

12. Because of this it has become popular to blame the arms race on the major Powers and on them only. While this may give an easy excuse for those who want to continue their local arms races, the international community can ill afford such simplified explanations. Regardless of its quantitative or qualitative dimensions, the arms build-up is the result of complex political, economic and technological processes.

13. New developments in weapons technology, particularly in the strategic and nuclear fields, have caused concern both on the global level and in many regions. The deployment of new types of weapons may give rise to a new round of the arms race. To avert this impending danger the world community must organize itself to increase its control over these processes and developments. Thus, the joint search for disarmament should be seen as a joint search for security. The Government of Finland expects that this search will be carried out thoroughly and realistically at the forthcoming special session devoted to disarmament.

14. After these observations a word is due on one of the most pressing disarmament issues: the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Finnish Government continues to believe that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [see resolution 2373 (XXII)] is a solid foundation for further efforts in this field. Those disappointments that have been encountered in the efforts to contain the spread of nuclear weapons do not lie in the alleged weaknesses of the non-proliferation Treaty. Rather the reason is in the failure of the international community to use the Treaty as an effective instrument against the dangers of proliferation. The prospect of nuclear explosives in South Africa is a telling reminder of the danger of nuclear proliferation.

15. Adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty is a contribution to the security of all States concerned. This should also be reflected in the terms applied in international co-operation and trade in nuclear materials and technology for peaceful purposes. The foundation of the non-proliferation Treaty will become eroded if States that have not pledged themselves to refrain from using peaceful nuclear facilities for military purposes can benefit from international nuclear co-operation. Therefore, one of the key tasks of today is to strengthen the non-proliferation Treaty and make the commitment to non-proliferation fully universal.

16. While we must continue to work for détente on a global scale, we are still awaiting a break-through in the main conflict areas of the world. One of the most difficult obstacles is the white minority rule and its repression of the vast majority of the people in southern Africa. This cannot be tolerated. There must be a change and there will be a change. The essential question is whether this change takes place through consent rather than bloodshed and violence.

17. With this in mind, the Nordic Foreign Ministers at their meeting in Helsinki earlier this month expressed the readiness of the five Nordic Governments to offer their services within the framework of the United Nations with a view to facilitating peaceful solutions in Namibia and Zimbabwe. They also established a working group to investigate the possibilities of a joint action programme for

further economic measures against South Africa. The Assembly will recall that earlier they proposed that the Security Council should transform the voluntary arms embargo against South Africa into a mandatory arms embargo. They also stated that it would be a significant action if the Security Council made a decision aimed at preventing new foreign investments in South Africa. Those positions stand.

18. In southern Africa we are approaching a situation where the credibility of the United Nations and its very capacity to live up to the Charter are seriously undermined. If the present opportunities for peaceful solutions are not seized, we shall face a situation where the world Organization collectively and Member States individually will have to review their stands in order to protect the basic principles of the Charter.

19. Over the last year, declarations by Arab and Israeli leaders containing a tone of moderation and realism have given the international community reason to hope for the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East. Mutual distrust has, however, so far seriously hampered the efforts to get the negotiating process involving all parties to the conflict under way. The momentum which nevertheless has been achieved should not be allowed to lapse. Therefore, it is particularly important that none of the parties now takes steps which are perceived as adding to the obstacles and thus leading ultimately to further frustrations and perhaps a serious international crisis.

20. The Finnish Government continues to support the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations. They create conditions for peace-building that should be fully utilized by the parties concerned.

21. Peace-keeping operations place a heavy financial burden on the Organization and on troop-contributing countries in particular. It is therefore necessary that the General Assembly should devote special attention to the consideration of the whole question of peace-keeping financing. This question should be examined not only in relation to the future but also as a problem which places the present peace-keeping operations in serious jeopardy.

22. The efforts to reshape the world economic and social order are parallel to the quest for détente and disarmament and pursue the same goals. Indeed, they are just different facets of global interdependence. Success or failure in one has profound effects on the other; the continued diversion of material and human resources to military ends is a conscious choice against development and contrary to the stated aims of the United Nations.

23. As a recognition of this fact the Nordic countries have proposed that within the framework of the special session on disarmament a new comprehensive study on the link between disarmament and development be undertaken.

24. Much to our regret—but not unexpectedly—the resumed session of the General Assembly¹ was not able to arrive at any consensus assessment of the results of the Paris

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 108th and 109th meetings.

Conference on International Economic Co-operation. This should, however, not discourage the Assembly. Progress on a number of issues was achieved. It is also encouraging that a will to negotiate prevailed. The problems of economic and social development are of such magnitude and such vital importance to the entire membership of the United Nations that we must pursue the negotiations together until we reach satisfactory results. In this we must show determination and courage.

25. We are now facing a twofold challenge: to preserve a favourable negotiating atmosphere between the North and the South and to make vigorous efforts to build on the groundwork laid in recent global conferences. We must do everything possible to prevent a sliding back to a collision course—the price for all of us but especially for the least developed and the most seriously affected countries would be too high. A period of stagnation such as the world economy is now experiencing creates immense pressures. Solutions to these problems can only be found in international co-operation. We are too interdependent to afford confrontation.

26. The other part of the challenge consists of making maximum use of the results of the negotiations which admittedly have been limited so far. Three important milestones mark the road ahead: the Integrated Programme for Commodities² with its common fund, the solution of the debt problem of the developing countries and the increase of official development assistance. These issues are all of critical significance to the developing countries, and Finland will fully support the search for solutions in these areas. In order to move more effectively towards the target for official development assistance Finland has decided to set a medium-term target of at least doubling the present level of its official development assistance.

27. Along with attacking the three most immediate challenges to which I just referred the United Nations must also respond to a longer-term challenge towards securing the establishment of the new international economic order. I am referring to the formulation of a new global development strategy. That should essentially be aimed at achieving what in the 1960s and 1970s remained an unattainable goal: the substantial raising of the material and cultural level of the poorest segments of the world's societies. It must imply a frontal attack on mass poverty. It must strike a balance between the growth needs of nations and the right to a life in security and dignity of the individual human being. Furthermore, it is not possible in our view to speak about development only in terms of growth and quantitative resources. Development must also mean a qualitative change in society, in the lives of its members. They will respond by engaging their will and energy in the development process. In particular, the participation of women must be activated in full equality with men in accordance with the world programme of the United Nations Decade for Women.

28. In this connexion, I should also like to say a few words more generally about the approach taken by Finland

to human rights as an issue in international affairs. Our own values in this field are based on the Nordic traditions of freedom, solidarity and justice. By ratifying the International Covenants on Human Rights [see resolution 2200 A (XXI)] and numerous other instruments in the United Nations system we have demonstrated our belief that human rights are a matter of importance for peace and good relations between States. It must be strongly emphasized that this applies to all human rights—civic and political, as well as economic, social and cultural rights. Some of the burning political problems of the world, such as those related to the situations in southern Africa and the Middle East, are also at bottom human rights problems. Social and economic development as a whole can be regarded as an effort to promote human rights.

29. International work in this field can best be carried out on the basis of common, accepted codes of conduct; no purpose is served by attempts to impose one set of values on another. Efforts to find common ground are therefore of primary importance. We see a great task for all countries in promoting and implementing human rights, both nationally and internationally. Success in this task will help to strengthen the rule of law and to build a durable world order in peace and security.

30. Mr. MACOVESCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): In addressing the President of this distinguished forum and in expressing to you my warmest congratulations, I am addressing the representative of a country—the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia—with which Romania has excellent relations of good-neighbourliness, friendship and collaboration. I hope that your mission will be crowned with a success, which will, of course, reflect also upon your country.

31. Now that Mr. Amerasinghe has concluded his term of office as President of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, it falls to us to acknowledge that he is leaving behind him the memory of an active President who unstintedly devoted his well-known qualities to the success of our work. For this, he has our gratitude.

32. I wish to pay a warm tribute to our Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, and hope that the new mandate entrusted to him by the General Assembly at its last session will give a new impetus to the noble task he carries out with so much dedication and skill.

33. At the beginning of each autumn, representatives of Governments of the States Members of the United Nations return to this hall to make a clear analysis of the international situation and also to seek together ways and means which can bring about for our world a reign of peace, understanding and co-operation among peoples.

34. At the risk of repeating some well-known truths—in the words of the old saying, *repetitio mater studiorum*—I will say once again that a new spirit is emerging in the world in inter-State relations.

35. This phenomenon is due to the great changes which have occurred in the world arena, the characteristic feature of which is the clear determination of the peoples to develop as the true masters of their destinies and to co-operate in a climate of peace and real understanding.

² See *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fourth Session*, vol. I, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.II.D.10), part one A, resolution 93 (IV).

36. The attainment in these last years of the twentieth century of national independence and sovereignty by all peoples is proving to be an unalterable law of social development, a necessity of human society's advancement, a categorical imperative of history. This has been proved by experience everywhere, including the experience of the Romanian people, which this year celebrated the centennial of Romania's independence as a State—an achievement which inaugurated a new era in its thousand years of history and strongly asserting its will and determination to live free and independent.

37. Aware of the realities of the surrounding world and of the events and phenomena which characterize the evolution of the human community, the Romanian people are mobilizing their resources and capacities in an intensive effort to achieve the objectives of economic and social development which they have set themselves.

38. One of their main preoccupations this year is the effort to overcome the consequences of yet another severe trial, the third to be inflicted on it in this decade through the unleashing of the forces of nature. During the tragic moments of the catastrophic earthquake of 4 March 1977, more than 1,500 lives were lost; more than 11,000 people were injured; and more than 35,000 families were left homeless—to say nothing of the tens of thousands of houses damaged. There was extensive damage to schools, hospitals and business premises. Almost 800 units in the basic fields of industry, construction and transport were affected by the catastrophe, and valuable installations and equipment were put out of order, with a consequent substantial loss of production. There was also heavy damage to agriculture.

39. Demonstrating a high spirit of self-denial and energy, of high moral virtues and strong cohesion, the Romanian people closed ranks in a spirit of unity to overcome the difficulties, ensuring an early normalization of the economic and social life of the country in order to eliminate fully the consequences of the catastrophe and to continue their advance on the road to progress.

40. Efforts to develop and modernize the whole economy are accompanied by a lasting concern to ensure, thanks to the results achieved in the development of the national economy, an increase in the level of culture and well-being of all the people, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, continuously to strengthen the democracy of our national life through the intensification of effective participation by working people in the management of economic and social institutions and in the shaping and implementation of the State's entire policy.

41. At the same time Romania is engaged in extensive international activities, developing wide economic, political, cultural and scientific relations with all States of the world. We are endeavouring to place Romania's relations with other States on a still firmer footing, being convinced that this is in the interests of the progress of our peoples and also constitutes a contribution to the promotion of the new principles of inter-State relations and to the strengthening of détente, peace and co-operation throughout the world.

42. The two new admissions to the United Nations, which were warmly endorsed by the Romanian delegation, also

have a symbolic value. The presence in this Organization of a reunified Viet Nam reminds us once again that no force on earth can overcome a people determined to secure and defend its right to a free and independent life. Romania views with sympathy, and lends its full support, to the attempt made by the friendly Vietnamese people to rebuild their country and recover from the adverse consequences of the war. Romania hopes that the moral duty of contributing to the healing of the wounds caused by the war in Viet Nam will be fulfilled.

43. The admission of the young African State, the Republic of Djibouti, recalls in turn the intensification of peoples' national liberation movements, which prefigures the near and inevitable end of the colonial system which has left a deep imprint on, and thorny problems in, contemporary international relations.

44. In Latin America, too, the struggle of the Panamanian people to recover sovereignty over their whole national territory has been marked by important success with the signing of the new Panama Canal treaty.

45. All these events rank among the revolutionary processes which are occurring in the world. Ideas about a new world of justice and equity at the national and international level have become a living reality in a number of countries that are building up with remarkable results, a new social order in Europe, Asia and Latin America. Today socialist ideas are inspiring an even greater number of peoples who are showing their desire and will to embark, in one form or another, upon the socialist path of development. The small and medium-size countries and the developing and non-aligned countries reject, with increased vigour, the tendency to have them play a secondary role in international life, and they are asserting themselves ever more actively on the world scene. The movement of peoples aimed at setting up a new policy based on respect for national independence and sovereignty is growing ever stronger.

46. These profound changes which I have described create favourable conditions for the achievement of a new international order built upon the solid foundation of the principles of international law, in order to solve, in a democratic spirit and to the benefit of all nations, the great issues confronting mankind.

47. The eradication of the state of under-development which afflicts large numbers of countries is an essential imperative of the contemporary world. Undoubtedly, the decisive role in the eradication of economic backwardness devolves upon the under-developed countries themselves, through their own efforts. However, at the same time, it is essential that their efforts be supported by broad international co-operation based upon the principles of equality and justice within the framework of the new international economic order. Such an order, favouring the more rapid advancement of the developing countries, is, as was emphasized by President Ceaușescu,

“... not only an essential prerequisite for the flourishing of the under-developed countries, but also a basic element for the progress of all States and for world economic stability. That is why all States and the whole human community must work in concert for the establishment of the new economic order.”

48. As a result of the initiative shown by the developing countries, in particular within the United Nations and its bodies, resolutions and programmes have been adopted which outline a number of norms and principles, as well as actions, aimed at the establishment of a new economic order and international economic co-operation. Their effectiveness depends, of course, upon the extent to which they are observed and applied by Member States. As a matter of fact, we have to admit that very little has been done in this respect. At present it is necessary to show greater determination to continue and conclude successfully the actions already started.

49. Since the setting up of a new framework for international economic relations is a problem of such vital importance to every State, it is necessary, in our view, to create conditions conducive to the participation of all States on an equal footing in all stages of the negotiations.

50. We view as a positive step the abandonment of the restricted framework of negotiations at the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation, the so-called "North-South dialogue", as well as the general conclusion to concentrate the debates and negotiations on the new economic order in the United Nations with the participation of all States on a democratic basis.

51. It now becomes imperative that the General Assembly plays its central role in these negotiations, ensuring a unified approach to them. In this spirit, we welcome the idea of convening a special session of the General Assembly devoted to development and the new economic order. In our opinion, the results of all these negotiations must be translated into specific commitments by all States in the form of a code of international economic relations that should include the principles and norms governing economic relations among States, their rights and obligations in various fields of international co-operation—in trade, raw materials, energy, transport, technology, industry, agriculture, financial and credit relations—as well as establishing the machinery for giving practical effect to the commitments undertaken.

52. The new economic order implies broad and unhindered access by the developing countries to advanced technologies and to all the achievements of modern science and technology. It implies also giving those countries the required technical assistance and effective help in the training of personnel. The practice of recruiting skilled workers and specialists from the developing countries prevents the peoples concerned from solving the acute problems of their development. It is high time we put an end to such practices, and further, in the spirit of the new international economic order, arrange for the specialists who have been attracted by various means to the advanced countries to return home.

53. In our view, one suitable means of organizing negotiations on all those problems could be the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, to take place in 1979. That Conference should develop measures for ensuring the access of the developing countries to the achievements of science and technology, for ensuring technical assistance and personnel training in all fields and for promoting and stimulating scientific research in the under-developed countries.

54. The developing countries have an important—indeed primary—role in the efforts to ensure the triumph of the new international economic order. The essential goal of that new order is to make it possible for every nation to earn its own living and exchange on a fair basis of the products of its work in its trade relations. This is a perfectly legitimate objective. The developing countries' capacity to take efficient action to this end is based on their unity and solidarity. We all know that great pressures are exerted upon those countries for the very purpose of breaking their unity and solidarity. We are confident that they will find the resources and the means to overcome those pressures.

55. Mankind's advancement requires that the establishment of a new international economic order be organically linked to the process of disarmament.

56. In our view, disarmament—above all, nuclear disarmament—is an essential problem of the contemporary era. We should all realize that the crucial moment when we must act is now, for there can be no doubt that the development of every nation, and the life and peaceful future of mankind, depend upon halting the arms race and achieving disarmament. These simple truths should be fully grasped by every inhabitant of our planet and by all nations. With the present destructive capacity of modern weapons, genuine security can only be sought through disarmament. Lasting peace is inconceivable as long as the arms race, which has now reached alarming proportions, continues. What is the basic reason for this arms race? The attainment of hypothetical balances in the level of armaments of various countries? We have no wish—I should like to make that crystal-clear—for any unilateral military advantages to be obtained by a State or group of States. But I wish to be equally clear in saying that we do not see what hope there can be of achieving a balance based on the ever-ascending spiral of the arms race. We consider that until complete disarmament is reached, mutual security measures should be taken at ever-lower levels of armed forces and armaments. It is not by inventing new weapons—whatever the explanations put forward—that we can convince the world that we want peace, but only by putting an end to the arms race. Only thus can the nations have material proof of States' good faith in their declared commitment to disarmament and the danger of war diminish.

57. The extremely harmful effects of the arms race are eloquently and scientifically described in a report entitled *Economic and social consequences of the arms race and of military expenditures*,³ which was the outcome of a Romanian initiative and which has been brought up to date this year by a group of experts [A/32/88 and Corr.1 and Add.1].

58. We feel that the General Assembly should ensure the widest dissemination of that report with a view to keeping Governments and international public opinion informed. We are convinced that this will contribute to a better understanding of the imperative need for disarmament.

59. The problems of disarmament are of course quite complex. However, it is their very complexity which, instead of being constantly invoked and regarded as an

³ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.72.IX.16.

obstacle to a direct attack on those problems, should impel us to assert the political will to tackle them courageously and with the determination to reach specific disarmament measures.

60. In our view, the United Nations can and should play a greater role in this domain, and as disarmament is of vital interest to all States they should have the right and opportunity to have a say in the discussions and negotiations on all disarmament measures. That is why Romania attaches great importance to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to the problems of disarmament, to be held in May and June 1978. As a member of the Preparatory Committee, my country will do its best to create the necessary conditions for that session to give strong impetus to the nations' efforts to achieve disarmament. The session should be used for the assertion by Governments of their political will to take real steps towards disarmament.

61. Disarmament has become a basic component of European security. Unfortunately, we are compelled to state that a growing contradiction is developing in Europe between the positive steps taken so far towards détente—the expansion of political contacts and the development of economic, technical, scientific, cultural and artistic exchanges—and the continuation, or even intensification, of the arms race. There is a great concentration of weapons and troops in Europe. Four years after their inception, the Vienna negotiations have not passed the “exchange-of-information” stage. The political will to achieve measures for disarmament and military disengagement in Europe has not yet emerged.

62. The corner-stone of the European security system that was outlined by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe is the strict observance of the principles of international law and the removal from international relations of the policy of force and threat of force. To achieve the final elimination of this policy the need is felt to conclude an all-European treaty that should include the commitment by all the States which participated in that Conference to renounce the use or threat of force, as well as the commitment by the States possessing nuclear weapons never to use those weapons in any form against other States or groups of States. The creation of peaceful, nuclear-free zones, including one in the Balkans, would also be a valuable contribution to the cause of European security. The duty of all States signatories of the Final Act is to take action for its implementation as a whole in the shortest possible space of time. We are hopeful—at any rate we shall do our best in this direction—that the conference which is to start in Belgrade before long will give a strong impetus to the efforts along this line and will open up prospects for the unhindered development of co-operation in economic questions, technology, science and culture, as well as in other fields of humanitarian interest among the European peoples. In this context, Romania supports the proposal put forward by the Soviet Union regarding the convening of a European conference on transport, energy and environmental protection, as well as in other areas of mutual interest.⁴

⁴ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 8, para. 12.*

63. Out of a spirit of responsibility for the fate of international peace and security, Romania and President Ceausescu are firmly supporting the complete renunciation of force in relations among States and the settlement of all disputes among States by peaceful means, and they are thus making an active contribution to the attainment of those objectives. Such imperatives guided Romania's action, together with that of other States, in the Security Council during its term of office as a non-permanent member.

64. Believing that force has never produced a lasting solution to any international issue but, on the contrary, has hampered the finding of a solution, Romania is doing its utmost to stimulate action in favour of a settlement of the Middle East conflict on the basis of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Arab territories occupied as a result of the 1967 war, the recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, including the right to establish a Palestinian Arab State, and the guaranteeing of the independence and sovereignty of all States in the region. We are in favour of the convening, as soon as possible, of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all the countries concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization as the only representative of the Palestinian people. As I have already stressed on other occasions, the United Nations should play a more active role than it has played so far in the political settlement of the problems of that part of the world, and the Secretary-General of our Organization is called upon to be present in all the actions undertaken to achieve peace in the Middle East.

65. The settlement of the Cyprus problem on the basis of the observance of the independence and sovereignty of Cyprus and the securing of the peaceful coexistence of the two Cypriot communities would do much to strengthen trust and develop peaceful co-operation in the Balkans, in Europe and throughout the world.

66. In Korea, the constructive initiatives and proposals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea aimed at relaxing tensions, the elimination of the North-South confrontation and the resumption of contacts and the improvement of relations between the two parts of the country offer a solid foundation for the fulfilment of the Korean people's earnest hopes for their country's peaceful, independent and democratic reunification.

67. In Africa, the tensions among certain States should be overcome at the negotiation table by action for the strengthening of the African countries' unity and collaboration, with a view to their independent economic and social advancement.

68. Romania—faithful to the ideals that prompted the long struggle waged by the Romanian people for freedom and social progress—firmly supports the struggle of all peoples still under colonial and racial domination to combat that anachronism, which is incompatible with the ethics and principles proclaimed nowadays by all peoples of the world. My country is fighting for the abolition of all forms of foreign domination over other peoples.

69. We are on the side of all oppressed peoples and we deem it our moral duty to give our full support—political,

diplomatic and material—to the national liberation movements in Namibia and Zimbabwe and to the struggle of the peoples in South Africa against racial discrimination and the policy of *apartheid*, as well as to the independent African States that have suffered from the aggressive actions of the racist régimes.

70. In our view, present international circumstances require more determined action within the United Nations and on the international level as a whole in order to secure the liberation of the peoples of southern Africa at the earliest opportunity and to put an end, once and for all, to any encroachment upon the freedom and national rights of the African peoples and an end to any forms of domination and foreign interference in the domestic affairs of other peoples.

71. All these are extremely complex problems confronting the contemporary world. They can be solved through the active participation of all States on an equal footing within the framework of a new and democratic order. This reality is determining and strengthening the role of international organizations with a universal vocation and particularly that of the United Nations. Referring to this fact, President Ceaușescu has stated:

“High responsibilities for the achievement of such democratic co-operation among States devolve upon the United Nations, which offers the most appropriate organizational framework for debating the issues with the effective participation of all States. Romania supports the United Nations and makes its contribution, in the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, to the finding of solutions in order that its organization and statute should better correspond to the great changes that have been occurring in the world as well as to the aspirations and expectations of all peoples”.

72. We have a positive assessment of the activity carried out so far by the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization. The list of proposals annexed to the Committee's report this year [A/32/33, annex II] seems to us to be a useful basis for a continuation of the dialogue as well as for identifying measures and actions capable of leading to a greater role for the United Nations in international life. We are confident that, through the concerted endeavours of Member States, the Special Committee will be able at its forthcoming meetings to devise such measures and actions, and in this way discharge the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. Thus, the United Nations will be able to become an instrument of co-operation available to States and show itself capable of playing an active part in the establishment of the new international economic order, in the achievement of disarmament, in the struggle against any infringements of the principles of international law, in the democratic settlement of all international issues, and in the furtherance of wide co-operation among States.

73. At the beginning of every autumn, the attention of peoples is focused on this forum where the most acute issues related to international peace and co-operation are debated.

74. As at the beginning of every autumn, hopes are reviving. And our duty is to justify those hopes, to give them a positive answer, to prove, through our redoubled efforts, that mankind has entered a new era of its civilization, that men and peoples are capable of solving the most difficult problems, and that the dreadful spectre of war is moving away from us.

75. The aims that we have set ourselves are attainable; they are in the realm of the possible. However, their attainment requires political will, energy, perseverance and a dynamic and far-reaching view of the future.

76. The work of the present session of the General Assembly must go down in the history of the United Nations as a noteworthy contribution to the fulfilment of the historic mission of this forum.

77. This is the desire and will of the Romanian delegation, and all our actions will be directed towards this goal.

78. Mr. FAHMY (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Mr. President, it gives me pleasure to begin by offering you sincerest and heartfelt congratulations on your election to preside over this session of the General Assembly, which is of great importance in the history of the United Nations. There is no doubt that your election is an expression of unanimous appreciation of your outstanding efficiency and experience. It is at the same time a tribute to your friendly country and its great leader, President Tito, whose struggle and achievements represent a brilliant chapter in the history of human endeavour.

79. I should also like to commend the tremendous efforts exerted by the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, and his concern for advancing the credibility of the Organization, seeking to ensure an active and effective role for it in the service of the cause of peace, progress and the positive co-operation of peoples. As the Secretary-General stated in his report on the work of the Organization: “It is dangerous if the Organization becomes complacent, set in its ways, unresponsive to new ideas or irrelevant to contemporary issues” [see A/32/1, sect. XII].

80. It is with happiness and pride that I welcome the Republic of Djibouti and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam as Members of the United Nations family, a membership which crowns the struggle of those two friendly peoples for their national independence and self-determination. No one doubts that these two countries will contribute actively and positively to the enhancement of the Organization's role and to the fulfilment of its mission.

81. The independence of those two peoples is a clear indication and a reminder to us all here of the inevitability of the triumph of the will of peoples still struggling for the right to self-determination and to eliminate subjugation and domination. I should like to mention specifically here the Arab people of Palestine and the brotherly African peoples in Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

82. Our meeting here at this time gives each of us an opportunity to present the broad lines of his country's foreign policy and the role of his country on the international scene as it sees it, as well as its views on the vital

questions affecting world security, peace and prosperity, whether those questions be political, relating to the balance between countries; or economic, relating to the life and future of peoples; or social, relating to the dignity of the individual and group, and to ways of preserving this dignity in a sound and healthy environment and an atmosphere favourable for development in the interests of this generation and for ensuring a happier future for the coming generations.

83. The General Assembly is probably aware that Egypt voluntarily shoulders a great responsibility. It is a responsibility which stems from its unique strategic position as a link between the continents, a bastion of peace in a region which has been and still is exposed to plots and conspiracies, and a torch of civilization in the heart of the Arab world and in the northern part of the great African continent. This prompts Egypt to defend Arab and African interests against any aggression against the Arab, African or non-aligned peoples, to whom we are bound by unity of principles, policy and interests as well as by a common view of the role of the peoples of the third world at present.

84. All this requires considerable sacrifices on the part of the Egyptian people, who make them willingly. With their historical awareness from time immemorial, the Egyptian people have come to realize the unity of the human struggle against oppression, domination and exploitation. They have come to realize that repelling any aggression against a brotherly people means defending their own existence, values and civilization.

85. This pioneering role naturally means that it is necessary for Egypt to be zealous in maintaining and safeguarding its independence and making certain that it is not marred by anything; that its will is free and is inspired only by right, justice and peace. Such free will can emanate only from the collective conscience of the nation to which it belongs and can rely only on its own ability to give, on the solidarity of its sister countries in all situations, and on their willingness to stand by it, whatever the sacrifices may be.

86. It is no mere coincidence that Egypt was among the pioneers of non-alignment or that it suffered a great deal for its resistance to alliances, spheres of influence and attempts to dominate. It became the prop and pillar of independence movements in the Arab world and on the African continent, movements which led those peoples to the path of victory and liberty. Egypt sought to lead freedom-loving peoples everywhere.

87. Hence, President Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat was concerned to ensure that the policy of Egypt should emanate from its heritage, its soil and its values, should be guided by its interests and the interests of those that stand by it, and should pursue a policy based on peace, freedom and brotherhood among all nations and peoples. The first prerequisite for an independent will is that the people should have the upper hand and that no Power should have a special privilege that contravenes the principle of equality and mutual co-operation among countries, or makes the will of one party subject to the will and influence of the other.

88. That is not an easy matter, because the preservation of independence and free will entails tremendous responsibilities and consequences. The exercise of independence also requires great vigilance and a delicate balance, since we live in an era of complexity and interdependence, and no one can live in a vacuum or aloof from events in the world, even if he so desires. The big challenge facing us all today is not one of inwardness or isolationism, but of openness and the ability to deal with all without complexes or undue sensitivity and without contravening the national will or the supreme national interest.

89. It is on the basis of this concept that Egypt follows a policy of openness everywhere in the world, in the east and west, and in the north and south, and is willing to deal with and react to all without fanaticism or discrimination, as long as they adhere to the principle of international legitimacy and as long as they are ready to respond truly to Egypt on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in domestic affairs or in matters relating to sovereignty and the free will of our people. Egypt's policy in this respect is clear, stable and unwavering. Egypt adheres to principles, respects pledges and establishes its international relations on objective bases that are easily recognizable, comprehensible and feasible. In short, any country ready to respect its international obligations and to adhere to the rules of legitimacy can establish healthy and good relations with Egypt to the mutual benefit of both countries and for the ultimate benefit of the international community.

90. Bearing all this in mind, Egypt participated with great interest in the North-South dialogue held in Paris between December 1975 and June 1977 with the object of considering and reviewing the foundations of a new international economic order.

91. Egypt, along with other developing countries, considers that the problem of development cannot be solved in isolation from other international economic problems. These problems must therefore be looked into as a whole and their solution tackled in an integrated manner. There exists an obvious and inevitable interrelationship between the problems of development and those of trade and finance. Furthermore, international trade and development assistance should serve the objectives of industrialization and of the transfer of advanced technology to developing countries. It is also imperative that we continue the dialogue to reach agreement on the measures necessary to combat international inflation, which is a phenomenon indicative of a serious disease that has spread to the economies of developing countries at a crucial stage, when those economies can hardly sustain fluctuations, or the feverish and uncontrolled rise in development costs.

92. We believe that developing countries can, among themselves, create a momentum towards greater international economic co-operation. I wish, in this connexion, to refer particularly to the positive results of the First Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States, held in Cairo from 7 to 9 March 1977, which was in effect the first serious and practical application of the principle of economic co-operation among developing countries.

93. The African continent, which for so long was the victim of imperialistic conspiracies and foreign exploitation, at present is witness to dangerous developments. It is therefore incumbent upon us to confront these developments with vigour and firmness if we are to succeed in sparing the African continent further suffering and conflict. I wish to refer briefly to those developments.

94. First, foreign intervention, instead of disappearing with the ebb of colonialism, is reappearing under various pretexts again in Africa, though disguised in other forms. The fact still remains that all foreign intervention in Africa is unacceptable, for it goes against the interest of the peoples and can only lead to an escalation of conflict and factionalism as well as to the creation of new areas of tension. Intervention always aims at the creation of a climate that guarantees its perpetuation and growth. Hence it becomes like an infiltrating malignancy that cannot be uprooted without difficulty, nor can its grave consequences be easily eliminated.

95. Secondly, the racist régimes in Rhodesia and South Africa, notwithstanding world public opinion and its unanimous condemnation of their policies and practices in violation of human rights and in breach of the principles recognized by civilized nations, are persisting in their policies of aggression, intimidation and terroristic atrocities.

96. These two régimes are adamant in their irresponsible behaviour and refuse to recognize the right of peoples to self-determination. I believe that we all agree that the international community cannot stand idly by faced with this untenable situation, a situation where a man lives as an alien in his own homeland, subjugated by those who have usurped his rights. We must be honest with ourselves and hence we must be committed to securing the total isolation of the illegal Smith racist régime, in conformity with Security Council resolution 409 (1977), adopted in May 1977. We also have to ensure the implementation of Security Council resolution 385 (1976) on Namibia and the termination of the illegal presence of South Africa in that Territory. We are in duty bound to stand firm in the face of the aggressive governing régime of South Africa and to put an end to its crimes, the latest of which was the assassination of an honest freedom fighter, who was cruelly and savagely tortured.

97. It is an axiom of history that the peoples of the Middle East, the cradle of civilizations and the place of origin of divine religions, have for ages lived in peace, harmony and brotherhood. There was no place for rancour or bigotry. Coexistence and interaction were the fertile soil from which civilizations burgeoned and where all differences between peoples vanished. The Middle East was in fact a melting-pot of historical perspective. Two fundamental phenomena prevailed: plurality as a basic manifestation of the civilization of man and his evolution, and tolerance as a prerequisite for the continuance of humanity.

98. Yet, all of a sudden, this ideal situation was disturbed when, from outside the area, an adverse wind blew, sustained by the ambitions and conspiracies of those who had colonized and exploited the countries and the peoples of the area. The methods and objectives of the colonizers coincided with those of a racist movement originating

outside the area. Both parties were bent on aggression against a whole people in order to usurp their rights, to threaten their very existence and to impose upon them a forced exile. That aggression was further extended to include other countries in the area, to the point where their people felt menaced in their lands, their values, their heritage and their civilization.

99. That is what happened in the past; it is what is happening today and what some quarters think will continue to happen in the future, in defiance of the lessons of history. It has imposed on the Middle East a unique situation: nothing less than a continuous state of war that has lasted for more than 30 years. It is like a volcano which erupts at regular intervals, with all that entails in human suffering and danger and misery for the people. In this respect it is worse even than those global wars that have erupted in certain parts of the world in certain periods and later petered out. A state of war such as that prevailing in the Middle East creates a material and psychological climate that is detrimental to stability and an obstacle to progress and prosperity: everything depends upon the unknown. The Middle East has accordingly been destined to a continuous sapping of its human and material resources and to a regrettable waste of energy and potential. Consequently, and as a result of a situation created by the unholy alliance of zionism and imperialism, an unhealthy atmosphere prevails in the area, where hopes are shattered and fear and rancour are intensified. The situation in the area is further aggravated by the increasingly aggressive intentions of the alien, racist Zionist entity, whose appetite for aggression increases with every right it usurps and every territory it occupies.

100. That is the truth of the situation in the Middle East and the root of all past, present and future trouble in the area. It is therefore inevitable that if the situation remains stagnant an explosion will occur, and that explosion will dwarf all previous ones and no one in the world will be safe from its devastating material, spiritual and moral consequences.

101. Let it be clear that the Arab nation has potential that can be mobilized and deployed in any conflict that may be forced on it, notwithstanding the recognized Arab endeavour to replace conflict and the state of "no war, no peace" in the Middle East with a peace based on justice.

102. No one can have any doubt that the Arab countries will stand hand in hand and respond as one at the right time and will in the most opportune manner repel any aggression against it, regardless of its source. It is only a question of time.

103. We are entitled to ask whether such a situation can continue, and until when, and whether it is admissible to say we are incapable of dealing with it. We may also ask about the party responsible for all the tension, violence and suffering. Does responsibility lie with the party that has since the dawn of history lived in peace with others, or does it lie with the party that has made of aggression a philosophy and of occupation a national claim linked to historic rights—the party that relates racism to divine belief? A glance at the events in the Middle East since 1947 and even earlier makes it evident that one party has taken it

upon itself to launch aggressive war at regular intervals and to prepare for such war under a heavy smoke-screen of duplicity and hollow propaganda, deluding itself that it has succeeded in fooling the world. In this false belief it claims that its aggression is actually self-defence, that its expansionism is motivated by the need to ensure its continued existence and that occupation and the uprooting of a whole people is essential to the coexistence of peoples and nations.

104. We are entitled to ask whether the aggressor has learned anything from the lessons of history and from the experience of other countries which have been exposed to similar storms. How can the aggressor make coherent its contradictory claims—for instance, the claim that it desires to live in peace, and its insistence upon occupation and expansion? Is it admissible that it claims we should acquiesce in its “right to live in peace” while it is still occupying our territory and refusing in a manner unprecedented in history to acknowledge the rights of a whole people? What kind of coexistence is based upon occupation and domination? Are we expected to recognize those who do not even recognize the basic principles of law and human rights?

105. Israel's leaders never cease to speak of peace, but they are not sincere in their intentions. They claim they seek coexistence and that the transition from a state of war to normal relations can be completed overnight. Even in this empty propagandistic exercise they offer no peace; in effect they propose the establishment of abnormal relations under conditions of occupation and expansion and the violation of rights. The worst thing about this behaviour is that it insults our intelligence as well as our ability to distinguish between right and wrong. If the Israeli leaders were genuine in their call, those among them who pay lip-service to peace would not have permitted themselves to declare daily that they insist on annexing territories and ignoring the existence of the people who have been, and still are, the owners of the land and have established rights there.

106. If Israel truly advocates peace, I challenge its Foreign Minister to stand here before the representatives of the peoples and nations of the world and declare from this very rostrum Israel's willingness to withdraw completely from occupied Arab territories and to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to establish an independent State on the land it cultivated and on which it built its civilization for thousands of years.

107. It may be recalled that General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 on the partition of Palestine, provided for the establishment of two independent States in Palestine, an Arab State and a Jewish State, two months after the evacuation of the armed forces of the Mandatory Power had been completed but in any case not later than 1 October 1948.

108. Thirty years have passed since adoption of that resolution, upon which Israel's leaders and philosophers based the “legitimacy” of their State and its continuation. How can one part of the resolution be implemented while the other is completely ignored?

109. Given the existence of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, how can Israel deny the right of a people to establish its own independent State just as other nations and peoples do? Year after year since 1947 the General Assembly has recognized the right of this people of its territory, to national identity and independence. Is it not entitled to demand the exercise of its right to self-determination, independence and repatriation? Who is Israel to deny the right of the Palestinian people to have their own State on Palestinian territory?

110. No matter how long Israel procrastinates and persists in oppression it will be unable to prevent the establishment in Palestine of an independent Palestinian State in which the Palestinian people can exercise their sovereignty without restriction and continue to make their great contribution to civilization, working for rapprochement between nations and serving as a link between civilizations, thus spreading tolerance and brotherhood among all.

111. Even more flagrant than this Israeli rejection of the right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent State is the insistence of the rulers of Israel on imposing their guardianship and their will on the Palestinians. Those rulers rejected a decision taken by the people to select their own representatives to speak on their behalf, protect their interests and express their aspirations. Such a situation is unprecedented in history because it means that Israel, following its occupation of the territory of the people of Palestine, now claims the right to control the minds and the collective conscience of the Palestinian people. Israel imagines that it can select those who should represent the Palestinians and defend their interests, and reject the freely chosen representatives to whom has been entrusted the task of leading the national struggle.

112. By this strange behaviour Israel is claiming for itself a right never claimed by any other country, however strong or dominant, now or in the past. If we were to use the same logic in dealing with Israel we could say that we did not recognize the Israeli Government as the representative of that people and we could insist on selecting other representatives. In fact, we would have more right to do that because the rulers of Israel who speak in its name today have a history dark enough to cast upon the entire society the stigma of having abandoned all human values and embraced theories which violate the most evident human rights. Thus we have more reason to object to their representation on the basis of their record of aggression and terrorism and their racist practices.

113. To whom is Israel objecting? Is it objecting to the Palestine Liberation Organization, whose National Council announced on 20 March 1977 that it would continue the political struggle to achieve the objectives of the Palestinian people and expressed its desire to participate in all conferences, forums and international efforts concerned with the Palestinian cause and the Arab-Zionist struggle for the national rights approved by this august Assembly since 1974? Is not the Palestine Liberation Organization the same Organization that stressed the importance of establishing relations with Jewish democratic and progressive forces within and outside the occupied territories?

114. With whom does Israel want to deal, assuming that we grant it permission to select its own opponents? Does it wish to deal with marginal elements which have no authority?

115. I should like to say this to Israel and its rulers. All this is going to serve no purpose, and will prove futile. You have failed in your attempt to ignore the fact that the Palestinian people exist, just as you have failed to conceal this fact from the world. Similarly, you will find yourselves completely unable to ignore the fact that there are legitimate and freely accepted representatives of the Palestinian people, who have reiterated this confidence in them every time they have had to select representatives and vote. The Arab nation has endorsed that choice and that vote at the highest level of leadership, and it was given unanimous support at the Arab summit conference held in Rabat from 26 to 29 October 1974. That Arab decision is final and it was reaffirmed by this Assembly when it adopted, at its twenty-ninth session, those historic resolutions inviting the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine [*resolution 3210 (XXIX)*], supporting the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people [*resolution 3236 (XXIX)*] and giving the Palestine Liberation Organization observer status [*resolution 3237 (XXIX)*].

116. Israel's aggression has not been confined to the territory of the Palestinian people. Israel is now trying to exacerbate the situation in southern Lebanon and to use that situation as a pretext for interfering in the affairs of that sister country, which has been suffering for so long as a result of foreign ambitions and interference. I should like to warn Israel from this rostrum that any exploitation of the situation in that area will have the gravest consequences for Israel, in addition to the great damage it may do to the search for peace.

117. When we call attention to the fact that any toleration of aggression and extremism can only produce an escalation of aggression, we do not speak idly or in a vacuum; we are not putting forward unproved theoretical assumptions but are talking about a contemporary situation with which we are living and from which we derive our concept of the events and developments which take place. Suffice it to mention here the Israeli measures to change the demographic composition and the legal status of the occupied territories despite the expressed will and unanimous decision of the General Assembly. I need not go into the details and the extent of those measures because the members of the Assembly are only too familiar with them and have stated their position on them individually and collectively. However, I should like to point out briefly the significance of those measures and the serious results which may ensue if they are allowed to produce the effect for which they have been designed.

118. As the Assembly knows, those Israeli measures are three-pronged.

119. First, there is an attempt to give legality to the Israeli settlements established on the West Bank. The Israeli cabinet issued a decision on 26 July 1977 giving legality to three new settlements created on the West Bank—namely, Hal Odmim near Jericho, Ofra near Ramallah and Elon Souria on the road to Nablus.

120. Secondly, there are the measures to impose Israeli regulations on the Arab population in the territories occupied since 5 June 1967 under the guise of ensuring equality between the Arab population and citizens of Israel. This is, of course, only a flimsy pretext, because everybody is aware that Israel treats an Arab as a person who has no right to life, work or choice. This measure made clear Israel's true policy, which is based on annexation and territorial expansion. There could be no stronger proof of this than the statement of the official spokesman of the Israeli Government who responded to the criticism of the decision by saying:

“You cannot annex to Israel territory that belongs to the Israeli people, because this territory was originally theirs. You do not annex your own territory.”

What further proof of Israel expansionist intentions is needed?

121. Thirdly, there is the establishment of new Jewish settlements on the West Bank. On 17 August 1977 an official Israeli source declared that it had been decided to create three new settlements on the West Bank. This decision means that settlements established by Israel in the occupied territory since June 1967 now total 85, distributed as follows: 37 settlements on the West Bank; 25 settlements in the Golan Heights; 18 settlements in the Sinai peninsula; 5 settlements in the Gaza sector. Israel has not been deterred from persisting in this strange policy by the fact that this Assembly has condemned these Israeli measures on more than one occasion. This Assembly, which is the true representative of international unanimity, has declared those measures to be void and without legal validity either now or in the future. I should like to refer in particular to the resolution concerning the City of Jerusalem adopted in July 1967 [*resolution 2253 (ES-V)*] and resolution 31/106 A adopted in 1976, in which the Assembly strongly deplored various Israeli policies and practices of this kind, especially the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and the transfer thereto of an alien population. The resolutions reaffirmed that all measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition and institutional structure of the occupied territories were null and void.

122. It is evident from those two resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and from the statement by the President of the Security Council on 11 November 1976⁵ that the international community condemns those measures, considers that they have no legal validity and reaffirms that the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 is applicable to the occupied Arab territories.

123. The latest Israeli measures provide an opportunity for all countries without exception to declare their rejection of those measures and of the arguments adduced to defend them. I should like to refer in particular here to the firm statement made by President Omar Bongo, the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, and the official statements issued by the Governments of the Asian

⁵ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council, 1976*, p. 5.

and European countries and the countries of North and South America, as well as to the statements of all my colleagues, the Foreign Ministers, who participated in the general debate.

124. The timing of the announcement of those new measures by the Prime Minister of Israel was indeed strange and calls for examination. Mr. Begin chose to announce them on his return from his visit to the United States, well aware of the publicity that they would receive, in order to portray himself, falsely, as a saint and a messenger of peace.

125. For all these considerations, Egypt has requested that this serious situation be examined, for the purpose of taking new collective action to deter Israel from these practices, which have been condemned by the world community. Therefore, on behalf of Egypt, I should like to submit to the General Assembly a draft resolution, the text of which will be distributed later today.⁶

126. We, the Arabs, are seeking peace. We are seeking peace in the perspective of our historic role. We seek no aggression and we make no unfounded claims. We seek to ensure rapprochement between peoples and we realize that the real challenge facing us is the challenge of progress and prosperity, which basically is the challenge of overcoming the most basic economic problems. We are attempting to do this while preserving our national independence and our free will, bearing in mind the need to maintain the delicate balance between interdependence, on the one hand, and the preservation of the culture, heritage and values of the people, on the other.

127. We firmly believe that the Middle East area should remain an area of peace and coexistence in which everyone can enjoy his freedom, liberty, right to life and progress, free from fear and oppression.

128. We are also ready to assume our responsibility under the Charter to maintain world peace and to contribute to the welfare of the world, for we believe that the international community is one family where co-operation, understanding and coexistence should reign. God the Almighty has said in the Koran: "I have created you as one nation and made of you tribes and clans so that you may get to know each other better . . .".

129. It is against this spiritual and civilized background that President Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat presented his peace initiative on 16 October 1973—when Egypt and the Arab world had reached the height of their victory—for a just and durable peace in the area. It is against this background that the Arab nation has maintained its pledge to peace despite the adverse and negative reactions of the other party. This only serves to prove that that party either is not ready or is unwilling to meet the challenge of peace.

130. The Assembly may also recall that Egypt opened the Suez Canal for international navigation on 5 June 1975, in order to facilitate and pave the road towards peace, despite the fact that Israel has attempted to impede the achievement of peace and to place obstacles in the path of all peace-seeking efforts.

131. Egypt is convinced that the achievement of peace is not only a duty, but a necessity. Peace is possible and attainable provided that Israel decides in the final analysis to accept the challenge of peace and all that it entails in terms of responsibility and the requirements of a constructive approach. The elements of peace are the following: first, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967; secondly, the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on the territory of Palestine, the right to return of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination; thirdly, the right of every State in the area to live in peace; fourthly, the provision of the necessary guarantees for all peoples of the area to live in security on their own land and to enjoy their own property. We do not object to any collective or bilateral guarantees, including any guarantees provided by the United States for Israel, on condition that they do not constitute a threat to Arab national security.

132. On the other hand, we are willing to examine all forms of guarantees, whether in the form of buffer zones, demilitarized zones, the establishment of United Nations forces, the reduction of forces or arms in areas adjacent to the borders, or even the use of modern early-warning systems for the detection of any developments that would endanger peace and security. The guarantees could also include political commitments provided by States Members of the United Nations.

133. Fifthly, in connexion with the whole aspect of guarantees, I should like to stress that real peace cannot be ensured unless there is agreement on the following points.

134. The first point relates to the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East. We believe that a nuclear threat from any source will jeopardize the prospects of peace in the Middle East and would make peace only an empty word. How are we to feel safe with the knowledge that Israel, in co-operation and collaboration with the racist régime of South Africa, is determined to become a nuclear Power? This indeed is not a manifestation of the desire for peace but only indicates the continued aggressive intentions of Israel, based on the fallacy of military superiority.

135. I should like to declare solemnly from this rostrum that if Israel ever obtains nuclear weapons, no one could expect us to stand idly by in the face of that development, which would create a grave situation militarily, politically and morally. Thus, we insist in the context of a peace agreement that Israel should adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, for it is inconceivable that Israel should be the only State in the Middle East not acceding to that Treaty. Egypt, for its part, having already signed that Treaty, is willing to abide by it.

136. The second point is the necessity to regulate conventional armaments—in the event of a just and lasting peace—since a race in this field is likely to increase tension and thus increase the possibilities that the situation will explode in the future.

137. The third point is that under no circumstances can the present Israeli immigration policy be continued. We believe that the continuation of such a policy of open-door, unlimited immigration from all parts of the world could

⁶ Subsequently circulated as document A/32/L.3.

only trigger further aggression and expansion at the expense of the Arab countries.

138. Israel realizes the difficulties it is now encountering in attracting new immigrants and providing them with accommodations. Israel should draw the proper lessons from that. We maintain that, if Israel wishes to enjoy a normal status and to be accepted, it must refrain from instigating the citizens of other nations to leave their own countries of origin on the pretext that they are living in the Diaspora and outside the Promised Land. At the same time, Israel is denying the Palestinian people the right to return to their country of origin.

139. Sixthly, there is no alternative to the return of Arab Jerusalem to those who have a right to it territorially, historically and culturally.

140. The challenge facing us is obvious, with no uncertainty or ambiguity, and the choice for Israel is clear. The challenge is very clear and obvious and the choice for Israel is evident, with no room for deception. Israel must either lean towards peace and choose to be a normal State in the region, in which case it must terminate its aggression against Arab rights and end its occupation of Arab territories, or it must confront a united Arab nation, which has the backing of a world that has discovered the false nature of Israel's claims and the danger which its intentions involve.

141. For our part, we shall continue to pursue the course of peace, but without the slightest neglect of our defensive capabilities, which provide the foundation for our pursuit of peace. It is with objectivity and impartiality that we express the belief that there is a golden opportunity for the establishment of a just and durable peace in the area and for putting an end to violence, war and destruction. If we miss this golden opportunity it may not present itself again at any time in the future.

142. We shall work persistently and continuously for the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, which shoulders the task and responsibility of representing the Palestinian people. We cannot imagine a solution to the problem in the absence of the Palestinian people, for their cause is the origin and core of the conflict. We would be deceiving ourselves if we thought for one moment that we could impose on that people the persons who should represent them. We would also be deceiving ourselves if we thought for a moment that we could deny them participation in the political efforts after having been accepted—for the first time in the history of the conflict—as part of this process and to be bound by its principles and rules.

143. We support any formula that would help the participation of representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the Geneva Conference on an equal footing with the rest of the parties. We disapprove of any formula that would lead to anything contrary to that, including the proposal for a unified Arab delegation which, in our view, is of no benefit unless the Palestine Liberation Organization participates with the other parties on the same level. In other words, that idea is rejected, if the purpose behind it is to get around that organization's established right to represent the Palestinian people.

144. Egypt and the whole Arab nation are truly grateful to this Assembly and deeply appreciate the constructive support that we have received from its firm stand and concrete actions, which go beyond mere words and verbal support. Egypt undertakes and pledges to seek United Nations participation in every step and to refer to it whenever there is any development in the situation, since that is where the responsibility and the decision lie.

145. If Israel's rulers had any historical awareness, they would have realized that the first objective they should seek is free acceptance, based on choice and conviction on the part of the Arab nation amidst which they live.

146. The Arab nation is prepared to accept those who are prepared to be bound by the legitimacy and supremacy of law. At the same time it rejects those who place themselves above the law or who take the law into their hands, toy with it as they please and convert it into a law of the jungle whenever they find it convenient.

147. We accept coexistence, plurality and interaction between opinions, beliefs and cultures. That is the challenge.

148. We reject occupation, expansion, the acquisition of territory by force and the violation of rights.

149. We accept, for the first time, the call to create normal conditions under which the Palestinian people can give expression to their capabilities and talents. Therein lies the key to the situation, and to the drive towards peace.

150. We reject the claim that the Palestinian people are doomed to live in a new Diaspora in the twentieth century or in the darkness of the Middle Ages.

151. You have stood by us in our just struggle for peace and liberty, and we cherish that fact with all appreciation and gratitude.

152. Tomorrow the sun of freedom will shine, dissipating the darkness of colonialism and racism.

153. Mr. DE GUIRINGAUD (France) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, there are many reasons why my delegation welcomes your accession to the office of President of the thirty-second session of the General Assembly. Allow me first of all to greet you as a former colleague, since you were the Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia when I was head of France's Permanent Mission in New York. Your strength of character and sound political instincts, your acknowledged competence and the esteem in which you are held make me certain that you will conduct our work here with unchallenged authority.

154. Yugoslavia has created a special place for itself on the international scene: as a founder and leading member of the group of non-aligned countries, an active member of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, as well as of the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation, and the initiator of the special session on disarmament to be held next year. Your country clearly perceives the problems of the day, whether in the context of East-West relations or the North-South dialogue. France

is especially pleased with the fresh opportunity our two Heads of State will soon have to strengthen still further the ties of friendship and co-operation which link our countries.

155. I am equally pleased with the brilliant re-election of our Secretary-General, whose outstanding qualifications have been rightly endorsed by that renewed expression of our confidence.

156. The current world situation is neither good nor reassuring. With the exception of the positive outcome of the lengthy Panama Canal negotiations, none of the major disputes under consideration in our Organization has made genuine progress towards a settlement. Human rights continue to be violated in several countries, including countries which were once proud of their liberal and humanistic traditions. It is high time that the texts formally adopted in this area guide the conduct of Governments.

157. Moreover, the difficulties that our economies have been experiencing in recent years may well lead too many nations to look inwardly in the vain hope of evading the rule that governs today's world—the rule of interdependence.

158. In the face of these persisting tensions, threats and uncertainties, it is more necessary than ever to turn away from fatalistic philosophies. For France, détente and dialogue cannot be mere slogans.

159. France initiated the policy of détente in Europe convinced of the merits of that policy, and we will not give it up. We will pursue it without yielding an inch on the most basic points, which are our country's security and independence, and respect for human rights. We will follow it without falling prey to doubts, even understandable ones, which could undermine the foundations of détente.

160. These are the principles of the joint declaration signed on 22 June of this year at Rambouillet by the President of the French Republic, Mr. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and the President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mr. Leonid Brezhnev, during his state visit to France. These are also the principles that will determine our attitude at the forthcoming Belgrade conference.

161. With regard to the North-South dialogue which France initiated in the form of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, we believe that the results of this unprecedented meeting are far from negative. Differences did of course appear in the reactions it elicited. This is only natural at the preliminary stages of so vast an undertaking. The final report⁷ drawn up by the experts, however, shows that the Conference made real progress over previous talks in several areas; this was true in the area of raw materials, for one, where the principle of establishing a common fund represents an important step; and also on the subject of the transfer of resources, thanks to new financial commitments by the industrialized nations; and in the area of African development, especially in the

context of the 10-year programme to develop transport and telecommunications which will have the backing of the developed countries. Useful talks were held on other important issues such as indebtedness, export earnings, investment and energy.

162. It is now up to us to continue our efforts according to procedures on which we agree. The new world economic order cannot simply be decreed; we will have to build it step by step. By the same token, the dialogue between North and South, which is so important for the world, must be a continuing process that takes into account the interests of everyone, and therefore implies a commitment by one and all.

163. At this point I will reiterate that it is up to the socialist countries to make their contribution to this ambitious undertaking. The difference between our philosophies and systems should not veil the interdependence which has become the law of our planet.

164. We are all experiencing this interdependence with growing awareness in the area of our planet's natural resources, especially energy resources. Those who have these resources have the right to a fair price for them, without, however, exposing the world economy to disorders of which they, too, would be victims. It is the imperative duty of those who live in affluence to eliminate waste. The future of our entire community requires us to manage our energy resources in common, whether they are oil, other fossil fuels, new energy sources—which have yet to be fully explored—or nuclear energy, which we must put to the service of a peaceful future.

165. Growing energy needs and a desire to diversify energy-supply sources have forced many countries to turn to nuclear means. The price we pay for this must not be proliferation of nuclear weapons, which would put humanity in mortal danger. It is in this light that we should view the international co-operation which has already been started by my country, for one, and which is aimed at reconciling the requirements of non-proliferation with the need to use more nuclear energy.

166. The negotiations under way on the law of the sea will be a decisive test of whether we are capable of using our scientific know-how and adapting our laws to a higher level of organization. We are not simply dealing with exploitation, however more rational and equitable it may be; we are also concerned with preserving all the sources of life at the international as well as national levels.

167. Such major undertakings cannot be completed while States and peoples live in the shadow of threats and domination, injustice and disunity.

168. That is why France, drawing on its experience, is continuing its co-operation with the Soviet Union and the countries of the East at the European level; that is also why France is still determined, despite the crisis, to achieve with its partners in the Community the ambitious goals of European construction. The nine members of the Community are asserting their collective identity more and more in international bodies by expressing common views on many subjects, as they did during the Conference on

⁷ See documents A/31/478 and Corr.1 and A/31/478/Add.1 and Corr.1.

International Economic Co-operation. By the same token, the day before yesterday [7th meeting] the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, current President of the Community, explained the position of the nine countries on many items on the agenda. France is convinced that political co-operation among the members of the Community makes a significant contribution to our work.

169. But the determination Europe has shown in overcoming its old quarrels, making détente prevail and embarking on the path of co-operation is far from being expressed in other areas of the world.

170. The situation in the Middle East unfortunately illustrates this point. All of us, and France above all, welcomed the return to peace in Lebanon with the deepest satisfaction. President Sarkis is to be commended for his steadfast efforts to restore authority and see that the unity, integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon are restored. France, which had been set on rendering assistance to a people dear to it, believes that now more than ever the existence of an independent, united, free and prosperous Lebanon is indispensable for the equilibrium of the region. The very disturbing situation in the south of the country shows none the less that the security and stability of Lebanon depend heavily on the course of the conflict in the Middle East.

171. We are unfortunately still far from a settlement. The desire for peace that I had noted during my visits to the region several months ago have so far not been enough to commit the parties to the path of negotiation. The entrenchment of positions may compromise the efforts under way, and thus gravely affect the stability of the States and the very future of the peoples of the Middle East. And yet the principles which must shape any settlement are not only known but are now accepted by the international community.

172. The first principle is the evacuation by Israel of the territories occupied in 1967. Peace cannot, in fact, be founded on conquest, on the occupation of territories, or on a fait accompli.

173. The recognition of the rights of the Palestinians to a homeland is the second fundamental principle. To refuse to grant a people which is displaced or living under an occupation régime the right to a homeland where it can fully express its national identity would be to ignore the fact that nothing lasting can be founded on irredentism, which would doom to failure all attempts at a settlement.

174. The presence of the Palestine Liberation Organization in our meeting halls, together with our conviction that it is essential for the Palestinians to be associated with the negotiations which will decide their fate, underscores the degree to which this crucial aspect of the conflict is now recognized. It is time that the Palestinian people were granted the opportunity to live in a system and under conditions of their own choosing; it is time this opportunity was included in the terms for a global solution.

175. I also want to repeat that recognition of the existence of all the States in the region, including Israel, within secure, recognized and guaranteed boundaries, is another mandatory requirement of any settlement. After so

many cruel wars, a genuine peace, implying normal relations, has to be found for this region so that the resources and talents of all sides can finally be employed to promote development and prosperity.

176. It is important, however, that no one should jeopardize the desired outcome by making gestures that lead nowhere and belie the will to negotiate which has been otherwise clearly displayed. Several measures recently taken by Israel in the occupied territories have given us cause for grave concern. Actions such as these do more than violate international law and the resolutions of the United Nations: they create a climate un conducive to negotiations to a time when the other States have expressed their readiness to seek peace agreements.

177. At the eastern end of the Mediterranean another *de facto* situation persists. Efforts to find a settlement to the problem of Cyprus continue to meet with suspicion and resentment. The death of President Makarios—and I should like to pay a tribute here to the memory of that patriot and statesman—should not delay our quest for the goal to which we are still committed: namely, to bring about a reconciliation between the Greek and Turkish communities, and to preserve the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus. We hope that the Secretary-General will continue the mission entrusted to him by the Security Council two years ago, and that the bases for a comprehensive settlement will be actively explored with his assistance and that of his Special Representative without pre-conditions and without regard for the *de facto* situation.

178. It is hard to imagine what other reasonable approach might be substituted for the current efforts: the present method of giving the communities themselves responsibility for drawing up the terms of a settlement corresponds to the particular nature of a dispute that could only be aggravated still further if it were extended. While the solution sought by the negotiators will have to take into account the strong individuality of the parties concerned, it will also have to contain a satisfactory answer to the important problem of the refugees and provide for a reasonable territorial settlement through significant adjustments in the present line of separation.

179. Africa, to which France is linked by so many ties, has been the special focus of my Government's concerns this year. Our position rests on the following principles. First, it is for the African countries themselves to resolve their differences and accordingly reject any interference that would make Africa an arena for external rivalry. Secondly, the solidarity that exists between France and Africa is practiced with full respect for the sovereignty of all States. Thirdly, the security and stability of the continent, the best guarantee of its development, will not be assured so long as the questions of southern Africa remain unsolved, be it Namibia, Rhodesia or the odious system of *apartheid*.

180. In the case of Namibia, first of all, my country, which is taking an active part in the efforts currently being pursued by the five Powers that are members of the Security Council, believes that free elections should be held under United Nations auspices, with the participation of all

the political organizations in the Territory, including the South West Africa People's Organization.

181. As far as Rhodesia is concerned, by stubbornly refusing to allow the black population of Zimbabwe to exercise its political rights, the rebel Government in Salisbury is bringing a growing threat to bear on the entire region and is undermining the security of Mozambique and Zambia. France supports the action taken by the United Kingdom and the United States in conjunction with the countries and liberation movements concerned.

182. Since the South African régime is based on the unacceptable system of *apartheid*, the risk of worsening tension which may disintegrate into racial war continues to grow. These grave perils were reason enough for the Conferences in Maputo⁸ and Lagos,⁹ at which *apartheid* was unanimously condemned.

183. If decisive progress is not achieved in solving these questions and if the necessary changes are not made, South Africa may well become increasingly isolated in our community, with the consequences that would inevitably result from this. In addition to the voluntary ban on arms sales which our countries, including France, have successively imposed, a code of conduct for companies with subsidiaries, branches or representation in South Africa was recently adopted by the nine countries of the European Community [see A/32/267].

184. South Africa was allegedly planning a nuclear explosion. The South African Prime Minister made a statement in which he said that his Government did not plan to acquire nuclear weapons. I have taken note of this. As I said last month, if that were not the case, it could jeopardize all the current peace efforts, and we would be obliged to react.

185. At this point I should like once again to dispose of a ridiculous allegation to the effect that a very common type of electronuclear plant, which has not even been built yet, has supposedly served or could have served in the manufacture of atomic weapons by the Pretoria régime. France and several other industrialized countries are building and exporting dozens of reactors for the peaceful production of nuclear energy which is needed throughout the world. As far as South Africa is concerned, the strictest controls are stipulated and precautions have been increased. The problems of proliferation with which we must concern ourselves are too serious to be left to malice and stupidity.

186. In addition to these persistent sources of tension, armed conflict has flared up among African countries themselves elsewhere on the continent. It is at the conference table, in the framework of its own institutions and through the efforts of its own mediators that Africa traditionally settles its problems. We hope that this will continue to be the case. Disunity in Africa on the procedures to be followed and appeals for massive outside help, whether for troops or weapons, would soon make the Africans pawns in the struggles. The motto "Africa for

the Africans" implies respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the right of these States to security in the framework of their own political options and the rejection of all outside interference.

187. This principle has guided and still guides France in its relations with all the African countries. The process of decolonization, which we began on that continent nearly 20 years ago, was recently completed when Djibouti acceded to independence following a referendum and elections that the Organization for African Unity, the United Nations and the League of Arab States witnessed as being democratic. My country, which has already established ties of co-operation with the new State, hopes that it will avoid becoming embroiled in the ambitions and confrontations swirling dangerously around it. It is with very great pleasure that I welcome here the presence of the delegation from Djibouti, which is making its debut in the international community.

188. France feels and shows solidarity for countries it has been closely associated with through history, and we are fully prepared to demonstrate the same solidarity in the Comoros. Misunderstandings are still evident in the interpretation of certain decisions regarding the island of Mayotte. The inhabitants of that island have opted by vote in favour of a future different from that of their neighbours. The status of the island does, however, leave them the possibility of stating their position about their future on another occasion. France will not stand in the way of any course of action, provided it is followed with mutual regard for the rights of the parties.

189. France respects the sovereignty of each African State and has joined in the development effort of the countries of the continent, but we strongly decry the tragic fate of two French nationals killed on 1 May in Zouérate and six others kidnapped while carrying out peaceful work to benefit the economic progress of Mauritania. The taking of hostages directly contravenes international conventions; and it is to be condemned even more because so far, despite the efforts of our Secretary-General and the International Red Cross, it has been impossible for us to obtain the precise information needed to reassure fully their families. We cannot allow men and women dedicated to peaceful work to be brought into conflicts unrelated to them. I formally request the international organizations and Governments that are in contact with those who kidnapped our compatriots to assist us in obtaining their release.

190. In endeavouring to explain France's position on the major sources of tension today, I have been obliged to omit references to situations in other areas of the world which have been less in need of our Assembly's attention. I should like, nevertheless, to repeat here my delegation's best wishes to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, which has finally joined our Organization. The sponsorship France gave this country shows how important we believed it was to obtain its contribution to our work.

191. In spite of our commitment to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, we cannot remain silent in the face of the news reaching us from Kampuchea. In the name of the friendship France feels for the Khmer people, I express the hope that this State

⁸ International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, held in Maputo from 16 to 21 May 1977.

⁹ World Conference for Action against *Apartheid*, held in Lagos from 22 to 26 August 1977.

Member of our Organization will respect the fundamental rights of the human being as set forth in our Charter.

192. I could not conclude these brief remarks about the Asian continent without praising the very good relations my country enjoys with the People's Republic of China, a country that holds a unique place in world affairs commensurate with its historic and human dimensions.

193. I should now like to take up a subject that has traditionally been one of the central themes of the discussions and work of our Assembly. My Government has always believed that the arms reduction effort is vital for peace in the world, for the development of States and the prosperity of peoples. It intends to make a positive contribution to the preparation of the special session to be devoted to this subject in May 1978: first of all because for 20 years my country has constantly spoken out in favour of general, complete and controlled disarmament, and we intend to continue to work in this direction; secondly, because our defence has been organized on the basis of our profoundly peaceful policy with the sole aim of preserving our independence and guaranteeing our security; and lastly because France is located in a region of the world where, despite a manifest spirit of détente, means of destruction continue to grow and to be perfected.

194. We cannot resign ourselves to the apparently inevitable build-up of nuclear and conventional weapons, and we cannot fail to deplore the senseless squandering of resources that could be put to better use for development. In 1976 \$350 billion was spent on arms.

195. We cannot remain indifferent to the intense competition among certain Powers, resulting in a perpetual increase in their overcapacity for mutual destruction.

196. Lastly, we cannot observe without concern the constant perfecting of technologies and of the most sophisticated means of destruction and death.

197. The effort to reduce arsenals is therefore one of the priorities of our era, and we must not be satisfied with mere appearances.

198. Of course for years there have been attempts to prohibit or limit certain types of weapons. Banning means of destruction that have not yet been produced, or agreeing to phase out gradually weapons of apparently dubious or marginal military importance, stems from praiseworthy intentions. But because measures such as these are still partial, they can only give an illusion of disarmament and do not make any substantial contribution to the reduction of weapons or to the greater safety of the international community.

199. By the same token, the efforts of the two super-Powers to ensure a balance in their strategic relationship, however desirable these efforts may be, should not in and of themselves be confused with the over-all disarmament effort.

200. As anyone can see, the problem of verifying commitments is fundamental in the quest for arms reduction and greater safety.

201. For there to be disarmament, there must be a genuine reduction of arsenals. The major Powers should take a part in this common effort consistent with the part they have played in the last 30 years in overarming the planet.

202. For there to be disarmament, not only nuclear weapons but also conventional weapons must be included.

203. Disarmament must be genuine, that is, it must produce a significant reduction in the level of weapons, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and must begin first with those countries whose arsenals pose the gravest threat in our world and are out of all proportion either with those of other Powers or with what is needed for world strategic balance.

204. It must be general and complete; that is, it must not allow for discrimination in favour of any one State, geographic area or type of weapon.

205. It must be gradual and balanced; that is, it must be carried out under the same safety conditions for all parties and must help reduce factors of instability.

206. It must also comprise effective measures of control and verification. It is essential in this respect for the United Nations to be able to take a real part in this task, without which no progress can be made. In fact, there can be no disarmament without trust, and no trust without control, and no control unless it is independent, that is to say, international.

207. How should these necessarily very general principles be applied?

208. We will obviously have to discuss this in detail at the special session of the Assembly in May 1978. It is difficult to separate questions of procedure from questions of substance. We will therefore of necessity have to ascertain which forums are best suited to deal with the matter of disarmament. It is not the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. All of us here are familiar with the limitations on the work that can be accomplished there. The reasons for this are well known. I will not go over them again.

209. When the time comes, France will present its proposals on all these questions with a view to the discussions of the special session of the Assembly. As the President of the French Republic said on 24 August, the overarmament of the world "requires urgent and resolute action". The United Nations community in its entirety must come to grips with this problem.

210. I said a moment ago that the world situation was neither good nor reassuring. There was probably little need to give examples; how many of us can say that we feel safe from the scourges of economic crisis, hunger and war? In this difficult world, no one is spared.

211. It is also up to us to see that man is the ultimate beneficiary of our action and that human rights are better respected. France, which has given asylum to nearly 100,000 political refugees, was one of the first nations to

believe in the need to proclaim human rights. We are soon to ratify the covenants solemnly adopted on this subject by the international community. We cannot help being disturbed at seeing so many Governments retreat behind emergency legislation, establish unequal systems, or practise oppression of entire peoples. No injustice will bring us any closer to the goals of our Charter, which will remain a dead letter unless all our Members agree to move forward within the law.

212. Interdependence is a fact in our international society, but it can also be the basis for great undertakings which, if mankind stands together, will lead us to greater freedom, dignity and well-being.

213. This must be the ambition of each of our Governments, for we know full well that our collective institutions, the principles to which we have all adhered by being

here, and the noble goals which we set for our meetings and conferences, ultimately depend on the determination of sovereign States.

214. The lessons of history and loyalty to its principles have led France, while exercising its independence, to propose two important concepts for our times: détente and dialogue. One describes the relations which should be fostered between the East and the West; the other suggests fruitful negotiations between the industrialized North and the developing South. Both fall within the framework of the collective effort that brings us together and corresponds to the legitimate expectations of our peoples. France will bring to this effort all the wealth of its creativity and determination.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.