



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

AGENDA ITEM 142

**The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives (continued)**

1. Mr. ROA KOURÍ (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Just two weeks ago the international community learned with indignation and shock that tiny Grenada, one of the smallest countries in the world, had been the victim of armed invasion by the most powerful country in the world, the United States of America, together with a small, pathetic group of policemen from six Caribbean countries whose leaders agreed to serve as creatures of Yankee imperialism in this, its most recent military intervention in our America.

2. The excuses given by the invader could not be more tenuous or mendacious: the rescue of American citizens who were never in any danger; the purported threat, never substantiated, posed to the security of neighbouring countries by the tragic events of 19 October in St. George's; the response to an alleged appeal by the would-be Governor-General, who, it turned out, never made any such request; and finally—the acme of brazenness—the delirious statements by President Reagan that he had invaded Grenada just in time, because it was “being occupied by Cuba and the Soviet Union”.

3. One after another, the Goebbels-like apparatus of the United States offered these lies, but they were exposed as the facts were revealed. The truth is preached upon the housetops, according to the Bible, and the “act of heroism” proclaimed by the Yankee leaders proved to be a cowardly and vile attack on a small country which had dared to declare itself free and independent.

4. The aggression against Grenada, the consequences and implications of which for the peoples of the world and in particular for the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean still have to be clarified, sheds new light on the machinations and intentions of imperialism in Central America.

5. In its attempt to impose its economic, political and military supremacy on the world, the American Administration has engaged in a reckless warlike policy leading to increasingly dangerous confrontations on the international scene and to the typically intolerant dogmatism of witch-hunters domestically. Statements by Government leaders smack of patriotic jingoism, reminiscent of William Randolph Hearst Sr., Theodore Roosevelt and Joseph McCarthy, and even of the advocates of European fascism.

6. In 1980, candidate Ronald Reagan, raising the spectre of an alleged foreign threat, exclaimed, “We are the last domino” and claimed that there was a sinister Cuban-Soviet conspiracy which might subvert the whole of Latin America from Patagonia to Mexico if the United States, advocates of “the American way of life”, did not wholly

do away with, not just hunger, ignorance and poverty in Central America which generate social conflicts in many countries of the area, but also the ignorant, the hungry and the miserable people who are fighting for a better life and a better destiny in spite of the oligarchies which President Reagan was defending.

7. In 1983, Ronald Reagan, already President, stated quite bluntly, “I do believe in the right of a country when it believes that its interests are best served to practice covert activity”. That unblushing statement can be matched only by Hitler's military expansionism. In fact, the theory of the defence of America's vital interests wherever they may be in the world, as defined by the Yankee leaders, is born of the Nazi doctrine of *lebensraum*.

8. The aggression against Grenada, like the invasion of Poland in 1939, could have been conceived as the prelude to direct aggression against Nicaragua. The covert actions from within Honduras, the American-Honduran military manoeuvres without a fixed closing date and the presence of the Yankee fleet off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Nicaragua have been foreseen for some time.

9. The dirty secret war of the Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] and of the Pentagon against the country of Sandino is becoming more and more dirty and less and less secret. Henry Kissinger, during his trip to Central America, divulged the true position of the Yankee Government when he said to those listening to him that the only solution for Central America was the overthrow of the Sandinist Government in Nicaragua. More recently, Mr. Fred C. Ikle, Under-Secretary of Defense of the United States, corroborated that statement when he admitted that Reagan's Government was pursuing a military victory in Central America and not a negotiated agreement.

10. In this context, it should be recalled that the Government of the United States publicly welcomed the initiative of the so-called Contadora Group, made up of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama, whose purpose is precisely to bring about a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the problems of Central America.

11. How are we to interpret, then, the statements by the American representatives in the Security Council and the General Assembly, when they say that they support that peace initiative, while at the same time there have been quite different objectives announced by Mr. Ikle and in private by Mr. Kissinger?

12. The deeds, better than the words, show the real policies of the United States, and those deeds, as was stated by the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua, Mr. Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, at the 47th meeting, are the following, *inter alia*: the killing between December 1982 and now of 786 workers, farmers, students, professionals and members of the Nicaraguan armed forces by ex-Somozist guards operating from Honduras, organized and financed by the CIA and the Pentagon; acts of sabotage which have caused losses amounting to \$103 million over the past 10 months; the bombing of the airport of Managua and the installations of Corinto harbour by counter-revolutionary elements in the pay of the CIA, using equipment given by the American agency.

13. The imperialist Government of the United States today keeps 6,000 servicemen in Honduras, which is virtually occupied and has become a base for aggression against Nicaragua; warships including aircraft carriers with nearly 200 planes, and more than 25,000 soldiers and marines near Nicaragua; and there has been an increase in the number of personnel and planes in the Panama Canal Zone. This means that there have been created the military conditions needed to invade Nicaragua or El Salvador where the American presence and military assistance have also been increased.

14. More recently, the General Command of the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation [FMLN] of El Salvador complained that the Minister of Defence of the tyranny, General Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova, following advice from the United States Government, had asked the armies of Honduras and Guatemala to invade his country to help him in the impossible task of putting down the Salvadorian revolutionaries, and that in fact 4,000 Guatemalan soldiers had been moved to Jutiapa, Valle Nuevo, San Cristóbal and Ciudad Pedro de Alvarado, near the border with El Salvador, while Honduran troops were concentrated in Jícaro Galán, where the highways to El Salvador and Nicaragua merge.

15. All this, together with the reactivation of the Central American Defence Council by the armies of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras—excluding Nicaragua, a founding member of that Council—is absolutely identical to the preparations by the Yankee Government before the invasion of the Girón Beach in 1961, and to the recent aggression against Grenada.

16. Despite the virtual isolation of the United States in the Assembly because of that aggression, we have seen the Reagan Government manipulating public opinion and obtaining the co-operation of the mass media, as well as—and this reveals the moral bankruptcy and opportunism of the Yankee politicians—of many Congressmen who, originally, had agreed with the international community in describing this action as a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law.

17. The temptation of the Yankee leaders, drunk with the “victory” gained at the expense of tiny Grenada, to extend their aggressiveness to Central America might be irresistible in this pre-electoral year, when a lucky coup could be presented to the voters, no matter what public opinion might say, as a great triumph by candidate Reagan.

18. We must discourage these dangerous illusions. If in divided Grenada, paralysed by the death of its leader, the Yankee invaders encountered stubborn resistance by various groups and by a handful of poorly armed Cubans which converted that military action into an unprecedented moral defeat, aggression against the heroic people of Augusto César Sandino or against the Salvadorian revolutionaries could result in the greatest setback that United States imperialism has ever suffered. We are issuing that warning calmly and with a keen sense of our responsibility.

19. The Government of Nicaragua and the peoples of Central America, including the FMLN and the Revolutionary Democratic Front [FDR], the vanguard movement of the Salvadorians, want to live in peace, determining their own destiny; they want to have respectful relations with their American brothers, including the people of the United States. They have never sought nor do they desire confrontation with them. It is imperialism, supported by régimes that are against the peoples, such as that in El Salvador, or by meek military régimes, such as those in Honduras and Guatemala, that wishes to drown the demands of the peoples of the region in blood and

to destroy the Sandinista Government of independent Nicaragua.

20. Four countries of our America—Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela—have made every effort to prevent a larger conflagration, which would surely engulf the entire region. But the United States Government has turned a deaf ear to their peace initiatives. While paying lip-service to the Contadora efforts, it has brandished the interventionist big stick against Nicaragua and El Salvador. Hence, today we must strengthen the actions undertaken by the States of the Contadora Group if we truly wish to prevent a conflict with unpredictable consequences.

21. The Government of Nicaragua, firmly committed to the initiative of the four Latin American countries and to its repeated peace proposals, including the treaties submitted for the consideration of the United States, Honduras, El Salvador and other States of the region, as well as to the Salvadorian revolutionaries, has given unequivocal proof of its willingness to seek and accept a negotiated, honourable and just solution to the problems besetting Central America.

22. Cuba also advocates a peaceful, negotiated solution in Central America. That, of course, would include El Salvador, for there can be no real peace in Central America if the Salvadorian conflict is not settled. To that end the Revolutionary Government of Cuba has declared that it is prepared to accept and respect any commitments which would be assumed, in peace negotiations with all the parties, by the Government of Nicaragua and the Salvadorian revolutionaries.

23. For those reasons, my delegation regards it as indispensable that the Assembly unanimously support the draft resolution which will be submitted and which, in our opinion, clearly and definitely serves the cause of peace in Central America.

24. Mr. AL-ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): We join previous speakers here in expressing our concern and apprehension about the deteriorating situation and the increased tension in the Central American region. We associate ourselves with those who wish to see the rule of reason prevail and who wish to ensure respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, foremost among which are the prohibition of the use or the threat of the use of force in international relations, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

25. The increased tension and the threat to peace and security in the Central American region are the result of the way in which the United States Administration deals with the peoples and nations of Central America.

26. Since the people of Nicaragua overthrew the régime of the lackey Somoza, established its national authority and chose a way of life that will serve its interests and fulfil its aspirations, the United States Administration has been issuing feverish statements and waging a media campaign against Nicaragua and its Sandinista movement. The United States has also resorted to mobilization of the remnants of the Somoza régime; it has trained, armed and financed them to carry out incursions across the borders of Nicaragua, as well as to undertake internal subversion against vital, strategic infrastructures of the country, in an attempt to destabilize the régime internally. All this has been accompanied by United States land, air and naval manoeuvres, in co-operation with States that are neighbours of Nicaragua. A naval blockade has also been put into effect against Nicaragua. Moreover, Nicaragua is blamed for any actions against the régimes

surrounding it, and this fans the flames of discord between Nicaragua and its neighbours.

27. All these facts make it evident that the United States cannot accept that economic, social and political struggles leading to internal changes can take place in any country. Hence, whenever something happens in a State that is Nicaragua's neighbour, that is blamed on Nicaragua and treated as interference by Nicaragua in the internal affairs of a neighbour.

28. The recent military invasion of Grenada by the United States and the justifications invoked for that invasion by the United States constitute a precedent which could be used by the United States to carry out a similar operation against Nicaragua.

29. Proceeding from this basis, the discussion of the situation in Central America after the American invasion of Grenada has great significance. The United States has justified that invasion by advancing all kinds of pretexts, any of which could be used at any time for interference in the internal affairs of Nicaragua.

30. For example, the United States has claimed that its invasion of Grenada was undertaken at the request of the States members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. How can we not think that the United States might invade Nicaragua at any time in the future claiming that other States in Central America had asked it to intervene in Nicaragua?

31. The American Administration believed that the establishment of relations between Grenada and other States, especially Socialist States, was a threat to the safety and security of the Caribbean States. It is easy to see that the United States might use the same logic in order to intervene in Nicaragua, since Nicaragua has strengthened its international relations by establishing relations with many States, including the socialist countries.

32. The United States has also claimed that Grenada had built up military forces which were not commensurate with its size. It is easy to see that the United States might use the same pretext for attacking Nicaragua, since Nicaragua, because of its concern for its sovereignty and national defence, is building up its armed forces.

33. What gives rise to the greatest apprehension and concern on the part of the majority of States, however, is the pretext advanced by the United States that it intervened in Grenada to restore democracy. Could not the United States claim—and indeed Mrs. Kirkpatrick said so at the 48th meeting—that the system in Grenada does not fit the American definition of democracy, thus enabling the United States to intervene to correct the situation and bring it into alignment with the American concept of democracy?

34. The United States concern to ensure democracy and its international practices are extremely contradictory. By way of example we cite the plots hatched and implemented by the CIA against the democratically elected President—I repeat, the democratically elected President—of Chile, President Salvador Allende, and the replacement of that régime by a dictatorial Fascist régime which abolished freedom and oppressed the Chilean people. On what criteria was that great concern about democracy based? Why did the United States not intervene, through invasion and a blockade, to restore democracy in Chile? To put the question another way, why did the United States intervene, through its intelligence agency, to stifle Chilean democracy, which had been a tradition for decades and was considered one of the most viable democracies in the entire continent of Latin America?

35. Those justifications invoked by the American Administration for its invasion of Grenada, which, as we

have explained, could be invoked to justify an American invasion of Nicaragua, did not succeed in concealing the facts, known to everybody, which lie at the root of the American policy of intervention in the internal affairs of States. The United States has a track record filled with acts of intervention in Central America. A great many of those who have spoken before me referred to this. This track record discloses the fact that the United States has consistently sought to extend its influence in Central America, to enhance its interests there, especially through its monopolistic companies at the expense of the welfare and progress of the people of the area. The American Administration will not stop short of any act of aggression to achieve its aims.

36. The American Administration pays a lot of lip service—especially through its Representative to the United Nations, Mrs. Kirkpatrick—to democracy, its time-honoured practice of democracy and its democratic institutions, and asks States to follow its example in these practices. At the same time, however, it categorically refuses to establish relations with States on a democratic basis. Democracy is allowed only inside the United States. For inter-State relations it is rejected and the law of the jungle is preferred.

37. The countries of Central America are conscious of the threat embodied in the American interference in their affairs and the exacerbation by the American Administration of the situation in that area. Those States have made proposals, known as the Contadora Group proposals, for a peaceful settlement based on negotiations and the principle of the non-use of force or the threat of force to settle disputes among States. The proposals of the Contadora Group were supplemented by the peace initiatives of Nicaragua—four initiatives, to be specific. These initiatives show the responsible concern of the Nicaraguan leaders to remove from the area the threat to which it is exposed. Unfortunately, these initiatives and the peace proposals have elicited no response from the American Administration. On the contrary, the United States has resorted to military escalation and to increasing its overt and covert material aid to the elements opposed to the regime in Nicaragua.

38. The United States, by virtue of its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations and its permanent membership in the Security Council, must respond to the call for peace, and respect the sovereign rights of the peoples of Central America to self-determination and to choose their own economic and social systems. It must not appoint itself the guardian of the destiny of those peoples.

39. The position of Democratic Yemen on the situation in Central America may be summarized as follows.

40. First, we condemn the policy of aggression pursued by the American Administration in Central America and especially against Nicaragua. Secondly, we call upon the United States to cease intervening in the internal affairs of Nicaragua and to refrain from supporting the forces of counter-revolution that were rejected by the people of Nicaragua in 1979. Thirdly, we call upon the United States to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Nicaragua and cease all military provocations and manoeuvres threatening peace and security in Central America.

41. In the interest of finding an honourable solution satisfactory to all parties in Central America, we call on the United States at this time to respond sincerely to Nicaragua's peace initiatives and the proposals of the Contadora Group.

42. Finally, we reaffirm our solidarity with the people of Nicaragua in its just struggle to establish its own

economic and social system so that it may realize its aspirations and affirm its sovereignty and independence.

43. Mr. QUIÑONES-AMÉZQUITA (Guatemala) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The debate on the crisis in Central America has brought us into a very thorny and difficult area. It is to be hoped that after this discussion the seeds sown by the Contadora Group will grow and that we shall be able to harvest the fruits of peace, concord and coexistence, to the benefit of our region.

44. There is in Central America a profound crisis both in the political and in the economic and social sphere, which are closely related. A storm has blown up over this crisis; but we must recall that very often storms clear the air and contribute to the fertility of the land. Let us hope that from this storm we Central Americans will learn to live in peace and seek justice, improving the standards of living of our peoples without losing what is so great and wonderful: pluralistic democracy and freedom.

45. After the Second World War, for 33 years—from 1945 to 1978—we witnessed a dynamic growth in the economies of the five Central American countries. Of course, there were differences from country to country. This growth was realized without any changes in the economic structures of the countries. That is not to say that these structures were just or that there was a fair distribution of the wealth thus generated. But it must be pointed out that we did have economic growth and stability. According to information from ECLA this year, over those three decades the annual growth rate of the gross internal product in real terms was 5.3 per cent, and even during the period when petroleum prices were rising—from 1970 to 1978—the average annual growth rate in real terms was over 5.6 per cent. Exports to areas outside the region rose from \$250 million to \$3.2 billion; imports also rose, from 18.6 per cent in 1950 to 33.6 per cent in 1978. External financing played a decisive role, so that any drop in exports did not have to be accompanied by a corresponding drop in imports.

46. The population of the Central American region also increased, from 8 million to 20 million, and the gross internal product went from \$1.95 billion to \$7.52 billion. The urban population, which represented 16 per cent in 1950, rose to 43 per cent in 1980, which meant better access to certain services. Despite this growth in at least four Central American countries, the living standards of the rural population did not improve significantly. However, they did not decline; and there was work available and conditions did improve compared with previous years. Central America was scarcely affected by inflation.

47. Although there was sustained growth for three decades, conditions did not improve substantially; but neither did they worsen. What, then, gave rise to the crisis? In the economic sphere, it is partly due to the depression of the world economy and the fall in the world market prices of Central American products on which the growth of Central America's economy largely depends. However, without any doubt one powerful factor in the crisis has been the entry on the Central American scene of outsiders representing international forces that had played no part in the region before, and here the economic crisis becomes linked with the political problem, since an arms race has begun in the area, subversive groups are being encouraged, trained and assisted and military advisers have been introduced—all of which has created a feeling of insecurity and led to an absence of domestic and foreign private investments, the flight of capital, the abandonment of farm production and the destruction of the infrastructure.

48. In Central America we see the phenomenon of the encouragement and arming of national groups as a means for foreign Powers to export their form of government and philosophy. These are precisely the actions covered by the draft Code of Offences against the Peace and Security of Mankind. In Article 2, paragraph 5 of the draft, it is stated that such offences include:

“The undertaking or encouragement by the authorities of a State of activities calculated to foment civil strife in another State, or the toleration by the authorities of a State of organized activities calculated to foment civil strife in another State.”<sup>1</sup>

This draft has not yet been approved by the United Nations, but it does reflect cases of crimes against mankind which have frequently occurred in Central America.

49. Those three factors—the economic problem; instigation by groups, with the consequent armament, advisers and so forth; and the desire to promote by force a given type of government—constitute the cause of the crisis in Central America. There have been very few cases of victorious revolutions that have not been nourished by other countries.

50. There can be no doubt that our region, apart from the serious social and economic problems urgently in need of solutions, has become a turbulent site of East-West confrontation. What Central America needs is peace, non-interference in its internal affairs by other States, and international assistance and co-operation to promote our economies.

51. We need peace if we are to develop our resources to the maximum. All the Central American countries, fortunately, enjoy an excellent climate and largely fertile lands, which should be able to produce enough for all of us.

52. Finally, we need international assistance and co-operation in order to emerge from our indebtedness. We need the industrialized countries to lend us a generous hand in helping us finance our development and in removing the tariff and non-tariff barriers which have until now hampered the payment of just and equitable prices for our export products.

53. My country has tried to keep out of the arms problem and the exportation of armed groups, and it hopes to continue to do so. The assertion that Guatemalan troops have moved to our border with El Salvador in order to invade that country is untrue and unsubstantiated. That information, as has been noted by the representative of Cuba, does not come from any authorized or official source.

54. As a Central American nation, Guatemala is concerned and deeply affected by the death of Central Americans and by the turmoil in the region. For many Guatemalans the establishment of a constitutional Government which will carry out social reforms within a pluralist democracy, respecting individual freedoms and rights, is the concept which carries us forward, inspires us and enlightens us. Our hope for Central America is that, just as arrows shot into the sky fall on the archers, so the wishes of the Central Americans will fall on those who do not believe in pluralistic democracy. We Latin Americans hold Western democracy to be the sanctuary of our ideas; it is a reflection of our profoundly Christian spirit, which rejects materialist doctrines of both the East and the West. We believe not only in the Constitution of the State, but also in the constitution which is the gift of a divine power and which every human being carries with him from birth; which is graven on the tablet of his individual right to live as a human being and to enjoy the

fundamental freedoms of thought, association, expression, the freedom to seek and choose his own destiny and the freedom to have the right to live in dignity.

55. The Guatemalan delegation is participating in this debate on the situation in Central America with the desire to co-operate in the search for solutions to the serious, complex problems facing our region.

56. The Central American crisis would be easy to resolve if the political will existed; if there were no more armament, no more advisers, no more military training, and no more arms exports; if there were respect for every country's political system, and no forcible exportation of any one form of acting or thinking; if the countries which believe in pluralist democracy respected the will of their peoples and if, through that will, the changes necessary for the general well-being came about.

57. All those who love Central America understand that its economic structures have been very slow to change, and that it is necessary somehow to revitalize that process, but without violence, by democratic means and in the context of a comprehensive development which would improve living conditions while respecting the individual. We know that this is no easy task and that there are some groups which oppose it, but all those who believe in human dignity and in pluralist democracy must make the effort.

58. All that we Central Americans want, all that we ask, is to be allowed to determine our own future.

59. Contadora is the regional forum chosen by the Central Americans, and it is producing results. At this stage, to call on other bodies would not only weaken the Contadora effort, but suggest that the Group recognized what it could not succeed. We must not weaken the position of the Contadora Group by introducing new organs or individuals. Nor must we be defeatist and think of carrying over the question of the situation in Central America to the next session of the Assembly, for the urgency of the matter requires that peace be brought swiftly to the region and that the necessary commitments be made.

60. Only understanding among Central Americans, only their determination to bring about peaceful change and their ability to live together without serving as an instrument of other, hegemonistic interests, will make it possible for us to achieve peace with justice.

61. Mr. GUMUCIO GRANIER (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): A year ago the constitutional President of Bolivia, Mr. Hernán Siles Zuazo, stated<sup>2</sup> in the Assembly that the grave crisis affecting the sister countries of Central America was a cause of deep concern to my country. He said that tension, threats, and escalating violence were all factors in the conflict which was developing and rapidly weakening the foundations of peace. He warned that the peoples of Central America had already suffered too much under totalitarian regimes to have to suffer now the terrible scourge of war.

62. Today, one year later, this concern is felt even more deeply. We are dismayed to see the Central American woman continuing to suffer when she loses her husband, brother or son, killed in unjust conflicts. We regret that the number of orphans, missing persons and those obliged to seek refuge has increased alarmingly. We are concerned over the destruction of the infrastructure of public works and productive centres, because we know that they are achieved with much difficulty, at the cost of great sacrifice and contributions on the part of the workers of Central America.

63. Since 1952 Bolivia has experienced a great social change as a result of the implantation of a model of

national and liberating revolution. We fully appreciate the difficulties existing in Central America today as the result of social strife and attempts to overcome past injustice and backwardness by creating a more just order guaranteeing civilian freedoms, respect for human rights, a political regime based on participation of the people and the establishment of economic systems guaranteeing a more equitable distribution of income.

64. Bolivia's experience has also made it possible to see that the establishment and consolidation of basic institutions requires a certain amount of time and the right atmosphere. Here I might mention that in the early years of the revolution in our country there were sectors both within and outside it that rejected it, people who conspired against development and even tried to bring about an economic blockade or to disrupt the free transit of goods. But today, 30 years later, every sector in the country and even abroad has accepted the movement of April 1952 as an irreversible fact in the creation of the new Bolivian State.

65. Bolivia reiterates its concern and friendship towards all Central American peoples. We respect and appreciate the democratic system of Costa Rica and we were very pleased to hear of the forthcoming declaration of Costa Rica's permanent neutrality. We share with Honduras the need to consolidate our democratic processes by setting up civic and republican institutions. We share with Guatemala bonds of friendship and tradition based on similar contributions to our societies by the Quechua, Aymara and Maya cultures. We hope sincerely that in El Salvador peace will be consolidated without foreign intervention and that the Salvadorian people will succeed in building a better future with the full participation of all their citizens.

66. With Nicaragua we have bonds of friendship which were strengthened when Bolivia, together with the countries of the Andean group, stood by the Nicaraguan people in their victorious struggle against the Somozist dictatorship. Here we might mention the words of Bolivia's Foreign Minister, Mr. José Ortiz Mercado, at the 15th meeting on 3 October last. He said:

“Bolivia expresses its solidarity with the people and Government of Nicaragua. It calls for the cessation of all foreign acts of harassment and hopes that its national liberating and non-aligned revolution will be consolidated and strengthened . . .” [*15th meeting, para. 186*].

67. In the Central American crisis, which is a source of concern to the entire international community and which we are today discussing in the General Assembly, the principles of international law must prevail if these problems are to be resolved. It is more important now than ever before to support the principles of the Charter of the United Nations which call for the independence, sovereignty and integrity of Member countries, non-intervention in internal affairs and the self-determination of peoples. These principles, together with the necessary machinery for dialogue, are essential elements for the strengthening of peace and security in the area.

68. The efforts of the Latin American countries forming part of the Contadora Group have the full support of the people and Government of Bolivia, which back them in their noble and difficult search for solutions to the conflicts in Central America. Bolivia will support any initiative of the Contadora Group towards seeking and improving the operational machinery necessary to achieve its objectives. In this connection, Bolivia also welcomes all initiatives put forward by the Central American countries, in particular the more recent ones by Nicaragua,

aimed at reducing tension and promoting solutions within the Contadora framework.

69. We believe that the result of the debate on the situation in Central America will be useful to the international community if in the General Assembly there is a consensus in support of the efforts of Contadora, which is the only viable framework at the present time. The consolidation of peace and the preservation of the lives of thousands of Central Americans requires this.

70. Mr. SAIGNAVONGS (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): The present tensions in Central America and in the Caribbean are a constant source of concern to the international community. Indeed, in their efforts to maintain their hegemony in the Caribbean, which they regard as a sort of *Mare Nostrum*, the leaders of the United States are not allowing the peoples of that region, who are the victims of social injustice, inequality, exploitation and repression by dictatorial regimes, to carry out changes in the political and social structures of their countries. In this way their pathological hatred of socialism automatically leads them to consider the struggle of those peoples to free themselves from poverty and under-development, to follow the path of truly independent development and to recover control and free use of their natural resources as a sort of conspiracy by the Soviets and Cuba and to attribute the changes occurring in that part of the world to an East-West ideological confrontation.

71. Since then the growing interference of the United States in the internal affairs of States in that part of the world has made the situation even worse. *Harper's* review of September 1983 in analysing that situation says: "As a result of U.S. interference, Central America is in chaos."\*

72. With the invasion of Grenada, the risk of a generalized conflict in Central America is growing daily, the more so since President Reagan himself recently stated at a press conference that the United States is prepared to repeat such an operation if the same conditions—that is, if the same alleged threats against American citizens—were to recur elsewhere. The director of the CIA himself clearly indicated that the United States would not balk at protecting its interests in the region and Nicaragua may well prove to be the target of an American military intervention of the same kind. Such statements give us grounds for much concern.

73. One of the factors making for tension in the region is the situation around Nicaragua characterized by an intensification of both overt and covert activities aimed at toppling the revolutionary Government of that country. As we know, for more than a year now the United States Administration has tried to foment armed insurrection among the Meskito Indians on Nicaragua's Atlantic coast. We are also aware that the CIA has trained and armed Somozist mercenaries, not only using the territory of a country bordering Nicaragua as a base for its subversion, but also encouraging the regular armed forces of that country to give direct support to the mercenaries.

74. Under the leadership of the Reagan Administration, the undeclared war against Nicaragua is in full swing: hundreds of American military advisers and an equal number of CIA agents are based in Honduras to supervise and co-ordinate operations; at the same time, American troops and Marines are carrying out major military manoeuvres close to the frontiers and along the coasts of Nicaragua.

75. To justify those hostile activities to both international and national public opinion, the Reagan Administration

has not hesitated to accuse Nicaragua of "conspiring with Cuba and the Soviets to destabilize the hemisphere". As far as destabilization is concerned, the *Harper's* review to which I have already referred shares our view and says the following:

"If our escalating interference in Central America is not somehow checked, President Reagan may well succeed in destabilizing the 'entire region from the Panama Canal to Mexico' and the consequences may not stop there."\*

76. Similarly, Nicaragua has been accused of "exporting violence" throughout the region. But any sensible person can quite easily and objectively see what is the source of violence in Central America. On the one hand we have oppressed and exploited peoples clamouring for social justice and genuinely democratic rights and freedoms; and on the other hand we have those who exploit them—the dictatorial regimes, clients of Washington and United States transnational corporations, with their anti-democratic armies and "death squads".

77. Nicaragua has also been accused of heading the popular uprising in El Salvador and of attempting to reverse the "elected" Government of that country. The Reagan Administration has never provided any concrete evidence to back up that accusation.

78. Despite the intensification of its undeclared war and all the efforts to provoke a popular uprising in Nicaragua, the CIA has not been able to realize its dreams. On the contrary, the revolutionary people of Nicaragua have closed their ranks around the Government, according to recent reports by some American television stations.

79. Thwarted by this failure, the CIA has been promoted to undertake another ill-considered step in its war, and to attack economic installations by sabotaging harbour installations and fuel storage tanks, bombing the Managua airport, and so on, the purpose being to slow down the national reconstruction of Nicaragua. Since it no longer has the courage to stand up to the military, it is now proceeding cravenly to attack civilian targets.

80. Furthermore, in order to find some pretext for waging an open war against Nicaragua, the CIA has planned various stratagems: one of them is to goad the Sandinist army into invading Honduras; another, even more abject and insidious than the first, is to launch attacks against economic targets and populations of Honduras and Costa Rican territories—attacks that would be attributed to the Sandinist Government. But in neither case have the Sandinist leaders fallen for the trick; they have even denounced those manoeuvres.

81. In this connection, listening to the brazen statements made by United States leaders to the effect that their country is not at war with Nicaragua and is not attempting to remove its Government, we find it difficult not to be disgusted by such hypocrisy.

82. Another factor which makes for tension in the region is the constantly deteriorating situation in El Salvador. Last April President Reagan stated before the Congress that democracy was beginning to take root in that country; but the facts belie that. The edition of *Harper's* to which I have already referred describes the situation as follows:

"Mass murderers now dominate civilian politics, and as United States military involvement has increased, Salvadorian officers deeply implicated in the slaughter of the civilian population have increased their control of the Ministry of Defence and the main field commands."\*

83. To date, more than 30,000 persons have been massacred in that country; American intervention is daily

\*Quoted in English by the speaker.

becoming more entrenched; American military advisers and even the Honduran Army are directly involved in anti-guerrilla operations. This prompted President Reagan to ask Congress to triple United States military spending on El Salvador.

84. But despite the massacres and repression and the increasing American intervention, the Salvadorian revolutionaries have further strengthened their positions, thus showing their adversaries that they represent a national political force to be reckoned with. Consequently, the conflict in El Salvador cannot be resolved and lasting peace cannot be established in the region until the United States intervention is ended and the political force embodied in FMLN and FDR participates in running the affairs of State. It would therefore be desirable for the Contadora Group to use its good offices in the dialogue between the Government of El Salvador and FMLN-FDR in order to bring about a negotiated political solution to the problem.

85. The solution to the problem in Central America, in my delegation's opinion, cannot and should not be a military one; it should be a purely political one. For efforts to wrest a military victory are absurd and would necessarily involve the United States in a second Viet Nam. Would the American people allow this? Furthermore, the fact that the United States House of Representatives has refused to give funds to the CIA for its secret activities against Nicaragua indicates quite clearly that the representatives of the American people do not want war and disapprove of the policies of their Government in that part of the world.

86. The delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic warmly welcomes the initiative taken by the Contadora Group of countries in the search for a solution to the situation in Central America.

87. In his statement at the 47th meeting the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua presented the peace proposals of his country, which consist in four draft treaties designed to complement and reinforce the Contadora process. Those reasonable and realistic proposals have the full support of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

88. The United States and Nicaragua's neighbours believe that Nicaragua represents a danger to their security. By those treaties, however, Nicaragua would undertake not to threaten their security in any way whatever, and the countries of the Contadora Group would be the guarantors of this. Thus, there could not be any possible misunderstanding. Those proposals deserve to be given very serious consideration by the countries concerned if, as they have claimed, they sincerely desire peace.

89. Mr. HOLLAI (Hungary): The situation in Central America has reached a stage at which the impact of an initially local conflict has become a matter of great concern for the entire world community. The Hungarian Government pays particular attention to the position taken by the non-aligned countries on the Central American region because several countries belonging to that region are active members of the non-aligned movement. As was stated in the Political Declaration of the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, Central America faces

“a serious political, social and economic crisis brought about for the most part by the traditional repressive power structure and by national economic structures that produce poverty, inequality and misery and aggravated by the interference and intervention to which those countries have been subjected since the end of

the last century.” [*A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. I, para. 134.*]

In the same document it was also stated that the crisis situation in Central America “has been aggravated by the intensification of imperialist interference in the internal affairs of the States of the region.” [*Ibid., para. 135.*]

90. The Hungarian delegation is in full agreement with the analysis by the members of the non-aligned movement of the situation in Central America. The events that have occurred since the Seventh Conference have undoubtedly produced further evidence in support of the Political Declaration of the New Delhi Conference.

91. The participants at the New Delhi Conference have called the attention of the international community to the covert and overt actions of imperialist forces against Grenada. On 25 October Grenada was invaded by the armed forces of the United States of America with the support and symbolic participation of some Caribbean States. This invasion, which has been condemned at the current session of the General Assembly [*resolution 38/7*], has further contributed to the deterioration of the situation in Central America and the Caribbean region.

92. The participants in the Conference denounced the increasing threat and acts of aggression against Nicaragua, particularly the violation of its air space and territorial waters. During the past two months the acts of armed aggression against Nicaragua have been increased, causing the loss of many innocent lives and considerable damage to property. The Heads of State or Government urged the Government of the United States of America to contribute to the peaceful solution of the problems in the region, but instead of adopting a constructive approach the United States Administration pursued the course of escalating the conflict.

93. There is a virtual state of war in Central America. Though the war has not been declared openly, the support of the CIA for the covert operations against Nicaragua is a matter of public record. I intend to mention just a few examples of the war against Nicaragua. On 8 September 1983 the Sandino International Airport at Managua was bombed by pilots who had a close relationship with the authorities of the United States, as set forth in Security Council document S/15986.<sup>3</sup> On 2 October terrorist commandos coming from the territory of Costa Rica blew up the fuel tanks supplying the entire Atlantic region of Nicaragua. On 19 October a tank of diesel fuel was destroyed, again by counter-revolutionary forces, in the port of Corinto. According to press reports the United States has established training camps in Honduras for mercenaries to carry out such terrorist attacks against Nicaragua.

94. My delegation wonders how anyone can claim the right to commit this kind of act. We have heard an explanation that those actions are intended to prevent support for the anti-Government forces in El Salvador. But if someone wants to stop the internal war in El Salvador, some basic questions must first be answered. The internal conflict in El Salvador did not start because of external factors but because of fundamental social and economic problems, because of inequalities in the sharing of national wealth, because of the misery of large masses of poor and the luxury of a handful of rich and because of extremely repressive power structures dominated by extremist reactionary forces. These social ills cannot be cured by foreign military interventions or by any other means imposed on a country from outside. These social problems can only be solved internally with the active involvement of the peoples concerned.

95. What the outside world can do and should, indeed, do in this regard is to refrain from policies and actions damaging to the region's interests and act in full accordance with the provisions of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations. No rewriting or self-serving interpretation of those provisions can be allowed if peace and security are to prevail in the Central American region and elsewhere.

96. The crisis in Central America and in the Caribbean region undoubtedly constitutes a threat to international peace and security. This crisis can only be solved on the basis of respect for the general principles that should guide the activities of States in the international arena. At their meeting held at Panama City from 28 to 30 May 1983, the Ministers of External Relations of the Contadora Group outlined those basic principles: self-determination and non-interference in the affairs of other States; respect for the territorial integrity of other States; the obligation not to allow the territory of a State to be used for committing acts of aggression against other States; the peaceful settlement of disputes and the prohibition of the threat or use of force to resolve conflicts.

97. The Government of Nicaragua has accepted those basic principles and the peace initiatives of the Presidents of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela made at Cancún on 17 July 1983. The Cancún Declaration on Peace in Latin America [A/38/303] stated the following:

“The creation of conditions conducive to peace in the region depends mainly on the attitude and the genuine readiness for dialogue of the countries of Central America, which must shoulder the primary responsibility and make the major effort in the search for agreements ensuring peaceful coexistence.”

98. On 19 July 1983 the leaders of FMLN, in their response to the Cancún Declaration, stated their acceptance of the peace initiatives and their readiness to take concrete steps to implement them. There are two totally different approaches to the crisis in Central America. One of them is a constructive, peaceful approach which takes into account the real interests of the peoples of that region in particular, and the interests of peace and security in general. This approach has been promoted by the Contadora Group since its inception and has been accepted by all peace-loving peoples of the world.

99. The other approach is an aggressive and militaristic one seeking a solution through subversion, armed intervention and political, diplomatic and economic warfare. This approach is utterly useless. As the Cancún Declaration has stated: “The use of force is an approach that does not dissolve, but aggravates, the underlying tensions.”

100. My delegation, together with the vast majority of States Members of the United Nations, firmly associates itself with the quest for a peaceful solution of the crisis in Central America. The people and the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic are in solidarity with the peoples of Central America in their struggle for a society based on a just social and economic order. Together with the peoples of the region we call for an end to the long history of foreign armed intervention so that the peoples may fully exercise their right to self-determination without outside interference of any kind.

101. Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia): During the past year, developments in Central America have steadily assumed ever larger and more ominous dimensions. An atmosphere of mutual mistrust and mutual recrimination and an increasing incidence of armed hostilities among neighbours unfortunately characterize the situation in that part of the world today. Indeed, in the Security Council, in

the meetings of the non-aligned movement and in caucuses among the regional States themselves the attention of the international community has been repeatedly drawn to the mounting tensions and strife in the region. However, despite the exhortations and the growing alarm expressed in those various forums, the situation has continued to deteriorate and is now posing a real threat to international peace and security.

102. Although Indonesia is geographically far removed from Central America, my Government has followed the worsening developments in the region with profound concern. We believe that we cannot and should not attribute blame for these developments solely to external factors or influences. The causes of continuing turbulence and instability in Central America are varied and are found in internal unresolved contradictions accompanying the process of growth towards truly independent statehood, as well as in externally induced overt or covert pressures, whether political, economic or military in nature.

103. As many of the developing countries and members of the non-aligned movement can attest, the struggle to consolidate political independence and sovereignty and to ensure truly independent economic and social growth is a hard struggle, bound to bring temporary instability, turmoil and setbacks in its wake. External interference, through political destabilization, economic coercion or outright intervention, often aggravates this struggle, as it hampers a peaceful process of change towards greater social and economic justice. Further complication occurs when, as in the present global constellation, heightened great-Power confrontation is superimposed on an already explosive crisis situation.

104. That has been the historical experience of many developing countries in other regions of the world, including my own country, and those, undeniably, are the factors that have embroiled the region of Central America in incessant turmoil until today.

105. Despite the multitude of problems confronting Central America, my delegation is heartened by the fact that the most rational approach towards their solution has come from the States of the region themselves. Indonesia welcomes and fully supports the initiative taken by the countries of the Contadora Group and the proposals advanced by them, as these not only are comprehensive and balanced but also manifest an acute awareness of the unique historical circumstances of the States in the region.

106. The Contadora approach has already earned worldwide recognition as well as broad support in our Organization, as reflected in Security Council resolution 530 (1983). By that resolution the Council has placed its confidence in the Contadora Group by calling upon the parties concerned to co-operate fully with it. In this regard, it is encouraging to note, from the note of the Secretary-General of 13 October 1983,<sup>4</sup> the firm commitment given to him by all Central American States to contribute faithfully to the search for mutually acceptable political solutions.

107. Since launching the Contadora initiative in January of this year, Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela have spared no effort and have made considerable progress in bringing all the countries in Central America to agree on a common approach in resolving their differences. Through these efforts the five Central American States agreed to the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America [*ibid.*], which established guidelines for the negotiating process as well as specific commitments to promote regional reconciliation. Most recently, at their



September meeting in Panama, all the parties endorsed the Document of Objectives,<sup>4</sup> which is a consensus statement setting out the legal, political, security, economic and social principles upon which a solution will have to be based. Furthermore, it identifies specific areas of negotiation and the machinery essential to ensure peaceful coexistence throughout the region.

108. My delegation believes that this extremely important initiative to solve regional problems through a regional approach free from the interjection of external interests or designs deserves universal support. Therefore we appeal to all parties concerned to go beyond verbal expressions of support and to refrain from any actions that would only detract from the Contadora approach and make its realization infinitely more difficult.

109. In facing the challenges and problems and their specific manifestations in Central America, my delegation believes that the premise for progress must always be based on scrupulous adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the basic tenets of non-alignment, especially those relating to non-intervention and non-interference in the internal and external affairs of States and the inadmissibility of the threat or use of force in the settlement of disputes. These principles can be realized only through dialogue, which will remove the misunderstandings and misperceptions that have led to frictions or conflicts in the past, and not by engaging in mutual recrimination, futile confrontation or resort to military means. The only path out of the quagmire is through negotiations, in good faith, leading to a consensus which would facilitate the realization of the political and economic objectives of the States in the region in accordance with their own choice and priorities.

110. My delegation shares the conviction of the Contadora Group that the effective way to defuse and de-escalate the conflict situation in Central America must begin with the adoption of certain measures. Among those identified in the Document of Objectives, my delegation would underline an end to the arms build-up in the region, the elimination of traffic in arms both within and from outside the region, and the reduced presence of foreign military advisers and other foreign forces involved in military and security activities. In our view, the implementation of these measures should avert a further deterioration of the situation and establish a climate of mutual trust and confidence, which is indispensable for the attainment of subsequent objectives.

111. The Assembly has before it a unique opportunity to recognize and endorse a historic effort to overcome regional problems through regional initiatives. It is the sincere hope of my delegation that this precedent-setting example will commend itself to the peoples of Central America and will become a beacon of hope for the many other troubled regions in the world.

112. Mr. de PINIÉS (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is very reassuring, Sir, to make my statement under your presidency, for we are convinced that you will guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion.

113. The Spanish Government has been following the Central American crisis with growing concern. Ever since it started, the Spanish authorities have maintained continuous close contacts with the countries in the area and have given resolute support to all initiatives aimed at establishing a regional framework for peaceful coexistence and co-operation. Within the United Nations my Government recently stated in the Security Council the Spanish point of view on the root causes of the conflict and the conditions necessary for a settlement.<sup>5</sup>

114. Today, as the debate in the General Assembly proceeds, the situation in Central America continues to be alarming. If the tension in the region became more acute, in spite of the worthy negotiating efforts taking place at present and in spite of the willingness to compromise expressed by the countries concerned, Central America could be led into an open conflict with unpredictable consequences. We all have a responsibility to prevent that.

115. My delegation once again stresses the need to put the problem in its proper perspective. As the Spanish Government has frequently said, the roots of the Central American crisis lie ultimately in the profound economic and social inequalities and the structural problems in the countries of the region. Those factors, exacerbated by the economic crisis, which has affected all of Latin America particularly badly, have frustrated the social and political aspirations of the peoples of the region. Only by correcting those inequalities and resolving those problems shall we be able to lay the foundation for peaceful coexistence and close co-operation between the countries of the region. The solution certainly cannot be imposed from outside and by force, in violation of the principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

116. My delegation stresses once again the basic position of principle of the Spanish Government, which is against intervention in the internal affairs of States and strongly opposed to the threat or use of force in international relations, in violation of the Charter. In accordance with those principles, the Spanish Government expressed its disapproval of the recent military intervention in Grenada, and we believe that the withdrawal of foreign troops and the restoration of conditions in which the people of Grenada may freely decide their own future is urgently necessary.

117. My Government also considers that any attempt to bring about a military solution in Central America—which, in addition to ignoring the real cause of the crisis, would be another destabilizing factor—would create a serious threat to peace in the region and prevent the necessary relaxation of tension between States which, because of their geographic position and their dynamic history, are more than neighbours, they are brothers.

118. No one, therefore, should deceive himself. There is no alternative to a policy of compromise, expressed in serious dialogue and in negotiations on the most acute problems. The various Governments and other parties involved have already agreed that the fundamental problems must be resolved at the negotiating table. That is a sign of hope, a ray of light against a gloomy background.

119. Of the long chain of peace initiatives put forward on various occasions, in the opinion of the Spanish Government, only the initiative of the Contadora Group has a genuine chance of success today. On the basis of this belief, in a declaration of the Council of Ministers on 20 April this year my Government expressed its full support for the actions of the Group. Similarly, on 17 July we gave our support to the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America [*ibid.*], which developed the Contadora spirit and called for co-operation by the international community in the search for solutions by peaceful means. Only recently, in his statement in the general debate, at the 12th meeting, the Foreign Minister of Spain again reaffirmed the Spanish Government's support for the Contadora initiatives.

120. Last September, Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, together with five Central American countries, adopted a Document of Objectives,<sup>4</sup> which was an

attempt to harmonize the Cancún Declaration, the Nicaraguan proposals and the proposals of the Governments of the other Central American countries. While recognizing the unjust economic, social and political structures as factors exacerbating the conflicts in Central America, and also the overriding need to put an end to tension, the Document deals with the problem of the arms race in all its manifestations. In addition, it proposes negotiations between the Governments and other parties involved and suggests that genuinely democratic systems be created, with guarantees of free elections and the exercise of human rights. Finally, it calls for the elimination of terrorist actions and of destabilizing operations against other countries, and for regional economic co-operation and the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral treaties between the countries of the region.

121. The Spanish Government takes this opportunity to express its full support for the Contadora process and for the Document, as offering the most suitable means of bringing the problems of Central America closer to a genuinely Central American solution, which would prevent those countries being caught up in the East-West confrontation.

122. With this in mind, the Spanish delegation believes that this debate should end with the adoption of a resolution in which the General Assembly unequivocally supports the peace initiatives of the Contadora Group, thus strengthening a process which, as we shall never tire of repeating, seems to us to be the only way to bring about a peaceful solution.

123. We should all be concerned with this effort to bring about peace. Its success would ensure not only the creation of a framework for coexistence and co-operation among the countries of Central America, but also the removal of one of the most serious sources of international tension.

124. Mr. PAPAJOJGI (Albania) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The General Assembly has quite rightly decided to debate the situation in Central America at the current session. The situation is very tense and is a serious threat to peace and security not only in that region but also at the international level. This shows that States which cherish freedom and peace and progressive world public opinion cannot remain silent in the face of situations such as this, which may bring about serious consequences for the future of the peoples of the world.

125. The situation in Central America at the present time, as in other areas of the world, has changed. That change is the result primarily of the revolutionary struggle and the liberation of peoples. That struggle has become more intense from day to day and has shown that it is capable of overcoming enemies and in many cases can emerge victorious. Proof of this is the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution which overcame one of the most reactionary régimes, the Somoza régime, the revolution in El Salvador, and so on.

126. The victory of the Nicaraguan people was a harsh blow to American imperialism and was a source of inspiration to the struggling peoples of the region, who see in this imperialism and in its aggressive and grasping policies their sworn and deadly enemy, and the supporter of oppressive anti-popular régimes wherever those régimes exist.

127. American imperialism could not reconcile itself to events which went against its interests. For this reason, it brought together the Somoza bands and supported and assisted them in every way and then undertook direct attacks against Nicaragua. But the intervention by imperialism encountered the resolute resistance of the

courageous people of Nicaragua, who destroyed imperialism's plans. Washington therefore increased pressure and blackmail against that country. It established a brutal economic and military blockade, and organized and is carrying out lengthy military manoeuvres with the participation of thousands of American marines and warships which are sailing off the coasts of Nicaragua. But nothing can weaken the resolve of the people of Nicaragua to defend the victories which they won with the sacrifice of their blood.

128. The United States is making every effort to preserve its privileges in Central America and its system of plunder and exploitation. For this reason it will never accept any change which undermines its interests. The most recent example is the barbaric aggression by American imperialists against a small country, Grenada. That aggression is a clear example of gunboat policy, a demonstration of force and a direct threat to Nicaragua and other countries which do not accept American dictatorship and have risen against it.

129. The peoples of Central America and Latin America are facing not only pressure and direct attacks from American imperialism, but also the intrigues of Soviet social-imperialism which, behind the mask of anti-imperialism, is trying to use the antagonism between the United States and those peoples in order to penetrate the region.

130. The policy of pressure, threats, intervention and aggression which the super-Powers have been pursuing in Central America and elsewhere, in Grenada, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Chad, is an expression of their rivalry in domination and hegemony which is inflicting suffering and misfortune on the peoples of the world.

131. The Socialist People's Republic of Albania has always strongly opposed the policy of aggression and expansion of American imperialism, Soviet social-imperialism, and other imperialist Powers, and their interference in the internal affairs of other countries, on whatever pretext.

132. The people and Government of Albania will continue, as in the past, to give firm support to the struggle of the people of Nicaragua, and have saluted their victory. We support the right of the Nicaraguan people to live as free and independent men in their country, and we support the struggle of the people of El Salvador and all the other peoples of Central America and Latin America, who demand an end to the brutal intervention of American imperialism.

133. Mr. WASIUDDIN (Bangladesh): For the first time, the General Assembly is considering the item entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives". The Security Council, however, has deliberated on this issue on previous occasions, and at its session held last May, it also adopted unanimously resolution 530 (1983) on the issue.

134. We had the privilege of listening to the statements made by the representatives who took part in the Council debate. Likewise, during the current debate, we have listened with great attention to the statements made by representatives of the countries directly involved and also to the statements made by others deeply interested in the region. It is an undisputed fact that the region remains very disturbed, and that further deterioration might ignite a wider conflagration there. A number of speakers who dwelt at length on the situation in Central America have expressed great concern both over the prevailing conditions on and inside the northern border of Nicaragua and over the consequent danger of a military confrontation between Honduras and Nicaragua. It is the overwhelming

consensus that any outbreak of hostilities would further aggravate the existing crisis in Central America.

135. Since a number of delegations have already covered developments in the region comprehensively in their statements, we do not wish to go into detail, and would only like to emphasize the need for a constructive debate directed towards a meaningful dialogue, understanding and reconciliation. Our deliberations should not, therefore, in any way inflame passions, deepen mistrust or engender mutual recriminations. It is satisfying to note that the parties directly involved in the present crisis have reaffirmed their desire to engage in a constructive dialogue with a view to seeking a negotiated settlement of their difference.

136. It is worth while mentioning here that the Security Council resolution on the issue recalled the relevant principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the obligation of States to settle their disputes exclusively by peaceful means, not to resort to the threat or use of force, and to respect the self-determination of peoples and the sovereign independence of all States. History has demonstrated beyond any shadow of doubt that peace and stability in any region can be built only on the basis of shared aspirations and mutual accommodation.

137. The Bangladesh delegation believes that the present situation in Central America should not be allowed to deteriorate any further, as it could escalate into a wider conflict with grave implications for international peace and security. We also firmly believe that regional efforts have a better chance of success for the simple reason that the countries of the region are in a position to take a wider view of the situation.

138. It is in that context that my delegation has commended the timely efforts of the Contadora Group of countries, consisting of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, to promote peace in the region through the process of dialogue. The members of the Group have consistently appealed for scrupulous observance of the principles that should govern relations among States in the region—namely, self-determination, non-interference in the affairs of other States, the obligation not to allow the territory of a State to be used to commit acts of aggression against other States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the prohibition of the threat or the use of force to resolve conflicts.

*Mr. Bwakira (Burundi), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

139. My delegation is particularly happy to note that the Security Council has lent its full support to the efforts of the Contadora Group. We hope and believe that the countries involved will co-operate fully with the Group, through a frank and constructive dialogue, with a view to resolving their differences peacefully. Bangladesh maintains friendly and cordial relations with the countries of the region and we are confident that they will overcome the present difficulties through their collective goodwill and self-restraint.

140. *Mr. de La BARRE de NANTEUIL (France) (interpretation from French):* The Central American region, which is beset by constant tensions and conflicts, is a source of disquiet to the international community.

141. The countries most directly affected by the deteriorating situation in that part of the world have proposed that a solution to the problems involved should be sought in the regional context. This initiative, which is to the credit of the four countries making up the Contadora Group, should enjoy the broadest possible support. France fully supports the efforts of that Group, whose action at the regional level is the most appropriate context for peaceful negotiations.

142. When considering this question in May 1983, the Security Council, in its resolution 530 (1983), unanimously expressed the desire that the Contadora Group should continue its efforts to find solutions to the problems of that region and urgently appealed to the interested States to co-operate fully with the Group, so as to resolve their differences.

143. Since then, owing largely to what has been done by the Contadora Group, progress has been achieved towards a peaceful settlement of the problems of Central America. Following the Cancún Declaration of 17 July last [*ibid.*], the Contadora Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the five Central American countries adopted a Document of Objectives.<sup>4</sup> France welcomes those results and hopes that the process that has been initiated will shortly yield tangible results. In this respect, we would ask all the parties to the conflict to make an additional effort to help the Contadora Group to implement the components of the document listing the objectives.

144. It is France's hope that all the countries of that region will be able to live in peace and security, free from foreign intervention or any attempts at destabilization. We support their legitimate right to independence and sovereignty, as well as the right to choose their own form of government freely and to determine their future, with respect for the concept of democratic pluralism.

145. *Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan):* The Assembly is now seized of a situation which has been a source of grave concern for many years. The situation in Central America, like those in many other hotbeds of tension in the world, is another manifestation of the imperialist policy of the use of force and intervention against other countries. This policy, which aims at forestalling the inevitable social upheavals in the region resulting from age-old dictatorial, repressive and exploitative régimes, as well as at subduing independent nations, has brought the whole region to the brink of all-out hostility and confrontation.

146. The peoples of Central America, which, like all other peoples in the world, have long-cherished aspirations to democracy, national independence, social justice and economic progress, have decided to do away with the imperialist, subservient, brutal and oppressive régimes imposed on them primarily through direct United States intervention.

147. Throughout these years, imperialism has been desperately trying to blame the creation of genuine national liberation movements in Central America on extraneous and external factors. The hard facts of life, however, have proven beyond any shadow of doubt that the struggles of the peoples of Central America are the outcome of unjust and exploitative systems and a natural and logical consequence of the contradictions between the social classes of those nations. All charges of "interference", "subversion", "exporting of revolution" and so forth—labels which the United States aggressors use against progressive countries of the area and other countries far away from the region—have thus failed to acquire the slightest validity.

148. In recent years, when the revolutionary struggle of Central American peoples has been gaining momentum, imperialists have escalated their attempts to suppress those movements and to keep in power the puppet régimes in those countries. Steady recourse to open interference and the use or threat of the use of force have become the manifest posture of the United States policy. Huge quantities of military hardware have been poured into the bloody hands of brutal dictators, and the effects have been manifested in the murder of thousands of civilians and acts of provocation and intimidation against peaceful neighbours.

149. The most brazen form of that policy is being carried out against revolutionary Nicaragua. The people of Nicaragua, who had smashed the shackles of a half-century dictatorship of the Somoza dynasty, were immediately considered by Washington as a thorn in the eye. The United States imperialist circles, which had militarily invaded Nicaragua three times in the past, in 1856, in 1912 and in 1926, embarked upon the new strategy of organizing, training, and arming of ex-Somozist counter-revolutionaries and dispatching them into Nicaragua from the territories of neighbouring countries for the purpose of subverting and destabilizing the young revolution of that country.

150. The United States, according to Congressman Ronald V. Dellums of California, has organized counter-revolutionary training camps in at least six States where scores of counter-revolutionary mercenaries undergo intensive guerrilla-warfare training. The United States has made no major effort to hide its heinous and sinister designs against Nicaragua. The heated debate over allocation of funds to finance the "covert" operations against Nicaragua have made an open secret of institutionalized intervention by the United States to subvert and ultimately overthrow the revolutionary order in Nicaragua. Only six days ago, a bill was passed in the United States Senate authorizing the allocation of \$19 million for the financing of the not so secret operations in Nicaragua. In a futile attempt to justify this action, Senator Malcolm Wallop, who managed the bill through the Senate, told the Senate that: "covert action is and always has been a tool of foreign policy and should remain one".

151. It is astonishing to note that the highest authority of the United States considers it to be its right to engage in illegal covert activities against other countries. In a recent news conference, President Reagan said:

"As long as there have been governments, there have been covert activities."

He continued:

"I do believe in the right of a country when it believes that its interests are best served to practice covert activity."

152. While shamelessly accusing the revolutionary forces in Central America "of shooting their way into power", the masters of the White House are arming to the teeth the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionary gangs to wage a war of attrition against the liberated people of Nicaragua.

153. The false and baseless United States argument that the waging of the undeclared war against Nicaragua is meant to force the Nicaraguan Government to engage in political negotiations with its neighbours could only fool the United States aggressive circles and their accomplices.

154. The assertion about forcing Nicaragua into diplomatic settlement was belied by none other than some very high-ranking United States officials, among them Under-Secretary of Defense Fred C. Ikle, who admitted that the Reagan Administration seeks military victory in Central America, not a negotiated settlement.

155. While the United States is busy putting stumbling blocks in the way of a settlement, the Government of Nicaragua gave its full support and consent to the proposals of the four member countries of the Contadora Group. It has taken even a further step by advancing a six-point peace proposal which the United States chose to ignore.

156. It has also been asserted by the United States that military pressure against Nicaragua will force that country to stop the alleged funnelling of arms into the hands of liberation movements in other neighbouring countries. United States Secretary of State George P. Shultz, in a

letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr. O'Neill, stated: "The United States-supported guerrilla attacks might lead the Sandinista Government to reconsider its pervasive intervention in the region."

157. With regard to the assertion on blocking alleged Nicaraguan assistance to the liberation movements in Central America, the United States Administration has so far failed to produce any credible evidence to that effect. In the absence of such evidence, even the hue and cry of the United States propaganda machine fell short of convincing anybody.

158. In a sheer act of hypocrisy and demagoguery, the United States claims that its actions are aimed at restoring democracy and human rights in that country and preserving them in other countries of the region. Such a claim can only invite laughter. For was it not the United States itself which kept in power, for more than half a century, the inhuman and bloodthirsty regime of Somoza in Nicaragua, which not only had no respect for democracy but was an outstanding symbol of repression and human rights violations in the world? Now that the people of Nicaragua have thrown off the yoke of imperialist domination and military dictatorship, the United States has filled the world with its hue and cry for democracy and human rights in that country.

159. Is it not the puppet régimes of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras which, fully relying on the political, financial and military support of their patrons in the United States, have terrorized the defenceless people of those countries with death squads and military gangsters?

160. The fact is that the United States is not the least interested in a political settlement in the region. Nor can its hypocritical concern for democracy and human rights deceive the international community. The arming of the dictatorships in the neighbouring countries, the establishment of huge military bases on the borders of Nicaragua, the conducting of war games close to its territory, the encirclement of that country by huge fleets, and its political and economic blackmail are, all in all, part and parcel of a unique plan to intimidate and crush the strong will of the Nicaraguan people who have courageously made great sacrifices to defend their independence.

161. Here I would like to quote a section of a study prepared by seven journalists of *Newsweek*, which was published in the 10 October issue of that magazine:

"The CIA agency has launched the massive campaign of espionage, air strikes, propaganda, and other support for a now notorious 'secret war' against the leftist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Clearly the cloaks and daggers have come out of cold storage at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia . . .".

The study continues:

"In one of the agency's most exposed undercover missions, covert operatives are spending an estimated \$80 million to direct a widespread war against the regime in Nicaragua, helping to supply some 10,000 troops in the field, conducting air strikes and espionage raids against installations within Nicaragua and masterminding a variety of propaganda activities to destabilize the Sandinistas. All this is coordinated from United States operational centers in Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador."

The United States Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission in El Salvador, Kenneth Bleakley, stated, "Our position is that we don't even acknowledge that the CIA is in operation in El Salvador."

The magazine continues:

"But several lower-ranking State Department officers with experience in the country say that the CIA

operations go far beyond the Nicaraguan effort to operations involving El Salvador itself—covert support for the country's weak political parties and electoral process and a 'propaganda and disinformation campaign' in the Salvadorian press aimed at 'convincing the civilian population that the guerrillas, not the Army, are the real bad guys'."

162. To the long, shameful record of interference, subversion, direct military intervention and aggression, perpetrated by this international hooligan and thug, namely United States imperialism, was added yet another blatant aggression against a very small and militarily weak nation, Grenada.

163. This ignominious act of international piracy, which was launched in arrogant violation of every single rule of law, promptly gave rise to strong condemnation and indignation by the world community. The United States left no room, even for those who harbour illusions about United States policies, to doubt that it does not feel itself bound by any principle of international conduct.

164. We reaffirm our strong condemnation of this United States act of lawlessness and associate ourselves with the call of the overwhelming majority of nations for the immediate withdrawal of the United States aggressive forces of occupation from that country.

165. The recent ominous developments in Central America and the Caribbean have caused legitimate concern in other independent small countries of the area. Economic and military pressures against the fraternal countries of Suriname and Guyana have escalated. According to the United States pattern of behaviour, those pressures constitute first steps towards more direct intervention and, ultimately, aggression.

166. While expressing our full solidarity with the peoples and Governments of Guyana, Suriname and other independent countries of the area, we warn against further imperialistic aggressive adventures in the region.

167. Our all-out support for and solidarity with the heroic people and Government of Cuba is further consolidated in the face of American threats to their security and independence. We hail their valiant struggle in the course of their 25-year revolution to preserve their freedom and stand by their internationalist principles against overwhelming odds.

168. To conclude, allow me to quote from the statement made by my Foreign Minister on 6 October 1983, in the course of the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly. He said:

"The situation in Central America has become a source of increasing concern, not only for the people of the region, but for the entire international community as well. That the main cause of tension and hostility in the area lies in the interventionist and aggressive policy of the United States is beyond question.

"...

"We reiterate our support for the initiative of the States members of the Contadora Group in finding an amicable and peaceful solution to the present situation in Central America." [21st meeting, paras. 101 and 105.]

And I would add, and now in the Caribbean.

169. Mr. FOUNGUI (Congo) (*interpretation from French*): The situation in Central America has deteriorated so rapidly that it now takes pride of place in the unfortunately too long list of sensitive points in the world. This dubious distinction is due above all to a dual misunderstanding, at once internal and external.

170. Internally, there has been misunderstanding when, instead of seeking to initiate a constructive dialogue

leading to the sort of dynamic action which could have "rooted out" entire segments of society, certain oligarchic authorities in Central America, such as that of Somoza, for a long time believed that they could base their principles for the management of society on anachronistic inertia, shameless corruption and open contempt for the fundamental aspirations of their peoples.

171. Once the machinery necessary for the elaboration of new solutions had been created, as in Nicaragua, something better than a further show of contempt, due basically to the hostile attitude of neighbours and foreign pressure and intervention, might have been expected.

172. To the mistrust of reactionary regimes fearing the righteous wrath of their peoples has been added the open hostility of some neighbours which no longer hesitate to resort to open aggression, disregarding fundamental principles of international law, in particular those of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, non-interference and the non-use of force in relations with other States as a means of settling disputes.

173. Central America is an integral part of the geographical and cultural subcontinent called Latin America, which comprises the southern part of this hemisphere as well as the Caribbean region. It is therefore difficult to look at the problems of this region out of their overall context, whatever approach we take in considering them.

174. One of the causes of controversy that was highlighted, in this connection, by the invasion of Grenada on 25 October—an invasion which my country condemned as a serious and unwarranted violation of the norms of international law—was the hypothesis of a world-wide conflict between what has been called "democracy" and the other system, which is described as "totalitarian".

175. The delegation of the Congo is not one of those that like to bandy about scholarly definitions of concepts such as democracy. Such an exercise is pointless not only in the light of the real substance of the needs and aspirations of most peoples but also and above all in the light of the fate reserved for this sorry democracy by those that are its main standard bearers.

176. Democracy cannot be measured simply by the option given to unscrupulous oligarchies to turn themselves into trade unions subject to orders from outside. There is certainly no more democracy in a society where the power of money reigns supreme than in those in which any other misused criterion determines the fate of individuals. If democracy has any attributes, these signify for us the right of each and every person to health, education, development and freedom. But what connotation can we give to democracy when those that are its most passionate advocates are the very ones that unblushingly support colonialist and racist regimes and violate with impunity the sacred right of peoples to self-determination and freely to choose their own future?

177. The relevant texts on which our Organization is founded enjoin upon all its Members the duty to refrain from restricting in any way the full exercise of freedom by a people or a State, and from the threat or use of force against another State with the purpose of changing its policies or obtaining from it concessions of any kind. Quite obviously, such behaviour would fall short of the ideals of the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant instruments, such as the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations [*resolution 2625 (XXV)*] or the 1981 Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States [*resolution 36/103, annex*].

178. The rejection inherent in any transgression of these rules is disquieting, not only because it is a return to the law of brute force, but above all because the immoderate use of force is almost exclusively visited on small, defenceless States.

179. It is heartening to note that the non-aligned movement has not shirked its duty to remain vigilant. In three of its most important meetings held this year it outlined the dangers that at present face the countries of Latin America, and more particularly those of Central America, and warned the forces most likely to disturb international peace and security in the area.

180. Last January at Managua, at an extraordinary Ministerial session devoted exclusively to the question of Central America, the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries indicated how important it was for the peoples and the States of that region to strengthen their unity so that they might better meet the challenges forced on them by the imperialism of Powers outside the region.

181. The Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, reiterated that concern and welcomed the idea of declaring Central America and the Caribbean a zone of peace.

182. Finally, more recently, from 4 to 7 October 1983, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegations of Non-Aligned Countries to the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly sounded the alarm at the ever more pointed, constantly reiterated threats against certain States, particularly Nicaragua and Grenada, in defiance of the right of every people to go its own way and to choose its own political, social and economic system.

183. At the present time extremely grave threats still loom over the horizons of certain Central American countries. If those threats were merely internal my delegation does not doubt for an instant that the peoples and the countries of the region would be able to resolve them by themselves, according to their own lights and in line with their own interests.

184. The Contadora Group—formed as a result of intrepid action by Mexico, Colombia, Panama and Venezuela—has for many months been evincing qualities which seem to us to be ideally suited to the style and methods which should be adopted by all sides in order to arrive at a settlement of the disputes and a lessening of tension in the region.

185. In his statement in the general debate on 10 October last, my country's Foreign Minister paid a well-deserved tribute to those efforts, when he said that:

“The initiatives and efforts of the Contadora Group are clear evidence of the ability of the countries of the region to resolve their differences themselves through dialogue and negotiation. To us those efforts testify to faithfulness to the basic principles of international law concerning mutual respect, non-interference and the non-use of force.

“The Congo hopes that those principles will prevail in settling the question of the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands, in ending the blockade of which Cuba is a victim and in removing the pressures being applied against Nicaragua, Grenada and Suriname.” [28th meeting, paras. 28 and 29.]

186. Now that some of those threats have ceased to be merely potential and have become a reality of the most brutal sort, Congo, which is a staunch advocate of mutual tolerance and good-neighbourliness, wishes once again to voice its conviction that it is the paramount duty of all those who can bring any sort of influence to bear in

the return of peace and harmony to Central America to provide—for the sake of the present and the future of that region—an atmosphere free from ill-will and mistrust.

187. The history of interventionism must not repeat itself endlessly in contempt of fundamental ethical considerations. To quote my Foreign Minister, once again, speaking at the aforementioned meeting:

“It is clear that as long as social peace is not encouraged in most of the countries in the region by a speedy response to the most elementary aspirations of the peoples concerned, and as long as the tragedy of the exploited social classes is analysed in terms of the cold war or ideological influences, we are right to fear a worsening of the situation and an extension of the conflicts, which the demonstrations of military power one sees in the region will do nothing to help resolve . . .” [*ibid.*, para. 27].

188. My delegation would like to call on all the parties involved in the situation in Central America to display the necessary willingness to help bring about an atmosphere conducive to dialogue and negotiation, which is the only viable alternative for us all, with full respect for the identity of each country in the region. We were pleased to learn that Nicaragua has made offers along these lines and in accordance with the spirit of the Cancún declaration issued this year by the Contadora Group, to which the Nicaraguan Government has already responded positively by putting forward its six-point peace proposal.

189. That same optimism makes us hope that the United States of America and other neighbouring States will unhesitatingly support the search for peace by joining in these courageous initiatives, without any pointless preconditions, and by resolving once and for all to bring about a cease-fire.

190. There is still time to avoid the point of no return for Central America, and that is the ardent desire of Congo.

191. Mr. MUÑIZ (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The situation in Central America is of very special concern to Argentina, because of the historical, geographical and cultural ties and those of blood and friendship that bind us to that region's peoples and Governments.

192. The causes of the present situation are very complex and find their roots in the history of Central America. Today those same causes are flourishing with such intensity that there is reason for fear about the peace and security of the region. The anachronistic social and political situations that exist in some parts of Central America and the need to modify them have been and are among the main reasons for the very often violent changes which have occurred recently in the area.

193. The solution of the problems in the region requires political will, dialogue, commitment and respect for the right of the Central American peoples to live in peace and prosperity. It requires also an encouraging international climate.

194. The Charter of the United Nations and that of the Organization of American States—to which all Central American States have subscribed—set forth principles which constitute appropriate instruments in these circumstances.

195. We advocate strict implementation of the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of the States of the region. This takes on special importance if we are to prevent the conflict spreading beyond the region, which would heighten tensions and increase the danger

of conflagration. Military intervention from outside the region forms a painful chapter in the history of Central America, and is another factor which has contributed to the existence of the unjust political and social order to which I have already referred.

196. I am honoured to be able to recall here the basic role played in the past by Argentine statesmen in the legal formulation of these principles, from the time that Carlos Calvo formulated his doctrine based on the national sovereignty and equality of States.

197. Roque Sáenz Peña, who participated in the first Inter-American Conference, held in 1889, underscored the solidarity among our countries "in that it represents unassailable respect for sovereignty, harmony and friendship among all the States of the continent"; Honorio Pueyrredón, at the sixth Pan-American Conference, stated in categorical and precise terms that "the sovereignty of States consists in absolute right, in complete internal autonomy, and in total external independence . . . If that right is not consecrated and practised in absolute form, international legal harmony cannot exist."

198. Carlos Saavedra Lamas, a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, said, in his closing statement as Chairman of the special Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, that the principle that no State has the right to intervene directly or indirectly in the internal or external affairs of other States was a significant gain for international co-existence.

199. We are convinced that scrupulous respect for the principle of non-intervention is the necessary first step for bringing peace to Central America.

200. Another essential element in attaining that objective is negotiation as a form of settlement of disputes, without resort to force or the threat of force among sister nations. Its corollary is to prevent the development of an arms race in the context of an ideological confrontation among the main centres of power.

201. It is also necessary to increase international co-operation for the region to ensure the well-being and prosperity of the people of the area and social justice and security, which are the bases of a lasting peace. As long as poverty and illiteracy exist, as long as there are no prospects of a worthy present and a better future for each and every Central American, the virus of violence will continue to break out in ever more threatening forms.

202. There are still reasons for hope and one of them, the strongest, is the initiative of the countries of the Contadora Group, which are ideally situated to play a fundamental role of peace and conciliation.

203. The Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America, issued on 17 July this year [A/38/303], constitutes a proposal for a specific plan of action to bring peace to the area and guarantee the strengthening of the integration machinery, the increase of intrazonal trade, industrial complementarity, and so on. This clearly proves that Latin American problems can and must be resolved from a Latin American standpoint.

204. With regard to the Powers outside the region, we agree with what is set out in the Cancún Declaration in the sense that it is necessary "that other States with interests in and ties to the region should use their political influence in helping to strengthen the channels of understanding and should unreservedly commit themselves to the diplomatic approach to peace."

205. We urge the Central American countries to solve their differences peacefully and through negotiation, rejecting direct or indirect interference in their internal affairs.

206. We reiterate our support and thanks to the countries of the Contadora Group for the steps they have taken and which we regard as the sole appropriate way to settle the issue. Geography and history have placed the Central American countries together and peaceful co-existence is essential for their development.

207. We hope that this General Assembly debate on the situation in Central America will have positive effects and contribute to détente in the region. We likewise trust that the expressions of solidarity with the Central American nations that we are repeating today will help them find the peace and progress they deserve.

208. Mr. AMEGA (Togo) (*interpretation from French*): Threats to international peace and security, wherever they occur, have always been the subject of grave concern to the Government of Togo, which believes that peace is essential to safeguard the independence and fundamental freedoms of all States and peoples. My country, once again, cannot look on with indifference at the deterioration of the situation in Central America, and this is the reason why agenda item 142, entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives" has been included in the General Assembly's agenda.

209. This situation of a complex tragedy featuring in turn arms salesmen, diplomats and politicians, is the result of the refusal of all concerned to respect the fundamental principles that should govern relations among States, principles which, moreover, are those enshrined in the Charter of the Organization to which we all belong. Certain countries of that region arrogate to themselves the right to police other people's countries, using violence in defiance of those principles, forgetting that violence merely begets violence and is a grave danger to international peace and security.

210. Togo, a profoundly peace-loving country, believes that relations among States must be based on respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State, on the principles of non-interference, good-neighbourliness, the non-use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is the violation of these principles that is at the root of the hotbeds of tension that exist in most parts of the world as a whole, and in Central America in particular.

211. Moreover, in the view of the Government of Togo, all peoples must be free to voice their political options without any foreign interference. This should apply to the case of the Nicaraguan people who, by overthrowing the dictatorial Somoza regime, proved their attachment to the idea of freedom, which they are now trying to apply under the regime they have chosen.

212. The States of the region in question, feeling threatened in the exercise of their attributes of sovereignty, and impelled by the danger looming over them, have not hesitated to invoke the direct or indirect protection of other friendly countries, with the sole aim of safeguarding the freedom won at the price of countless sacrifices. It is because unfortunately hostilities are taking place, because States refuse to respect the noble principles of our Charter, because the national independence is under threat, that alliances are entered in line with the interests concerned. Those alliances have proved to be, for their signatories, imperatives dictated by the threats facing them. Only an end to those threats can transform the nature of those alliances.

213. One of the consequences of those alliances is the intensive deployment of weapons on both sides as if to prove the superiority of one and the ability to retaliate of the other. The whole of Central America, as well as

other regions of the world, has thus been flooded with all sorts of weapons, at a time when the United Nations is calling for arms reductions in order to benefit development programmes. The arms race in Central America is thus becoming a kind of madness that is proving hard to reconcile with the urgent requirements of development.

214. The tragedy being enacted in Nicaragua by force of arms should remind all States Members that the Organization to which we belong came into being in the aftermath of one of the deadliest conflicts in the history of mankind with the purpose of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Our presence here in this Hall should remind us that we all belong to an Organization that has laid down principles the implementation of which should lead to the creation of a universal society, one in which fundamental human rights, dignity, equality, justice, freedom and brotherhood prevail.

215. Can we stand by, erring either through commission or omission, while those fine principles—principles in which unhappy humanity has placed its faith and without which the law of the jungle, as is the case today in Central America, would prevail—are relegated to the rubbish heap? It is time for the guns to be silenced in Nicaragua. It is time for the guns to be silenced in all of Central America.

216. The paths towards a cessation of hostilities must involve strict respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, a respect that must proceed from the genuine desire of the parties concerned to settle their differences. Here it should be emphasized that at the present time negotiations are the sole path towards a solution to the problem. Such negotiations could be held within OAS, the counterpart of the Organization of African Unity, which has so often been asked to help to resolve conflicts between African States, under the aegis of the Contadora Group or on a bilateral basis. Pending an acceptable solution, it is imperative that all hostilities cease forthwith and that contact be maintained between the various parties to the conflict.

217. We would like to welcome as extremely positive the efforts made by the Contadora Group, whose members have drawn up a list of the ways and means of achieving a genuine peace in Central America. We hope that, given goodwill, the States of the region will manage to establish peace, democracy, security, stability and co-operation in the interest of their economic and social development.

218. I cannot conclude this statement without once again referring to the wise words of the Founder of the Rally of the Togolese People and President of the Republic of Togo, Mr. Gnassingbe Eyadéma, who stated:

“The people of Togo cherishes for itself and for all nations an ardent desire for peace and progress. That peace must be a genuine peace and must help to promote the effective emancipation of our various nations. That is why Togo, given the serious disturbances of our era and the threat to international equilibrium, has always had recourse to fraternal dialogue and lasting co-operation in the peaceful search for just solutions to the unhappy conflicts that shake our world and cause daily losses of human life.”

219. My delegation urges all the States of Central America concerned to engage in such a dialogue in order that that region may become a zone of peace in which national antagonisms will be subsumed in a common brotherhood for the salvation of our suffering humanity.

220. Mr. GAUCI (Malta): It has been over 18 months since details of the serious situation in Central America

were first brought to the attention of the Assembly. If the situation was uneasy then, it is even more alarming now.

221. Over that period an avalanche of documents and newspaper reports have done full justice to the complex situation in the region and to the concerns of all the countries involved.

222. My delegation, therefore, does not wish further to expand on what has already been fully stated by earlier speakers more intimately knowledgeable about the region. We do not wish to indulge in selective quotations from an over-abundance of sources. But we do wish to share the concerns—the real concerns and the genuine fears—expounded by the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua in his statement at the 47th meeting opening our discussion of this item.

223. In particular, we note with regret that the preoccupations which he expressed on the very first occasion upon which he addressed the Assembly have not abated. On the contrary, against the background of the series of events in the region, culminating in the most recent, those fears and preoccupations have, unfortunately, become more acute. The reassurances that Nicaragua originally sought have not yet been forthcoming.

224. The Assembly attempted to analyse the situation in its first debate on the item. The aspiration of Nicaragua at that time was, as it remains today, to embark upon a popular process of nation-building and reconciliation, free from outside pressure. The constant fears, the threats, and even the actual attacks to which the Nicaraguans are subjected, prevent them from carrying out that policy and from devoting attention to such other national priorities as social and electoral reform. The pressure to which Nicaragua is being subjected is probably the main cause of the lack of progress in other sectors that an outside Power is accusing Nicaragua of neglecting.

225. It was revealing in this connection that on 20 December 1982, in an interview in *Le Monde*, the Minister of the Interior of Nicaragua announced that his Government was studying electoral systems in order to determine which structure was most suitable for his country. Subsequently, however, for reasons which become very clear from a perusal of a random selection of recent newspaper articles—such as the one that appeared in yesterday's edition of *The New York Times*—national survival became Nicaragua's national priority.

226. A ray of hope was engendered in our debate nearly ten months ago when the Foreign Ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela first met to begin a process which they sincerely hoped would lead to a rapid decrease of tension in Central America. The Ministers, meeting on the Panamanian island of Contadora, agreed upon “the need to intensify the dialogue at the Latin American level as an effective means of confronting the political, economic and social problems which are jeopardizing the peace, democracy, stability and development” [see A/38/68, annex] of the region. They expressed concern over intervention in the area and stated that it would be “undesirable that those conflicts should be included in the context of east-west confrontation” [*ibid.*].

227. The international community naturally backed and encouraged those objectives which were subsequently incorporated in resolution 530 (1983) unanimously adopted by the Security Council. Since then further efforts have been made, both by individual countries—and prominently by Nicaragua, which ardently seeks dialogue with all its neighbours near and far—and by the Contadora Group.



228. On 18 October, in fact, a comprehensive Document of Objectives agreed to by consensus was submitted to the Secretary-General by the Ministers of the Contadora Group and of the five Central American countries.<sup>4</sup> That document sets out the main objectives that are indispensable to enable the countries of the region to live in peace and security, free from foreign interference.

229. It is a sad reflection on our times, I submit, that these principles need to be repeated, stressed and reaffirmed, each one being equally important. Among those given prominence were the self-determination of peoples; non-intervention; the sovereign equality of States; the peaceful settlement of disputes; refraining from the threat or use of force; respect for the territorial integrity of States; pluralism in its various manifestations; full support for democratic institutions; the promotion of social justice; international co-operation for development; respect for and promotion of human rights and the prohibition of terrorism and subversion.

230. Those principles and guidelines cannot but engender universal support. They are the best prescription for peace.

231. My Government therefore continues to place its faith in the work of the Contadora Group and gives it full encouragement as a promising regional approach. We also add our voice to those urging all countries, irrespective of size or ideological persuasion, strictly and fully to abide by these principles, even when the most unselfish motives of philosophical purity or brotherly solidarity would seem to counsel otherwise. It is now necessary to proceed from enunciation of objectives to their practical implementation.

232. Nicaragua—like all other developing countries throughout the world—primarily needs understanding and assistance. It cannot be arbitrarily excluded from the regional development process. Teachers, doctors, nurses, social workers and other experts are always welcome. Heavily armed mercenaries and other associated agents of death are not and can never be. In the same vein, more can be obtained by friendly co-operation than by armed destabilization.

233. Mr. OGOUMA (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation welcomes the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly. For some time now Central America and the neighbouring region of the Caribbean have been a veritable powder-keg, the explosion of which threatens to set alight the entire area and to endanger international peace and security.

234. That was why, as early as March 1983, the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, meeting at New Delhi, expressed their concern at the threats of all kinds facing the countries of the region. Thus they took note "that Central America faced a serious political, social and economic crisis brought about for the most part by the traditional repressive power structure and by national economic structures that produce poverty, inequality and misery and aggravated by the interference and intervention to which those countries have been subjected since the end of the last century." [A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, sect. I, para. 134.]

235. That observation, made at the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, at New Delhi, is unfortunately even more applicable today. Indeed, despite the commendable efforts made by the Heads of State of Latin America to assist in the establishment of an honourable lasting peace in the region, it can be said without fear of contradiction that the

situation is steadily deteriorating owing to the clear manifestation of a desire for power and international imperialism's grip on the political decision-making mechanisms and economic and social development structures of the countries of the region.

236. In that part of the world tension persists and there is an increasing risk of conflict, despite the repeated appeals of the international community for negotiations and the efforts made by certain countries to ensure the preservation of peace.

237. My delegation welcomes the six-point proposal made by the Nicaraguan Government and the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America, and reaffirms its militant support for the peace initiatives undertaken by the Contadora Group, convinced as we are that the solution of the regional problems can be found not through military confrontation but through political negotiations among all the parties concerned.

238. That is why my delegation subscribed to the desire expressed by the ministerial meeting of non-aligned countries held here in New York from 4 to 7 October during the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, including the emphasis on the need to ensure the security of all the States of Central America by the conclusion of a treaty on non-aggression and non-interference between States of the region and other interested countries. This appeal by the non-aligned movement must be heeded by all countries of the world, and in particular those with special relations with the countries of the region.

239. The peoples of Central America, like all peoples of the world, aspire to peace and security and they want to forge their own future in complete freedom and independence, through harmonious social and economic development. This is an inalienable right which should be recognized by the entire international community. To act otherwise would be to help sustain or create hotbeds of tension in the area. To act otherwise would be to help perpetuate a policy of domination and hegemonism, which peoples that cherish peace and justice—like the peoples of Central America—cannot accept. The position of Benin is quite clear on this question and it was stated in the Assembly on 17 October this year, as follows:

"no nation, large or small, has the right to interfere and become involved in the internal affairs of another country or to try to impose on another country its views or a course of conduct other than the one that that country has chosen for itself." [32nd meeting, para. 76.]

240. Our Organization, in order to accomplish the noble task it has set itself since San Francisco, must reaffirm its condemnation of recourse to the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any State. The violation of that principle leads to unacceptable intervention and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

241. The recent events in Grenada, the threat to destabilize Nicaragua and the situation in El Salvador and other countries of the region are sinister illustrations of this policy. There is a real danger that the recent military invasion of Grenada by foreign troops, which the world has witnessed with indignation, might spread further. In this connection, my delegation will support all measures taken by our Organization to reduce the tension in the area and restore peace to the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean, to which it offers the militant support of Benin.

242. The peoples of the Central American States, like all other peoples of the world, must be free to choose the economic and social system they desire. In stating this, my delegation is simply reaffirming the universally accepted principles of the Charter of our Organization

and the inalienable principles of the non-aligned movement—of which my country, the People's Republic of Benin, is a member—on which our foreign policy is based. This means that Benin is a pawn in nobody's hands and submits to none. Benin is a non-aligned sovereign State and intends to remain the master of its own destiny.

243. Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu): Vanuatu is a small South Pacific nation that geographically speaking is very far from Central America. In a sense it is true that, as others have said, our region is relatively calm, peaceful and very far removed from most of the areas of seemingly never-ending conflict in this very complex and troubled world of ours.

244. In the ideal world that we would wish for, all regions would enjoy the relative quiet and harmony that our region enjoys. However, the world is certainly not ideal, and even the quiet and harmony which we enjoy are not absolutes, but are instead relative to conditions existing in other regions with which we are all painfully very familiar.

245. If we had our choice and if the world were ideal, we would all be gathered here today to pay a tribute to a medical research team which had just discovered a cure for cancer, heart disease, sickle cell anaemia or some other dreaded ailment. Alternatively, we might be gathered here today to honour some individual or institution which had developed a less costly and more efficient way to feed the world's hungry children or to house the world's homeless.

246. Unfortunately, we have not yet, as a race—the human race—progressed to that point. We still gather here primarily to denounce rather than to carry on dialogue. We still gather here primarily to rationalize our own preconceived prejudices rather than to listen and resolve or to search for new solutions. We still gather here primarily in response to bellicose military posturing, rather than in response to the pleas and prayers for peace with which all of our children—East and West, North and South—end their busy little days and drift off to sleep after having been tucked into bed.

247. Vanuatu's size, location and limited resources mandate an economy of words and energy which compel us to pick and choose very carefully the issues on occasions on which we speak. We have neither the opportunity nor the inclination to engage in every debate, or even in most debates, on the lengthy agenda of this body.

248. Why, then, some may ask, has Vanuatu chosen to participate in this particular debate? Is not Central America too far away? Is not this an emotion-charged issue? Has not the debate been full of bitter accusations, claims and counter-claims? Has not the rhetoric of this debate escalated dangerously beyond the point of reason? Have not some suggested that small countries, particularly those that are not of the region, have no business participating in debates of this sort, where the interests of larger countries are involved?

249. Those who suggest that smaller States need not concern themselves with this issue because a large country is an interested party misread the Charter of this great Organization. We have examined every page and every Article of the Charter. Nowhere within it do we find any admonition that small countries must not discuss issues which larger countries are involved in. In fact, it is ironic that those that decry the participation of smaller countries in debates of this sort have on other occasions used smaller countries for their own purposes.

250. It is because of the current international situation and, particularly, the emotion-charged atmosphere and rhetoric of this debate that we have not only a right, but

also an obligation to speak. We are not here today to confront or embarrass the delegation of any other nation. We seek to court no one's favour, nor to incur anyone's wrath. We speak here today for posterity, on behalf of Vanuatu's people, on behalf of reason and rationality, and on behalf of the Charter and the rule of law.

251. This debate on Central America cannot be considered in isolation from other international events. It most certainly cannot be considered outside the context of recent events in Grenada. The foreign military intervention in Grenada has contributed to fear for the future role of international rules of conduct. Who among us can deny that fact?

252. In examining the situation in Grenada, we believe that one thing should be paramount—international law. The deaths of Maurice Bishop, his colleagues and other citizens of Grenada were certainly a great tragedy. However, it was also an internal political matter and one which unfortunately was not without precedent in far too many other countries on other occasions.

253. Abhorrent as things might have become in Grenada, and anguished as its neighbours might have been, the fact remains that nations, like individuals, must not take the law into their own hands. We, the nations of the world, stand for nothing if we do not stand for the rule of law.

254. In none of our societies do we encourage individual citizens to take the law into their own hands, no matter how seriously they have been injured or sinned against. Much less do we encourage such action when individual citizens are merely frightened in real or imagined anticipation of some future breach of the law by another party.

255. How, then, can we condone the taking of the law into its own hands by any State or group of States? To accept such vigilante action is to court and encourage disregard of the rule of law which the founders of the United Nations laboured so tirelessly to establish and to institutionalize.

256. We are not authorities on Grenada, so we cannot profess to know what is best for its people, or even what they themselves want. We will not discuss the many political questions raised by the military intervention. We will not even ask why a coup against a South American Government 10 years earlier, the murder of its elected President, and the actual and intentional killing of citizens of the United States prompted nothing even remotely like the military intervention in Grenada.

257. We will not even question whether or not Grenada is guilty of all that it has been accused of. For the sake of argument, we will even assume that Grenada is guilty as now charged. Let us do so even though the charges and the alleged evidence have been produced after the punishment has already been administered. Let us not quibble over these technical details.

258. The fact remains that, even if we accept everything we have been told, Grenada broke no known international law. When did it become a violation of international law for a country to build an airport on its own territory? It does not matter whether the airport is civil or military. When did it become a violation of international law for a country to employ or utilize within its own territory, doctors, schoolteachers, construction workers, or even military advisers from another country?

259. When did it become a violation of international law to have a stockpile of weapons? This allegation alone is surprising, as many nations are known to have weapons and munitions far in excess of what they can ever use—“above all: to thine own self be true”.

260. Lay aside for the moment our own preferences and prejudices. Let us pause to think of the broader implications. Can anyone here today state with certainty that his or her country is not also in danger under the precedent established by the intervention in Grenada?

261. It is against this backdrop that we must now examine the situation in Central America. Nicaragua's fears of invasion cannot legitimately be dismissed as misguided paranoia. These fears have been fed and nurtured by innuendo, support for covert operations and now the open invasion of Grenada.

262. We cannot pass judgement on whether the Government of Nicaragua has lived up to, or will live up to, its promises to its people. This is something that is best left to the people of that country to decide for themselves. There is probably not a Government in the world which can claim to have lived up to all of its promises. If there is, it probably made no promises to begin with.

263. Nicaragua, having just emerged from perhaps the most difficult period of its history, is now in the process of choosing a path of development based upon its experiences. We must assume that its choice will be one which will benefit its people, given their present conditions. Some may not agree with that choice, but all must concede that Nicaragua, just like any other State, has the right to make that determination for itself. Having struggled to achieve that right, only the people of Nicaragua have the right to make that determination with respect to their country. It remains for them to either advance or reverse the historical processes at work in their land, and we must add that the same can be said for their neighbours or for any other country.

264. It would be remiss of us, however, if we were to overlook the allegations that have been made with respect to the treatment of Nicaragua's indigenous native American Indian population. Once again we will not attempt to pass judgement here today. Suffice it to say that these are very serious allegations which trouble us deeply.

265. In fairness to Nicaragua, however, one cannot help but note the context in which these accusations have been made. Perhaps there is a problem. We are not aware of Nicaragua's Government ever claiming that it had already succeeded in resolving every contradiction it had inherited and that it had now created a perfect social order.

266. In addition, who among us can profess to know of a single nation in the western hemisphere where the treatment of native American Indians has not been one of mankind's most profound tragedies? Perhaps this subject should some day be considered on its own and in its broader historical and hemispheric context. It should certainly not now distract us from our responsibilities as Members of the world body.

267. The essence of our responsibilities is not to seek individually to impose any set of values upon an internationally recognized State, but rather to bring some sense of order to the relations between States and thereby preserve world peace and security. These tasks are difficult enough without any individual State arrogating to itself the task of being the final arbiter of words and concepts as susceptible of differing interpretations as "freedom", "justice", "equality" and "human rights".

268. There are six nations in Central America, not five as some have mistakenly stated. Although their histories and their futures are no doubt intertwined, each is free to choose its own path of social and economic development. They share a common need for peace, however, to pursue their goals.

269. Without peace, their fragile economies can certainly not generate or sustain the growth and stability

needed to bring a better life to their people. In this sense Central America is no different from any other part of this globe. We therefore join with others in supporting the Contadora initiative and believe that it will become a model for similar approaches in other regions. The Contadora Group faces a difficult task. We therefore must all avoid exacerbating the situation, if we can, and lend them our support.

270. Central America's people have already endured many lifetimes of suffering. What the future will bring they themselves will determine.

271. A bitter and costly war is raging in El Salvador and threatens to embroil the entire region. Naturally, most people would have preferred to see that country's social transformation take place without violence. However, some are so opposed to even the most fundamental reforms that they do not hesitate to do violence to even their own humanity in erecting road-blocks to human progress and dignity.

272. There will not be an easy solution in El Salvador, but we must bear in mind that the men and women who call themselves revolutionaries in that country are motivated by love and not by hatred. They love their country and their families. How else could they endure what they endure? How else could they have survived this long? By now even their adversaries recognize that they are no one's proxies and that they will continue their resistance. Fortunately, there is still a faint glimmer of hope, as they have still not closed the door to a negotiated settlement. It is still not too late, if someone can be found for them to negotiate with.

273. The breakdown of internal law and order in El Salvador and Guatemala and the existence of Fascist-minded death squads in those countries are frightening developments. No one is immune. Priests, nuns, teachers, doctors, peasants, women, children, Indians and businessmen have all been victims. In some cases, even the diplomatic representatives of countries which support these Governments have been threatened.

274. Thousands of refugees have fled to Belize, a Central American country which, incidentally, has been threatened from this very rostrum by one of its neighbours which still refuses to recognize that country as an independent State. Imagine for a moment how dangerous the precedent of Grenada is for the people of Belize. Conversely, we must ask, can Grenada's neighbours claim to have been more threatened than Belize?

275. Fortunately for those of us who still believe in the letter and spirit of international law, the United Kingdom has played a very constructive role in helping to preserve Belize's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Thus, the preservation of the independence of this small Central American State, which is also a member of the Caribbean Community and the Commonwealth, shows that there are ways to meet the legitimate security concerns of threatened States within the limits of international law. Fortunately we can also note that not every Guatemalan harbours the illusion of conquering Belize.

276. A system of law must be consistent in both its pronouncements and its application. We cannot have one set of laws for some and another set of laws for others. If pre-emptive defensive strikes are legitimate in the Caribbean, then they are legitimate in the Middle East. If threats to subvert Governments through covert operations are legitimate in Central America, then they are legitimate in southern Africa.

277. What distinguishes the United Nations from previous international bodies is that all the nations of the

world have made a commitment to certain legal absolutes. We have all agreed to abide by certain legal principles.

278. All of us have not always kept our word. We have not always respected the rule of law. East and West, North and South, far too often abiding by the law has increasingly become a matter of convenience or expediency.

279. Now, in Central America, we have another chance to demonstrate our adherence to certain legal principles. We have another chance to act as if we have faith in ourselves.

280. After all, what is this law of which we speak? It is the law which governs the conduct of nations and will determine the course of our future existence. It is the law which we abide by even when we may not want to or when it may not be expedient. The law is a living, breathing thing; it is a constant; it is always there. It is not something to be forgotten or ignored at will. It is not this building or the symbols of the United Nations. The law is not what any one country or group of countries says it is. It is not some abstract principle or just a group of words found in a book called the Charter. The law of nations or international law is us, all of us. We, the nations of the world, are that law. We must nurture it, preserve it, respect it and abide by it, in Central America, in the Caribbean and in the rest of the world.

281. Mr. KURODA (Japan): The Government of Japan is greatly concerned about the situation in the Central American region. It has been following closely recent developments in Central America and my delegation has listened with keen interest to the statements made by previous speakers on the current item.

282. As for the problems confronting the international community in Central America at this time, Japan maintains the position that the States in and around Central America should themselves work together, within the regional framework, to restore peace and stability to the region. It is our belief that long-term solutions to the problems there will be found only if economic development is achieved and social justice promoted on the basis of free and democratic institutions. To this end, Japan for its part has been extending considerable economic assistance to the countries in the region. Nevertheless, my Government realizes that the slow and painstaking process of economic and social development will not be possible unless peace and stability prevail in the region.

*Mr. Illueca (Panama) resumed the Chair.*

283. Accordingly the Government of Japan pays a high tribute to the members of the Contadora Group, that is, the Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, for the valuable efforts they have been making since early this year towards the restoration of peace and stability in Central America. We particularly welcome their adoption on 17 July of the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America [A/38/303], which, in addition to setting out guidelines for the negotiating process, outlines a programme to be proposed to the countries of Central America which would require strict compliance with the essential principles governing international relations. The Declaration also calls for

“the conclusion of agreements and political commitments that will lead, region-wide, to effective control of the arms race; the elimination of foreign advisers; the creation of demilitarized zones; the prohibition of the use of the territory of some States for the development of political or military destabilization actions in other States; the eradication of transit of and traffic in arms; and the prohibition of other forms of aggression

or interference in the internal affairs of any country in the area.”

284. Moreover, we regard as a significant step forward the agreement reached in September by nine Latin American States on a Document of Objectives which, based on the Cancún Declaration, contains principles for attaining peace in the region. My Government earnestly hopes that the members of the Contadora Group and other States concerned will work to expedite the attainment of those objectives so that lasting peace can be restored to the region. Only then will the countries of Central America be able to concentrate their energies and resources on the economic and social development which their peoples so urgently desire.

285. In concluding my remarks today, I wish to express the hope that this body will refrain from taking any measures which could in any way hamper the valuable work of the Contadora Group.

286. Mr. LEGWAILA (Botswana): Bombs are exploding everywhere. Every region of our troubled world is in turmoil. Be it in southern Africa, the Middle East, South-East and South-West Asia, Central America, the Caribbean—there is bloodshed everywhere. Everywhere our earth is soaked to saturation with the sacred blood of hundreds of thousands of innocent victims of political circumstances—men, women and children caught up in all manner of conflicts and struggles, ranging from wasteful and diabolical struggles for ideological hegemony to genuine wars of liberation. None of us is safe any more. There is no place to hide, particularly for the weak and powerless, for the powerful have arrogated to themselves the right to decide unilaterally the destinies of the weak; with impunity, the weak have been trampled underfoot, bullied into submission and reduced to a life of servitude. There is suffering and misery everywhere.

287. The people of Central America have not been spared this suffering and misery born of perpetual conflict and strife. Coming as I do from southern Africa, where conflict and strife have become part of the lives of the people of our region, it is easier for us to share the concerns and anxieties of the people of Central America. In many ways the political problems which beset our two regions are similar. In southern Africa a brutal and tyrannical racial oligarchy terrorizes millions of our people in South Africa and Namibia, while in Central America a few pockets of feudal tyrannies persist in denying their victims their God-given right to live in freedom and peace in their own countries.

288. Central America, like southern Africa, has also fallen victim to the destabilizing activities of a powerful neighbour. Nicaragua, in particular, has become the focal point of dissident subversion fuelled, overtly and covertly, by the support given to the dissidents by that powerful neighbour. We find it incredible and inexplicable that the United States should in such a calculated manner go out of its way to ensure that Nicaragua in particular should be so thoroughly infested with dissident movements as to be denied the right to enjoy peace and the opportunity to concentrate its efforts and energies on the rehabilitation of the economy of the country in the wake of a protracted and destructive war against the murderous Somoza regime.

289. And yet Nicaragua has repeatedly pleaded for peace with the United States and all its neighbours. In a communiqué dated 20 July 1983, addressed to the President of the Security Council, the representative of Nicaragua stated “Peace in Central America can become a reality only in so far as respect is maintained for the fundamental principles of coexistence among nations . . .”<sup>6</sup>

290. Botswana supports the laudable peace initiative of the Contadora Group. It is quite clear that there will be no peace in Central America unless the countries of the region are prepared to sit down at a conference table to iron out their differences. Neither the swarm of dissident movements spawned to destabilize Nicaragua or any other country in Central America and the Caribbean nor periodic invocations of imminent threats of invasion will bring peace to the region. On the contrary, dissident movements are not agents of peace but harbingers of war, conflict and misery. Surely, the United States, as a big Power in this hemisphere, would not want consciously and deliberately to be responsible for the creation of a chaotic situation in its own backyard.

291. We must reassert the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States. Surely even the smallest country in this world deserves the right to organize its own society as it sees fit. *Cuba* would have thought—indeed we take it for granted—that the socio-political system obtaining in Nicaragua, as in any other country in Central America, is none of anybody else's business. Nicaragua has every right to espouse communism or any other ideology if it is the free choice of its people to espouse such an ideology. This is what democracy is all about; it is freedom to choose one's way of life without interference.

292. We see no hope for peace in Central America outside the framework of a shared commitment by all the countries in the region to respect one another's boundaries and to recognize one another's right to live in peace. The four points proposed by Nicaragua for consideration by the countries of the region are, in our view, a step in the right direction in the search for peace in Central America. These points offer the countries of that region a rare opportunity to arrest the dangerous drift towards chaos in the region.

293. Mr. CASSANDRA (Sao Tome and Principe): It is becoming more and more evident that the situation in Central America has worsened with the invasion of Grenada, the precedent of which might serve as a way of testing public opinion for a future military adventure against Nicaragua. Who knows what would happen in a country besieged by another with a different political and social system? The situation is posing a serious threat to the stability of the region and is rapidly assuming international proportions, with consequences that no one can foresee.

294. This year alone the Security Council has met three times to deal with the problem and yet tension in the area continues to increase and the circle of violence keeps getting wider and wider. Regrettably, the parties in dispute are not talking to each other, and my delegation hopes that a sane and rational solution will be found before it is too late. For these reasons we welcome the discussion of the problem once more by the General Assembly, hoping that we shall reach some kind of understanding, agreeable to all the parties, which will pull us away from the edge of the abyss.

295. The world community cannot afford to remain silent or indifferent to the continuous escalation of violence, to this unending use of force to solve regional conflicts, in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, which explicitly asks Member States to refrain from the threat or use of force to solve international disputes.

296. My Government firmly believes that the problem in Central America is basically caused by poverty. Years of neglect, dictatorship and deprivation have culminated in a hotbed of tension, frustration and despair which has

led the population in some of those countries to demand a fair share of the meagre resources available. The problem, I repeat, is socio-economic and therefore cannot be solved by resorting to military means, covert operations, destabilization and imperialist intervention. The people of the region should be left in peace to determine their own destiny and find solutions to their economic plight.

297. Based on these arguments, the people and Government of Sao Tome and Principe support the Cancún Declaration, formulated by the Governments of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela, and the Document of Objectives later ratified by other countries of the region.

298. It is clear that the conflict is escalating out of all proportion. The provocation and military manoeuvres intended to overthrow the legitimate Sandinist Government have increased, despite international condemnation, yet the barbarous attacks on towns and villages, the burning of farms and the destruction of fuel stores have been intensified. In this atmosphere of animosity, charges and counter-charges, it was with deep satisfaction that we learned that on 21 October Nicaragua had proposed a Central America peace treaty, with the Contadora Group as guarantors. In our view, that proposal shows a genuine interest in resolving the conflict and demonstrates the sincerity of the Sandinist Government in finding a way out of the impasse.

299. In conclusion, my delegation takes this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General for the efforts he has undertaken to bring peace to that region. With his background and his knowledge of the area we believe that he has indeed a great role to play. However, all these treaties, commitments and personal efforts will be useless if the parties in conflict do not show a clear interest in ending this terrible climate of terror. We believe in the worth of mankind and sincerely hope that we will eventually find a path away from war, a war that would make all of us the losers.

300. Mr. DERESSA (Ethiopia) (*interpretation from French*): First of all I wish to congratulate those delegations, particularly the delegation of Nicaragua, that have taken the initiative in requesting the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of item 142 entitled "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives".

301. Tension and violence are not new to Central America, but the situation now prevailing in the region is a challenge to the cardinal principles of the Charter of the United Nations, a challenge to international law and a challenge to the well-established rights of States to choose the economic, social, political and cultural systems best suited to their peoples. The situation in Central America provides a classic example of the prevention of free and independent States from making that choice. This, in the view of my delegation, is the root cause of the problems confronting us, and, as long as the Governments of powerful States do not understand that they cannot impose on peoples regimes that do not meet their aspirations, any normal relationship and any peaceful coexistence among States will be illusory.

302. The present United States Administration arrogates to itself the right to act as a policeman with very special responsibilities, defying all accepted international rules and engaging in acts of destabilization, invasions and incursions in Central America and in the Caribbean. Nicaragua, which has just emerged from a bitter struggle for independence to free themselves from the Somoza dictatorship and its thugs and which simply wants to devote itself to national reconstruction, is being subjected to constant attacks from gangs of counter-revolutionaries

trained and armed by the CIA. Nicaragua is being subjected to slow economic strangulation because the Sandinist Government has refused to bow to the dictates of its powerful distant neighbour. On several occasions Nicaragua has called on the Security Council to help, but, unfortunately, these appeals have gone unheeded. Today for the first time the problem of Central America has been brought before the General Assembly. The international community thus cannot remain silent in the face of actions that trample on the fundamental principles governing relations among States.

303. My country, which is also a target of international imperialism, wishes to reiterate its militant and active solidarity with the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean in their struggle against imperialism and oppression and for peace, security, stability and democracy. In this connection, the Ethiopian delegation will support any initiative to bring peace and stability to the region, particularly the efforts of the Contadora Group to reduce tension in Central America and to bring about an appropriate atmosphere for useful and constructive negotiations, based on mutual respect for independence, territorial integrity and the right of each State to choose the political system that suits it best, free from any foreign interference.

304. My delegation would also like to salute the Sandinist Government for its initiative in taking the first step by presenting to the United States authorities the six-point plan and also a draft bilateral plan or multilateral plan for non-interference and non-intervention. In doing so, the Sandinist Government has once again shown that it seeks lasting and stable peace in the region.

305. The Ethiopian delegation supported the inclusion of item 142 in the agenda of the current session. Similarly, it will support any draft resolution that responds to the appeal of the oppressed peoples of Central America, especially one that prevents what took place in the Caribbean, namely the invasion of Grenada, from happening again in Central America.

306. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): The representative of Mozambique wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

307. Mr. dos SANTOS (Mozambique): The representative of the United States in a statement on the situation in Central America, made to the Assembly on 8 November 1983 said, among other things, the following:

“Once a transfer of power has been achieved and a dictatorship friendly to the Soviet Union has been established, the Soviets seek to guarantee its irreversibility by providing thousands and thousands of technicians, advisers, troops—‘workers’, such as we saw in Grenada—to prop up and guide the new Government. Thus the extraordinary array of Soviet-bloc military and civilian personnel in Nicaragua, Angola, Benin, Ghana, the Congo, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Syria, Ethiopia and so forth.” [48th meeting, para. 154.]

308. From the very beginning of the struggle for national liberation the United States, in all its sovereignty, chose to side with Portugal’s dictatorship, led by the dictator Salazar. Independent Africa, severally and collectively,

the non-aligned movement, the Socialist countries and the Scandinavian countries, equally in all their sovereignty, chose to side with freedom, independence and liberation. So did the peace-loving and freedom-loving people of Europe and North America, including the people of the United States. It was the policy of the Portuguese colonialists to keep our people illiterate. With the assistance of the American people, a secondary school for young Mozambican refugees was set up in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The United States Government decided to prop up the Portuguese dictatorship with political, diplomatic, moral, financial and military assistance. These facts are well known to the international community, including the United Nations.

309. Mozambique’s independence having been attained, the people of Mozambique decided to forget the past and look to the future, and they established diplomatic relations with the United States and other countries which had taken a similar stand. Mozambique sought and received assistance from Western Europe, the Scandinavian countries and socialist countries. The American Embassy in Maputo was transformed into a centre against Mozambique, and we had to expel the American diplomats involved. A long period of difficult relations ensued. In the past month Mozambique once again decided to forget the past and to improve relations with the United States.

310. Mozambique is an independent country, and as such has the right to invite whomever it wishes and from whatever quarter—east, west, north and south. Today one can find citizens from socialist, capitalist and Scandinavian countries in Mozambique. There are Portuguese and American citizens working under very difficult circumstances side by side with Mozambicans to build a better future.

311. On the other hand, the American Administration has freely decided to involve itself with *apartheid* South Africa. Just as we do not wish to decide the form of government best suited to the American people, the Mozambican people rightly expect their right also to be respected. It is my ardent hope that the United States will join other countries in sending thousands of technicians and other workers to Mozambique to prop up not *apartheid* South Africa but peace, democracy, development and racial harmony—in a phrase, a better future for our people.

*The meeting rose at 7.35 p.m.*

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *The Work of the International Law Commission* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.V.11), p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Plenary Meetings*, 84th meeting.

<sup>3</sup> *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1983*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Supplement for October, November and December 1983, document S/16041.

<sup>5</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year*, 2422nd and 2435th meetings.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1983, document S/15878.