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President: Mr. Jorge E. ILLUECA (Panama).

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Sinclair (Guyana),
Vice-President, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 142

The situation in Central America: threats to international
peace and security and peace initiatives

1. Mr. D'ESCOTO BROCKMANN (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Sir, may I begin my statement by expressing our most cordial greetings to the President and the great satisfaction of Nicaragua that the thirty-eighth session of the Assembly is under the presidency of a Central American brother as it begins consideration of the item "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives". We are confident that under his leadership the discussion of the item by the Assembly and the draft resolution that will be adopted will lead to the prevention of war, to the elimination of external aggression against Nicaragua, a commitment to the use of peaceful means to resolve situations among States that constitute a threat to international peace and security, the strengthening of Central American unity and the strengthening of peace initiatives such as the one by the Contadora Group countries.

2. On 19 October last an astonished world heard a statement which, given its origin, inevitably elicited not only the categorical condemnation of all those who believe in the importance of an international system based on justice and law, but also alarm and concern over the consequences which such a statement made by the President of the United States might have for the future of humanity. "I do believe in the right of a country when it believes that its interests are best served to practise covert activity."

3. We all know that "covert activity" is the euphemism now in use to describe acts of intervention against the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of other States by means of destabilizing actions, sabotage, terrorist attacks, aggression by mercenary forces, crimes against defenceless people and assassinations of political leaders. According to *The Washington Post*, in its first edition of 20 October 1983, President Reagan's incredible assertion was made in response to a reporter's question as to whether the President felt it was proper to assist the armed opposition to Nicaragua in conducting such sabotage actions as the blowing-up of the oil storage tanks at Corinto, which had endangered the lives of the port's 35,000 inhabitants.

4. What is so alarming about the statement quoted is that it did not come from just an ordinary person lacking the ability or the means to shake the foundations of the international legal order to its very core. What is so serious for world peace is that the quotation came from

none other than the President of the United States of America, the world's leading military Power, which, indeed, has the ability and, as stated by President Reagan himself, the willingness to do violence to all the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in whose strict observance lies the only hope for the survival of mankind.

5. If I have referred to the true meaning and significance of Mr. Reagan's statement in such harsh terms, terms not often employed in conventional diplomacy, it is because we are convinced that, convention aside, there are values more noble and sacred that must be defended, without beating about the bush, such as the right to life, peace, justice, independence and self-determination of all peoples.

6. The international community is not unaware of the consequences which "covert actions", perpetrated against Nicaragua by the United States of America, have had. Nor is it unaware of the fact that when Mr. Reagan speaks in defence of the supposed right of the United States to conduct "covert activity" against the sovereignty of other States he is but acknowledging in public the philosophical under-pinning of his interventionist policy against Nicaragua, against El Salvador, against Grenada, against Cuba, against Argentina, against Namibia, against the people of southern Africa, against the front-line States, against Viet Nam—in sum, against all peoples and Governments fighting to attain or consolidate their freedom and independence.

7. Therefore, what concerns us is not merely Mr. Reagan's words, but the application of that philosophy, which in the final analysis reflects the total departure of the United States from present-day international legal order and from the community of civilized nations. We have felt it important to begin our contribution to the item entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives" by referring to what future generations will surely know as "the Reagan doctrine", because this is precisely where we can find the root cause and essence of the current Central American crisis, which is of such concern to Nicaragua, to the region's peoples and to the world community as a whole.

8. Centuries of injustice, exploitation and suffering, made more acute by the present international crisis, are behind the high level of political and social unrest in the countries of Central America. None the less, this alone does not explain the Central American crisis or transform what is happening in Central America into one of the major threats to international peace and security. The problems emerging from this long-standing injustice and suffering are not peculiar to Central America alone, inasmuch as they are also found in all the countries of the third world.

9. What does, however, constitute a Central American characteristic, and not ours exclusively, of course, is the fact that since obtaining its independence from Spain, Central America has suffered the consequences of having

as neighbour a Power, which, first under its Monroe Doctrine and later under its concept of manifest destiny, gunboat diplomacy and dollar diplomacy, has historically prevented those countries from exercising their right to self-determination.

10. If the Central American peoples have been prevented from developing politically and economically, this is due in large part to the fact that attempts at genuine change in the region have always clashed with the interests of an empire which, in the name of a spurious regional stability and purported vital interests, has implanted, or at the very least supported and defended, the most despotic régimes and systems in all of Latin America. What this has meant, therefore, is that opposing such régimes and systems has involved, in effect, opposing the United States. This characteristic has made the problems facing Central America more acute, but, since this is nothing new, it does not explain the region's current crisis.

11. What does explain the crisis of Central America today is the Reagan doctrine, with its policy of "covert activity" that involves turning Central American States into bases for aggressions against the new Nicaragua, which has been free of United States domination since 19 July 1979. All this has created an artificial situation of conflict between countries of a historically united region that, in better times, defended itself jointly against the United States invaders seeking to implant slavery on our shores.

12. The essence of the Central American crisis resides in the fact that, from the very moment Mr. Reagan came into office as President, the United States has taken advantage of political and economic conditions to augment its influence and control over Governments of the region, first with the purpose of isolating Nicaragua—as reflected in the creation of the so-called "Central American Democratic Community"—and, later, to attack Nicaragua from other countries in the region whose Governments parrot the theses and slogans from Washington which claim that so long as the people's Sandinist revolution lasts there can be no peace in the area—meaning, of course, that that revolution must be destroyed.

13. The docility of some of the region's Governments and armies is such that they no longer simply parrot the empire's theses; they also become more and more involved in the war which the Reagan Administration is waging against the people and Government of Nicaragua. In addition to allowing their territories to be used as bases of operations for Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] mercenaries who are trying to overthrow our Government and destroy our revolution, some Governments are involving their own armies, step by step, in direct aggressions against Nicaragua.

14. As a result we must stress that the crisis in Central America is not primarily a clash between the States of Central America but a crisis provoked by the unwillingness of the United States to accept sovereign Nicaragua's inalienable right—a right established by our Organization's Charter—to determine its own destiny and build a decent future in which the freedom, equality and happiness of its people may be assured. This reluctance has led the United States artificially to create a situation of international tension that could evolve into an armed conflict with unforeseeable consequences for international peace and security.

15. The consequences for Nicaragua of the Reagan doctrine and its policy of "covert activity"—as it terms this dirty and criminal war which relies on the remnants of the genocidal Somoza National Guard and the ever-increasing docility and subservience of Governments of

sister nations—can be seen in the slaughter, during the period from December 1982 to the present alone, of 786 Nicaraguan workers, farmers, students, professionals and members of our heroic army, as well as the deaths of 1,765 mercenaries. During the same period an additional 715 Nicaraguans have been wounded, 37 have disappeared and 433 have been kidnapped. In Nicaragua today there are thousands of families in mourning—widows, orphans and mothers—all victimized by State terrorism promoted, organized, financed and directed by the world's greatest military Power against one of the world's smallest nations for the simple fact of the latter's having recovered its sovereignty and for defending its right to self-determination, something which, in the eyes of the Reagan Administration, obviously constitutes a crime.

16. The material damage inflicted so far this year by the covert activity financed and directed by the United States CIA—through mid-October to be exact—amounts to a total of \$103 million. This amount, compared to Nicaragua's economic statistics for 1982, is equal to 3.5 per cent of the gross national product and almost a quarter of all credits we received. It is five times more than we have received in international donations for national reconstruction so far this year.

17. Of these damages, \$30 million apply to physical installations, \$37 million to general production, \$20 million to delays in projects or programmes and \$16 million to lost income. Only the will of our entire people, who are determined to defend their revolution, has made it possible for our country to continue its march towards development in spite of the extent of the United States imperialist aggression in economic terms. This does not include the grave losses the Nicaraguan economy has suffered due to the United States policy of blocking loans and economic assistance to Nicaragua from multilateral lending agencies.

18. The increase of "persuasive military pressure"—as the Reagan Administration cynically terms these immoral and illegal actions—has been sharpest in the past three months, particularly in the last month, the month of October. In the first 18 days of last month the total damage inflicted by the CIA's mercenary forces amounted to 13.8 million dollars, not including the very extensive damage to the Corinto harbour installations, which included the destruction of the pumping system for non-petroleum liquids, damage to the control tower for the port's container crane, serious damage to the port's docks, damage to warehouses and storage tanks and damage to export products awaiting shipment and imported products still in bond.

19. The attack on Corinto harbour resulted in the total destruction of the storage tanks for petroleum by-products valued at almost \$7 million, a criminal action which also endangered the lives of the harbour's entire population.

20. That is why the act of sabotage against Corinto, Nicaragua's main port, elicited worldwide condemnation, which the Assembly of the United Nations will surely echo once more today.

21. During the month of September this year, the major acts of sabotage designed and directed by the United States CIA and carried out by Somozist mercenaries included, among others, the following civilian targets: the Managua International Airport; the customs and immigration installations at El Espino on the Honduran border and Peñas Blancas on the Costa Rican border; and the destruction of electric power transmission towers and important telecommunications centres.

22. It may be germane at this point to recall that, according to reports widely published in the United States media, the Cessna 404 twin-engined aircraft that crashed into the control tower after bombing the Managua airport, narrowly missing dozens of passengers and workers who at that very moment were beginning to enter the airport, was an aircraft belonging to the CIA. According to Federal Civil Aviation Administration records, it was registered under the Investair Leasing Corporation of McClean, Virginia, a company headed by a former top official of the now defunct Intermountain Aviation Incorporated, which was revealed in public documents as having been a CIA property used for supporting paramilitary activities abroad.

23. The time has come to demonstrate to the peoples of the world that their hopes for the United Nations are perfectly valid, that the United Nations is capable not only of echoing the universal indignation at an adventurist and reckless policy, but also of taking a strong stand, a stand in accordance with the basic provisions of the Charter, a stand in favour of peace, which is the fundamental objective of the United Nations and the very reason for its existence.

24. Despite the loss of human life, despite the suffering and destruction and despite the huge economic damage inflicted, it is evident that the current phase of the war against Nicaragua has been a tremendous failure for the Reagan Administration. Over the course of 11 months it has been unable to attain the objective of occupying and controlling part of Nicaragua's national territory and installing a puppet Government to be recognized immediately by the United States.

25. Instead of finding the popular support its analysts predicted would be found in Nicaragua, the mercenaries have met with militant repudiation and rejection by a people that decided long ago to fight to the end against Somozist and foreign intervention and whose call for a "free homeland or death" is as alive today as it was yesterday. It is precisely an awareness of this reality that has led to the Reagan Administration's decision to increase the offensive capability of its invading forces, involving the Honduran Army more and more every day and promoting the revival of the Central American Defense Council and of the Organization of Central American States—an illegal revival indeed, given the arbitrary exclusion of Nicaragua, which continues to be a member of both organizations.

26. There can be no doubt that the United States is determined to provoke a war between Honduras and Nicaragua. My country, in compliance with Security Council resolution 530 (1983), has tried and will continue to try to avoid such a war, which if it did break out would inevitably lead to an invasion of Nicaragua by United States troops under the pretext that their presence was requested by Governments of the region, just as attempts have been made to justify the cowardly and reprehensible invasion of Grenada. At this very moment and clearly in preparation for such an eventuality, there are more than 5,000 United States soldiers in Honduras, and off our shores there is the threatening presence of United States warships, whose so-called manoeuvres are on a scale unprecedented in our region.

27. We have denounced all this since March 1982, when we first turned to the Security Council, and, despite the fact that we have always received the support and understanding of the international community, it is clear that until only a short time ago the danger of an invasion of Nicaragua by the United States was considered by some to be impossible or very remote. None the less, as the

process of aggression against our people has continued, even the most sceptical have arrived at the same conclusion as a distinguished United States congressman who only two weeks ago confessed to me that he had always considered our concern exaggerated, believing as he did that the era of United States military intervention in Latin America was a thing of the past, but that a couple of months back he had come to the conclusion that a direct invasion of Nicaragua by United States troops was now inevitable.

28. Now, after the invasion of Grenada and the totally unacceptable reasons offered by the Reagan Administration to justify that deplorable act of international bullying; now, after the defiant statement made by the United States representative, who, in defence of that criminal and cowardly invasion and forgetting her country's commitment as a permanent member of the Security Council, alleged in the Security Council that "the prohibitions against the use of force in the United Nations Charter are contextual, not absolute"¹; after all this, we are confident that no one in this General Assembly will continue to give the United States the benefit of the doubt and refuse to add their voices to the clamour of nations which respect the Charter of the United Nations and the right to life, peace and self-determination for all peoples in condemnation of the escalation of the aggression by the United States against Nicaragua. We are confident also that this Assembly will call for a response to the concrete and detailed proposals for peaceful solutions presented officially by Nicaragua within the context of the Contadora process.

29. Nicaragua insists more urgently than ever that now the only thing that can prevent a United States invasion of Nicaragua and an international war in Central America is immediate recourse to the peaceful means outlined in the Charter of the United Nations for resolving situations or controversies between States that could constitute a threat to international security.

30. In conformity with its desire and need for peace, Nicaragua has always sought to maintain a permanent dialogue with the other Central American countries. We participated actively in the historic meeting of Central American Foreign Ministers, held at San José, Costa Rica, in March 1980, applauded its achievements and have always observed with absolute fidelity the commitments made there.

31. However, the Association of Central American Foreign Ministers created at the San José meeting was virtually abolished in 1981 when the United States, with the purpose of isolating Nicaragua, managed to persuade three of the Governments of the region to establish the so-called "Central American Democratic Community", in violation of what had been agreed upon at San José.

32. Since 1979, as the border problems between Honduras and Nicaragua increased following the raids from Honduran territory by Somozist bands, who murdered defenceless Nicaraguan citizens and spread terror along our common border, Nicaragua has been reiterating, ever more insistently, its invitation to enter into dialogue in order to resolve that situation and to avoid a further deterioration in our relations with Honduras.

33. As a result of these countless efforts to bring about dialogue, the Heads of State of Honduras and Nicaragua met on 13 March 1981 at the Nicaraguan border post of El Guasaule, and it was agreed to hold an urgent meeting of top military leaders of the two countries in order to determine means for carrying out joint patrols of the border area. Despite Nicaragua's repeated efforts to convene that meeting, which had been agreed upon, Hon-

duras has consistently refused, and to this day it has been impossible to hold the meeting.

34. In April 1982, on the occasion of my visit to Tegucigalpa, I officially presented Honduras with a seven-point peace proposal, the main point of which concerned the signing of a non-aggression agreement between the two countries. Honduras rejected Nicaragua's proposal outright. Since then, all efforts by Nicaragua and by the Presidents of Mexico and Venezuela to bring the Heads of State of Honduras and Nicaragua together have also failed. By that time, Honduras had lost its ability to make its own decisions, and since the United States Government was against Honduras talking with Nicaragua about its bilateral relations with my country, all efforts on that score became useless.

35. Our efforts to maintain direct and systematic dialogue with the United States Government concerning the bilateral relations between the two countries, with the objective of eliminating tensions, have fared no better. The process of communication that began following the visit of the then Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Thomas O. Enders, was broken in effect by the United States when it left unanswered our last note, which was dated 13 August 1982.

36. It is in this context of a virtually total lack of direct formal dialogue with the United States and Honduras, at a time when tensions between those countries and Nicaragua have risen to the point of threatening international peace and security, that the initiative undertaken by the countries of the Contadora Group assumes its full importance.

37. Nicaragua has always recognized and supported the extraordinary efforts and the important achievements in the search for a peaceful solution made by the Contadora Group. None the less, as we have stated on many occasions, it is undeniable too that the other process—the anti-Contadora and anti-dialogue process, the process which rejects direct, frank and constructive communication and seeks to impose its will through military means—has moved forward with much greater speed. It is undeniable that despite its repeated verbal assurances of support for the Contadora initiative, the Government of the United States has always sought to undermine it. Its motive for this was explained this past September by Assistant Secretary of Defense Fred C. Ikle, who stated that negotiations would not be enough to resolve the conflicts in Central America, and that a military victory would be necessary. It would appear that the Reagan Administration is committed to provoking the Contadora Group's collapse as a preliminary step towards carrying out its plans to invade Nicaragua.

38. Despite the relatively slow pace of the negotiations in the Contadora framework, we regard as a significant step forward the fact that the Document of Objectives² worked out at the September meeting has since been endorsed by the Heads of State of the Central American countries, thus laying the foundation for the presentation of proposals for commitments, treaties or agreements, in line with the different items to be resolved, in order to avoid war, alleviate tensions and promote effective co-operation among the Governments of those sister nations in fostering the region's development.

39. Nicaragua was the first—and is, to date, the only—country to present any specific, detailed proposal in accordance to what was agreed upon in the Document of Objectives. That proposal, officially presented to the Contadora Group on 15 October 1983 and entitled "Legal Bases to Guarantee the International Peace and Security of the States of Central America," gives priority to the

issues of international security and to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations that must guide relations between sovereign States—all of which are reflected also in the Document of Objectives. In other words, Nicaragua's proposal places top priority on the measures that must be taken to prevent war, which is precisely what is required by the current circumstances.

40. Our proposal, therefore, does not attempt to exhaust each and every issue contained in the Document of Objectives; clearly there are other points in that Document which must be addressed later on, not only so that we may avoid the terrible war which threatens us today but also so that we can attain in the near future the high degree of co-operation that should prevail between brother peoples and nations, and which are a requirement for the development of our respective peoples.

41. Nicaragua's peace proposal includes three draft treaties and a draft agreement, with guarantors and machinery for verification. We have presented them as an indivisible whole, inasmuch as the omission of any one of them would mean that the security of the States of the Isthmus—which it is the basic goal of the proposal to protect—would not be adequately safeguarded, making it impossible to address seriously the issue of military growth, which is hurting our economies. But if aggression from abroad against Nicaragua were immediately ended, if the warships were withdrawn from our coast, and if the foreign military bases and military schools directed by foreigners in the countries of the region were closed down, Nicaragua would be willing to participate immediately in devising measures to ensure that not a single foreign military adviser remained in Central America and in initiating talks on armament and military growth.

42. Concretely, Nicaragua has presented a four-point peace proposal, as follows: first, a draft treaty to guarantee mutual respect, peace and security between the Republic of Nicaragua and the United States of America; secondly, a draft treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation between the Republics of Honduras and Nicaragua; thirdly, a draft agreement to contribute to the peaceful solution of the armed conflict in the Republic of El Salvador; and, fourthly, a draft general treaty concerning the maintenance of peace and security and concerning relations of friendship and co-operation between the Republics of Central America.

43. The peace proposal that Nicaragua has presented not only is in full accord with the Contadora Document of Objectives but also addresses itself clearly to all the arguments advanced by the Reagan Administration in its attempts to justify its acts of aggression against Nicaragua and its threats of invasion. These arguments revolve around three accusations. The first is that Nicaragua is the reason why the Salvadorian armed conflict has not been resolved, since it is allegedly through our country that the arms for the Salvadorian revolutionaries pass, and because our country is supposedly the command centre for that war of liberation. The second is that because we are revolutionaries we are necessarily exporters of revolution, and thus constitute a permanent threat to the security of the other States of the region. The third is that we also constitute a potential threat to the national security of the United States itself, inasmuch as we could become a Soviet military base.

44. A careful examination of our proposal, the pertinent sections of which we have also presented to the United States Government, clearly reveals how baseless these accusations are, and shows Nicaragua's willingness to enter into solemn agreements, with the Contadora countries serving as guarantors and with means for verification of fulfilment, agreements which would make it impossible

for any country of the region to constitute a threat to the security of any of the other contracting parties.

45. Nicaragua is doing everything possible to prevent a war which would bring only suffering and destruction to all the peoples of the region. We are doing everything possible to prevent United States troops invading us for the third time this century, because it would create an extremely grave situation for all the parties concerned and there would be no winners, only losers. We are also willing, without undermining the principle of the self-determination of peoples, to join other countries in helping to find a peaceful solution to the armed conflict in El Salvador, since without this regional peace cannot be ensured.

46. We hope that the international community will duly weigh the efforts Nicaragua is making to defend its right to determine its own political, social and economic future, resorting to all the peaceful means provided for in the Charter of the United Nations. The best way for the international community to do so would be to give the broadest and most resolute support to the draft resolution on "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives", which will be presented for the consideration of the current session of the General Assembly.

47. While recognizing the significant efforts which the countries of the Contadora Group have made to re-establish peace in Central America and asking them to persist in their noble undertaking, we insist that unless there is a clear commitment from the United States, by means of a treaty such as the one we have proposed, to cease its acts of aggression against Nicaragua, and without the participation of the Contadora Group as guarantor of all the agreements on peace and security, we shall not attain the peace which our peoples need and demand of us.

48. Finally, we reaffirm that we are not, and do not wish to be considered, enemies of the United States. We call on all the Governments of the Central American Republics to re-establish mutual trust, on the basis of verifiable agreements. Let us direct our best efforts to the defence of the interests of our peoples.

49. It is our hope that peace and the unity and unalterable fraternity of the Central American peoples may long endure.

50. Mr. C. P. N. SINGH (India): For many months now the attention of the international community has focused apprehensively on developments in the Central American region. We have all watched with mounting concern the continuous exacerbation of tensions, the plethora of accusations and counter-accusations, acts of subversion and provocation, the frequent outbreak of hostilities and the perceptible evidence of outside interference and intervention in this troubled region. Three times already this year the Security Council has been seized of the situation in Central America, following complaints by Nicaragua. Together with the situation in major hotbeds of tension such as the Middle East and southern Africa, events in Central America have come to constitute a serious threat to international peace and security, and it is only appropriate that the General Assembly should be addressing itself to this matter of acute global concern.

51. Strife and tension are not new to Central America. It is an unfortunate fact of history that the peoples of the region have known little else for many decades now. Successive generations of people in some countries in the area have not known what it is like to live in peace and to be left free to determine their destiny without external

pressures, interference and intervention from any quarter. The causes of instability in Central America are rooted as much in fundamental socio-economic maladies as in the propensity of those outside the region to meddle in its affairs; the latter action has only served, in the course of time, to exacerbate the already deep socio-economic cleavages rather than to ameliorate the problem. This pattern has now reached alarming proportions, creating a situation that is potentially explosive and threatens the ever precarious balance of peace.

52. In his address the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua, Father Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, has presented his country's case before this Assembly in poignant and lucid terms. The Government and people of India share the anguish of Nicaragua, a country with which we enjoy ties of friendship and co-operation, and a fellow member of the non-aligned movement. It is clear from his statement, as well as from those of other delegations, that the situation in Central America has continued to deteriorate and the danger of a possible wider conflagration in the region looms ever larger on the horizon. Events of the last few weeks have only served to complicate the situation further and to augment international concern.

53. The provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles and objectives which inspire the non-aligned movement clearly lay down that every State must enjoy the right freely to determine the destiny of its own people without any form of external pressure, interference or intervention. At the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, it was reaffirmed that "the right of any State freely to choose its own political, social and economic system [is] of paramount importance" [A/38/132, and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. I, para. 139].

54. Referring specifically to the crisis afflicting the Central American region, the Heads of State or Government asserted that the process of change in the region "could not be attributed to or explained by an East-West ideological confrontation" [*ibid.*, para. 135]. They further observed that "... although the crisis situation prevailing in the region could not be viewed in isolation from the adverse developments in the global context characterized by great Power confrontation, it has been aggravated by the intensification of imperialist interference in the internal affairs of the States of the region." [*Ibid.*]

55. At their meeting, held in New York from 4 to 7 October 1983, the Ministers and heads of delegations of the non-aligned countries to the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly noted the further deterioration in the situation since the New Delhi summit meeting, as a result of increased recourse to policies of interference and intervention "through the utilization of neighbouring territories for aggression against other States, the installation of military bases and by covert and overt attempts at the destabilization of the Nicaraguan Government as well as the pressures, aggressions and economic discrimination against countries in the region." [A/38/495, annex, para. 64.] They also expressed their opposition to "the conduct of military manoeuvres as a means of exerting pressure and urged the United States Government to rescind its decision to carry out military manoeuvres along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Central America." [*Ibid.*]

56. In the prevailing atmosphere, surcharged with emotion and animosity, we have been heartened by the serious efforts being undertaken by the members of the Contadora Group of countries to defuse tensions and to work

out a negotiated political solution to the problems afflicting Central America. Since their first meeting on the island of Contadora on 9 January 1983, the countries of the Contadora Group have met on several occasions and have also been engaged in consultations, severally and collectively, with the Governments of the five Central American nations. My Government has welcomed and expressed its strong support for the efforts of the Contadora Group. We also appreciate the positive attitude of the Government of Nicaragua to the proposals for a negotiated settlement and the constructive response it has made. It is a matter of particular satisfaction that, on the basis of the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America of 17 July 1983 [A/38/303] issued by the Heads of State of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, a Document of Objectives was adopted by the Contadora Group and the five Central American countries on 9 September this year. This single consensus text contains the principles on which an eventual solution will have to be based, a solution which, we hope, will not be long in emerging. The non-aligned movement has urged the Contadora Group to continue its commendable efforts. We wish these countries every success in their endeavour. We hope and trust also that all the countries concerned will work in a spirit of understanding and co-operation with the Contadora Group.

57. Permit me also to express a word of appreciation to the Secretary-General for his own indefatigable efforts in this regard. We are aware of his sincere commitment to facilitating a peaceful solution to the problems in Central America. We have been heartened to learn from his note of 13 October 1983, that the five Central American countries have assured him of their firm commitment to contribute in good faith to the search for peaceful solutions.² In that assurance lies the best hope for peace and stability in the area.

58. It is an established lesson of history, particularly the vexed history of the Central American region, that peace and progress can be built only upon the edifice of an acceptance of shared aspirations and the affording of full scope to a pluralism of political and socio-economic values and systems; it cannot rest on the exclusion of one State or another from the mainstream of regional development on one pretext or another, and it can never be sustained on the strength of external pressures, threats or blandishments. The Government of India believes that the present situation in Central America must not be allowed to deteriorate further. If it does, there may be no escape from a horrible conflagration in which we will all be losers. The path to peace is through dialogue. It is incumbent upon all of us in the Assembly, and particularly upon those directly involved, to give peace a chance.

59. Mr. MACIEL (Brazil): At the outset of the general debate, my Foreign Minister explained extensively to the Assembly, at its 5th meeting, the position of the Brazilian Government on this item. I can therefore afford to be very brief.

60. My Government has been following very attentively the turn of events in Central America, and is becoming increasingly concerned at the worsening of the situation, a concern made all the more understandable because of the traditional and cordial ties of Brazil with the countries of Central America, with which it has always enjoyed enduring relations of friendship and co-operation.

61. Brazil's position on the present Central American crisis is clear and well known. It is based upon the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, allegiance to which is the cornerstone of our foreign policy. Our position also reflects our understanding that the problems which now bedevil the Central American

region are manifold and do not lend themselves to simple solutions. The interwoven components of the crisis—political, diplomatic, military, social and economic—testify to its inherent complexity. In the search for a durable and stable settlement we cannot afford to confine our efforts merely to current aspects—for, after all, they are in no small measure the result of decades of social and political imbalance, the persistence of which has exacerbated frustrations and accumulated widespread grievances.

62. Unless these structural deficiencies are adequately dealt with, the tensions that are now smouldering cannot fail sooner or later to flare up again into outright violence. The effects of the present global economic crisis have aggravated even further the difficulties besetting the Central American peoples. We cherish the belief that an honest and sustained effort of international co-operation in the economic field can help to alleviate their plight.

63. Brazil has maintained time and again that the problems of Central America must be solved by the countries of the region themselves. We consider that the conditions for a constructive dialogue should be established and that it is indispensable for certain principles to be scrupulously observed, particularly the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and that of self-determination. At this stage it is essential that every country in the region be convinced that its security interests are not threatened by the actions of its neighbours. Distrust must be superseded by confidence and rancour must give way to open dialogue.

64. The only avenue open for the solution of the Central American problems is the pursuit of diplomatic efforts, conducted in a climate of calm and mutual trust. It behoves all members of the international community to refrain from increasing the political temperature in the area.

65. My country, as a staunch supporter of the diplomatic approach to a negotiated solution of the Central American crisis, cannot but wholeheartedly applaud the honest efforts that are being undertaken by the sister nations comprising the Contadora Group. Their long-standing acquaintance with the problems of the area and proximity to it qualify them, more than anyone else, to assist the countries of Central America themselves to settle their differences in a peaceful manner.

66. We are happy to note that the Heads of State of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua have ratified the Document of Objectives adopted two months ago at Panama City on the basis of the Cancún Declaration signed by the Presidents of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela. We sincerely hope that the process of regional reconciliation will, despite the present odds against it, yield long-lasting positive results for the benefit of the peoples of Central America. We urge the Contadora Group not to feel discouraged by the negative factors that they are facing now and may continue to face.

57. Mr. FERM (Sweden): My Government is greatly concerned about the developments in Central America and welcomes this opportunity to express its views in the General Assembly on the deteriorating situation there which constitutes an increasing threat to international peace and security. While there is a risk that the armed conflicts in the area might escalate into an East-West confrontation, my Government believes that the conflicts in Central America have their roots in social and economic conditions.

68. What we have here is an almost classical example of the need for social transformation. This transformation

is not only necessary but also inevitable. If a peaceful, gradual transformation is blocked, an explosive internal situation will arise, as we have already witnessed in that area. Unjust political and economic structures cannot in the long run be maintained. My Government considers it a mistake to interpret the basic conflicts in Central America in terms of the global East-West competition.

69. On the other hand, it is increasingly obvious that the present conditions in the area are being exploited as a pretext for outside intervention. In fact, the small vulnerable republics of Central America have been given little chance to solve their own problems with proper respect for their sovereignty and right to self-determination. What is important here is to look at the problems from those countries' perspective. They have a right to be regarded not as the front yard or the backyard of any great Power but instead as a region that has its own problems and concerns.

70. When the Latin American countries constituting the Contadora Group met with the five Central American republics—Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua—in Panama last September, a Document of Objectives² was adopted. That document not only clearly establishes the principles to be observed in order to reduce conflicts and create peaceful conditions in the area but also sets out a number of political and economic objectives for the Central American States. Those States all agreed that the use of overt and covert force or threat of force must be discontinued and that the traffic in arms must be eliminated. They are considering various measures to reduce the militarization of the area. They commit themselves to respect and promote the human rights of their peoples, as well as to adopt measures conducive to the establishment of fully democratic, representative and pluralistic systems of government. The Central American States further expressed their intentions to undertake economic and social measures with the aim of promoting well-being and an equitable distribution of wealth.

71. As members of the international community, we should assist those States in achieving the aims contained in the Document of Objectives, which constitutes an important result of the tireless efforts of the Contadora Group. Above all, we should not make it more difficult for them. Their problems are difficult enough. All outside countries, regardless of size, must respect the stated objectives of those small countries, refrain from involvement in their internal affairs and scrupulously uphold the principles of non-intervention, sovereignty and territorial integrity as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.

72. However, at the present time the civil war in El Salvador and the cruel repression in Guatemala show no sign of abating. Grave violations of human rights are being committed on a horrifying scale. Nicaragua, which four years ago freed itself from the oppression of the Somoza regime, is under attack by armed groups and outside interests with the declared aim of destabilizing its Government. The country needs peace to implement the policies of democratization and social development to which its Government has committed itself.

73. The conflicts in Central America must be settled by political, not military, means, in accordance with the Contadora agreements. The risk of a regional war should be reduced by negotiations between Nicaragua and Honduras so as to find methods of solving mutual grievances without violence and outside interference. Efforts to bring to an end the civil war in El Salvador have shown that a negotiated settlement in that country is not possible

without the participation of the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation Revolutionary Democratic Front.

74. In my Government's view, the first step towards a political settlement of the conflicts in Central America must be the cessation of all deliveries of weapons, all arms traffic and all military assistance to and within the region.

75. The United States maintains that it has a special responsibility concerning the situation in Central America. The Swedish Government is of the opinion that, in order to promote political solutions to the crises in Central America, the United States, as well as other countries, should refrain from steps that might increase tensions in the region. It is our hope that the ongoing diplomatic activities will be a contribution in that regard. Moreover, it is our view that the proposals handed over by Nicaragua to the United States recently should be considered within the framework of the Contadora negotiating process, as should also the willingness expressed by Cuba to promote a regional accommodation.

76. In a dark picture, the Contadora process offers a gleam of hope. The Swedish Government welcomes the fact that the Latin American countries themselves have taken the lead in the search for peace and reconciliation in Central America. The efforts of the Contadora Group deserve the whole-hearted support of the international community. Its solemnly pledged objectives must be transformed into human reality.

77. Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): The delegation of the German Democratic Republic actively supported the inclusion in the Assembly's agenda of the item entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives". In adopting this position, we were guided by the awareness that the dangerous developments in the area constitute a threat to peace and security not only regionally but also world-wide. If there had been any doubts about this, the naked and brutal aggression by the United States against the people of Grenada has provided ample proof.

78. The murder campaign organized by Washington in Grenada, the undeclared war waged by the United States against Nicaragua, the backing given to military regimes in the region and the preparations for, and threats of, similar military interventions against other countries in the area are ample evidence that the present United States Administration has raised recourse to international terror and aggression to the level of an official policy of State. It is becoming ever more clear that an insane hatred of socialism, national liberation and social progress, and the use of military force and interference, are the distinctive features of that policy. As a result, the United States Administration's course is becoming ever more dangerous and ever more unpredictable, even for its own allies.

79. What is under way in Central America today is indeed a crusade against international peace and security, against the peoples' freedom and independence. What we are witnessing there today is a whole range of violations of international law—from the brutal military intervention in Grenada and the persistent and recently stepped-up threats against Cuba, through overt and covert attacks on the sovereignty of Nicaragua, to interference in the internal affairs of El Salvador and misuse of the territories of other States in the region for subversive purposes. Wherever it deems it to be feasible, Washington is trampling upon the legal and moral norms of relations between the peoples and upon our Organization's purposes and principles, under the pretence of protecting so-called vital interests.

80. As was written in *The Christian Science Monitor* on 1 November this year, Grenada is to serve as the

“scenario” for Nicaragua. As early as September 1983, a periodical in this country disclosed the State Department’s view that, where Central America is concerned, it was a general policy goal to create “a textbook case of armed aggression”.

81. The first-ever employment of units of the so-called Caribbean rapid deployment force admits of the conclusion that Washington is already aiming at more far-reaching acts of direct aggression against Cuba, Nicaragua and El Salvador. It is being declared very bluntly that the point is to teach a lesson. The plan is to upset the region’s balance of forces in keeping with United States policy targets, to shake up the political situation “from the Panama Canal to Mexico on our southern border”, as is stated in the same periodical.

82. This dangerous situation that we are currently witnessing in Central America constitutes a serious threat to peace in other regions also, as well as to peace in the world at large.

83. Whole regions are recklessly being turned into military staging areas of the United States. This policy, which is posing an extreme threat to the vital interests of the peoples, has its cause in the course of confrontation and all-out expansion of military might embarked on by the United States and its principal allies.

84. The naval contingents, including aircraft carriers, which are operating in the Central American region are intended to intimidate also the peoples in the Middle East. The United States is now seeking to build up its military presence in that region and to launch a large-scale military operation designed to deal a massive blow at the national patriotic forces in Lebanon and other Arab countries. The same imperialist policy being pursued in the Caribbean and in the south Atlantic is the cause of tension and is undermining the chances of a peaceful solution in South-East Asia. Counter-revolutionary gangs of mercenaries are being systematically used in Nicaragua as well as in southern Africa. Everywhere this policy is directed against the sovereignty of the peoples. Everywhere the same mendacious slogan of the so-called protection of freedom, democracy and human rights is being drawn upon as a justification.

85. Under the banner of the cynical claim to morality that is inherent in this duplicitous propaganda, hospitals are being bombed, ports are being blockaded and shelled, and teachers, peasants and even foreigners on work assignments are being slain. The events in the Caribbean are further evidence that for the present United States Administration, freedom, democracy and human rights end where the peoples are not ready any longer to bear the yoke of imperialist exploitation and where they assert their right to self-determination and exercise the right to follow their own path of independent development. Yet the experience of the peoples shows that the course of history cannot be reversed. Neither imperialism’s ill-famed “big stick” policy nor a repetition of gunboat diplomacy can bring back the days and conditions of colonialism and unlimited imperialist domination. They have long ceased to be capable of arresting, let alone preventing, the process of social renewal in those countries.

86. Today, orders are unscrupulously being given to launch an attack on Grenada and to kill peaceable citizens in Nicaragua, in Lebanon and in other countries simply because the internal order of those countries is not congruent with United States standards and because of an alleged need to uphold United States national interests somewhere in the world. Quite obviously, the present United States Administration wants to ignore the lessons of the dirty war against the people of Viet Nam and is

bent on solving international problems by the use of force, by military intervention and by war. In many capitals of the world, people are rightly wondering whether Washington intends definitely to abandon the path of lawful conduct, the path envisaged in the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, the path of common sense and rationalism in international relations.

87. There are fears that these latter-day crusaders might eventually use nuclear weapons to teach a lesson to sovereign States or even employ the nuclear “big stick” in an attempt to come to grips with the historical challenges of our time.

88. The mendacious arguments designed to mask the unscrupulous actions which the United States and its mercenaries from a number of countries are undertaking in Central America are well known. The slogan of alleged protection requirements for nationals abroad or the absurd thesis of so-called precautionary actions and measures have already served as a pretext for setting the European continent ablaze by unleashing the Second World War. The peoples had to pay for this with a total of 55 million lives.

89. If the United States had its way, the deployment of medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe would get under way in a few weeks’ time. These weapons would bring about a radical change in the military strategic balance in favour of imperialism.

90. After the bloody experience following in the wake of the imperialist policy of aggression in the Caribbean, in the Middle East and in other world regions, can there remain the slightest doubt in anybody’s mind what the disastrous consequences would be if the United States succeeded in its bid for military superiority? For the sake of peace, and in the interests of the peoples who stand up ever more forcefully against the United States policy of war and world domination, no change in the military strategic balance in Europe or elsewhere in the world will be permitted under any circumstances. At a time when the danger to the survival of civilization is manifest as never before since the end of the Second World War, the United Nations has a more urgent task than it ever had in the past to pool all efforts by States in the struggle to avert the danger of nuclear war, as well as to mobilize all potentialities and resources which are conducive to peace, in order to turn the course of world events back to the road of common sense and political realism.

91. Before the General Assembly, the German Democratic Republic reaffirms the position stated in the Political Declaration adopted on 5 January 1983 at the Prague session of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty and in the Moscow Joint Statement of the leaders of the Warsaw Treaty countries of 28 June 1983 [see A/38/292, annex], that in Central America also, issues under dispute can and must be settled peacefully and resolved by political means on the basis of mutual respect, independence and territorial integrity.

92. The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries, too, in the final documents of their New Delhi conference [see A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2], expressed deep concern at the continuing colonialist policies and the methods of economic blackmail, threat and aggression applied in that region.

93. Firmly and fully siding in solidarity with the peoples of that region, the German Democratic Republic supports the constructive proposals submitted by Nicaragua and Cuba as well as by other States. The German Democratic Republic supports all efforts for a political solution of

the crisis in the area, such as reflected, *inter alia*, in the activities of the Contadora Group.

94. It is the high hope of my delegation that the plenary meeting of the General Assembly will take decisions conducive to the restoration of peace and security in Central America and in the world at large.

95. Mr. MOUSHOUTAS (Cyprus): The critical situation prevailing in Central America reflects the tense world situation and the serious political, social and economic problems which plague mankind today, and underlines the urgent need for initiating meaningful steps for their peaceful, just and lasting solution.

96. The region, which suffered from dramatic imbalances and social injustices, is at present undergoing a process of internal change evolving around struggles for the improvement of the quality of life through fuller participation in the political processes of the countries involved. The struggles of the peoples of Central America aim at changing the causes of exploitation as well as at regaining human dignity, freedom and democracy. Even though those problems are not implants but result from bloc rivalries and polarization, those struggles in our closely interdependent world affect all of mankind and may, if they remain unresolved, cause wider conflict, with calamitous consequences for Latin America and for international peace and security in general. It was therefore appropriate that the item entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives" should have been inscribed by Nicaragua on the agenda for consideration in the plenary Assembly at the thirty-eighth session.

97. In participating in this debate we are motivated by a desire to contribute to the search for peace in that region and by an equal desire to express to the Governments concerned our strong wish that negotiations will commence without delay for the solution of those problems. Misguided and short-sighted approaches which seek to substitute for eternal principles imposed solutions based on military considerations and economic interests perpetuate the problems and exacerbate an already critical situation. What is needed now is not recrimination, which will only aggravate the tensions in the region, but concerted action within the United Nations to assist the parties and the Contadora Group to resolve differences through dialogue.

98. The cardinal principles of non-use of force, respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, non-interference and non-intervention should be, as the Contadora Group's Document of Objectives² correctly stipulates, the basis for negotiations and should be scrupulously observed and implemented. The right of the peoples to choose freely their own political, social and economic systems without interference and intervention should be strictly upheld. Pluralism of political values and systems is not and need not be considered a danger to established social systems, for unity in diversity is in itself a lofty democratic ideal. It enriches the region, promotes challenges and results in progress.

99. The Secretary-General transmitted with his note of 13 October 1983,² pursuant to Security Council resolution 530 (1983), the Document of Objectives approved by the Heads of State of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

100. The Document of Objectives, which, as the Foreign Minister of Mexico pointed out in his statement at the 13th meeting, is a single consensus text which sets out the positions of the five Governments directly concerned and contains the proposals of the Contadora Group on

principles on which the eventual solution of the problems of Central America will have to be based.

101. The right to self-determination of peoples, non-intervention, non-use of force, the sovereign equality of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for the territorial integrity of States, support for democratic institutions, pluralism, the promotion of social justice, respect for human rights and the prohibition of terrorism and subversion are the cardinal points in these documents.

102. As the Secretary-General rightly points out in the above-mentioned note, a solution to the problems of Central America must take into account the profound socio-economic imbalances with which the peoples of the region have always struggled.

103. The good faith demonstrated by the Central American countries and their determination to co-operate with the Governments of the Contadora Group in their efforts to find peaceful solutions offer a unique opportunity for the international community which must be fully utilized. On the other hand, the Contadora Group's endeavours to find solutions adapted to the realities of the region, without any intrusion deriving from East-West conflicts, deserve the manifest support of the international community and this has been rightly and universally acknowledged.

104. My Government expresses its deep appreciation to the Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela for their commitment to the achievement of a just and peaceful settlement of these problems, which is in keeping with the finest fraternal traditions of the peoples of Latin America.

105. The prior initiatives of the President of Mexico and the Governments of France and Venezuela have won similar appreciation from those who desire a just solution to the problem. We feel that it is incumbent upon the United Nations membership to extend their full solidarity with and support to the Contadora Group of States in their peace initiative by encouraging a meaningful dialogue in search of a just solution based on the inalienable rights of the peoples and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

106. Cyprus, as a non-aligned country sharing common aspirations with many non-aligned Latin American countries, unreservedly supports these peace initiatives, which are in accordance with the authentic principles of non-alignment.

107. We oppose pressure, interference and intervention of any kind in the internal affairs of the countries of Central America and, together with other non-aligned countries, are determined to strive to contribute our moral support to the success of the Contadora peace initiatives, with a view to strengthening peace and security in the region and ensuring unfettered independence and unhampered political and socio-economic development for all States in the region.

108. Cyprus, plagued by a problem of invasion and occupation and situated in the strategic Mediterranean, where the Middle East crisis continues unabated, shares the earnest desire of the peoples of the Central American region for peace and independence.

109. We particularly hail the victorious struggle of the Nicaraguan people, who threw off the decades-old oppressive yoke of the Somoza dictatorship. The guiding principles of democracy, which won the people of Nicaragua their hard-earned social, political and economic freedom and independence, must be jealously safeguarded and must remain at the root of all actions.

110. Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): On 3 November this

year, just a few days ago, the Senate of the United States Congress voted to allocate \$19 million for the implementation of covert operations in Central America, primarily in Nicaragua. The author of this report, taken by us from *The New York Times*, emphasizes that only \$19 million of the \$50 million requested by the United States President was allocated. One can imagine what new loss of life and new destruction of industrial and administrative facilities those millions will mean for the people of Nicaragua.

Mr. Malinga (Swaziland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

111. In recent days at the United Nations, the question has repeatedly been asked: who will be the next victim of the United States? Is the answer to this question not to be found in the decision taken by the American Senate? In Central America and in the Caribbean Sea area we can observe an extremely dangerous situation, one which truly threatens international peace and security.

112. Any impartial witness can easily discern that the critical situation in that region came about as a result of the aggressive policy of the United States: its policy of domination and diktat with regard to independent States. The United States of America is increasing its interference in the internal affairs of El Salvador, is carrying out an undeclared war against Nicaragua, and has pursued criminal and shameful acts of international piracy in assaulting defenceless Grenada with enormous military forces. The United States Administration is showing complete disregard for the norms of international law and is flagrantly violating the lofty principles of the Charter of the United Nations and even its own obligations to the Organization of American States.

113. The policy and practical activities of the United States over many years show that in order to achieve its hegemonistic goals, Washington does not intend to consider the right of peoples freely to choose their own paths of development. Thus, they brazenly disregard the will of peoples and world public opinion.

114. There can be only one major purpose for such a policy, whatever deceitful assertions might be made to disguise it, and that is, not to allow the existence of and to suppress and overthrow unsuitable national regimes in countries which have chosen independent paths for development, while establishing puppet, pro-American regimes which concord with the standard of American-style democracy.

115. At a recent press conference, the President of the United States stated that he considers Taiwan and South Korea to be examples of democracy and the most faithful allies of the United States to be Israel and South Africa. It is difficult to dispute the logic of the American Administration in this. Such democracies have indeed been established and are maintained solely by fire and sword.

116. In carrying out unprovoked aggression against sovereign Grenada, the United States has once again revealed the essence of its foreign policy credo. From intimidation and threats against national liberation and revolutionary movements, they proceeded to outright war; from theory, they have escalated to the shameful practice of international State terrorism. Washington has once again embarked upon the path of open intervention.

117. The Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, Tip O'Neill, concluded last week: "Over two years now, the Administration has been seeking a pretext for invading Grenada, and I think it has found it . . . in the pretext of the murder of Bishop."

118. As was convincingly demonstrated in the Security Council, this operation was premeditated and carefully

rehearsed during the Amber and Amberines military exercises, as part of the "Ocean Venture" manoeuvres. This further justifies the great concern shown by Nicaragua and other countries of the region over the sharp increase in United States military activities in Central America. We fully share this concern, as expressed in the Security Council by the representatives of Cuba, Nicaragua, Guyana, Mexico, Tanzania and other countries—"Today Grenada, but who tomorrow?"

119. The aggressive interventionist policy of the United States against Grenada, Nicaragua and other countries and peoples of the Central American region and the Caribbean Sea is part of its overall policy to whip up international tension, a policy of threats and diktat against independent States, an openly aggressive policy in Latin America, unconditional support for Israel in the Middle East, the aiding and abetting of bandit groups in Afghanistan and outright political, economic and military support for the *apartheid* regime in South Africa, as well as a confrontationist policy in South-East Asia, a sharp increase in the arms race and an obstructionist policy at all disarmament negotiations. These are the integral parts of the global policy of Washington, aimed at flagrant interference in the internal affairs of other countries by seeking to impose upon them the American way of life, the achievement of military superiority, and, in essence, the attempts to establish world domination.

120. This is truly the root of the evil as brought to the world. The foreign policy of the United States, designed to undermine the basis of international relations, the use of force, brazen interference in the internal affairs of other States is a threat to world peace and calls for stern condemnation.

121. We must immediately put an end to armed interference of the United States in the countries of Central America and the Caribbean Sea, and put an end to aggression, provocation and threats against sovereign States. The strengthening of peace and security in the region, or any other part of the world, is possible only on the basis of respect for the right of each and every people to choose its own way of life. Attempts to subject countries of that region to United States domination, to establish and to perpetuate despotic anti-popular regimes, obedient to Washington, are doomed to failure.

122. The Ukrainian SSR sternly condemns the aggressive policy of the United States in the world, and in particular, in Central America and the Caribbean basin, and states its steadfast solidarity with the just struggle of peoples of that region for independent and free development.

123. Mr. dos SANTOS (Mozambique): Sir, when on behalf of my Government I addressed the Assembly during the general debate, I had the privilege of congratulating Mr. Illueca on his election to the presidency of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly and of extending to him the fullest co-operation of my delegation. I expressed the confidence that his leadership would be equal to the task. I take this opportunity to state that he has acquitted himself very well indeed and to renew the pledge of my delegation's co-operation.

124. The founding fathers of our Organization solemnly pledged to live in peace as good neighbours and to promote social progress and better standards of life. Although the purposes and principles of the United Nations are well known, I think that it would be quite in order to recall them at this point. They are, in Article 1 of the Charter:

"1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace,

and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;

"2. To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;

"3. To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and

"4. To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends."

125. With the giant strides made by science and technology, especially in the past few years, humanity is potentially in a position to achieve those goals. The eradication of hunger, devastating widespread diseases, illiteracy and misery is well within our reach. Yet after a tortuous and difficult march of 38 years we still seem to be far away from our final destination.

126. During the general debate in the Assembly, speaker after speaker expressed concern at the rapidly deteriorating climate in international relations. In analysing the international situation in March of this year, the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries stated that:

"current trends in the international situation give cause for grave concern. There is increasing recourse to the use or threat of force, military intervention and interference in violation of the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. Forces hostile to the emancipation of peoples continue to infringe the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries and to impede the rights of peoples under colonial and alien domination to self-determination and independence." [A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. I, para. 12.]

127. Several months later, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegations of Non-Aligned Countries stated:

"Reviewing the international situation, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation expressed grave concern over the continuing existence of focal points of aggression and tension particularly in the Middle East, Africa—particularly southern Africa, South-West Asia, South-East Asia, the Caribbean, Central America and the South Atlantic and in certain parts of Europe." [A/38/495, annex, para. 5.]

128. The situation in many parts of the world has deteriorated even further—in the Middle East, southern Africa, the Caribbean and Central America, to mention just a few areas. The fears expressed by the international community on many occasions became in a shocking manner a brutal reality. What reason had accepted as obvious but the heart had refused to consider came and knocked at our doors and entered our homes to sow death and destruction. Harsh language gave rise to harsh reality, and the fear engendered by those harsh words became sorrow, grief and death.

129. When countries take measures to allay those fears such measures are presented as justification for punishment. Effect becomes cause and cause becomes effect. Development endeavours become synonyms for aggressive intentions and preparations, events in the Caribbean

wound up making what was already known all too obvious. They have poured fuel onto the fire in Central America. A disquieting course of events became even more disquieting. The alarming situation is rightly attracting growing regional and international attention. Oppression and suppression have continued unabated and have come to be viewed as part of every-day life in many countries. Tens of thousands of human beings, including priests and nuns, have been murdered; tens of thousands of others have disappeared and still tens of thousands more are still languishing in prisons.

130. In Central America there can be no doubt that most of the problems that have embroiled the region in incessant turmoil stem from and are deeply rooted in profound and abject exploitation, endemic social and economic injustice and centuries-old inequality and repression. The tensions and strife in Central America stem from the head-on collision between the yearning of the peoples for freedom, independence, democracy and justice, on the one hand, and, on the other, the frenetic but vain attempts being made by imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and fascism to thwart the movements towards that goal—towards reforms. When force is used to block the path to peaceful reform and change only one course of action is left open. When the door to freedom is shut people will be prepared to give up their most precious asset—their lives—to open it. When a boiler lid is tightly closed and there is no safety valve the boiler itself will be blown into pieces. Those who do not always practise what they preach, those who espouse the belief in the dignity and equality of all humankind and all nations and yet despise and ignore others, those who profess belief in freedom of expression and choice and yet are not ready to accept differing views, such people are shutting the boiler's safety valve.

131. It is in this light that we should view the exercise of political, military and economic intimidation and pressures, the war games and embargoes, the destabilization and the promotion of violence. And, to cap it all, there is always the recourse to vile campaigns of hostile propaganda. There is no doubt that a well-co-ordinated, externally planned campaign of subversion against Nicaragua and other countries in Central America and the Caribbean is under way. Here, as elsewhere, a peaceful and just solution to problems is called for.

132. One cannot stop a storm with one's bare hands. Gone are the days when a single gunboat—or a group of gunboats, for that matter—could paralyse millions and hold them in check. History, especially recent history, has proved time and again that however powerful some countries may have become, they cannot subjugate forever the aspirations of people to freedom and independence and that ideas cannot be killed with the gun.

133. The settlement of Central American problems cannot be enforced from outside, nor can the threat or use of force be tolerated. We call upon all countries involved to put an end to the campaign of threats and provocation against Nicaragua and other States in the region.

134. A lasting solution to the conflict requires strict observance of international law, norms and decency. It also requires respect for non-confrontation, non-interference in internal affairs, non-intervention, sovereignty, non-aggression and territorial integrity and the inviolability of frontiers.

135. The endeavours, efforts and proposals made by the Contadora Group offer a glimmer of hope. There is some ground for optimism. We enjoin every interested country to respond immediately and positively to the

Contadora Group's call. In this context I commend Nicaragua for its prompt acceptance of the Contadora Group's peace overtures, and for its own initiatives. Only respect for peace, dialogue, self-determination and the legitimate interests of the countries in the region will bring a just solution to the problem.

136. Each and every country has the sovereign right to live in peace, to work and freely achieve its political and economic goals. All nations have the sovereign right to choose and follow their own path in social, economic and political areas, free from coercive measures of any sort.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

NOTES

¹*Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, 2491st meeting.*

²*Ibid., Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1983, document S/16041.*