegation's view, if we fail to acknowledge the central relevance of the Kampuchean problem to the question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia, our discussions will be totally without substance and a waste of our time and energy.

88. In this regard, it should be recalled that the United Nations is playing a significant role in efforts to resolve the Kampuchean problem. Again at this session, as it has done at previous sessions, the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority of votes, a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchea and the restoration of the Kampuchean people's right to determine their own destiny. These component principles of any just and lasting solution of the Kampuchean problem thus have been once again affirmed by the United Nations in resolution 37/6.

89. In summary, my delegation believes it would be most appropriate for the General Assembly to take up item 35 only after a comprehensive political settlement of the Kampuchean problem has been achieved, through the prompt implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions and the Declaration of the International Conference on Kampuchea, which

expressed the common wishes of the international community.

90. Mr. ALEINIK (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): As has already been pointed out by many delegations in the course of the general debate at the present session and now in the discussion of this agenda item, the situation in South-East Asia continues to arouse serious concern on the part of the international community because of the position adopted by the forces of imperialism and reaction. Peace and stability in that region are constantly threatened because of the continued interference of those forces in the affairs of the sovereign States of the region and the increase of tension in the relations between the two groups of countries—the member countries of ASEAN and the countries of Indo-China. Some are trying here, quite unjustifiably and to no avail, to link this abnormal state of affairs with events that took place in Kampuchea almost four years ago, as a result of which the Kampuchean people threw off the venal, bloody Pol Pot clique and embarked upon the path of national rebirth. It is not the presence of the Vietnamese armed forces which are temporarily in the People's Republic of Kampuchea at the request of its legitimate Government that is threatening peace and stability in South-East Asia; rather, it is the imperialist and hegemonist interference in the affairs of that region. Who is not aware of the expansionist policy of American imperialism *vis-à-vis* the countries and peoples of that part of the world? The attempts of the United States to use the States of South-East Asia for its imperialist interests are fully in keeping with the general framework of the current policy of the United States Government as regards young, independent States.

91. Washington, unabashedly declaring whole areas of the world to be United States "zones of vital interest", is striving to set up new military bases and rebuild old ones, and to make developing countries participate in its military preparations. South-East Asia, that strategically important area of the globe, thus finds itself one of the centres of the Pentagon's militarist fever. Incidentally, the head of that institution is currently on a trip to various countries of the region.

92. Then again, imperialist and hegemonist forces, with the complicity of certain circles in ASEAN, are attempting by any means possible to return to power in Kampuchea the criminal Pol Pot clique so as to prevent the rebirth of the Kampuchean people. This is the objective of the recent establishment of the so-called Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. The new provocative fuss about this hastily thrown together motley coalition is direct interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

93. The arsenal of the current opponents of peace in South-East Asia is varied; it includes strong pressure on Viet Nam, Kampuchea and Laos, constant pitting of countries of that region against each other and recourse to blackmail and constant provocations. These are the real reasons for the situation prevailing in that part of the world. It is quite obvious that for normalization of the situation in South-East Asia what is needed first and foremost is an end to inter-

ference from abroad in the affairs of that region and to the policy of whipping up confrontation between the two groups of States of the region—the member countries of ASEAN and the three Indo-Chinese countries, Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea.

94. The solution to the problem of South-East Asia can be found through development of a dialogue between the States of that region on the basis of non-interference in internal affairs, mutual respect and non-imposition of the will of one side on the other. Such a policy is, in fact, being pursued by the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea are sincerely and constantly striving to improve relations with neighbouring States. They have repeatedly stated and continue to state their desire to live in peace, friendship and co-operation with all their neighbours. They not only state that; they have acted on it, making, over recent years, a host of particularly relevant, constructive proposals. An important manifestation of the good will of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and of the People's Republic of Kampuchea has been the unilateral withdrawal of part of the Vietnamese armed forces from Kampuchea and the readiness of those countries to go farther along this path if the other side reacts positively to this peaceful initiative.

95. Last July, at the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, held at Ho Chi Minh City, the three Indo-Chinese countries came forward with new peaceful initiatives, pertaining in particular to the convening of an international conference on the problems of South-East Asia; these initiatives are certainly a good basis for the normalization of the situation in that part of the world, making it a zone of peace and stability. The international conference would involve, in addition to the member countries of ASEAN and the Indo-Chinese countries, the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council which already took part in the earlier international conferences on Indo-China, as well as India and Burma. It is proposed that at such an international conference all matters pertaining to South-East Asia would be discussed. The initiatives put forward by Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea also take account of the proposal of the ASEAN member countries on the convening of an international conference. The sooner this conference takes place the better it will be for the cause of the peace and security of the countries and peoples of that region.

96. In a letter of 15 September 1982 from the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five ASEAN member countries [A/37/477, annex I], the three Indo-Chinese countries once again set forth, in a spirit of peace, specific proposals designed to achieve reconciliation and co-operation among the two groups of States of South-East Asia. We should emphasize that an important element in those proposals is that they provide for a contribution by the United Nations in establishing peace and stability in South-East Asia. However, the positive role of the United Nations and its prestige are being undermined by the fact that in the United Nations we still see the unlawful presence of representatives of the Pol Pot clique,

who embody a policy of genocide and national treachery.

97. Obviously, there is no lack of realistic proposals by the three Indo-Chinese countries designed to achieve the speediest possible solution to the problems of South-East Asia. Now it is up to the other side. The refusal to give a positive response to these proposals cannot be justified by references to the present situation in that region. Even if, as it is claimed, without grounds, the situation in the region is a complex one and hardly normal, that is all the more reason to undertake without delay decisive and effective measures to normalize it.

98. One thing is certain: disagreements between the two groups of countries in the region can be settled through dialogue and negotiation on the basis of the principles of respect for the legitimate interests of each side, equality and mutual agreement, without any pressure or interference from abroad. It is our deepest conviction that the cause of peace would only gain if the constructive efforts of the countries of Indo-China to normalize the situation, to renew good neighbourliness and to develop co-operation in that region involved other countries of South-East Asia as well. All States there must show restraint, realism and a responsible approach; and other countries should not place obstacles in the way of development of this positive process which, in the final analysis, should lead to a solution of all problems in South-East Asia. We believe therefore that contributing to the development and deepening of a dialogue between all the States of South-East Asia must be one of the major goals of the foreign policy of the interested States, as well as of the United Nations.

99. In conclusion, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR states once again that it fully supports the constructive initiatives of the three countries of Indo-China and that it is prepared to welcome any other proposals designed to achieve peace, stability and the development of co-operation in South-East Asia and the world over.

100. Mr. DOBIE (Australia): This is the third occasion on which the Assembly has been called upon to debate this item; to what point has never been made clear. The item is so general and its stated objectives so lofty that nobody could disagree. The Malaysian delegation put it well last year: who in South-East Asia does not desire to live in peace? Who in his right mind does not require stability, which is so essential for development? Who in the region does not consider co-operation as a guarantee of progress and well-being for the area as a whole?

101. The propositions advanced and implied in the title of this item are unexceptionable. It is when one gets down to working out how these objectives might be realized that agreement erodes and disagreement begins. Viet Nam and Laos predicate their position on the assumption that South-East Asia can be divided into two camps: the five member States of ASEAN, on the one hand, and the three States of Indo-China, on the other—presumably with Kampuchea irreversibly under Viet Nam's wing. Understandably, the ASEAN member countries have rejected this approach. And why should they not reject it? The division projected by Viet Nam is a totally artificial

division. There is nothing irreversible in the situation in Kampuchea. The régime there is lacking in international credibility and has no significant internal support. It is a régime installed and controlled by Viet Nam. It would collapse immediately without the presence of 200,000 Vietnamese troops.

102. That brings me to the major omission in the Vietnamese-Laotian approach. In the memorandum of the Lao Deputy Prime Minister circulated last September, China was identified as the major cause of tension in the region. It is not our intention here to delve into the intricacies of the admittedly tense relationship between China and Viet Nam. What we can say in relation to South-East Asia is that the main cause of tension is not China but Viet Nam's invasion and continued occupation of Kampuchean territory. This is really the central issue. It is not something which can simply be swept aside or obscured by counter-claims that regional tensions are solely, or even mainly, a product of outside interference. Interference there is—but primarily Viet Nam's interference in Kampuchea. Until Viet Nam is prepared to face up to this fact, there will be little scope for moving seriously on the principles which Viet Nam and Laos maintain should govern inter-State relationships in South-East Asia.

103. There can, of course, be no objection to these principles *per se*. Most of them are impeccable. Who would contest, for instance, the principle of respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country in South-East Asia, and for non-aggression, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence among them? Who could deny the right of the people of each country to choose and develop freely their political, social, economic and cultural system, or to determine freely their domestic and foreign policy position in accordance with the objectives and principles of non-alignment and of the Charter of the United Nations.

104. It is when we look at the present situation in South-East Asia, and particularly the situation in Kampuchea, and ask how these principles are being applied in practice that difficulties arise. When we do so, we find that the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kampuchea have been violated by Viet Nam, whose military forces have invaded and continue to occupy Kampuchea in flagrant breach of the Charter. We find, too, that the people of Kampuchea have been deprived of their fundamental right to choose freely their own form of Government and their own domestic and foreign policies.

105. In short, it is easy to agree to uphold the principles allegedly put forward by the sponsors of this item. The question is whether Viet Nam itself will adhere to them. Viet Nam's record provides no confidence that its deeds will match its words.

106. Why then has this item been inscribed? We are forced to conclude that the hope has been to blunt the impact of the passage of the successive General Assembly resolutions on Kampuchea and, beyond that, to deflect international attention from Viet Nam's occupation of Kampuchea. If these are the objectives, then Viet Nam and its friends have failed. The views of the international community on Kampuchea were given eloquent expression two weeks ago in the adop-

tion, with 105 affirmative votes, of resolution 37/6. It may be a fair comment to anticipate that, as in previous years, Viet Nam and its supporters will not be able to consummate their efforts with any resolution of their own.

107. Australia, as a regional country, shares the goals of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia. Such goals lay at the heart of ASEAN's proposals for a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality. Such a zone of peace, however, can be brought into being only if all countries of the region abide by the same rules. Viet Nam has not done so. Its invasion of Kampuchea was a setback for the principles underlying the zone of peace and neutrality. It dealt a severe blow to the process of good neighbourliness. It invited suspicion and mistrust. It provided a pretext for outside Powers to involve themselves, whether to Viet Nam's liking or not. It has naturally provoked concern among weaker neighbours that could well be next.

108. If Viet Nam is serious in its professed desire to promote peace, stability and co-operation, it has to recognize that a necessary first step is the withdrawal of its occupying army and its co-operation in settling the Kampuchean problem in accordance with the processes agreed in the United Nations and at the International Conference on Kampuchea.

109. Australia would like nothing more than to see an easing of tensions between ASEAN and Viet Nam and Laos. The regional realities for the moment are that Viet Nam has cast in its lot with the Soviet Union. Australia would like to see Viet Nam reverse that approach by accepting the fact that its future lies in developing relations with the countries of East and South-East Asia. There are large issues in dispute between China and Viet Nam to which Australia is, of course, not a party. But even with those differences, we are sure that the countries of our region would respond to any real indication from Viet Nam that it wished to take a more constructive and co-operative role in its relations with other South-East Asian countries. We have made it clear that as far as Australia is concerned, there is no issue other than the occupation of Kampuchea by Viet Nam that is disrupting relations between Australia and Viet Nam. The onus is on Viet Nam to show its sincerity by withdrawing its forces from Kampuchea. Viet Nam will find that the other countries of the region are prepared to accommodate its legitimate security concerns, as long, that is, as Viet Nam in turn acknowledges the preoccupations and concerns of its neighbours.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

NOTES

¹ A/36/561, annex.

² A/36/116, annex, para. 85.

³ See A/36/388.

⁴ See *Report of the International Conference on Kampuchea* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.81.I.20), annex I.

⁵ A/36/86; for the text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-sixth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1981*, document S/14351.

⁶ A/36/328; for the text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-sixth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1981*, document S/14547.