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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINETY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 11 July 1989, at 11.00 a.m.

President:

Mr. DLAMINI
(Vice-President)

(Swaziland)

- Resumption of the forty-third session
- Tribute to the memory of Andrei Andreyevich Gromyko, former President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (Article 19 of the Charter) (continued)
- Policies of Apartheid of the Government of South Africa (continued): Note by the Secretary-General
- Suspension of the session

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF THE FORTY-THIRD SESSION

The PRESIDENT: The forty-third session of the General Assembly is resumed.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ANDREI ANDREYEVICH GROMYKO, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The PRESIDENT: I should like to invite the Assembly to join in a tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Andrei Gromyko, former President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, one of the original signatories of the Charter of the United Nations, who passed away on 2 July 1989.

The very special role the late Mr. Gromyko played in the creation and nurturing of our Organization needs no elaboration. Nor do I need to dwell on his singularly distinguished contribution as a statesman and diplomat to the evolution of international relations, a contribution which spanned most of the last half century.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of the Soviet Union and to the bereaved family.

I now invite members of the Assembly to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Andrei Gromyko.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Denis Dangué Rewaka, Permanent Representative of Gabon, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. DANGUE REWAKA (Gabon) (interpretation from French): The Group of African States, on whose behalf I have the sad duty to speak today, learned with deep sorrow of the passing of the former President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, Mr. Andrei Gromyko. There are people who, because of their personality and talent, play a pre-eminent part in the life of their country and in relations between States. He was such a person.

Mr. Gromyko began his career at an early age, and stood out because of his intelligence and his hard work. He was very soon entrusted with responsibilities as weighty as that of signing in San Francisco in June 1945, as a member of his country's delegation, the Charter of the United Nations.

After he became Foreign Minister, his country put him in charge of all the negotiations that gave form and life to détente. We recall that on the Soviet side he was the great artisan of the first agreement on strategic weapons in 1972 and a leading figure in all disarmament negotiations.

Before leaving the post of Foreign Minister in July 1985 to assume the very important duties of President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet he drew up with his United States counterpart a new framework for negotiations on systems of space bases and on strategic weapons.

To those who knew him Mr. Gromyko was a memorable man, a great professional of diplomacy, who had complete mastery of his subject. In particular, we recall that in moments of tension he had - to quote his own words - "sufficient patience to continue negotiations".

On behalf of the Group of African States, may I convey to the Government and people of the Soviet Union and to Mr. Gromyko's family our sincere condolences and sympathy.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Ahmad Fathi Al-Masri, Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. AL-MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): The Group of Asian States received the news of the death of Mr. Andrei Gromyko, former President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with great grief and sorrow.

Mr. Gromyko was a great man, who dedicated his life to defending the causes of peace and liberation and building a better future in international relations, to be developed on principles of sovereignty, equality and mutual respect. He was always anxious to support the causes of people struggling for liberation and independence.

As representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, I wish to pay tribute to the dedicated efforts Mr. Gromyko made to build and promote friendly relations of co-operation between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Soviet Union and to develop those relations in the interests of both countries.

The world has lost an outstanding man whose personal qualities enabled him to attain the level of a world leader who played a prominent role, crowned with many outstanding achievements. He will, of course, be remembered as a prominent man in modern history.

On behalf of the Group of Asian States and on my own behalf, I wish to express to the Soviet delegation and to the Government and people of the Soviet Union, as well as to Mr. Gromyko's family, our heartfelt condolences.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Anatolij Arseenko, of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

Mr. ARSEENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, which deeply mourn the loss of a major politician and statesman of the Soviet Union, the former President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, Andrei Gromyko.

Mr. Gromyko entered upon his diplomatic career half a century ago, in 1939. During the Second World War and immediately thereafter he was Ambassador of the Soviet Union to the United States, and at the beginning of the 1950s he was Ambassador to the United Kingdom. He was also the Soviet Union's representative in the Security Council and was later a Deputy Foreign Minister and then First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union.

(Mr. Arsenko, Ukrainian SSR)

For 28 years, from 1957 to 1985, he headed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union. From 1983 to 1985, he was also the First Deputy of the President of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union. In July 1985 Andrei Gromyko was elected to the responsible post of President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, which he occupied until October 1988.

The diplomatic activities of Andrei Gromyko became widely known in the Soviet Union and abroad. He participated in the work of the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences of Heads of Government of the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom. His signature on behalf of the Soviet State is affixed to the document that created the United Nations. Andrei Gromyko headed the delegation of the Soviet Union at many sessions of the General Assembly, as well as at international conferences and negotiations, thus making a considerable contribution to the strengthening of the peace-making potential of the United Nations.

Andrei Gromyko was actively involved in meetings of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty and meetings of the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of those countries, promoting policies for the preservation of peace and security, the strengthening of friendship, and co-operation and mutual assistance among peoples.

The Group of Eastern European States, on whose behalf I speak, expresses its profound condolences to the Government of the Soviet Union, to the Soviet people, and to the family of the deceased on their grave loss.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Alejandro Serrano Caldera, Ambassador of Nicaragua, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. SERRANO CALDERA (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): As Chairman of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, I am speaking to pay posthumous tribute to Andrei Gromyko, who passed away recently.

(Mr. Sezzano Caldera, Nicaragua)

First we would express the condolences of the Governments that form our Group, including of course the Government of Nicaragua, to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the loss of one of the most outstanding diplomats of recent times. Andrei Gromyko was, inter alia, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and his country's representative to the United Nations.

He embodied, as few have, an entire era. From the post-war period until our day, in a time marked by realities and illusions, hope and disenchantment, he was undoubtedly one of the most outstanding of personalities. In the ebb and flow of world events, here and there are finally appearing new and encouraging signs that a better future will soon be with us. The world is cautiously observing a softening of ideological positions, the onset of dialogue and certain fundamental agreements between the major Powers, best known as arms-reduction agreements. The cold war is now on the wane, which might lead to the settlement of regional conflicts. In addition the world seems to be moving from confrontation to coexistence and co-operation. We are also witnessing the growing interdependence of the world, the internationalization of the world economy, the emergence of new economic centres in Japan and the European Economic Community, the economic awakening of China, and profound changes in the society, politics and economic and social structures of the Soviet Union.

However, while in the developed North we see signs of hope, and while it would even appear that the threat of nuclear catastrophe is lessening, on the other hand, in the poor, exploited South, the doomed of the Earth, as Franz Fanon called them, are seeing their poverty worsening, their opinions being devalued and their hope being undermined.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

The gap between North and South has widened. The international economic situation is increasingly unfavourable; tariffs are excessive; there is inadequate access to the markets of the industrialized countries; prices of export products have fallen; and external debt results from the need for resources to meet the social and internal economic needs of countries. Interest on that debt is usurious and immoral, and mortgages our peoples' future. At the same time the deterioration in the internal situation in various countries and the political and social explosions in some countries darken our future. Not so long ago Andrei Gromyko, speaking at the United Nations, deplored the situation I have just described, and he devoted his energies to bringing about change.

Therefore I think the best tribute we can pay to that distinguished personality is once again to recall that peace is not the mere absence of war but a free and dignified life for one and all and respect for moral values and for the self-determination of peoples. It is recognition that the peoples of North and South, notwithstanding fundamental differences, share a common destiny. Today more than ever before we must pursue development in a common world-wide effort of solidarity. The future must be viewed as a concept, and mankind must be viewed as a whole.

In the difficult period in which he lived, Andrei Gromyko forged international relations. Let our tribute to his memory be an expression of our common will to fight for peace, for democracy and for development.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Helgi Gislason of Iceland, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. GISLASON (Iceland): On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, I have the honour to express our sympathy at the passing of His Excellency Mr. Andrei Gromyko, former President of the USSR.

(Mr. Gislason, Iceland)

Mr. Andrei Gromyko was an outstanding personality who left his mark on the scene of world politics over a long period, as the Ambassador of the USSR in Washington and London, as the Permanent Representative of the USSR to the United Nations, as Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, and, finally, as President of his country until he retired last year.

On behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States I request our Soviet colleagues to convey our condolences to his family and to the Government and people of the USSR.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Ismat T. Kittani, Ambassador of Iraq, who will speak on behalf of the Arab States.

Mr. KITTANI (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the Group of Arab States I have the honour to express the deep sadness we feel at the loss of His Excellency Andrei Gromyko, former President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, a great and eminent statesman. On this sad occasion we recall his admirable qualities and the great role he played since the Second World War in the cause of peace and international coexistence based on co-operation in a world fraught with problems, crises and confrontations.

Andrei Gromyko was indeed one of the great contemporary diplomats. In this forum where he stood many times to address, through the delegations gathered here, the world at large, we cannot find a better expression of his qualities and great talents than the words of the United Nations Secretary-General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, who described him as one of the architects of post-war diplomacy. That phrase sums up the role Andrei Gromyko played in the field of contemporary international relations.

In that connection we would make particular reference to the role he played over four decades in the establishment and development of the United Nations. His life and his unique role are now the property of historians and scholars, who will evaluate it and reveal all its dimensions. I am confident that his life will provide rich material and valuable lessons for the establishment of a better world, one in which peace based on justice and prosperity will prevail and in which the Organization will play a major role.

I would be remiss were I not to say that, while the Assembly is paying a tribute to the memory of this great man, the Arab States would also like to recall the valuable political efforts that Andrei Gromyko, acting on behalf of the friendly Soviet Union, made for the cause of a just peace in our region of the world. We recall his support for Arab causes, foremost among which is the just cause of the Arab Palestinian people. It was a unique effort, and one that

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

extended over a long period of time - indeed, since the very beginning of the conflict more than 40 years ago. The deceased was one of the few international political figures who dealt with the problem in all its accumulated complications, with a clear vision, with resolution, and with a view to finding a just solution to the problem for the benefit of peace and security in the world.

Lastly, the members of the Group of Arab States would like to extend their sincere condolences to the delegation of the Soviet Union and, through it, to the leadership and people of that friendly country and to the family of the deceased.

The PRESIDENT: I now call upon the representative of the United States of America, who will make a statement on behalf of the host country.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): Few statesmen have witnessed at first hand as many of the key events in our turbulent century as did the former President of the Soviet Union, His Excellency Andrei Gromyko.

As Ambassador to the United States during the Second World War, as one of the architects of the United Nations and a signatory to the Charter, as the Soviet Union's foreign minister for nearly three decades and, finally, as Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. Gromyko knew every United States President from Franklin Delano Roosevelt to George Bush and every Secretary of State from Cordell Hull to James Baker.

Mr. Gromyko's death marks the passing of a generation that shaped our era. The United States Government extends its condolences to Mrs. Gromyko, to the family and to the Government and people of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The PRESIDENT: I now call upon the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

(Mr. Lozinskiy, USSR)

Mr. LOZINSKIY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to express my delegation's sincere gratitude for the warm and sincere words of condolence on the passing of an eminent Soviet politician and statesman, Andrei Andreyevich Gromyko, that have been voiced by you, Mr. President, and by the Chairmen of the Group of African States, the Group of Asian States, the Group of Eastern European States, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Group of Western European and other States, as well as by the representative of the United States of America, the host country for United Nations Headquarters.

Half a century ago, Andrei Andreyevich Gromyko embarked upon his diplomatic career. As an eye-witness to and direct participant in epochal events in international life he stood as an example of how to serve the cause of peace. As Ambassador of the Soviet Union to the United States of America, he was actively involved in the work of the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences among the leaders of the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom, and, at the San Francisco Conference he participated in the drafting of the Charter of the United Nations. As is well known, Andrei Andreyevich Gromyko was the first Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union to the United Nations Security Council and headed the delegation of the Soviet Union at numerous sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, always attempting to ensure that the Organization would become an authentic centre for reaching common ground in the actions of States and in striking a balance of interests.

As Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union from 1957 to 1985 he attended some of the most important international conferences and negotiations, making a signal contribution to developing co-operation among States and to strengthening the rights of peoples to self-determination and international peace and security. During the last years of his life, as Chairman of the Presidium of

(Mr. Lozinskiy, USSR)

the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1988, he was an active supporter of efforts to achieve the restructuring - perestroika - of Soviet society, bringing to that task all his experience as statesman and politician.

We regard the expressions of respect offered by representatives from many States as reflections of their high commendation for the peace-loving policies of the Soviet Union, in the implementation of which Andrei Gromyko played a major role. The Soviet delegation will transmit the condolences expressed here to the Government and people of the Soviet Union, as well as to the family of the deceased.

AGENDA ITEM 120 (continued)

SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS
(ARTICLE 19 OF THE CHARTER) (A/43/995/Add.3)

The PRESIDENT: Before turning to the item on the agenda for this meeting, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to document A/43/995/Add.3, which contains a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General informing the Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication dated 18 April 1989, Benin has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of that information?

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 36 (continued)

POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA: NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/43/1010)

The PRESIDENT: This session has been resumed in order to consider an urgent request by the Special Committee against Apartheid regarding the holding of a special session of the General Assembly on apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 43/50 G.

I should like to invite the attention of members to a note by the Secretary-General (A/43/1010) informing the General Assembly that he has received a letter from the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid containing that Committee's recommendations regarding the date for the special session.

In order to enable the General Assembly to take the required action it is necessary to re-open consideration of agenda item 36, entitled "Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa".

Under the circumstances, may I take it that the Assembly has no objection to re-opening consideration of agenda item 36?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now invite members to turn their attention to the letter from the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid contained in the annex to document A/43/1010.

As specified in the letter, the Special Committee against Apartheid, after consultations, recommends the postponement of the special session on apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa to December 1989, on the understanding that the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session would hold its debate on item 28 of the preliminary list, entitled "Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa", three to four weeks before the date of the special session.

(The President)

The dates for the special session agreed to in consultations between the Secretary-General and the Special Committee against Apartheid are from 12 December to 14 December 1989. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the special session will take place on those dates.

May I take it that the Assembly adopts that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 36.

SUSPENSION OF THE FORTY-THIRD SESSION

The PRESIDENT: I hereby declare the forty-third session of the General Assembly suspended.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.