



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

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ENGLISH

**PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
SEVEN HUNDRED AND TWELFTH MEETING**

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 7 October 1986, at 5 p.m.

President: Mr. AL-SHAALI

(United Arab Emirates)

Members:

Australia

Bulgaria

China

Congo

Denmark

France

Ghana

Madagascar

Thailand

Trinidad and Tobago

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

United Kingdom of Great Britain and

Northern Ireland

United States of America

Venezuela

Mr. WOOLCOTT

Mr. TSVETKOV

Mr. LI Luye

Mr. GAYAMA

Mr. BIERRING

Mr. de KEMOULARIA

Mr. DUMEVI

Mr. RABETAFIKA

Mr. KASEMSRI

Mr. ALLEYNE

Mr. BELONOVD

Mr. BIRCH

Mr. ORUN

Mr. AGUILAR

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The meeting was called to order at 5.10 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

LETTER DATED 30 SEPTEMBER 1986 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ, JORDAN, KUWAIT, MOROCCO, SAUDI ARABIA, TUNISIA AND YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/18372)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): In accordance with the decisions taken at previous meetings on this item, I invite the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Argentina, Bangladesh, Chad, Cuba, Egypt, the German Democratic Republic, Jordan, Kuwait, Mexico, Morocco, Oman, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Tunisia, Yugoslavia and Zambia to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; I invite the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization to take the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Aziz (Iraq) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Zarif (Afghanistan), Mr. Delpech (Argentina), Mr. Siddiky (Bangladesh), Mr. Lassou (Chad), Mr. Velazco San Jose (Cuba), Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Ott (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Al-Sabah (Kuwait), Mr. Moya Palencia (Mexico), Mr. Alsoui (Morocco), Mr. Al-Ansi (Oman), Mr. Kabanda (Rwanda), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Sarré (Senegal), Mr. Bouziri (Tunisia), Mr. Golob (Yugoslavia), Mr. Mwananshiku (Zambia) and Mr. Khadoumi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Guyana, Mauritania, Nicaragua, Peru and Yemen in which they request to be invited

(The President)

to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

Mr. Jackson (Guyana), Mr. Ould Boye (Mauritania), Mrs. Astorga Gadea (Nicaragua), Mr. Alzamora (Peru), and Mr. Basendwah (Yemen) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I should like to draw the attention of members to the following documents: document S/18381, letter dated 6 October 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; and document S/18382, letter dated 6 October 1986 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

The first speaker on the list is the representative of Yugoslavia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia): Allow me, Sir, to extend our congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. At the same time I should like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Belonogov of the Soviet Union for the way in which he managed the business of the Council during the month of September.

The tragic armed conflict between Iran and Iraq is in its seventh year. For more than six years the two countries have been engaged in a cruel war that is devouring lives and destroying and devastating villages and cities. This war has

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

been on the agenda of 12 meetings of the Security Council. The consequences of this war for peace and security in the region of the Gulf and beyond are a matter of legitimate concern to all members of the international community.

Ever since the beginning of the hostilities between Iran and Iraq Yugoslavia has actively and insistently sought a speedy cessation of the armed conflict and the solution of the outstanding problems between these two non-aligned countries through negotiations. We have emphasized time and again within the United Nations and outside it that negotiations constitute the only way to resolve the problems between the two countries. The issues in the relations between the two countries cannot be resolved on the battlefield. It is necessary that military operations be stopped immediately and that the troops be withdrawn to the internationally recognized borders. There can be no lasting and just resolution of this conflict unless a process of negotiation is begun on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter, the policy of non-alignment and mutually accepted obligations through international agreements, with full respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs.

It is possible and necessary that Iran and Iraq find a way to resolve their disputes by peaceful means, that they cease hostilities, under conditions acceptable to both sides, and that they withdraw their troops to the internationally recognized borders. This was our opinion at the outbreak of the conflict, and it is our opinion today.

During the past six years the United Nations and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries have tried to bring about an end to this tragic war. The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, has done his utmost in the same vein. As he rightly said at the beginning of this series of meetings of the Security Council, he has spared no effort to bring the conflict to an end.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

Unfortunately, all these endeavours, appeals and attempts at mediation have brought no result. However, to be discouraged by these failures and to reconcile ourselves to the existing situation would be perilous. It is incumbent upon the Security Council, whose paramount task is to safeguard international peace and security, to spare no effort and to act resolutely in order to bring an end to this war. Concrete and decisive steps are needed.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

There should not be another period of waiting to see which way the developments might go. It is clear that if nothing is going to be done, new suffering and new destruction will ensue; new dangers of the escalation of the conflict will arise. To wait and to watch means to assume the responsibility for the eventual spilling over of the war to adjacent countries.

Thus we think that the Security Council should help both sides to extend co-operation to the United Nations and to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Perez de Cuellar. Now the Security Council has adopted a number of important resolutions which offer the basis for a mutually satisfactory and negotiated solution on the basis of non-interference, renunciation of the use of force and full respect for the sovereignty, independence and the territorial integrity of the two countries. However, it is obvious that will not yield the desired results without the necessary measure of political readiness and political understanding that the problems cannot be resolved by force and that using force means exhausting human and material resources of the two countries.

Permit me to recall here that the Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries at their recent meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, said in their Declaration:

"The Heads of State or Government reaffirmed the applicability of the principle of non-use of force in international relations with regard to the conflict between Iran and Iraq.

"In this context they expressed profound regret at the initiation and continuation of hostilities between the two non-aligned countries which are important members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

"The Heads of State or Government therefore appealed once again to Iran and Iraq to cease hostilities forthwith in order to avoid further loss of life and damage to property. They once again pledged themselves to exert every effort to facilitate a speedy end of this tragic conflict."

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Yugoslavia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is Mr. Rashleigh Jackson, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Guyana.

I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. JACKSON (Guyana): The impassioned calls for an end to hostilities between Iran and Iraq reverberated in the halls during the recently concluded non-aligned summit in Harare. And nearly every statement during the current general debate has repeated such an appeal, an appeal which was also uttered at previous sessions of the General Assembly. The desirability of such a course of action is being increasingly addressed in other multilateral, regional and subregional groups, both governmental and non-governmental. It has indeed been made more urgent when we contemplate the enormous cost of this fratricidal conflict, not only to the two participants in terms of casualties and the destruction of property, but also the effects which it has had on neighbouring States and peoples, and the disruption of commercial navigation.

The conflict engenders insecurity in the region and contains the potential for even wider international involvement, with serious negative consequences.

Adding its voice to the call for an end to this war, Guyana wishes to reiterate its conviction that this can best be achieved through negotiations on the basis of the Charter of this Organization, and with full respect for the principles of international law including those relating to the settlement of international disputes.

It is, I suggest, difficult to overstate the urgency and the importance of dynamizing the peace process in the Iraq-Iran war. The two sides have before them the constructive eight-point plan proposed in 1985, which our Secretary-General has been pursuing with vigour and determination. There are yet many difficulties to be

(Mr. Jackson, Guyana)

overcome if that plan is to be successfully implemented. Those difficulties however should not deter us. We must continue with vigour and determination.

Guyana calls for the abandonment of policies and doctrines inconsistent with the Charter and the decisions on this issue by the Security Council. To set aside or to ignore those decisions would encourage a slide into a wider and uncontrollable conflagration in the troubled Middle East area, one which would yield no winners. We appeal to both parties to co-operate to the maximum with the Secretary-General in his efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace between Iraq and Iran.

With those brief but sincere words, I add the voice of Guyana to the appeal.

Mr. BELONOGOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, at the outset I should like to congratulate you on acceding to the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I should like to express my belief that your great professional ability and prestige will enable you to guide the Council successfully in its work of dealing with the difficult and important tasks facing us.

I should like to take this opportunity to express thanks to those delegations that have addressed kind words to me as representative of my country and President of the Security Council during September.

The Soviet delegation believes that the Security Council's consideration of the question of the Iran-Iraq conflict is fully justified and extremely important. This is further confirmed by many statements made here by foreign ministers and other representatives of States Members of this Organization, and also statements made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the General Secretary of the League of Arab States.

The common thread running through all the statements was a sense of deep concern over the continuing armed conflict between Iran and Iraq and a realization

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

that leaving it unresolved any longer could lead to the most serious consequences for international peace and security.

I think I would not be mistaken if I were to say that this sense of deep concern over the situation in the region and the continuing deadlock in the efforts to find a settlement to the Iran-Iraq conflict is shared fully by the overwhelming majority in the international community.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

In our view, this concern is fully understandable and justified. This armed conflict, which has been going on for seven years now - that is, longer than the Second World War - is indeed one of the darkest pages in the history of relations between Iran and Iraq, and also in the history of the whole region. It has already taken thousands of human lives, undermined to a large extent the economies of the two countries and distracted their peoples from creative development.

We do not yet know the exact number of victims, but even according to the most conservative calculations, during the war about 1 million people have been killed or wounded, thousands of Iranians and Iraqis have been taken prisoner, and material damage has reached tens of billions of dollars.

The sparks of war are threatening to set fire to neighbouring countries, and the situation is worsened by the fiery flames of the burning tankers in the waters of the Gulf, which directly threaten the coastal States and international shipping.

In short, however one looks at this conflict, it is quite clear that it is bringing sorrow and suffering to the peoples of Iran and Iraq, and is also a factor causing serious destabilization throughout that region. Moreover, judging by reports we are getting, we cannot exclude the possibility that the conflict may become even more destructive and dangerous and of even wider scope. It is the extremely urgent task of all peace-loving States to halt this continuing slide into danger, to put an end to this hotbed of military confrontation, and not to allow it to become more widespread.

The Soviet Union has always approached and continues to approach the Iran-Iraq war from this very standpoint. The situation is indeed not a matter of indifference to us because we are in the direct area of its southern borders. At the outset of this tragic conflict the Soviet Union came out clearly and strongly in favour of halting it immediately and bringing it within the process of a

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

political settlement. We have always proceeded, and still proceed, from the premise that in resolving disputes and disagreements between States recourse must never be had to the use or threat of force. Such conflicts should be settled by peaceful, political means alone, on mutually acceptable conditions and taking into account the legitimate interests of the States and peoples involved. This is one of the fundamental requirements of the Charter of the United Nations, which makes it binding on all Members of the Organization to resolve their international disputes by peaceful means and thus not endanger international peace and security. This applies fully to the conflict between Iran and Iraq.

Today, we once again confirm quite emphatically, that the Soviet Union believes that the disputes between these two countries should be resolved at the negotiating table, not on the battlefield. Proceeding from this basic position of principle and guided by a sincere desire to promote efforts to halt the Iran-Iraq conflict, the Soviet Union supported all the earlier decisions by the Security Council on this matter. In particular, together with other members of the Council, in February of this year we cast our vote for resolution 582 (1986), which creates a positive basis for shifting to a political solution of the problems dividing the two sides. At the same time, the USSR has consistently advocated and supported the mediating mission of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and other constructive international efforts designed to find a solution to the conflict. The Soviet Union, for its part, has consistently striven to make use of its influence and authority to achieve this same goal.

Speaking recently from the rostrum of the General Assembly, the Foreign Minister of the USSR, Mr. Shevardnadze, emphasized the following:

"Being sincere friends of both nations, we are making use of the possibilities available to us to convince the parties to the conflict that they should make peace. We shall continue to do so." (A/41/PV.6, p. 57)

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

So far, alas, these efforts have not been successful.

In the present dangerous situation in the region, particularly taking account of the possibility of an escalation of military actions, we consider it essential and urgent that this senseless mutual destruction, this war between two neighbouring developing countries, be halted without further delay. The Soviet Union supports the view that the Security Council should make use of the potential, the possibilities and the prerogatives available to it to shift the Iran-Iraq conflict into the channels of a political settlement.

In this connection, we commend the efforts made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations within the context of the good offices mission entrusted to him by the Security Council. It must be quite clear that the only ones that can benefit from this war are those that are interested in ensuring that Iran and Iraq both become weaker and that there is general destabilization of the situation in the region.

I have one last comment. I would like to recall that the Soviet Union has always strongly warned - and continues to do so - against any attempts to make use of the Iran-Iraq conflict. We are against any outside intervention in the affairs of the States in the region under any pretext whatsoever.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. WOOLCOTT (Australia): I welcome you, Sir, on behalf of the Australian delegation, to the presidency and assure you of our support and co-operation. We know that you as a man of peace who can be relied upon to conduct the affairs of the Council with your acknowledged skill and impartiality.

I also take a moment to express our appreciation to Ambassador Belonogov for the skilful manner in which he presided over our deliberations last month.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

Once again the Security Council is called upon to explore the scope for constructive action with regard to the war between Iran and Iraq. Australia's views about various aspects of this conflict have been clearly articulated on a number of previous occasions and I do not propose to repeat them in detail in this current debate.

We continue to be appalled by the tragic consequences of a war which has raged for over six years. The carnage, the material damage, the human suffering, have been on a scale unprecedented since the end of the Second World War.

Australia has maintained, with impartiality, an active dialogue with both parties and taken every opportunity, including during our own presidency in November, to urge them to seek a negotiated settlement of their dispute. We have also urged Iran to participate in the Council's consideration of this tragic conflict. As the war has increased in scope and intensity, we have had cause to express our concern about a number of developments, including attacks on civilian population centres, merchant shipping and civil aircraft.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

The Australian Government has condemned the use of chemical weapons in the conflict in the clearest terms. We totally reject any use of chemical weapons and urge the parties against recourse to them.

In his address to the forty-first session of the General Assembly, less than a week ago, the Australian Foreign Minister drew attention to the shameful fact that Members of the Organization facilitate the continuing death and destruction in the Gulf war by providing the protagonists with weapons. Mr. Hayden urged that Members of the United Nations should agree not to export defence materials and weapons to nations engaged in military conflict. Those countries which continue to contribute to the Iran-Iraq tragedy in this way should be held accountable for their actions.

Australia has joined other members of the international community in expressing its serious concern at the implications of the continuing violence for regional and international stability. We have consistently held the view that the Security Council has a clear responsibility to take all possible steps, in consultation with, and in support of, the Secretary-General, to seek an end to the war and, in the meantime, to mitigate its worst effects.

The Australian delegation was closely involved in drafting resolution 582 (1986) last February and we continue to regard it as the best available basis for a settlement of the conflict. In our view, that resolution is couched in objective and impartial terms and offers both parties a fair and honourable starting point for the negotiation of a settlement of this terrible conflict.

As a Charter signatory, Australia must, of course, condemn all acts of aggression. We supported resolution 582 (1986) which deplored the initial acts which gave rise to the conflict. At the same time, Australia insists that there can be no justification for the further prosecution of this war. We note that resolution 582 (1986) also deplored any continuation of the conflict.

(Mr. Woolcott, Australia)

It is a matter for serious regret that the specific appeals made in resolution 582 (1986) have been ignored. This meeting of the Security Council provides us with an opportunity to repeat our call for an end to the conflict. We must hope that this time it may be heeded. Already the conduct of this war has seen Security Council resolutions go unheeded and international conventions flouted. To continue the war further after six tragic years of slaughter would, quite simply, be in no-one's interests and certainly not in the interest of the system of international relations envisaged and established in the United Nations Charter.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Australia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. LI LUYE (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Mr. President, I have the honour to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. It is expected that the Council will have a busy month ahead and I am fully convinced that you, with your talent, will guide us to complete success. I wish also to thank Mr. Belcnogov of the Soviet Union for presiding in an outstanding manner over the work of the Council last month.

Since last February, when the Security Council considered the conflict between Iran and Iraq and unanimously adopted resolution 582 (1986), the war between the two countries has not stopped; instead, it has expanded in scale, even showing the dangerous prospect of an all-round escalation. This cannot but arouse serious concern on the part of the international community, including China.

It is well known that the six-year-old war has inflicted colossal human and material losses on both sides. Should it continue any further, the peoples of the two countries would not only sustain even heavier losses, but also find it even more difficult to heal the wounds of war in future reconstruction. What is even more disturbing, should the war be prolonged and expand, is that it would directly

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

threaten the peace and security of the Middle East, particularly the Gulf region, thus adding one more destabilizing factor to the international situation. Events of the past few years have shown that the disputes between the two countries cannot be settled through the means of war, which is extremely harmful to the interests of both countries and equally detrimental to the preservation of peace and security in the region. Such a choice is by no means advisable.

The Chinese Government has time and again called on the Governments of Iran and Iraq, two countries friendly with China, to end this war at an early date and seek a fair and reasonable settlement of their differences and disputes on mutually acceptable terms, in keeping with the norms of international law and by peaceful negotiations. It is the consistent view of the Chinese Government that Iran and Iraq, both being developing countries and both belonging to the Islamic world and the Non-Aligned Movement, share the same historical mission in maintaining international peace and security and developing their respective national economies. This is where their fundamental interests lie in their relations. So long as the two countries set store by this overall interest, bury previous grudges, stop the war and make peace, they will certainly be able to find a peaceful solution to their disputes.

In the past six years, many countries and international organizations have made extensive efforts and put forward many suggestions in order to bring an early end to the Iran-Iraq war. It is regrettable that their efforts have so far failed to achieve any practical results. The Chinese delegation once again calls upon Iran and Iraq to heed the appeal of, and to co-operate with, the international community, the Security Council in particular, to observe an immediate cease-fire and jointly to seek the way to a peaceful settlement. Peace will bring prosperity while war will bring destruction to both sides. Reconciliation is the only choice for the settlement of the Iran-Iraq dispute. The Chinese delegation will support

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

any initiative conducive to a peaceful settlement of the dispute and continued efforts by the Secretary-General in this regard.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. SIERRING (Denmark): Mr. President, allow me first to congratulate you sincerely on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of October. You will have a very busy month ahead of you, but I am confident that with your usual and well-known diplomatic skill and wisdom you will be able to steer the deliberations of the Council to fruitful results. I should also like to express our appreciation and thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Belonogov, of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, for the skilful manner in which he guided the work of the Council during the month of September.

(Mr. Bierling, Denmark)

The devastating war between Iraq and Iran, now in its seventh year, continues to have the most tragic consequences for both parties to the conflict. The suffering and sacrifice of the civilian populations as well as the frightening death toll must seriously concern the entire international community.

My country has a long history of friendly relations both with Iran and Iraq as well as with the other countries in the Gulf region. We view the danger of a renewed escalation or expansion of the conflict with deep concern. An end now to the senseless carnage and destruction would spare many on both sides and allow Iran and Iraq to pursue their development in peace. As stated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark during the General Debate: "both parties as well as the World Community and the standards of civilization stand only to lose by further continuation of this appalling war". (A/41/PV.7, p. 92)

The war between Iran and Iraq has grave consequences not only for the two nations themselves but also for peace and security in the entire Gulf region. In view of the importance of oil supplies from the Gulf the international community could be severely affected in case lines of supply should be cut off. Together with our partners in the European Communities we have called upon the parties to the conflict to respect strictly the sovereignty and territorial integrity of neighbouring States and not to interfere with third countries' commercial navigation in international waters. It is not only the peace and security of the region itself which is at stake.

The Security Council has over the years repeatedly sought to bring a just and peaceful end to this conflict, which in our view had no justification at the outset, and which has since been continued unnecessarily. By adopting resolution 582 (1986), in February this year the Council made a serious and

(Mr. Bierring, Denmark)

unprecedented effort to reflect as balanced and comprehensive a view as possible of the conflict, of its origin, of its tragic course, and of the steps necessary to terminate it. Unfortunately, this step taken by the Council has hitherto failed to bring about a cessation of hostilities, or to engage the parties in mediation efforts aimed at a peaceful settlement. In the present serious situation the Security Council cannot but reaffirm resolution 582 (1986) as the most relevant basis for a settlement and call on both parties to implement that resolution fully and without delay.

The Secretary-General in his recent report on the work of the Organization noted that while the United Nations has not been able to bring the war to an end, it has, however, been able to lessen to some extent the cruellest aspects of the conflict. The Secretary-General made a very constructive step when, in June 1984, he obtained the acceptance of both parties to a moratorium of attacks on civilian targets. It is distressing that this agreement has been more or less consistently violated and that violations continue to take place. The attacks on civilian areas, in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, have led to intolerable sufferings of the civilian population, including the killing of numerous women and children. We fully support the appeal reiterated by the Secretary-General on 3 July 1986 that both parties halt all such attacks.

It is indeed imperative that both parties respect all relevant international legal instruments, including the four Geneva Conventions and the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning the use of chemical weapons. During my country's presidency of the Security Council in March this year the Council strongly condemned the continued use of chemical weapons in clear violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1925. The frightening disrespect of generally recognized principles and rules of

(Mr. Pierring, Denmark)

international humanitarian law which we are witnessing in the conflict between Iran and Iraq must not be allowed to continue.

It is high time that an end be put to the immense sufferings of the peoples of Iran and Iraq. It seems to my Government that a promising beginning was made with the eight-point plan of the Secretary-General, who enjoys the confidence of both parties and whose ideas seemed to be acceptable to them. However, the moment has now come to translate that acceptance into active co-operation with the Secretary-General. Both parties must now realize, and demonstrate, their ultimate interest in co-operating towards a peaceful settlement based on the principles outlined in resolution 582 (1986).

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Denmark for his kind words addressed to me.

MR. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): It is a special pleasure for me to see you presiding over the work of the Council once again, since October promises to be a busy month, and as is customary, we will be able to draw upon your advice, equanimity and wisdom. Whether within our group or within the Council, my delegation will make a point of extending its full and fraternal co-operation to you.

To His Excellence Mr. Alexander Belonogov, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, who took up his duties while I was on leave, I should like to extend formally my belated but sincere greetings and the thanks of my delegation for the exemplary way in which he presided over the Council last month.

When, on 24 February, we adopted the sixth resolution relating to the conflict between Iran and Iraq we concentrated in one single document the thrust of the previous resolutions as well as the essentials of the twelve statements made by the

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

President on behalf of the Council. Objectively speaking, resolution 582 (1986) consequently reflected the concerns of the international community and what that community felt was essential for the restoration of regional peace and security. None of the elements was new. Their formulation had enjoyed the unanimous support of the members of the Council and the impartial presentation of the elements, on a political and legal basis, was intended to test the reactions of the parties involved. The reception of the document was mixed, but there were two points on which the parties seemed to be in agreement, notwithstanding differences of approach, namely, the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes and the need for a halt to hostilities for implementation of that principle.

Contrary to what might have been thought, the Council, in accordance with its responsibilities, has been following a logical approach deriving from previous decisions and resolutions and from the principles and provisions of the Charter.

There are grounds for recalling the areas in which the Council has made recommendations or launched appeals, whether with respect to cease-fires, the halting of military operations, the withdrawal of forces to internationally recognized frontiers, the treatment of exclusively civilian population centres, the use of chemical weapons, the exchange of prisoners, or the freedom and safety of air and maritime navigation. These resolutions and declarations were taken up by the Secretary-General in his mediation efforts which the Security Council has always supported in view of the complementarity of approaches and the single-minded purpose pursued, which remains the restoration of a lasting peace between the two parties, on the basis of justice as perceived under international law.

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

That means that support for the Secretary-General must be reflected in acceptance of the recommendations and the decisions of the Council - and there must also be reciprocity.

The current series of meetings of the Security Council, which was requested by the Committee of Seven of the League of Arab States, is taking place owing to the risk of escalation or, at least, owing to the undoubted deterioration of the situation in which causes and effects are merged. Among the causes, we point out the non-implementation of the Security Council's resolutions, especially resolution 582 (1986), the specific political content of which sums up previous resolutions, that is, the prolongation and intensification of the conflict, lack of respect for certain commitments and, in general, disregarding of obligations contracted under the Charter.

It is therefore incumbent upon the Council to take all necessary measures to halt this deterioration and, above all, to bring the two parties to accept the Council's decisions and resolutions and hence, in order to seek a just solution in keeping with international law, to elaborate a comprehensive solution taking into account all the aspects of the dispute, a step-by-step solution, the first step necessarily being a cease-fire and the last peace between the two countries which would ensure stability in the region.

We are all of the view that resolution 582 (1986) is the framework providing all the conditions for effective mediation between the two parties, for, in the last analysis, everything depends on the will of the latter. But we must not allow for it to be said that this is an empty framework, to the extent that it is based on the principles and purposes of the Charter and that we are aware of the means at our disposal to achieve them.

An appeal has been made by the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at the eighth summit in Harare. This appeal for the

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

immediate cessation of hostilities is based on the validity of non-recourse to force in international relations and the termination of the initial actions that led to the conflict and its continuation. May that appeal also be heard.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Madagascar for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. BOUZIRI (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me to say how pleased I am, Sir, to see you presiding over the work of the Security Council during this busy month of October. Your outstanding qualities as a diplomat, your thorough knowledge of international affairs and your well-known wisdom will no doubt make the work of the Council proceed smoothly. Your presidency is an honour for your country, the United Arab Emirates, a fraternal country to which Tunisia is linked by a common destiny and with which we share the same aspirations for peace, justice and harmony among peoples.

I also avail myself of this opportunity to pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Belonogov, Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and to commend him for the skill with which he guided the work of the Council last month.

(continued in French)

As a member of the Committee of Seven Arab States, Tunisia is motivated in coming before this body with a deep feeling of sadness at the continuation and worsening of the conflict which for more than six years now has pitted Iraq and Iran against each other.

The joint step it has undertaken along with the other countries of this group does not involve any narrow interests, since geographically we are far from the theatre of operations. Nor do we harbour any animosity towards Iran, which, like

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

us, is a member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Our prime concern in addressing the Council is not to pass judgement, were that necessary, or even less to allocate blame for the conflict. It is above all to work together with all others of good will to put an end to this devastating, deadly and absurd conflict. It is a conflict the end of which is unfortunately not in sight, and it has confirmed fears, which were thought to be speculation at the outset, of a protracted war running the risk of a widespread conflagration in the Gulf and even beyond.

It is with this terrible prospect in view that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia on 23 September last stated before the General Assembly:

"After six years of bitter fighting, bringing death and destruction to Iraq and Iran, those two countries must take the sensible course of peace and negotiation. They must save their human and economic potential from destruction ... They must realize the danger of this disastrous development of a ridiculous war, condemned to failure for both sides, the real danger of its bringing death and desolation to neighbouring countries and of assuming an international dimension, and going beyond the context of the region, because of the strategic economic interference that could provoke such an extension."

(A/41/PV.6, p. 37)

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

This risk of spreading is even greater at this time, when one of the belligerents is occupying part of the territory of the other, where it continues to camp, and threatens to launch a new offensive, with all the death and destruction that would entail for the two peoples. These publicly declared plans mystify us with regard to the nature of the conflict and the violence it will do to the most cherished principles of international law and the spirit of our Charter.

This conflict which is raging between members of the same family, beyond the fact that it entails the sad reality of seeing these principles flouted, has, according to some estimates, taken the lives of a million men, women and children and has swallowed up more than \$500 billion, thereby destroying a large part of the economies of the two countries. It has produced very serious social effects, including the rendering of millions of people homeless. It has also produced more lasting and tragic effects on the two peoples, that is, the mutilation of more than a million Iranians and more than 300,000 Iraqis. The reconstruction efforts of these two devastated countries will require several decades of work, and it will perhaps take even longer to expunge the debts which have accumulated. These two martyred peoples need a great deal of time to heal their wounds, to cool their passions and to revive feelings of hope among their peoples.

In analysing the various aspects of this tragedy, it may be observed that, in spite of everything, nothing could justify its existence or logically prevent its ending, unless war is waged for the sake of war or unless by such means stubborn attempts are being made to impose a point of view which could not be defended in peaceful dialogue.

It is hardly necessary to reiterate here that this senseless war does not serve the higher interests of the two nations. The senselessness of the armed confrontation between them has been largely proved. Consequently it is surely time to resort to peaceful means to resolve what it has not been possible to resolve with instruments of death.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

The ground has in fact been prepared by the many peace initiatives taken by the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. These initiatives, like the courageous steps undertaken by the Secretary-General, have, unfortunately, come up against a wall of silence, indifference and even disdain. We sincerely regret this, especially since everything that strengthens the partisans of wanton violence weakens the cause of justice and peace.

It may be useful to recall here that the conflict between Iran and Iraq has had harmful repercussions in the Middle East. In fact, since it broke out the situation in that area has taken a major tragic turn which has affected the vital interests of several peoples in the region. Other countries further away have become involved in the whirlwind of violence and find themselves increasingly threatened by the effects of a disastrous conflict. If the overwhelming majority is really concerned over its continuation and the passions it has aroused over the years, others attach crucial importance to its continuation and try to encourage it in order to serve their own interests.

Thus, through a subtle interplay of balance, they have endeavoured to prolong this fratricidal war in order to exhaust the two warring parties, impoverish their peoples and reduce them to silence. These schemes, we are convinced, will not fail to rebound against them, especially if the conflict were to spread in a decisive manner. We can only observe that the risks of its expansion and consequently of the destabilization of the whole region are quite genuine. There can be no doubt that such risks do not exclude intervention in the region by foreign Powers, which so far have shown restraint without, however, using all their authority to speed the ending of this tragedy.

My country duly appreciates the arguments put forward by both sides, the interests at stake and the strategic imperatives which, in such a vital region as

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

the Gulf, are of great importance. However, is it not also legitimate to avoid the possibility of a catastrophe which would engulf the whole region, by acting before it is too late? My country, like others, has no claims to be able to put forward the best way of restoring peace and avoiding further damage. Nevertheless, it remains convinced that, in spite of the stalemate in the mediation efforts and peace initiatives, all the possibilities have not been exhausted. It is for the Security Council to determine in due course the necessary steps, taking into account the developments of the situation. Iraq, we might recall here, has welcomed the peace efforts as well as the decisions taken by the Council. It has even proposed the establishment of an independent tribunal to determine the responsibilities in this conflict. We venture to hope that it is not illusory to expect that the Islamic Republic of Iran will finally go along with the wishes of the international community.

Our hopes are even greater since the Iraqi and Iranian peoples are tired of sacrificing their children on the altar of this absurd and endless war. We harbour this hope because Muslims everywhere are revolted by this conflict, which is unjustifiable and which is taking the form of useless carnage, something which our faith forbids and condemns. We are hopeful also because these two fraternal peoples have been distracted from their development efforts and from the recovery that is so vital and have been plunged into an adventure with unforeseen consequences which has bled them dry and jeopardized their future. All this allows us to hope that, in spite of the stubbornness of some and the indifference of others, reason will triumph.

The Security Council last February adopted unanimously a balanced resolution, the drafting of which took up a great deal of time and energy. Addressing all the aspects of the conflict, resolution 582 (1986), in our opinion, had every chance for success, as it should have finally set the two warring parties on the

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

path to a negotiated solution. The efforts made by the Council and the co-operation given it by one of the warring parties did not, unfortunately, elicit a response.

Tunisia believes that we should focus our attention on that resolution. We wish to recall, in this context, that paragraph 7 of the resolution requests other States to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from any act which may lead to a further escalation and widening of the conflict and thus to facilitate the implementation of the resolution. In the months which have gone by since the adoption of resolution 582 (1986) there has been a lack of co-operation in the implementation of that request.

(Mr. Bouziri, Tunisia)

We have seen a renewal of fighting and even preparations for a new offensive with new arms deliveries which, unfortunately, only prolong the agony of the populations.

The conditions laid down in order to put an end to the conflict should be considered around the negotiating table. The least one can say of the Iranian conditions is that they should be dealt with in negotiations held in a climate of security and calm, but that they cannot be a point of departure for such negotiations. This is why the war is becoming increasingly tragic and henceforth directly threatens the interests of other States in the region.

Tunisia considers that peace is indivisible and that the humanitarian aspects of war, however important they are for the civilian population, should not make us forget the major problem which is the continuation of war. When a disease worsens and spreads, medication must be administered in order to alleviate the pain, but the time comes when an operation is essential. The situation between Iran and Iraq has already reached an advanced stage of decay when a peaceful solution, albeit incomplete but resulting from a compromise, is more effective than a military solution based on hate, passion and vindictiveness.

In this International Year of Peace, we call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to respond favourably to the repeated exhortations made recently by the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned States when they met in Harare, and particularly the efforts of the Security Council and of our Secretary-General. In so doing it will finally spare its own people, as well as those of Iraq and of the whole Gulf region, the horrors of war and the unpredictable consequences of an escalation of the conflict.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

(The President)

Due to the lateness of the hour, I intend to adjourn the meeting.

The next meeting of the Security Council, to continue consideration of the item on the agenda, will take place tomorrow, Wednesday, 8 October 1986, at 3.30 p.m.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.

