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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 49th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ROCHE (Canada)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 71, 72 and 73 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE: CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. ARNOUSS (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): The first Article of the United Nations Charter clearly defines what is needed to maintain international peace and security - namely the adoption of effective collective measures for the prevention and elimination of threats to peace, the deterrence of aggression, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the promotion of friendly relations between nations through respect for the right of self-determination and equal sovereignty, the upholding of the rights of man and, last but not least, the resolution of international economic, social, cultural or humanitarian problems.

Although more than 43 years have now passed since the adoption of the Charter, the aspirations of its authors are still valid and very much needed in this day and age. Respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter remains essential if we are to solve the numerous and very real problems which beset our world and eliminate the grave threats that endanger international peace and security the world over.

Few are the regions of the world which enjoy a measure of comprehensive security. The other regions lack that security. In reviewing the international situation in all its aspects, it would be wrong to focus only on one specific aspect of international security and ignore the others. Since we live in an integrated interdependent world, we cannot deny that peace is an indivisible whole. International peace cannot be maintained unless all countries enjoy equal security. This means that the security of some cannot be maintained at the expense of the security of others. Genuine security necessitates the elimination of all

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

the factors that undermine security in the world. Foremost among those are colonialism, foreign occupation, racialism, apartheid and the denial of the rights of the oppressed peoples to self-determination and realization of their national aspirations.

The prevailing international circumstances are complex and difficult. Under those circumstances, the international situation continues to deteriorate. Political, economic and social tensions worsen under the weight of the endemic imbalances in international relations and the use or threat of use of force becomes the norm. Nuclear weapons proliferate and are acquired by the racist régimes. The occupation of the territories of others and the repression of the liberation movements of peoples continue under various pretexts. The gap between the industrialized and the developing countries continues to widen. All these and many others are factors which heighten international tensions, undermine security and cause instability in the world. This makes it our duty to consider seriously and responsibly the various problems besetting the peoples of the world and try to find appropriate and just solutions for those problems within the framework of our international organization, in line with the principles and purposes of its Charter.

The Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Countries held in Nicosia in September of this year reiterated that since the accumulation of weapons, in particular nuclear weapons with their mass annihilation effect, constitutes a threat to the continued survival of mankind, it has become imperative that States abandon their goal of unilateral security through armament and embrace the objective of common security through disarmament. Within the framework of recent developments vindicating the position of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Ministers once again rejected the idea that world peace could be maintained through nuclear deterrence, a doctrine that lies at the root of the continuing escalation,

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in terms of quantity and quality, of nuclear weapons and has in fact led to greater insecurity and instability in international relations than ever before. Hence, to rely on nuclear leverage is to accept a perpetual community of fear that contradicts the Charter of the United Nations and the approach and principles of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, and those contained in the Declarations of the Conferences of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

The Ministers further reaffirmed the close interrelatedness of disarmament, the relaxation of international tension, respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations - in particular, the sovereign equality of all States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-recourse to the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity and unity or the political independence of any State - the total elimination of colonialism, apartheid and all other forms of racial discrimination, aggression and occupation, respect for the right to self-determination and national independence, respect for human rights, economic and social development and the strengthening of international peace and security.

We are all aware of the difficulties the United Nations encounters in trying to achieve the purposes of the Charter and uphold its principles. We are convinced that unless the United Nations is enabled to play its role in maintaining international peace and security and solving the problems of the world's peoples, it will be no easy task to safeguard the international community and ensure for it a secure existence free from fear, uncertainty, instability and tension.

The main problem that impedes the achievement of genuine international security is the increasing militarization of the concept of security and the attempt to ensure the security of certain States at the expense of others. The result is an ongoing premeditated violation of the tenets of international law and an escalating recourse to the use of pressure in the imposition of foreign interests on the countries of the developing world. The question of security in its totality should be viewed in the context of genuine international co-operation within the framework of the United Nations and total commitment to its Charter. Consequently, there must be an unremitting effort to find just solutions for the world's problems and thereby ease international tensions.

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The efforts of the United Nations should be credited, above all else, with the decisive contribution to the ending of colonialism and enabling the peoples who were under the yoke of foreign hegemony to liberate themselves, accede to independence and lay the foundations of international economic security in the context of a new international economic order. It can be said that, despite the difficulties it has faced, the United Nations has been able to entrench the concept of security, help shed light on the dangers posed by racialism and apartheid and highlight the devastating role played by the two racist régimes in occupied Palestine and South Africa in sabotaging every prospect of a stable situation of international security based on full respect for the national rights of States.

The role of the United Nations has been consolidated lately. The international arena has recently witnessed agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union and a renewal of the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. At last, the Organization has been able to start solving a number of regional conflicts, but there remains a great deal to be done by the United Nations. The Middle East and southern Africa continue to be the two regions of highest tension. This is due to the existence of the apartheid régime in Pretoria and the settler-expansionist régime in occupied Palestine and the continued occupation by force of the territories of others in violation of the Charter and United Nations resolutions. This is compounded by the brutal repression practised by the two régimes, and the collaboration which exists between them in various guises in oppressing and committing acts of aggression against the peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Palestine as well as the peoples of other countries of the two regions. One cannot understand how there could be talk of international peace and security in the absence of international co-operation to

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put an end to such a situation and eliminate once and for all the causes of tension in those two regions.

While on the subject of the Middle East, we should recall that the Mediterranean is teeming with foreign navies and military bases, whose arsenals are filled with nuclear and conventional weapons of mass destruction. Those arsenals have been used against the countries of the region - as in the cases of the act of aggression against Libya, the Israeli aggression against Tunisia and the military manoeuvres off the coasts of Mediterranean countries in a show of force intended to threaten, intimidate and exert pressure in full collaboration and co-ordination with Israel.

The ministerial Conference of non-aligned countries dealt with this issue. Reviewing the situation in the Mediterranean, the Ministers noted with regret the continued military and naval presence with nuclear capability and the existence of hotbeds of crisis, occupation and aggression in the region. They emphasized that no motive or pretext could justify the threat or use of force, interference in the internal affairs of Mediterranean countries or the creation of situations that could have such consequences.

The Ministers called on all States, and in particular the Mediterranean European States, to respect the provisions of the Valetta Declaration, especially the need to adhere strictly to the principle of non-use of force or threat of use of force, and urged them not to use their armaments, forces, bases and other military facilities against non-aligned Mediterranean States and not to permit foreign forces to use their territory, waters or airspace to launch acts of aggression against non-aligned countries.

They welcomed and fully supported the decisions adopted by Ministers for Foreign Affairs of non-aligned Mediterranean countries, held at Brioni, Yugoslavia, on 3 and 4 June 1987, as well as their further activities based thereon and aimed

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at promoting an open and constructive dialogue on security and co-operation in the Mediterranean. They particularly welcomed the efforts, following the Brioni meeting, aimed at opening a dialogue with other European countries, particularly Mediterranean ones, with a view to promoting relations in the Mediterranean through co-operation. In that context, they welcomed the decision to hold the next ministerial meeting of Mediterranean members in Algiers in early 1989.

My delegation strongly supports declaring the Mediterranean a zone of peace, security and co-operation, free from confrontation and conflict. We support the efforts aimed at promoting security and co-operation in that region in accordance with resolutions of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries and the United Nations and in particular the efforts of non-aligned Mediterranean States to ease tension and promote co-operation between themselves and European States with a view to achieving mutual security between Europe and the Mediterranean. To speak of European security while the security of the Mediterranean is ignored is a futile exercise in view of the organic interrelationship of the two regions. Realistic thinking and logic make it clear that the security of either region cannot be achieved without the parallel security of the other.



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To speak of European security while ignoring security in the Mediterranean region is futile in view of the fundamental link between the two. In the circumstances, it stands to reason that security in either of those regions is dependent upon the maintenance of security in the other.

Mr. ADAM (Sudan) (interpretation from Arabic): More than 40 years after the widespread devastation caused by the Second World War, the peoples of the world have become fully convinced that the qualitative and quantitative accumulation of armaments cannot guarantee peace and security. On the contrary, military doctrines of deterrence, particularly nuclear deterrence, have led to the emergence of military blocs and strategic alliances, which have extended to the four corners of the earth, resulting in continual military threats, a climate of suspicion and a lack of confidence and trust, which have in turn exacerbated the arms race, both quantitatively and qualitatively. In spite of some positive trends which have emerged recently, the logical outcome of this terrifying development can be summed up as follows.

International relations are still marked by rivalry with regard to zones of strategic economic and even, sometimes, ideological influence. Some parts of the world are still subjected to policies of domination and exploitation. The arms race - in particular the nuclear arms race - has been neither halted nor even slowed down. The threat or use of force is still widespread. Military intervention is still a feature of the policies of the major Powers and of the outlook of the blocs they lead. The occupation of foreign territory by military force is still practised although the twentieth century is drawing to a close. The independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of many small States are still constantly under threat.

(Mr. Adam, Sudan)

In spite of the grim picture I have outlined, which has existed for decades, the rapprochement now emerging between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which culminated in the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, has created a more positive international climate, which encourages us to hope that the current confrontation and distrust will disappear, to be replaced by détente and the preservation of common interests. The international community now hopes for further nuclear and strategic arms limitation agreements, for the elimination of the hotbeds of regional and international tension and for the strengthening of machinery for maintaining and preserving international peace and security, especially the United Nations. The international community therefore hopes that all the provisions of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security will be implemented.

The détente now prevailing between the world's two major Powers and their bilateral negotiations, which have consequently proved fruitful at times, are very much welcomed in the context of discussions on international security at all forums. Yet, despite the importance of those gains for international peace and security, we should not disregard the importance of multilateral negotiations, which supplement and lend new momentum to bilateral negotiations.

If we genuinely wish to achieve real international security, we must turn to certain key elements conducive to such security and endeavour to strengthen their foundations.

The first key element is the United Nations Charter. States must respect commitments entered into under the Charter. This is a primary responsibility which cannot be avoided for the sake of national interests. The first step towards

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achieving international security is to ensure that the United Nations Charter is respected in letter and in spirit and that force is not threatened or used. Disputes must be settled by peaceful means, and crises and hotbeds of tension, which directly threaten international peace and security, should be eliminated in accordance with the provisions of the Charter. In other words, countries should respect and make effective use of the principle of collective security in the political sense, and give up the ongoing arms race, particularly in parts of the world such as Western Europe, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, where there are large accumulations of armaments.

The second key element is the principles of international law, which all countries must respect and obey in order that right may triumph over might.

The third key element is the United Nations, which was set up to fill the void felt by the peoples of the world after the devastating effects of the Second World War. The Member States laid down a clear-cut and essential role for the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security and economic and social development in the interests of mankind. The strengthening of the role of the United Nations in those vital areas should not be simply a matter for academic discourse. On the contrary, all States must endeavour by every possible means to strengthen the role of the Organization and ensure that it is not used to further strategic national interests.

The fourth key element is the Security Council. The vital importance of enabling the Security Council to discharge its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security is increasing daily. Recent events have shown that the Security Council can be effective in resolving serious regional conflicts

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and eliminating hotbeds of tension which threaten the international community. It is thus of the greatest importance to strengthen the effectiveness and mandate of the Council in accordance with the principles of the Charter. The exercise of the right of veto has often weakened the role of the Council and prevented it from discharging its responsibilities and mandate with regard to important problems, such as the situation in the Middle East, including the full exercise by the Palestinian people of its rights and the halting of Israel's aggressive and expansionist policies. This also applies to the situation in southern Africa, where the Pretoria Government is pursuing its policy of apartheid, which has been condemned by the international community. It is the duty of the Permanent Members of the Security Council to strive to ensure that all Council resolutions are put into effect, in accordance with the Council's responsibilities under the Charter.

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Furthermore, in connection with the role of the Security Council and the United Nations, we should also mention the role of the Secretary-General in the implementation of the decisions of the Organization relating to the maintenance of international peace and security. We cannot but commend the Secretary-General for the role he has played, particularly in recent events, in reducing, and indeed eliminating, tension in many parts of the world. We also deeply respect and appreciate the important role played by the United Nations Peace-keeping Forces, for which they were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize this year.

Sudan, as a developing and non-aligned country, is convinced, like so many other countries, that the doctrine of deterrence, particularly nuclear deterrence, cannot guarantee international peace and security in any reliable way. If adherence to the programme of action laid down by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is the principle from which we must not depart, scrupulous observance of the principle of collective security remains the only viable option for breaking the vicious circle of fear, distrust and rivalry prevailing today. The danger threatening international peace and security is not just military, but also involves the economic, social and human dimensions of societies.

The world will not know lasting peace until it has resolved international economic problems, particularly those affecting developing countries, and has established a stable and forward-looking international economic order guaranteeing justice for all.

Sudan welcomes all initiatives taken to strengthen the principles of international peace and security within the framework of the Charter and role of the United Nations.

Mr. VONGSAY (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): My delegation is pleased once again this year to participate in the

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debate on the crucial question of the strengthening of international peace and security. We would like to pay tribute to the exemplary spirit of compromise and concession evinced by the socialist countries, the original sponsors of the item entitled "A comprehensive system of international peace and security" which has been considered by the General Assembly since its forty-first session. The item is now entitled "Comprehensive approach to strengthening international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations".

The opinions expressed in the Secretary-General's Report (A/43/732) dated 20 October 1988, have no doubt contributed to the adoption of such language. In view of the crucial importance of the question under consideration and the urgent need to develop and intensify constructive international dialogue on that matter, my delegation has become a sponsor of the draft resolution currently before the Committee, as it did with similar draft resolutions in the past.

I should now like to explain the views of my Government on international peace and security, the close interdependence between those and other concepts no less crucial to the fate of mankind, such as disarmament and development, and on the ways and means of reinforcing global international peace and security.

To us, as to the overwhelming majority of the Member States of the world Organization, peace and security mean more than absence of war. That understanding is extremely rational and plausible during this nuclear and space era. There is no more sacred duty or more urgent task for States than to combine their efforts and strength in order to dispel the threat of nuclear holocaust, which hangs over mankind like the sword of Damocles. That task would be to make concrete and effective the measures for limiting arms and disarmament, particularly within the nuclear domain.

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In that connection, Laos, like all peace-loving States and peoples, welcomes the ratification in Moscow last June of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, an entire category of nuclear missiles. It is reassuring to note that the implementation of that historic Treaty is currently proceeding properly. The international community keenly hopes that the Soviet and American negotiators in Geneva will be able to put the final touches to the draft treaty on the reduction of their offensive strategic arsenals by 50 per cent within the framework of strict respect for the provisions of the 1972 anti-ballistic missile Treaty as soon as possible. However, it is unfortunate that multilateral negotiations on measures to limit arms and disarmament, particularly in the nuclear sphere, are still lagging due to the well-known dilatory attitude of those who refuse to depart from the dangerous military doctrine of seeking security by accumulating weapons rather than by means of disarmament.

It is interesting to recall that the international community, particularly the Non-Aligned Movement, rejects and condemns the apocalyptic doctrine of nuclear deterrence that imperils the very survival of mankind. It is crucial that all States subscribe to the idea prevalent today that all States, large or small, rich or poor and whatever their ideology, have the right to undiminished security at a level of armaments and armed forces that are as low as possible. Hence it is necessary for all the States of the planet to address themselves to aspects of peace and security that are non-military, that is to say, political, economic, socio-cultural, humanitarian, ecological and other aspects.

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It is reassuring to note that the international community, and particularly the overwhelming majority of Member States of the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement, have become increasingly aware of the seriousness of such problems and the urgent need to solve them before it is too late.

Peace and security, considered in global terms and from the standpoint of their dialectical interdependence, can be strengthened only by global and integrated means, calling for wide-ranging international solidarity and close co-operation on the part of all States and peoples. It is a herculean task, whose accomplishment would require that States evince the necessary political will, a spirit of selflessness and altruism for the ultimate good of mankind, that they reject their aspirations to power and domination and accept to consider others as equal partners, human beings, rather than adversaries to be fought or slaves. All those ideals occupy a place of honour in the United Nations Charter, in its preambular and operative parts alike. If the system of collective security as globally conceived and as provided for in the Charter, has not functioned as it should have, it is precisely because some States have not rigorously implemented the fundamental provisions it contains with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security and the means to achieve them.



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Among the fundamental principles of international law explicitly and implicitly included in the Charter we see, in particular, respect for the sovereignty, equality, political independence and territorial integrity of States, non-intervention and non-interference in domestic affairs, non-recourse to the threat or use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes, self-determination, in particular the inalienable right of all States to choose their own political, economic, social and cultural system free from any interference whatsoever from another State, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, co-operation among States and the implementation in good faith by States of obligations that they have entered into under the United Nations Charter. The non-application or the breach of these sacrosanct principles by some States explain why tragic conflicts and situations of tension in various parts of the world not only persist today but, in the case of some of them at least, are becoming intensified and worsening.

Thus the world is still standing powerless before acts of brutal repression, aggression and destabilization committed with impunity by the criminal system of apartheid against the majority black populations in South Africa, Namibia and the front-line States.

In the Middle East the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples in occupied territories continue to be the victims of Zionist acts of repression. However, the heroic struggle of the martyred Palestinian people to ensure the exercise of their inalienable fundamental rights has recently taken a decisive turn with the proclamation by the Palestine National Council of the State of Palestine in its homeland, with Jerusalem as its capital. That is an historic decision about which the Lao people and Government have rejoiced and to which we give our entire support.

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In Central America efforts and initiatives to achieve regional peace are being blocked by exogenous, destabilizing manoeuvres. In other parts of the world, particularly in Pacific Asia and South-East Asia, military and para-military threats continue, although at different levels, for well known reasons.

In order to encourage the improvement in the international climate, brought about by the positive results of a series of Soviet-American summit meetings, the States of the South-East Asian region have redoubled their efforts to find a just and lasting political solution to the problems that relate to the maintenance and reinforcement of peace and stability in that region, including the Kampuchean problem. As I have already said in a previous statement in the Committee on the item relating to disarmament, the Lao delegation, on behalf of the three countries of Indo-China, put forward, in the course of the Jakarta Informal Meeting last July, a seven-point proposal to make South-East Asia a denuclearized zone of peace, freedom, neutrality, friendship, and co-operation. The essential principles underlying our proposal are in keeping with the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter with regard to the rules of civilized conduct that should be adopted by States in their international relations. Hence, we have advocated that any dispute, whether it be political, economic, border or other dispute, must be solved by means of negotiation or by other peaceful means as stipulated in the United Nations Charter. In this vein we hope with all our heart that the border problem that is pitting our country against one of our immediate neighbours can be solved by means of negotiation as speedily as possible.

Everyone acknowledges the fact that the state of the world is not good in all areas but one must provide means to remedy the situation and to settle the difficulties and differences of opinion that arise because of the persistence of conflicts of interest among States throughout the world. After all, the purpose of

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our debate here is to try to narrow the differences of view and thus to be able to achieve a balance of interests. Laos welcomes all initiatives and proposals that have been put forward to date with a view to reinforcing peace and general security.

In general terms, we welcome the political-philosophical reflections and the concrete proposals put forward by Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in his article published in 1987, entitled "Reality and safeguards for a secure world" together with the essential ideas contained in the report put forward by the Soviet Union entitled "Towards general security through strengthening the role of the United Nations".

We welcome the positive, constructive work of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization. The most important document it submitted to the General Assembly this session for consideration, is, without doubt, the draft declaration on the prevention and removal of disputes and situations which may threaten international peace and security and on the role of the United Nations in this field, contained in paragraph 14, of document A/43/33.

According to the terms of this document the major bodies of the United Nations, namely, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and even the International Court of Justice could take preventive action in regard to the maintenance of international peace and security, an area in which law is still lacking. So far as the States themselves are concerned a preventive role must be assumed.

We must also pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and the Security Council for their positive contribution to the settlement of certain extremely complex regional conflicts. The draft Declaration, once adopted by the General Assembly,

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would supplement the set of existing instruments, in particular, the Declaration on the Enhancement of the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations, instruments which, if rigorously implemented by States would contribute effectively to reinforcing international peace and security.

In the contemporary world - which has become increasingly interdependent and in which no State, however over-armed it might be, could escape the exterminating effects if there were to be a nuclear holocaust one day because of accident, miscalculation or a breakdown in the means of communication - there can be no alternative for States or peoples of the planet but to live in peace with one another and to develop co-operation in all areas as the United Nations Charter requires. That is to say, the policy of peaceful coexistence and of multifaceted co-operation must be actively carried out on the basis of the principle of the primacy of law to the exclusion of any recourse to force.

That kind of mutually advantageous co-operation, in order to be feasible, would necessarily require that States evince the political will to make an effective contribution to the elimination of the causes of poverty, misery, hunger, disease and ignorance, scourges that still afflict an extremely large part of the population of the world. The international community, in our view, should redouble its efforts to implement, completely and rigorously, the decisions and recommendations contained in numerous General Assembly resolutions relating to the establishment of a new international economic order, a new international humanitarian order, international co-operation in regard to the environment, the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, the final documents of the special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

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These are the ways and means that have been prepared within the United Nations, and their use would reinforce international peace and security from the military, political, economic, humanitarian, ecological and other aspects. These are also the solid foundations for the secure world that my country will actively participate in building.

Mr. PITARKA (Albania): The preservation of international peace and security has rightly been among the priority items on the United Nations agenda since the Organization's creation. Regrettably, throughout this period peace and security have been gravely impaired in various regions of the world and have been subject to continuous threats. However, the desires and aspirations of the peoples have remained unvaryingly clear and straightforward in all that time. They are genuine peace and international security, prosperity and development.

Notwithstanding those aspirations, the present international situation makes it clear that the elements which put world security in jeopardy still persist. I shall mention just a few.

The arms race remains a real and constant threat to international security. The nuclear military arsenals of the two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, offer no room for complacency; their uninterrupted improvement increases the threats to international peace and security. The arms trade, with all its negative political and economic consequences, heightens insecurity and expands the threats that maintain existing local conflicts and provoke new ones. Furthermore, the deepening of the economic crisis, foreign debts and unfair international economic relations add to the negative factors that run counter to the aspirations of the peoples to genuine peace and security.

We maintain that the problems of international peace and security cannot be solved on a fair and rational basis by allowing them to be made into a monopoly in the hands of the super-Powers, which have always been known to tend to their own interests above everything else. As we have pointed out on more than one occasion, it is our conviction that the establishment and strengthening of peace and security on a world-wide scale is a long process, which can yield positive results only through the efforts of freedom-loving peoples and countries resolutely to oppose the hegemonistic policy of the super-Powers.

(Mr. Pitark, Albania)

I should like now to state a few considerations on the item entitled "Strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region". In this context, in our view, two points have always retained their actuality: the gravity of the political and military situation in the region, which shows no signs of a change for the better, and the long-standing aspirations and demands of the Mediterranean peoples for security and co-operation, true to their vital interests of peace, genuine security and prosperity.

We hold the view that the foreign military presence of the two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, and of the military blocs they command constitutes the main and most perilous cause of confrontation in the Mediterranean and the tension, unrest and conflicts that still persist in the region. It is the political and military strategy of the super-Powers that has turned the Mediterranean into a militarized sea with a vast concentration of armaments of all kinds, including nuclear arms. Judging by the military situation, by the United States and Soviet operations in this basin, it is clear that they strive in every possible way to increase and consolidate their presence in the Mediterranean, to put that basin under complete control in order to implement their hegemonistic and expansionist aims.

No realistic and objective mind could ever accept the so-called reasons the super-Powers offer to justify their military and political presence in the Mediterranean, endeavouring to ascribe it to their defence and national security interests. Rightly, the question is asked: which countries are washed by the Mediterranean waters, and what is the geographical distance between the Mediterranean and the national boundaries of the possessors of such huge military arsenals deployed in the Mediterranean? The very nature of the military potential stationed there, the priority that has been attached to increasing the

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effectiveness of the rapid-deployment and swift-combat forces testify to the real goals the super-Powers are out to attain in the area.

Whenever the issue comes under consideration, here at the United Nations or in other international or regional forums, such as the ones in the Mediterranean, the concern of the Mediterranean countries over the situation in their region is increasingly expressed. This is only rational and absolutely justifiable, for, in the final analysis, who could be more preoccupied with and interested in real security and stability in the region than the Mediterranean countries themselves? Therefore, every initiative or project relating to security in the Mediterranean should necessarily come from the Mediterranean countries. It should take into account, rest on and be implemented in full conformity with their aspiration to free the Mediterranean from all foreign military presence. The initiatives and proposals emerging in the context of the United States-Soviet rivalry and collaboration, which have not failed to cover the Mediterranean as well, aim not at withdrawal from the region, but at legalization of a balanced presence of both the super-Powers, as their global interests demand.

The People's Socialist Republic of Albania follows with concern the course of events that seriously disturb and aggravate the situation in the Mediterranean. It views them as dangerous developments which impair peace and security as a whole, and, primarily, the peace and stability of each and every one of the Mediterranean countries. Turbulence in the Mediterranean is fraught with grave consequences, which, under certain conditions, take the form of acts of aggression or other forms of threat and blackmail. The Middle East conflict is a case in point that is still a reality. We strongly desire that the Mediterranean be freed from the long-accumulated military potential, from the super-Powers' fleets and bases. That would eliminate the destabilizing elements brought into existence by their repeated demonstrations of military might.



(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

For its part, the People's Socialist Republic of Albania condemns this dangerous policy and activity. With the policy of a truly independent and sovereign country, leading to concrete actions, it has carried out its obligations in rendering its assistance and its contribution to achieving stability in the area. Its constitution prohibits the deployment of foreign military bases, armaments and troops in the territory of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania. No facilities have ever been granted to foreign war ships for anchoring in Albanian ports or off Albania's shores.

The delegation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania reiterates that the political and military presence of the United States and the Soviet Union in the Mediterranean constitutes a real threat to the peoples and countries of the region and beyond, a threat to their freedom, independence and sovereignty. Genuine peace and stability in the Mediterranean, as in all parts of the world, can be achieved only when foreign war fleets withdraw and foreign military bases are closed. It will be brought about by resolutely opposing the super-Powers' aims of becoming permanent residents in the region, by refusing them every kind of concession. The legitimate aspiration of "the Mediterranean to the Mediterraneans", can be met only by removing the negative factors that have turned it into a militarized sea.

Mr. NGUYEN DUC HUNG (Viet Nam): Mankind has created a terrible threat. However, as has often happened in history, it has at the same time created the conditions for removing that threat. Millions of people are grappling with the vital problems of war and peace, annihilation and survival.

In recent months, encouraging, positive developments in world politics have taken place that have not only had a significant impact on the easing of international tensions but have also served as a new starting point along the road to general and complete disarmament and contributed in a practical way to the building of a non-violent world free of nuclear weapons. The two Soviet-United States summit meetings, the ratification of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles and the progress, modest though it is, made in the talks on a 50 per cent reduction in strategic nuclear arms constitute important breakthroughs that have opened up the actual possibility of achieving still greater results in the long struggle to rid mankind of the nightmare of a nuclear holocaust. The strengthening and broadening of international co-operation at the global and regional levels - an objective necessity of our times - significantly encourages the process towards the establishment of a world of peace, détente and co-operation.

At present, a distinctive feature of the international scene is the arrival of a multitude of new States, all of them different but increasingly bound together by ties of interdependence. Our world is contradictory but also integrated in many respects. If human civilization is to go forward, countries big and small, developed and developing, from East and West, North and South, cannot go on confronting each other as in the past but must enter into dialogue and co-operation with one another. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations wrote on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations:

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"Never in history has there been a time when Governments needed so much to co-operate with each other."

And, in his annual reports to the General Assembly, he has repeatedly stressed that co-operation is not a choice for the nations of the world but a necessity. That approach is intimately linked with the idea of making peaceful co-existence a universal standard of international relations, entailing the establishment of an international order dominated by good-neighbourly relations and co-operation, with extensive exchanges in science, technology and culture for the good of all nations, and not by military strength.

When all human beings are facing the prospect of annihilation, none of us can make provision for his own security without considering and weighing the security of others. Security can only be comprehensive and reciprocal. It must be guaranteed, not by the hope of technological supremacy but by political will.

We have advanced beyond the times when international politics were based on the interests of a single Power or group of Powers. In the nuclear age, we cannot shirk our great responsibility to uphold the right of every people and every individual to life, freedom, peace and the pursuit of happiness. If we are to give priority to human values, non-violence must become the foundation of international life.

The Havana Appeal issued on the eve of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament by the Special Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries clearly states:

"The concept of international security, which has traditionally been premised on the acquisition of arms and mutual deterrence, has proved erroneous since it has failed to produce global stability. Common security for all States can only be assured by new concepts based on mutual confidence, co-operation and interdependence". (A/S-15/27)

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The ministers attending the Havana meeting also reaffirmed

"The urgent need to effectively implement the measures of the collective security system provided for in the Charter of the United Nations and to examine other initiatives in the General Assembly and Security Council that complemented this system and facilitated the implementation of such measures".

(A/S-15/27)

A credible system of universal security is impossible without a healthy psychological and moral climate, without frankness in politics and actions, without a spirit of good will and mutual respect and without the introduction of a political approach that excludes the cult of militarism, hatred and violence, racism and apartheid. It is imperative to stop relying on military force as a means of ensuring security, not only because of the destructive potential of modern weaponry but also in view of many political and economic factors whose significance has increased manifold.

Mankind is currently facing difficulties related to energy, raw materials, food, ecology and many other global problems. The economic backwardness of developing countries is becoming even more outrageous, while their foreign debt and the volume of debt servicing to the West have reached catastrophic proportions. The situation of all countries, regardless of their socio-political systems, is affected by the development of the world economy. Given the interdependence of States and the global problems they all share, the complexity of security policy presupposes the existence of mutual interest in each other's stability and prosperity. The efforts made to strengthen universal security must be integrated with regional efforts.

In Asia and the Pacific, the situation over the past years has undergone far-reaching developments. The political map of that region has been basically altered. The changes experienced in the Asian-Pacific region derive from none

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other than the motive force created by the struggle for national independence and economic development.

From the 1970s on, along with the struggle against nuclear weapons in that region, initiatives on peace, stability and development were advocated and carried through by the countries of the region. Such endeavours have helped to enhance peace and promote regional security. The members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), prompted by Indonesia's concept of self-reliance, have promulgated the Zopean Proposal. The Mongolian People's Republic has proposed establishing a mechanism of the non-use of force in relations among countries in the Asian-Pacific region; the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has called upon the United States, together with the two parts of Korea, to hold talks on the peaceful reunification of Korea; the Lao People's Democratic Republic set forth the initiative of building South-East Asia into a zone of peace, friendship and co-operation; the Geneva Accords on the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan, the on-going talks for solving the Kampuchean problem are likely to be concluded by a political settlement.

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The continuing efforts over nearly two decades to convert the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, the Soviet statement of Vladivostok and the Soviet-Indian New Delhi declaration have voiced the desire of the Asian-Pacific nations for peace and have charted a practical way of attaining peace and security in that region. Those endeavours are, in substance, considered to be practical steps towards the establishment of a universal system of security.

Constructive debate on this question, with the broad participation of Member States in a democratic and non-confrontational manner, would bring the current practice of international relations closer to the integrated system of international peace and security enshrined in the United Nations Charter. There is a need to evolve a universally acceptable political language that could be used to reach agreement on the most complicated issues and to replace the language of guns for all time.

We firmly believe that consideration of this question is in the interests of all Member States, as well as the interests of promoting the effectiveness and authority of the United Nations, and would be in conformity with other United Nations efforts directed at strengthening international peace and security.

Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): Some positive developments in international relations since the last session of the General Assembly have found a reflection in the situation in the broader area of the Mediterranean as well. The restoration of relations between Algeria and Morocco and the increased diplomatic efforts in connection with Western Sahara, as well as the resumption of dialogue between the two Cyprus communities, are important contributions to peace and stability in the region that has, throughout its eventful and often turbulent history, occupied an important place in and exerted considerable influence on international events and elicited the continued attention and interest of outside actors.

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The improvement in relations between the super-Powers, however, has thus far brought no adequate positive change that would lead to a decrease in the rivalry between them, nor has it reduced the presence of non-Mediterranean forces in that area, which continues to be a potential source of instability and conflict. This is particularly true of the continued deterioration of the situation in the territories occupied by Israel since the June 1967 war and of the very volatile and complex situation in Lebanon, which is the result of foreign interference and the occupation of the southern part of that country.

Yugoslavia has always pointed out that the existing contradictions and conflicts in the region are a warning sign of the perennial danger of a new escalation of tensions in even more serious form. It is understandable, therefore, that Yugoslavia, as a Mediterranean, non-aligned and European country, should follow with great attention the developments in the region. We continue to believe that the main causes of the unsatisfactory overall situation in the Mediterranean are rooted in policies based on positions of force, intervention and interference in the internal affairs of the States of the region and the denial of the rights of the region's peoples to self-determination and independence. We are deeply convinced that dialogue, negotiations and equitable co-operation are the only way to remove the sources of tension and instability in the region and to reach a lasting solution of disputes and outstanding problems in the region, regardless of their nature and gravity.

Any attempt to use existing hotbeds of crisis, which are the results of a complex and difficult historical legacy and of the conflicting interests of individual countries in the region, as a pretext for intervention and interference by foreign factors would only aggravate and postpone their lasting and long-awaited solution.

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Owing to its geographical location and to its friendly relations with the majority of the countries of the region, Yugoslavia is naturally vitally interested in the strengthening and promotion of peace and stability in the region of the Mediterranean as an inseparable component of its own security. Together with other non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean, my country has for a long time been engaged in efforts designed to create conditions for starting the process of peacefully overcoming the present unfavourable situation and leading to a lasting removal of the existing sources of disputes and tension in the region.

Parallel to action within the United Nations, the Mediterranean non-aligned countries have striven, through concrete initiatives and actions, to stimulate the development of regional co-operation and dialogue. Along those lines the ministerial meetings of the non-aligned countries at Valletta, Malta, in 1984 and at Brioni, Yugoslavia, in June 1987 put forward a number of suggestions and initiatives for the development of comprehensive and equitable co-operation among Mediterranean countries and the transformation of that region into an area of peace, security and co-operation.

In that context, last year's ministerial meeting of non-aligned countries held at Brioni underlined the importance of dialogue, consultations and joint efforts among non-aligned and European-Mediterranean countries and other countries to overcome the outstanding problems that aggravate the situation and cause tension in the Mediterranean region.

The main idea of the non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean is to develop comprehensive co-operation among Mediterranean countries on the basis of equality and mutual benefit and the intensification and continuous promotion of contacts in all areas in which common interests and real possibilities exist. To that end a dialogue was begun with European-Mediterranean countries and countries members of



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the European Economic Community (EEC), as well as with the United States and the Soviet Union. In that connection, as was also pointed out in the decisions taken by the ministerial conference of non-aligned countries held at Nicosia last September, particular emphasis should be laid on efforts being made to reflect the more favourable situation now prevailing in Europe in the area of the Mediterranean as well. Indeed, there exists a firm interrelationship between security and disarmament in Europe and in the Mediterranean. We are convinced that a more active contribution by European-Mediterranean countries outside the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as by other influential non-regional forces, some of which have displayed an increased interest in being included in such processes, would significantly contribute to the creation of an atmosphere of greater trust and pave the way for a comprehensive solution of the existing sources of tension and conflicts in the region.

Of prior importance, however, is the prevention of the further militarization of the region and the removal of the arsenals of non-regional bloc forces, as well as the undertaking of concrete efforts to eliminate the existing hotbeds of crisis that have, over the years, often brought the Mediterranean to the brink of armed conflicts of broader proportions.

It is therefore necessary that every effort to achieve relaxation of tension and solve the existing problems and differences should proceed from and take account of the authentic interests of the countries of the region and their aspirations to decide freely and independently on their own destiny. We consider that conditions have already matured sufficiently for us to make resolute efforts within the United Nations at this session to initiate the process of peaceful solution and removal of the existing primary causes of tensions and crises in the region. Among them, it is of priority importance to find as soon as possible a

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just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. The nearly one-year-old uprising of the Palestinian people against the Israeli occupation has already demonstrated the untenable nature of the existing situation. The decisions of the recently concluded meeting of the Palestine National Council at Algiers, including the declaration of an independent Palestinian State, which Yugoslavia, along with a large group of other countries, has officially recognized, opened the way for a speedy convening of an international conference on the Middle East with equitable participation by all directly interested parties, among them the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. That, in our opinion, remains the only realistic way to a just and lasting solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the underlying question of Palestine.

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The pre-condition for it is the total and immediate withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied since the June war of 1967, the realization of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the ensuring of the right of all countries and peoples of the region to peace and security within internationally recognized borders.

We give our full support to the speedy restoration of the national unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon, with the consistent implementation of the resolutions of the Security Council. An indispensable pre-condition for it is the complete and immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanese territory and the enabling of Lebanon to decide on its internal development freely and independently.

Yugoslavia welcomes the renewal of dialogue, through the good offices of the Secretary-General, for an early solution of the problem of Cyprus on the basis of full respect for the independence, territorial integrity, unity and non-aligned status of Cyprus. We believe also that there can be no lasting solution to this problem without the complete withdrawal of foreign troops from the island and agreement between the two ethnic communities.

The only realistic way to bring about a lasting stabilization of the situation in the Mediterranean is to create a basis for the development of comprehensive and equitable co-operation and coexistence, with full respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and special characteristics of the development of individual countries, in particular respect for differences in their internal systems and orientation.

The non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean have devoted concrete efforts over a number of years - and this is their long-term orientation - to launching and promoting equitable co-operation in the region based on mutual benefit in all areas involving the interests of the countries of the region, as well as of the other

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European countries with which this region is, by the nature of things, related. In the view of the non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean region, this is the concrete contribution they can make to greater security in the region of the Mediterranean. What remains to be done, however, is to concretize some initiatives and proposals of the non-aligned countries of the Mediterranean through joint programmes of action and co-operation in the interest of peace and stability in the region. Some results in co-operation among the non-aligned Mediterranean countries in regard to the protection of the environment, economy, science and technology, tourism, culture, art and sports reveal only a part of the possibilities existing in this area. We expect that the forthcoming ministerial meeting of non-aligned countries, scheduled to take place in Algiers at the beginning of January 1989, will provide fresh impetus in this direction.

Yugoslavia is in favour of, and supports, the broadest possible exchange of contacts and information among the countries of the region with a view to promoting understanding. Through better knowledge of one another and greater respect for the special characteristics of their internal development, much misunderstanding and many disagreements would be avoided and more easily overcome.

The efforts of the non-aligned Mediterranean countries at improving the situation in the Mediterranean and transforming it into an area of peace, security and co-operation have always been fully supported by the United Nations. We believe that the world Organization can make a substantial contribution to the promotion of peace and security in the region, on the basis of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, in particular from the need to respect the true interests and aspirations of the countries and peoples of the region.

We expect that the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) follow-up meeting in Vienna, which is entering its final phase, will affirm even

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more strongly the interrelationship between security in Europe and the Mediterranean, which would significantly contribute to the creation of a more favourable climate and the relaxation of tension in the Mediterranean region, and that is in the interest of all.

We would like to point out on this occasion that the most important thing is to allow the countries of the region to resolve existing disputes and differences all by themselves, on the basis of their real and specific interests and needs, with full respect for the Charter and with a view to strengthening and promoting peace, security and the stable development of the region.

Mr. GARCIA ITURBE (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Our Committee is beginning its consideration of topics related to international security at a time when the international community is undertaking efforts, perhaps unprecedented, to strengthen peace and security in the world. If we analyse the situation in international political relations and also the process that has developed with regard to various hotbeds of tension that have been affecting international peace and security for years, it is obvious that some of the events of recent times have resulted in an improvement in the process of reinforcing understanding and international co-operation and that confrontation has given way to negotiation despite the fact that as yet, in some regions of the world, there still exist hotbeds of tension that continue to threaten international peace and security.

It is indisputable that, in general terms, steps have been taken in various parts of the world that enable us to view the future with optimism and to think that, while all conflicts have not as yet been resolved, the solution of some of them and the steps taken to solve others allow us to imagine that it is possible to improve the international situation if we can make sure that the principles set forth in the Charter are respected by all and if, finally, the resolutions adopted

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by the United Nations relating to the independence and the right of peoples to exist are implemented.

When we begin consideration of these items we must take account of a whole series of principles without which international security could be achieved only with great difficulty and which, in one way or another, are reflected in the Charter.

It is undeniable that in order to strengthen international security States must refrain from interfering in the internal or external affairs of other States; that there should be relations of friendship and co-operation among States; that there should be total elimination of the use or threat of use of force, interference, colonial domination and all kinds of coercive measures, be they political or economic, which violate the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States.

The peaceful settlement of disputes, the elimination of hotbeds of crisis at the international level as well as the establishment of a new, more just international economic order would contribute greatly to strengthening international security as well.

In order to strengthen international security and really begin to take serious steps to improve relations among States, it is undeniable that a highly important element is to be able to halt the arms race, and what is even more desirable, to begin a process of general and complete disarmament, which would result in the total elimination of the threat of war as well as the conversion of the weapons industry into a producer of goods to meet the needs of the world population.

However, there is another highly important condition for the guaranteeing of lasting peace, and that is that when steps are taken towards disarmament they must also be steps towards development; that natural economic and technological

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resources devoted to war must be devoted to improving the living standards of the less developed countries, to provide them with an industrial base that will make it possible for them to produce enough for their consumption and guarantee the education and health of all their citizens, because peace is inconceivable without development, and development cannot be achieved without peace and disarmament.

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That is why my delegation, in considering the item on the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, considers it of the utmost importance to call once again on all States to comply strictly in their international relations with the obligations entered into under the United Nations Charter. We should also call on them - and this amounts to the same thing - to refrain from the use or the threat of the use of force, intervention, interference, aggression, the imposition of measures of political or economic pressure, and the violation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and security of other States.

That would decisively contribute to finally bringing a happy end to the situation in Central America, which would mean that the Nicaraguan people would no longer have to suffer the loss of the lives of so many of its children as a result of the activities of mercenary bands subsidized by United States taxpayers.

My delegation attributes the greatest importance to the question of the general system of international peace and security, since it focuses on the reinforcement of the United Nations as the appropriate body for achieving, through its various bodies and by means of the implementation of the Charter, the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security. This forum constitutes the real hope of the peoples of the world, and in particular of the developing countries, for a more stable, just and equitable economic situation that would encourage development, guarantee the means of subsistence and eliminate unequal terms of trade through the establishment of a new international economic order. All of this would decisively assist in the maintenance of world peace.

In order to fulfil those aims, we must establish a global system of international peace and security that would ensure the adoption of practical measures in implementation of the principles of the Charter - above all those principles of major significance and importance for world peace, such as



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disarmament, the peaceful settlement of disputes, economic development and international co-operation. My delegation fully supports the initiative for the establishment of such a system, which would redound to the benefit of the developing countries and would deal with the realities of the nuclear era in an appropriate way and within the framework of the United Nations and its Charter.

As we said at the beginning of our statement, we cannot but be optimistic when we see the important effect on international peace and security of the signing at the end of 1987 of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.

The agreements on the situation in Afghanistan will also undoubtedly contribute significantly to the achievement of peace in the region more quickly.

The talks between Iran and Iraq and the end of the war between them have the greatest importance for security in the Persian Gulf. We welcome the progress made towards achieving peace in that region, thanks to the co-operation of both countries and the good offices of the Secretary-General.

The recent decision by the Palestine National Council on the establishment of the State of Palestine - which Cuba fully supports - is an important step towards the solution to the conflict in the Middle East. We must all give broad support to that decision.

The implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which guarantees full independence to the Namibian people, would greatly strengthen peace in southwestern Africa and would be the successful culmination of the quadripartite talks that have been taking place to that end for several months now.

The situation that had persisted in the Korean peninsula for years appears to be changing. Some positive steps have been initiated that could lead to the creation of a new situation in which the peace and security of the region would be strengthened.

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Other events, in South-West Asia and other regions of the world, indicate that there are possibilities for improving the political climate and strengthening security so long as the political will to reach appropriate agreements is maintained.

If we make an inventory of all those situations, we easily realize that, with regard to the majority of the hotbeds of tension existing in the world, action is being taken towards the achievement of a peaceful solution to conflicts - action that would both guarantee the security of the region and make it possible to reinforce the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter.

We wonder: does not Central America also have a right to see serious and constructive steps taken towards the solution of the tensions in the region, thereby enabling its peoples to aspire to live in peace, without the constant pressure of foreign interference, the threat of the use of force, intervention in the domestic affairs of its countries, aggression or measures of political or economic pressure? Do not those who wage war think that the time has come to let those peoples live in peace, to enable them to decide their future for themselves and, at the same time, to encourage understanding and mutual respect rather than hatred, interference and the undermining of the trust that should exist in international relations?

We are confident that common sense and a more realistic analysis of the present world political situation will make it possible to change the policy that still casts shadows on the Central American horizon, so that in the not-too-distant future we may also welcome steps towards the achievement of a lasting peace in that region.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.