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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND  
EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Thursday, 5 January 1989, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. RAZALI

(Malaysia)

Members: Algeria  
Brazil  
Canada  
China  
Colombia  
Ethiopia  
Finland  
France  
Nepal  
Senegal  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
United Kingdom of Great Britain and  
Northern Ireland  
United States of America  
Yugoslavia

Mr. DJOUDI  
Mr. NOGUEIRA-BATISTA  
Mr. FORTIER  
Mr. LI Luyue  
Mr. PEÑALOSA  
Mr. TADESSE  
Mr. TORNUDD  
Mr. BROCHAND  
Mr. RANA  
Mr. BA  
Mr. BELONOGOV  
  
Sir Crispin TICKELL  
Mr. OKUN  
Mr. PEJIC

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The meeting was called to order at 3.50 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF CONDOLENCES

The PRESIDENT: I should like at the outset of the meeting to express condolences in connection with the untimely passing of Mr. Bernt Carlsson, the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia, who, while returning to New York to attend the historic signing of the agreements aimed at bringing about the independence of Namibia, lost his life last month in the tragic destruction of Pan American flight 103, which resulted in the loss of hundreds of innocent lives, an act which was strongly condemned by the members of the Security Council in the statement by the President on 30 December 1988. I am sure I speak for all the members of the Council in expressing our deepest sympathy over this great loss.

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: Malaysia began its term of office on the Security Council on 1 January 1989. At the same time it assumed the presidency of this important organ of the United Nations. Thus both an honour and a responsibility have been placed on our shoulders, a responsibility which we accept with the promise to carry it out with dedication to the ideals of the Charter.

EXPRESSION OF WELCOME TO THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND OF THANKS TO THE OUTGOING MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The PRESIDENT: In presiding over this first meeting of the Council in 1989, I am happy to welcome the other new members of the Council - Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia and Finland.

I am sure that I express the feelings of all members when I pay tribute to the representatives of the five outgoing members of the Council - Argentina, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan and Zambia - for the valuable contributions they made to the work of the Council during their term of membership.

## EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the members of the Council, I should like to express the Council's deep appreciation to my predecessor in the office of President, Mr. Hideo Kagami, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, for having so admirably guided the work of the Council during the month of December 1988.

## ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

LETTER DATED 4 JANUARY 1989 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/20364)

LETTER DATED 4 JANUARY 1989 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF BAHRAIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/20367)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bahrain, Burkina Faso, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia in which they request to be invited 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 conformity 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.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Shaker (Bahrain) and Mr. Muntasser (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) took places at the Council table; Mr. Dah (Burkina Faso), Mr. Al-Masri (Syrian Arab Republic) and Mr. Karoui (Tunisia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 5 January 1989 from the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request that the Security Council extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Samir Mansouri, Acting Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, during the Council's discussion of the item presently on its agenda."

That letter will be circulated as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/20371.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation to Mr. Mansouri under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council is meeting today in response to the requests contained in two letters dated 4 January 1989 from the Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/20364) and from the Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/20367).

I should also like to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following other documents: S/20366, letter dated 4 January 1989 from the Acting Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; and S/20368, letter dated

(The President)

4 January 1989 from the Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

The first speaker is the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, whom I invite to make his statement.

Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic):

Allow me at the outset to express to you, Sir, our congratulations upon your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month, representing as you do a friendly country with which my country has close and fraternal ties. I am confident that, thanks to your capabilities, skills and statesmanship, the work of the Council will be crowned with the desired success. I should also like to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Japan, for the constructive manner in which he conducted the Council's work last month.

On behalf of my delegation I should also like to congratulate the States that became members of the Security Council at the beginning of this year. I am confident that their presence on the Council will contribute to the success of its deliberations on the questions before it at this critical juncture. My delegation would also like to express its thanks and appreciation to the States whose terms of membership have just ended.

The United States of America has pursued a policy of blatant aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya ever since its 1969 revolution. At that time the Jamahiriya began to pursue an independent policy based upon its own free will with regard to international, regional and national issues. It liquidated the American military bases on its soil and began to exercise its full sovereign rights over its own natural resources, supporting the causes of liberty, justice, the right of peoples to self-determination and national liberation movements and calling for decolonization. That course aroused the wrath of the United States of America, which wanted the Jamahiriya to continue to be one of its puppets and an instrument of its hegemony and control.

The policy of aggression practised by the United States of America against the people of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has reached a peak under the present Administration of that country, thereby making the Jamahiriya the object of

(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan  
Arab Jamahiriya)

disinformation campaigns and a long series of threats, provocations and acts of direct and indirect aggression. Such acts have taken the form of overt actions in the information, cultural, economic and political fields. In the political field we recall the statement made on 7 January 1986 by the head of the Administration himself, when he said that he "would make Libya a totally isolated country". I leave it to the members of the Council to appreciate the connotations of that statement.

As for the economic field, those actions took the form of such coercive measures as an economic blockade, the freezing of funds and assets, the withholding of spare parts and the transfer of technology in order to impede the development programmes of the Libyan people. In the cultural field, racist and discriminatory actions were taken against Libyan students who were pursuing their studies in the United States. Coercive measures were taken to prevent them from studying certain disciplines, although every code and law stipulates that access to knowledge is the inherent right of every human being. All of those steps are aimed at isolating and destabilizing the Jamahiriya by creating an atmosphere of confusion and suspicion around it.

When the American Administration failed to realize its aggressive objectives through political pressure, the media and educational and economic warfare, it then turned to the military option, paving the way with a series of violations of Libyan airspace and territorial waters. It systematically conducted provocative naval and air manoeuvres in Libyan territorial waters off the Libyan coast and in its airspace in an attempt to draw the Jamahiriya into a direct military confrontation.

By way of example, I would cite merely the following incidents: On 19 August 1981, United States military aircraft intercepted a number of Libyan military aircraft in Libyan airspace, fired missiles at them and downed two of them

(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan  
Arab Jamahiriya)

in Libyan territorial waters. On 13 January 1983 American military fighter planes intercepted an airliner operated by the Libyan airlines during a scheduled flight from Benghazi to Athens. On 24 March 1986 American aircraft bombed a number of targets in the city of Sirte, while at the same time vessels of the United States Sixth Fleet fired missiles at Libyan boats on routine patrols in Libyan territorial waters, actions which led to severe losses of life and property. On the same day, American aircraft bombed the same civilian targets that had been hit earlier, while the debris was still being cleared and the bodies of innocent civilian victims removed from the ruins, doubling the losses. On 15 April 1986 the United States of America launched brutal and barbaric raids against residential areas and civilian airports in the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi. A number of strategic F-111 bombers, taking off from bases in Britain, along with L-6 and L-7 bombers from three aircraft carriers deployed off the Libyan coast, engaged in a joint air raid, dropping tons of bombs on residential areas and on rehabilitation centres and dormitories for the handicapped, claiming the lives of large numbers of elderly handicapped persons as they slept. Even foreign embassies were not spared the terrorism and brutality of the American bombing - the embassies of France and Switzerland provided perhaps the best evidence.

The international community condemned those acts of aggression at the Harare Summit of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in September 1986. They were also condemned at the Summit conferences of Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) at Kuwait, as well as by the international community as a whole in General Assembly resolution 41/38.



(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya)

The United States Administration confronted this international unanimity in condemning its unwarranted aggression by opting to continue its folly and arrogance, riding roughshod over all international instruments, rules, laws and regulations. Thus, it launched a new disinformation campaign, recalling the current campaign being waged against the Jamahiriya to destabilize it, undermine its security and violate its territorial integrity. As the whole world knows, this campaign was exposed. In this regard, only by way of example, I cite the resignation of the official spokesman for the State Department, Mr. Bernard Kalb, who, the moment his conscience awakened, protested before all the international mass media, stating that he could not remain in his position and implement a sham media campaign.

The United States Administration still persists in its folly and in its disinformation campaigns to discredit the people of the Jamahiriya. We see that this Administration is once more resorting to threats, terrorism and brutal military force to create flimsy pretexts and baseless allegations that the Libyan pharmaceutical plant is capable of producing chemical weapons. The Jamahiriya has categorically denied those allegations and reaffirmed that it has no intention whatsoever to produce any kind of chemical weapons and that it is a party to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxic Weapons and on Their Destruction. It reaffirms also its commitment to all international instruments, decisions and relevant conventions and gives its full, unconditional support to all General Assembly resolutions regarding chemical weapons.

Our expectations were realized when the American Administration committed an act of aggression against the Jamahiriya - for which it paved the way with its

(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya)

continuing disinformation campaign and by precipitating events. Last Friday it dispatched a 13-vessel task force from Norfolk, Virginia, led by the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt, to support the Sixth Fleet, which was deployed off the Libyan coast. Having announced those provocative manoeuvres off the Libyan coast, the United States committed an act of premeditated, deliberate aggression as a prelude to large-scale aggression, by shooting down two unarmed Libyan reconnaissance aircraft on routine patrol near the Libyan coast. They were intercepted by American military aircraft which shot them down without any justification. As I say, yesterday's premeditated, deliberate act of aggression was a prelude to a large-scale attack upon the economic and military installations in my country.

The Council is called upon to condemn this American military aggression against the Jamahiriya in the most forceful terms. The Council should assume its responsibilities under the special powers invested in it by the Charter of this Organization as the international body entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security. It is also incumbent upon the Council to take all measures to put an end to the aggression and to use whatever means are necessary to prevent its repetition. Moreover, the Council should call upon the United States, the aggressor State, and a permanent member of the Council bearing special responsibilities for international peace and security under the powers invested in it by the Charter, to withdraw its naval fleets and put an end to its provocative manoeuvres directed against the Libyan people, a small peace-loving people, on its national soil.

If the Council fails to shoulder its responsibilities, who can predict how far this Administration will go in its arrogance, high-handedness and treachery

(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya)

supported by the folly of brute force? It may even go as far as launching a large-scale attack upon all military facilities of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including the economic infrastructure, in an irrational attempt to subjugate the Jamahiriya to full American control.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to express to you the satisfaction and congratulations of the United States delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I wish to assure you of my delegation's full co-operation in the important tasks before the Council during this month. I am confident that your diplomatic skills and leadership qualities will assure the success of our common endeavours. I should also like to express my delegation's warm appreciation for the outstanding manner in which your predecessor, Ambassador Kagami, performed his challenging duties last month. We are all in his debt.

My delegation also warmly welcomes the delegations from Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, Finland and Malaysia, which have just joined the Security Council. We express our thanks to those delegations which have left the Security Council and which contributed so much to the successes of the Council during the past two years.

It is not Libya that is the aggrieved party in this Chamber, but rather the United States, whose routine operations over international waters, well beyond the 12-mile limit of the territorial seas claimed by the Government of Libya, were aggressively and hostilely challenged by the Libyan Air Force. The United States Navy aircraft were involved in normal training operations. I wish to state here unequivocally that their activities had no other purpose.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

The action by the United States Navy F-14 aircraft, in response to provocation and threat by two armed Libyan MiG-23 aircraft, was fully consistent with internationally accepted principles of self-defence. The United States has so informed the United Nations Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council under Article 51 of the Charter. Our letter has been made a formal part of these proceedings.

The facts in the case are clear. The incident took place on 4 January. The aircraft carrier Kennedy was on an easterly transit through the Mediterranean Sea 170 miles north of the border between Libya and Egypt. The United States Navy aircraft were operating on a training mission in international airspace over international waters, some 70 miles off the coast of Libya, north of Tobruk.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

Operations of this nature have been conducted in the same area many times in the past - in fact, 12 times over the past year. These operations past and present pose no threat to Libya or other countries.

During these operations armed Libyan fighter aircraft were detected by the United States forces as the Libyan aircraft left their home base at the Al Bumbah airfield in eastern Libya. The Libyan aircraft were tracked for 10 minutes as they closed rapidly on the two American F-14 planes. Our pilots did not react precipitately; rather they exercised restraint under very tense circumstances. They did not fire immediately. Instead they repeatedly attempted to avoid the Libyan aircraft which were closing on them.

In order to determine the intent of the Libyan fighters and to demonstrate lack of hostile intent on their part, the United States pilots on five separate occasions altered their direction. They also changed their speed and their altitude. Still the Libyan aircraft continued to close and to track our aircraft in a hostile manner markedly different from previous sorties by Libyan aircraft to monitor our training operations.

In the face of this repeated hostile behaviour by the Libyan planes, the United States section leader was faced with a growing and imminent threat of being shot down by the intercepting Libyan aircraft. We have photographic evidence that clearly shows the Libyan aircraft were carrying air-to-air missiles.

At a distance of approximately 14 miles, or with only a few seconds to make a decision, as the Libyan planes closed at a very high rate of speed, the United States section leader determined that his aircraft were in jeopardy. The United States aircraft then fired on the Libyan planes, shooting down two Libyan aircraft in a clear and unambiguous act of self-defence.

My Government has subsequently made clear in its public statements that, as far as the United States is concerned, this was a distinct incident unrelated to

(Mr. Okun, United States)

other issues. It had nothing whatever to do with our concerns about Libya's chemical-warfare plant, which in any case lies 600 miles away from the location where the shoot-down occurred. It is also erroneous to associate this incident with extraneous issues such as the routine rotation of the United States Sixth Fleet into and out of the Mediterranean Sea. As United States Defense Secretary Carlucci noted in his 4 January briefing to the press, the aircraft carrier on which the two United States F-14s were based has been in the Mediterranean for approximately the last half year.

In sum, it is very clear from the foregoing that our actions were fully consistent with accepted norms of self-defence. My Government considers this matter now closed.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Bahrain, who wishes to make a statement in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States for the month of January. I call upon him.

Mr. AL-SHAKER (Bahrain) (interpretation from Arabic): It is a privilege to address the Security Council on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States, over which my delegation has the honour of presiding for this month.

On this occasion I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I wish you every success in your endeavours. We are fully confident that, thanks to your ability and skill, you will conduct the business of this Council successfully.

I should like also to congratulate your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Japan, on the efforts he made during his presidency of the Council last month.

(Mr. Al-Shaker, Bahrain)

I would also take this opportunity to express my support for the new members of the Security Council and to congratulate the outgoing members.

The Security Council is meeting to consider the United States act of aggression against the Libyan reconnaissance planes over international waters on the morning of Wednesday, 4 January 1989.

On behalf of the Arab Group I would like to express indignation at that unwarranted act of aggression, which will only lead to an escalation of tension in the region, thus threatening peace and security in the Mediterranean region and indeed throughout the world.

It is a source of surprise and amazement that this act of aggression against Libya should have been carried out by a major Power, a permanent member of the Security Council which thus bears special responsibility under the United Nations Charter.

This act of aggression took place at a time when peace had started to prevail in large parts of the world, at a time when the hotbeds of tension and regional conflict had started to take the course of permanent peaceful solutions in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

The world was stunned by the use of force by the United States. The Arab States believe such acts of aggression will continue unless deterrent measures are taken to prevent the repetition of military operations of this kind. The Arab States call for the ending of such operations.

Every day the United States publicly announces its plan to attack the pharmaceutical plant in Libya, alleging that it is a chemical-weapons plant despite the firm and repeated denials of such allegations by the sisterly Libyan Arab Jamahariya and its declared readiness to place its facilities under international supervision and inspection.

(Mr. Al-Shaker, Bahrain)

The Council of Arab States, at its extraordinary session on 26 December 1988, considered the threats against the pharmaceutical plant in Libya, and in the light of that consideration it has decided inter alia strongly to condemn those threats and to reaffirm the complete solidarity of the Arab States with the Libyan Arab Jamahariya. It has warned against repetition of military acts of aggression against it, and has also called on the international community to shoulder its full responsibility vis-à-vis such threats on the basis of its commitment to international conventions.

Today my Government issued the following statement:

"It is with great concern that Bahrain has followed the incident of the downing by United States forces of two Libyan jets over international waters in the Mediterranean. It believes that that incident constitutes a grave threat to peace and security in the region as well as a setback to international efforts aimed at the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Government of Bahrain calls for the exercise of utmost restraint and refrainment from the use or threat of force against the sisterly Libyan Arab Jamahariya. While expressing its regret at the unwarranted act of aggression, Bahrain reaffirms its solidarity with the brotherly Libyan Arab people in its defence of its sovereignty by all legitimate means. It also calls upon the international community to contain the situation and to prevent the development or expansion of such incidents."



(Mr. Al-Shaker, Bahrain)

The Arab States call on the Security Council to adopt the appropriate measures to prevent a repetition of acts of aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. We also hope that the Council will condemn such irresponsible acts of aggression. We are confident that the Council will not fail to shoulder its responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security in the Mediterranean region.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bahrain for his kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. DAH (Burkina Faso) (interpretation from French): Mr. President, the delegation of Burkina Faso is deeply pleased to see your country not only occupying a seat on the Security Council but also serving as President of the Council for the month of January. I should like to assure you that my delegation will extend you its full support. Your ability as a diplomat is a pledge of the success of the work of the Council.

My delegation would also like to congratulate the representative of Japan for his performance as President during last month. His country is one with which my own country entertains excellent relations.

I should like also to take this opportunity to extend to you, Mr. President, and all the members of the Council, as well as to the United Nations Secretary-General, my best wishes for a happy and successful new year.

This new year, which has just begun, is, unfortunately, in sad contrast with the feelings of hope which characterized the end of 1988. Today there is reason to fear the worst, given the tension which has arisen in the Mediterranean with the build-up of the United States Sixth Fleet.

(Mr. Dah, Burkina Faso)

The campaign of the United States media against Libya, which is based on the claim that Libya has a chemical weapons factory, echoes the warlike bluster of certain American politicians and makes it appear that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is in serious danger of being attacked. The threats of armed United States aggression against a small country, an active member of the Non-Aligned Movement, must be taken seriously for reasons obvious to all of us, for we all still remember the act of aggression carried out in April 1986 by the United States against the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi in Libya, causing loss of life. Those innocent civilian victims paid with their lives for the actions of the greatest nation in the world that seeks to lecture others on morality. At the time, Burkina Faso, like many other countries, expressed its disapproval of those events. The current escalation, which is deliberately undertaken by the United States Administration, whose fleet is carrying out manoeuvres in the Mediterranean, has led to the destruction of two Libyan reconnaissance aircraft.

The presence of the United States Sixth Fleet in waters so far removed from United States territory in itself involves some measure of provocation of the coastal States. At any rate, the grounds put forward for the United States provocation collapsed when the Libyan Government showed its good faith by calling for an international fact-finding commission to visit the pharmaceutical plant which has been the subject of accusations. That decision shows, if there was any need for it, the good intentions of the Libyan authorities. As a result, the allegations of the United States have become rather flimsy.

Can there be any need for the use of force when discussions can take place?

The Government of Burkina Faso is deeply concerned by what is fast becoming a practice on the part of one of the super-Powers, involving a show of force by that Power against a small country on bogus grounds. Burkina Faso condemns such acts

(Mr. Dah, Burkina Faso)

of violence which very much qualify as a manifestation of State terrorism. Accordingly, we call on the Government of the United States to renounce the use of brute force as a means of pressure against an independent State. Today, it is Libya; tomorrow, it may be another country - which one? Real insecurity now threatens the smaller nations.

With respect to the control of chemical and biological weapons, Burkina Faso believes that this should not be the exclusive preserve of any Power or super-Power. Rather, we feel it is a question within the purview of the whole international community, in which our country reiterates its faith. We very much welcome the forthcoming Paris Conference, which will be attended by the large and small countries and which we hope will achieve its objective of defining ways and means of preventing the manufacture and use of chemical and biological weapons. My Government supports the Conference, at which it will be represented at a high level.

Finally, Burkina Faso reaffirms its solidarity with the Libyan people in the face of the danger presented by the United States. My Government also very much hopes that wisdom may prevail on this occasion, and in the future, over the will of the more powerful which in times past was characteristic of barbarous societies.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Burkina Faso for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is Mr. Samir Mansouri, Acting Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MANSOURI (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, I should like to extend to you and to the other members of the Council our thanks for giving us this opportunity to put forward the views of the League of Arab States regarding the complaint of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya against the United States of America. I should also like to express to you the warmest congratulations of the League of Arab States on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. We are convinced that, thanks to your vast diplomatic experience, you will successfully carry out the work of the Security Council in a manner that will contribute to international peace and security.

I should also like to express our appreciation to the Ambassador of Japan for the exemplary manner in which he conducted the Council's proceedings last December.

(Mr. Mansouri)

We should also like to extend a welcome to the new members taking seats in the Council this month and to express our thanks to the outgoing members.

The Security Council has heard the Ambassador of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, who presented a detailed account of the act of aggression carried out by American military aircraft against two Libyan reconnaissance aircraft on a regular reconnaissance mission over international waters in the Mediterranean. It goes without saying that there was no justification for intercepting and destroying these Libyan aircraft, which were flying over international waters.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is entitled to send reconnaissance aircraft over international waters near its coast, especially given the increased presence of American naval forces near Libyan shores on the pretext of carrying out military manoeuvres and in view of the recent threatening statements by the United States concerning possible attacks on targets in Libyan territory for unacceptable reasons. Furthermore, the Libyan Government has stressed that the American assertions are unfounded.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was a victim of aggression perpetrated by the United States on its territory in April 1986, after the United States had accused Libya of carrying out terrorist acts. It emerged subsequently that Libya was in fact innocent. Furthermore, the American authorities subsequently acknowledged that they had at the time engaged in a disinformation campaign aimed at preparing American public opinion for the aggressive operation against Libya in April 1986.

The American Administration today has unleashed a new disinformation campaign similar to that of 1986. There is no doubt that the United States intends to perpetrate aggression against Libya.

The Council of the League of Arab States met on 26 December 1988 and considered the American threats against Libya. In this connection it adopted a

(Mr. Mansouri)

resolution, from which I should like to quote a few paragraphs:

"1. Vigorously condemns the American threats, made at the highest level, so as to create a pretext and justify aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya;

"2. Stresses once again the solidarity of the League of Arab States with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in the face of any American aggression and underscores the right of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to take any measure to defend its sovereignty;

"3. Cautions the United States not to repeat its military aggression against the Jamahiriya and considers it responsible for any negative effect on Arab-American relations and on the peace and security of the region;

"4. Calls on the international community fully to discharge its responsibility in the face of American threats, which are endangering international peace and security."

The American Administration continues to defy international law and the Charter of the United Nations and to ignore its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Security Council. The United States has perpetrated aggression against two Libyan aircraft, which confirms that the American Administration is continuing its provocation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. In this regard, I should like to read out the statement made yesterday by the Secretary of the League of Arab States, Mr. Chedli Klibi:

"The American forces' shooting down of two Libyan aircraft over international waters is a very serious act of aggression, the consequence of a misconception by the Government of the United States. This latest act of American aggression, which is a violation of the United Nations Charter and of the obligations of the permanent members of the Security Council, will undermine efforts being made to bring about peace in the Middle East.

(Mr. Mansouri)

"The Arab countries, which have reaffirmed their solidarity with the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in the defence of its sovereignty in the face of American threats, call on the United States of America to put an end to its acts of aggression and any other actions that might constitute provocation off the Libyan coast. They caution the United States not to run the risk of exacerbating relations with a member of the League of Arab States."

The League of Arab States calls on the Security Council to take the necessary action, to discharge its responsibility with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Mediterranean, to ensure that an end is put to aggression against Libya and to work towards making the Mediterranean, in this period of international détente and the strengthening of international co-operation, a region of peace and security, by ensuring that the threat or use of force in this international area will be prohibited. To that end, vigorous action must be taken to ensure the withdrawal of the American fleet from the Mediterranean, which can then become a zone of peace.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Mansouri for his kind words 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. KAROUI (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the delegation of Tunisia I should like at the outset to express to you, Sir, our warmest congratulations upon your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, the first month of your membership in the Council. We are confident that, thanks to your personal wisdom and ability and the outstanding reputation enjoyed by your brotherly country, Malaysia - which is bound to my own with the strongest bonds of friendship, fraternity and religion - you will conduct

(Mr. Karoui, Tunisia)

the business of the Council in an able and wise manner and provide it with the atmosphere necessary for carrying out its task, the maintenance of international peace and security.



(Mr. Karoui, Tunisia)

It gives me pleasure to express our thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, His Excellency Hideo Kagami, Permanent Representative of Japan, for his successful conduct of the business of the Council last month. I also congratulate the new members of the Council, wishing them all success in their new tasks.

The Security Council meets today to consider the complaint submitted by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya as a result of the downing by the United States Air Force of two Libyan jets over international waters on Wednesday, 4 January 1989. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has related to the Council the various stages of this grave incident which the Tunisian Government followed with deep concern and anxiety. Indeed, we expressed outright indignation. It is a matter to which the Tunisian people attach great importance in the light of the fraternity and good-neighbourliness that bind them to the Libyan people.

It is indeed regrettable that the region has become the scene of new grave threats. Indeed, we fear that this operation may assume unforeseeable dimensions as a result of the constant danger it poses. It is a source of bewilderment that the downing of the Libyan jets by the United States Air Force should coincide with the recent campaign of threats against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Such threats seriously compromise international peace and security in the Mediterranean region and run counter to the United Nations Charter, in particular Article 2, paragraph 4, under which all Member States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force or from acting in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

Tunisia has called for the exercise of restraint and the avoidance of any act that could render the situation more complicated. It is most disturbing that this operation should have taken place at the beginning of the new year, which the

(Mr. Karoui, Tunisia)

international community as a whole had hoped would be one of consolidating the détente that had started to characterize political international relations during the past year. This incident clouds the newly-created positive atmosphere in the peaceful efforts towards solving the question of the Middle East. We fear that this operation will prejudice the future of those efforts.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's request that the Council consider the downing of its jets by the United States Air Force is proof in itself of the gravity of that operation and its threat to the security, safety and stability of the States of the Mediterranean. My delegation reflects Tunisian public opinion and political sentiment when we express grave concern at the dangerous escalation of tension taking place in the region and in voicing its solidarity with the fraternal Libyan people to which we are bound by good-neighbourly relations.

We look to the Security Council to take all steps consistent with the great responsibility it bears for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, whom I invite to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AL-MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): At the outset, I should like to express our pleasure and happiness at seeing friendly Malaysia, with which my country shares the closest bonds of history, culture, understanding, friendship and confidence, accede to membership of the Security Council. We are confident that Malaysia's participation will certainly contribute to strengthening its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, and I wish you, Sir, every success on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month.

(Mr. Al-Masri, Syrian Arab  
Republic)

I extend my thanks and appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Japan, Mr. Hideo Kagami, for his successful presidency of the Council last month and wish to place on record my appreciation for the wisdom displayed by his country throughout its membership of the Council over the past two years. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the other new members of the Council, who will certainly contribute to the success of its work and the discharge of its important responsibilities.

It is truly regrettable and painful that the new year - on which all peace-loving peoples pin their hopes for a better tomorrow of justice, peace and security for all - should begin with an act of American aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. This act has jeopardized the international détente so necessary for an international climate of sincere co-operation among States, devoid of all acts of aggression and the use or threat of force.

The incident of the downing of the two Libyan aircraft by units of the American fleet in the Mediterranean off the Libyan coast has given rise to world-wide anxiety over the prospect of heightened tensions in the Mediterranean region. Given the especially sensitive nature of the region and its unique strategic position, this latest act of aggression can only have an adverse effect on international peace and security.

(Mr. Al-Masri, Syrian Arab Republic)

It is no secret that the downing of the two Libyan aircraft the other day was not simply a casual incident; rather, it was a link in a series of aggressive measures and actions which the United States Administration has been taking against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya since 1981, when the United States Navy downed two Libyan aircraft near the Libyan coast. We must also recall on this occasion the act of aggression of April 1986, when American aircraft bombed the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi, resulting in the destruction of residential quarters and the killing and wounding of a large number of civilians, including women and children.

Such acts can only increase tension in the Mediterranean region and undermine peace and security there, especially since they have been perpetrated by a major Power, a permanent member of the Security Council with special responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security.

This act of aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was preceded by an intense media campaign to mobilize world public opinion to justify it. What increases the international community's concern is the prospect of military action against the territory and sovereignty of the Jamahiriya, under flimsy pretexts with no basis in reality.

The letter from the Acting Permanent Representative of the United States addressed to you, Sir, contained an unconvincing justification for the act of aggression. It spoke of

"self-defense ... in response to hostile actions constituting an armed attack by the military forces of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya against United States forces lawfully operating above international waters of the Mediterranean Sea." (S/20366)

(Mr. Al-Masri, Syrian Arab  
Republic)

Such an attempted justification can convince no one - politically, militarily or even logically - for several reasons. First, the act of aggression was committed after a large-scale media campaign had paved the way for it. Secondly, it is inconceivable that a small State such as Libya would launch an armed military attack with two small aircraft against naval vessels having the most sophisticated and most potent means of warfare, the most modern offensive and defensive equipment, including the most sophisticated fighters, making such naval vessels huge mobile arsenals bearing a range of modern weapons. Thirdly, what have been described as lawful acts carried out by the American naval forces in the waters of the region are also unjustified, because such acts, which are in fact military manoeuvres off the Libyan coast, are designed to prepare for a new act of aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries drew attention to the gravity of such military manoeuvres in areas adjacent to the territorial waters and airspace of littoral States of the Mediterranean. The Heads of State or Government

"condemned the military exercises and other demonstrations of military power near the territorial water and airspace of littoral States which lead to the outbreak of very serious incidents and endanger the sovereignty and independence of non-aligned countries of the region".

They declared that

"such a situation is fraught with the danger of uncontrolled developments which may have far-reaching consequences for peace and stability in the Mediterranean, Europe and the world at large. They emphasized that no motive

(Mr. Al-Masri, Syrian Arab Republic)

or pretext can justify the threat or use of force, interference in the internal affairs of Mediterranean countries and the creation of situations that can have such consequences." (S/18392, part I, para. 210)

The Syrian Arab Republic strongly denounces and condemns this act of aggression. At the same time, it stands firmly by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the fraternal Libyan people and calls upon the Council, as the highest international authority for the maintenance of international peace and security, to shoulder its responsibilities in situations threatening international peace and security. It calls upon it to take the necessary measures to end such acts of aggression, prevent their continuation and reassure all concerned, thus opening the way for the policies of détente to cover all the peoples and States of the world.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his kind words addressed to me.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Cuba in which she requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative 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.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. De Florez Prida (Cuba) took a place at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: I invite the representative of Cuba to take a place at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. DE FLOREZ PRIDA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish first, Sir, to say how pleased we are to see you, the representative of a friendly, non-aligned country, presiding over the Council. We also wish to thank the representative of Japan for his praiseworthy performance as President in December.

We are grateful for this opportunity to address the Council, which is meeting in response to a request by Libya after the shooting down of two of its aircraft by the United States. The gravity of the event, which creates a very dangerous situation in the central Mediterranean, makes it essential for us to speak on the matter.

There is talk today of a process of international détente, a lessening of tension in various parts of the world and the emergence of favourable prospects in others, and new steps are being taken towards co-operation between nations and away from confrontation. It is therefore truly incredible that such barbarous action could be taken against a small third-world country by such a mighty Power as the United States.

(Mrs. De Florez Prida, Cuba)

This, however, is not the first time that the Government and people of Libya have been victimized by the United States of America. In case any of us had forgotten, today's newspapers have given an historical account of those acts of aggression, particularly those that have occurred since the Reagan Administration's accession to power in 1981. Ever since then, and with varying intensity, there has been a constant chain of threats, acts of aggression and attacks against that country, some of considerable dimension, such as the United States air raids against Tripoli and Benghazi in April 1986, which caused 15 deaths.

Recently there has been a resurgence of threats and press campaigns based on the construction of what is alleged to be a large chemical-weapons factory near Tripoli. That "menace", according to statements by one United States Government spokesman, led to the decision to carry out a military attack against it. Barely two days later, two Libyan planes were shot down in the Mediterranean.

What does the United States hope to gain from this situation? The Libyan Government has categorically denied that it is building a chemical-weapons factory and has explained that it is a factory intended solely for the production of pharmaceutical products. Yet even if the report were correct, what right has the United States to appoint itself as international policeman, to monitor what sovereign States may or may not do? On what moral basis does the country possessing the greatest military arsenal in the world - including chemical weapons - arrogate to itself the right to question, threaten and commit aggression against a small country?

On 3 January the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries rejected the deliberately misleading manoeuvres and threats against Libya and warned that they could be a prelude to direct aggression against that country. Yesterday's events confirm the accuracy of that judgement. Today, accordingly, the members of the Movement of



(Mrs. De Florez Prida, Cuba)

Non-Aligned Countries have once again condemned that aggression as a premeditated act of State terrorism and as a violation of international law and of the United Nations Charter. While expressing its full support for Libya and its solidarity with it, the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has urged the United States to withdraw its naval forces from the central Mediterranean.

Last night, referring to these events, President Fidel Castro qualified as shameful, brazen and repugnant the aggressive actions taken by the United States against Libya. Wondering whether they were United States imperialism's concept of peace and coexistence, he asked what right the United States has to bomb Libya and what guarantees the peoples of the third world could have in light of such events.

Today Libya has been on the receiving end of aggression, but tomorrow it could be any other country. We should like to reiterate emphatically our resolute support for the Government and people of Libya and our strenuous condemnation of this latest abominable act of aggression committed by United States imperialism.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cuba for her kind words addressed to me.

There are no further speakers for this meeting. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of the item on its agenda will take place tomorrow, Friday, 6 January 1989, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.