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**President: Mr. Lazar MOJSOV (Yugoslavia).**

**Address by Tupuola Efi, Prime Minister of Samoa**

1. The PRESIDENT: This afternoon the Assembly will hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Independent State of Western Samoa. I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency the Honourable Tupuola Efi and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

2. Tupuola EFI (Samoa): First I must extend to you, Sir, the warm wishes and congratulations of Samoa, my delegation and myself on your installation as President of the thirty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. You will bring to this Assembly the wisdom and experience that Yugoslavia has developed over the years in the fields of international relations and diplomacy.

3. Yugoslavia has long been a leader in the search for world peace and in the evolution of the non-aligned movement through which the bulk of the developing countries can make themselves heard as a force both for peace and for the betterment of life for the majority of the peoples of the world.

4. Samoa doubly congratulates you on the honour that this world body has bestowed upon you and, through you, upon Yugoslavia.

5. Samoa has close links with Yugoslavia, and only recently we were honoured by the visit to Samoa of the Vice-President of the Council of Deputies of Yugoslavia. Samoan leaders will likewise visit Yugoslavia next year, and both our countries are in detailed negotiations on economic co-operation matters. Samoa welcomes your presidency of this Assembly.

6. I also express my country's gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, both for his inspired leadership of the United Nations and for his personal assistance to us during Samoa's first year of membership. I value this very much, and we are most grateful for his assistance and the assistance of the various staff members of the United

Nations who have helped us during this year and in the establishment of our Permanent Mission in New York.

7. I should also like to take this opportunity to express to the Government and people of Viet Nam the congratulations of Samoa on the achievement by Viet Nam of membership status in the United Nations. Likewise, we also congratulate the new State of Djibouti on its accession to membership in the United Nations.

8. Samoa was the first nation of Polynesia to achieve independence and the first Polynesian State to become a Member of the United Nations. Polynesia stretches from the islands of Hawaii in the north to New Zealand in the south, from Samoa and Tonga in the west to French Polynesia and Easter Island in the east. The Polynesians are a homogeneous group with close cultural and linguistic affinities. The word "love" in the Maori language is "Aroha", in the Samoan language is "Alofa", and in the Hawaiian language is "Aloha".

9. The major issue confronting the world today is the search by man for a harmonious relationship with his fellow man and with his environment. The Polynesians by necessity achieved a relationship with the environment over a thousand years ago. The quarters of the moon tell us about the tides and the seasons of fish. The flowers bloom and they also have a message. The Polynesians are a seafaring people and produced mariners who navigated by the stars over countless thousands of miles. They struck a balance with nature. They were one with the environment.

10. It is this same oneness with the environment that we are seeking today. We are all seeking a balance between man and nature. It would be unrealistic to retreat to earlier eras: there are new pressures on the world that make retreat impossible. World populations have grown; there are increased pressures on natural resources; there are new demands for a higher quality of life. These pressures and demands cannot be ignored. We must find a new ecological balance with the environment. In a positive sense, it is what the law of the sea is about. In a negative sense, it is what nuclear-weapons testing is about.

11. We need to approach these problems with the correct perspective. But what is the correct perspective? The English language recognizes two perspectives: the "bird's-eye view" and the "worm's-eye view". The Polynesians recognize three perspectives: that of a man on top of the mountain, that of a man on top of a tree and that of a man in a canoe. Who is to say which man has the right perspective? The man on top of the mountain certainly has the best panoramic view and can see the whole picture. But the man in the canoe is better placed to see the school of fish.

12. All have a role to play. The art lies in allowing each to make his contribution, in the pooling of complementary resources. The man on top of the mountain makes his contribution, the man on top of the tree his, and the man in the canoe his. But neither can ignore the other. Likewise, each Member country, no matter how large or small, must be able to contribute to the common good. That is why Samoa feels that a small nation, like the man in the canoe, can make an essential contribution to the United Nations. The United Nations needs the three perspectives, or as many perspectives as are available to it.

13. An important factor in the formulation of Samoa's perceptions is the colonial experience, which has exacted a high price from our people. Samoa was partitioned in the late nineteenth century by decree in Europe. We are still separated from our fellow Samoans. We have experienced the demeaning nature of colonialism. We have always struggled against our colonial masters. Lives have been lost. Samoans have been exiled simply because they held dear the principles of the dignity of man. Our struggles were spread over 100 years and coincided with the great freedom movements in Asia and Africa. Samoa was an integral part of the independence struggle. We know what it is all about.

14. Samoa achieved independence in 1962. Samoa welcomes the fact that in our region three countries—the Solomon Islands, the Gilbert Islands and Tuvalu—will achieve independence in the very near future. But problems remain, and elements of colonialism linger in the South Pacific and elsewhere.

15. Samoa is watching with interest the political developments that are occurring in the New Hebrides. Our sympathies are with the people of the New Hebrides in their struggle for freedom, and we look forward to the day—which, we hope, will be in the near future—when that country achieves full and independent nationhood.

16. Samoa is sad, however, that the political process towards independence in other parts of the South Pacific is not moving at the same pace. We hope that the people of these remaining Territories will grasp the opportunities that present themselves to reassess their political future and will choose paths that will lead towards the full realization of the destinies of their various countries.

17. Samoa did not achieve independence because it was fashionable, nor does Samoa now oppose colonialism because it is likewise fashionable. On the contrary, Samoa achieved independence because the Samoan people fought for it. We continue to oppose colonialism because we cannot accept the dominance of one group of people over another. We cannot compromise on this basic issue. The rule of a minority against the wishes of a majority cannot be tolerated. We deplore racism and repression in whatever form they might take. We regard *apartheid* to be abhorrent. Our sympathy and support for the peoples of Namibia and Zimbabwe is based on these clear principles. So when Samoa talks about colonialism and repression, whether in Africa, in the South Pacific, in Asia or elsewhere, it is not just rhetoric. Rather, Samoa's opposition to colonialism is fundamental because of its own experience.

18. By the same token, Samoa is not engaging in rhetoric when it expresses its opposition to nuclear testing. We in

the South Pacific are experiencing, against our wishes, the continued testing of nuclear weapons. We are firmly opposed to nuclear-weapons testing in all environments, anywhere in the world. The concept behind the acquisition, testing and proliferation of nuclear weapons is wrong and cannot be justified if we all have as our basic objective the attainment of world peace.

19. The whole idea of the United Nations Charter is to gather the nations together to seek a consensus, to solve by discussion rather than by conflict. We are all part of the human family. Issues are discussed here which affect us all. We should all have a voice. Not only the super-Powers, which have enough in their arsenals to destroy themselves and the whole world, but the other nations, should be allowed to put forward their perspectives, unshackled by old and discredited formulas.

20. Samoa is a non-committed nation. It has no defence treaties with anyone. Samoa has a close affinity with the non-aligned movement. We are of the third world. The problems and aspirations of the third world are our problems and aspirations. We will approach from that basic point of view the problems that come before the United Nations.

21. We will determine our position on the various issues that come before the United Nations on the basis of our own assessment. Our approach to the important political issues such as Africa, the Middle East question and the Korean question will be constructive. We will not intervene for the sake of scoring debating points, but when we do speak it will be to state a point of view that might contribute in a small way to a solution. We are encouraged that, as time progresses, attitudes change, new priorities are established, the meaning of words differs, an evolutionary process develops—all of which tends to make it easier for a consensus or an accommodation to be reached on contentious issues. We are mindful also that usually in such issues it is the major players who must reach an accommodation. This might be by quiet diplomacy in this building or elsewhere. It might also be by bilateral talks. We support this concept and shall respect such activities whenever we are speaking.

22. Our concern will be that one party does not dominate to the detriment of the other. The rights of all must be protected. The right to exist, the right to prosper and the right to have one's point of view respected are valuable rights to which Samoa strongly subscribes. Dominance by one country or one group is evil and contains within it the danger of a reaction from other groups. Similarly, great-Power rivalry and great-Power dominance, often for the sake of dominance rather than for any other reason, is to be deplored. The South Pacific has in the recent past been free from such rivalries—but the indications are that this is changing. Samoa is firmly opposed to attempts from any direction to create such rivalry. Samoa views this as senseless activity which serves no good purpose and which might even aggravate world tensions. Samoa will do all in its power to prevent this from happening.

23. Samoa has no quarrel with any nation. We have old friends and we are gaining new friends. We have a basic policy of universalism and we pledge to work closely with

all countries that extend to us the hand of genuine friendship.

24. My address would not be complete without a brief reference to two economic matters, the new international economic order and the law of the sea. I do not have to remind you that the major economic problem facing the world today is the wide gap between the standard of living of the advanced industrial countries and that of the developing countries. It is also the major political problem, because the disparity between developed and developing transcends political ideologies.

25. As a third-world country, Samoa joins in the urgent demand of the developing countries for a new international economic order. The demand is for fundamental changes in the structures of economic dominance and inequality. We believe it must proceed and apply universally and not sectorally. The changes must be structural rather than marginal. Above all, they are changes that must relate to human needs and the human condition. We believe that any new international economic order must be founded on moral and social justice no less than on economic and political realities. There is too much at stake for it to be otherwise.

26. Likewise, we regard particular aspects of the law of the sea as forming an integral part of the new international economic order. These provide a means of ensuring a sharing of a major resource among the people of the world on a just and equitable basis.

27. For all nations of the South Pacific, the law of the sea has special meaning. The sea does more than provide sustenance to us. It has shaped and influenced our respective characters and our livelihoods for centuries. For some South Pacific nations, the sea and all it contains is their only exploitable resource. Samoa regards it as essential that a satisfactory conclusion be reached on the law of the sea. We urge that the seventh session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea act positively in the creation of a new law of the sea which will be both sensible and fair.

28. The South Pacific nations are willing to share this resource with the other nations of the world. It is important for all nations, developed and developing, that a comprehensive and workable law of the sea régime, which includes an effective system for the settlement of disputes, be achieved. If not, the South Pacific nations should not be blamed if they group together to protect their major resource from outside encroachments.

29. Finally, I thank the Assembly for its attention. This is the first time that Samoa has taken a full role in the general debate of the United Nations. This for Samoa is a historic occasion. For me it has added poignancy. Samoa's delegation, which included the present Head of State and my father, travelled to the United Nations in 1958 to put Samoa's case for independence to the world body. It was the United Nations that accepted what they had to say—and it was the United Nations that agreed to Samoa's independence. Now it is the United Nations that has welcomed back the new generation of Samoa as a full Member.

30. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Samoa for the important statement he has just made.

## AGENDA ITEM 9

### General debate (*continued*)

31. Mr. PEACOCK (Australia): Mr. President, I begin by offering you my congratulations and good wishes as you commence the task of steering the General Assembly through its thirty-second session. I have no doubt that you will serve this Assembly with distinction, and I offer you the full co-operation of my delegation. I wish to take this opportunity also to express my Government's recognition of the continuing contribution made to the United Nations by Ambassador Amerasinghe, particularly in the high office of President of the General Assembly, in which he preceded you, and in the office of President of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. Yugoslavia has much to contribute to the functioning of the United Nations and to the furtherance of harmony among nations. Yugoslavia's distinctive role in international affairs is fittingly recognized in your election to the presidency of this General Assembly.

32. Let me also say that last year we welcomed Samoa to membership, and I am delighted and indeed honoured to be following today my friend, the Prime Minister of Samoa.

33. This year, of course, two new Members have joined us. As Chairman of the group of Western European and other States for the current month, the Australian delegation has already had an opportunity to express a welcome to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Republic of Djibouti. May I add that we look forward to full co-operation with them across the broad range of the United Nations agenda.

34. Every year we are all faced with the problem of how best to use our time on this rostrum—what subjects and themes to focus on, how wide or narrow a range of subjects to cover. I have decided to be very selective on this occasion, to speak on central issues which are of common and immediate concern to all Members and all peoples, whatever their more particular interests and preoccupations: namely, the issues of nuclear arms control and disarmament; energy; North-South relations; human rights; and the particular problems posed by the two areas of most acute crisis in the world today, southern Africa and the Middle East.

35. It has been possible during the last few years to discern a fundamental shift in emphasis in our agenda. This has been a reflection of the objective fact of a new interdependence and at the same time a much greater awareness of that fact. But there is one crucial item which is as important on the new agenda as it was on the old: the issue of nuclear arms control.

36. The first concern of mankind must be the avoidance of nuclear conflict. If we fail in that, we fail in everything. We shall no longer be living in a recognizable world, if indeed we are living at all. The issue is not one which will stand still; things must get better or they will get very much worse. And we are very close to the point of no return.

37. It is therefore enormously important and appropriate that there will be a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in 1978. This special session is not intended to provide a forum for the negotiation of new agreements. But it is intended to give new stimulus and focus to international efforts in the whole field of arms control and disarmament, to make an important contribution to a new consensus on priorities for future negotiations and to review ways in which existing negotiating machinery can be made more effective. These are urgent tasks.

38. The central issues of nuclear arms control, as I said here last year, are: the achievement of universal adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [see resolution 2373 (XXII)]; the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban agreement and its acceptance by all States; and continued progress by the United States and the Soviet Union in their negotiations on strategic arms limitations.<sup>1</sup>

39. It is essential that the linkage between progress towards these goals be fully appreciated. Under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons the nuclear-weapon States have undertaken to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race. This obligation is one facet of a three-cornered bargain, on which the non-proliferation Treaty rests: nuclear Powers undertake to negotiate towards mutual nuclear disarmament; non-nuclear Powers forswear nuclear weapons and accept safeguards on their nuclear industries; and countries in a position to do so undertake to co-operate in the peaceful development of nuclear energy. These interlocking undertakings have not only a legal aspect deriving from the Treaty but political and psychological ramifications of the greatest importance. Indeed it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the psychological dimensions of this whole problem. The substitution of confidence for hesitation, trust for suspicion, and hope for fatalism is essential for its solution.

40. The interest of the international community is that all States should adhere to the non-proliferation Treaty. The fact that a large majority of States are now parties to the Treaty lends hope that universal adherence can be achieved. There is no other convincing test of a country's commitment to non-proliferation. Every nation has responsibilities to join in efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to contribute to an international climate which would make it harder for States to remain outside the non-proliferation Treaty.

41. Australia has always attached great importance to the cessation of nuclear testing in all environments. We are encouraged by the discussions which are taking place between the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom on a comprehensive test-ban agreement. Such an agreement would be a major step forward in nuclear arms control. It would be an important barrier both to the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries and to the expansion of existing nuclear arsenals—and both are equally important. Agreement between the super-Powers is the essential first step towards the cessation of tests by all countries in all environments.

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 9th meeting, para. 183.

42. The pre-eminence of the super-Powers is also such that agreement between them must provide the foundation for progress, not merely towards mutual limitation but also towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. In this context the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the United States and the Soviet Union are of fundamental importance. We welcome the significant measure of progress which the two States have already achieved and their commitment to continuing negotiations into the future.

43. It goes without saying that the success of arms control efforts in the nuclear sphere is closely linked to satisfactory international controls on the utilization of nuclear power for peaceful purposes. Australia recognizes the right of all States to share in the utilization of nuclear power for peaceful purposes. We believe that there should be the widest possible agreement on an appropriate framework for the management and operation of the nuclear fuel cycle. This requires stringent safeguards and controls on nuclear materials, equipment and technology to prevent their misuse for military purposes. But alongside these, and of equal importance, there must be incentives for countries that have unreservedly forsworn the nuclear weapons option. Such a framework will strengthen the non-proliferation régime. In this regard, Australia strongly supports the impending international nuclear fuel cycle evaluation.

44. It is of course the most striking historical irony of our era that the nuclear energy which has given rise to the problem of proliferation also offers the only economic solution to another urgent problem facing the international community over the next few decades, namely, the prospect of energy shortages.

45. No other issue so strikingly reflects the interdependence of the nations of our planet, for it affects all countries. None demonstrates so clearly the need for intensified co-operation to avoid what could be potentially disastrous consequences, politically, economically and socially, if the world proves incapable of a smooth and rapid adjustment from a primarily oil-based economy to one reliant on renewable and non-depletable sources of energy. We do not underestimate the difficulty of bringing about such a change, which will require considerable effort and many sacrifices on the part of all nations and will test our innovative skills to the utmost. Such a change will also—and I stress this—require a sustained and imaginative effort on the part of Governments to impress the gravity of the situation on the consciousness of their people, to make them fully aware of what is at risk if a solution is not found. But I am optimistic that, provided we co-operate closely, we shall succeed in overcoming the energy problems that face us.

46. It is possible that by the mid-1980s, and virtually certain by the 1990s, there will be dislocations in the world's supply of oil as global oil resources become more rapidly depleted. The major oil-producing and oil-consuming countries are fully aware of this situation and will increasingly want to reserve oil supplies for non-substitutable energy and non-energy uses. In the light of this, Governments will be required to take urgent action to conserve energy use, to promote the development of conventional sources of energy and to develop, through intensified research and development programmes, alter-

native non-conventional energy sources which are both renewable and non-depletable. These are actions that cannot be put off until next year or the next decade. Given the long lead times involved and the prospect of energy shortages, action must be taken by Governments now. Many Governments, including my own, have recognized these realities and are responding accordingly.

47. Last month the Australian Government announced a range of policies designed to promote the development of Australia's energy resources. Our decision to proceed with the mining and export of Australia's uranium will have important implications for the world community. Bearing in mind that we possess some 20 per cent of the Western world's proven low-cost reserves and have no domestic nuclear power requirement at this stage, Australia will be in a position to make a significant contribution towards supplying the needs of an increasingly energy-deficient world. Given that the scope for conservation and for expanding conventional energy sources is limited, and that alternative renewable energy sources are unlikely to be brought into commercial use in the short or medium term, an expansion in the use of nuclear power will be essential for the next few decades at least. Recognizing its responsibility to the international community, Australia is prepared to co-operate with other nations to supply uranium, subject to the strictest safeguard conditions, to facilitate this transition.

48. Furthermore, we believe that, in order to overcome the obstacles facing the world community during the transition period in energy, co-operation among nations in this area must be intensified. Bilateral co-operation will be necessary but, in my view, insufficient. With the conclusion of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, no forum currently exists for continuing an international dialogue on energy. The Australian Government earnestly hopes that the failure to reach agreement on a continuation of the energy dialogue at the Conference will prove only temporary. We should spare no effort over the coming months to seek means of establishing international consultations on energy. As a potentially major net exporter of energy, Australia is ready to play its full part in any such future dialogue.

49. When we talk of international interdependence, we are talking not only of the interdependence of countries, but also of issues. For these do not stand apart from each other as discrete problems but are interlocked. I have just mentioned the Conference on International Economic Co-operation in the context of energy; but both the Conference and the energy problem itself are of central importance to the next issue I wish to discuss: the North-South dialogue.

50. That dialogue is about many things and at the deepest level. Economic matters are not the only important ones. But they certainly are important, and so far the dialogue has concentrated most heavily on them.

51. The economies of many countries are heavily dependent on the income derived from exports of agricultural commodities and raw materials, and market forces cause significant fluctuations in the prices of these products. Little wonder, then, that these countries have sought to

introduce measures of price stabilization, which would be to the benefit not only of producers but also of consumers.

52. My country is a member of all existing international commodity agreements, many of which have brought together consumers and producers in a natural compact. Some of these agreements have been successful and the problems of others have encouraged the devising of alternative methods of ironing out excessive price fluctuations. Developing countries, concerned over worsening balance of payments positions, have made concerted efforts in UNCTAD for the adoption of measures which would assist in stabilizing prices over a wide range of commodities. In this context, a significant proposal now before the international community is that for an Integrated Programme of Commodities<sup>2</sup> with the associated proposal for the establishment of a common fund.

53. The decision in favour of the establishment of a common fund is perhaps the most notable achievement of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, and I am pleased to have played some part in its adoption at the Ministerial Meeting in Paris in May and June. Subsequently, at the Meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government in London from 8 to 15 June, the Australian Prime Minister urged the creation of a technical working group of experts to examine the matter. The Commonwealth Group, drawn from a cross-section of producer and consumer countries, developed and developing, was requested to report on the issues and considerations. My Government is examining their report, which has just been received, for the contribution it can make to the development of our position on the complex and technical questions associated with defining the common fund's purposes and methods of operation.

54. Negotiations on an Integrated Programme for Commodities are proceeding concurrently with negotiations on tariff and non-tariff barriers affecting trade in a wide range of agricultural and industrial products. My Government welcomes the impetus given to the multilateral trade negotiations. We are preparing our position in accordance with the time-table agreed upon between the United States and the European Community. We share, too, the concern expressed in London by the major economic partners of the Western world about the dangers of a resort to protectionism. The salutary lesson of the 1930s is clear; so also is that of the 1950s and the 1960s when economic prosperity moved hand-in-hand with an expansion in world trade. We look forward to the acceleration of the multilateral trade negotiations in the hope that the Tokyo round will indeed stimulate increased trade in farm products, raw materials and industrial goods.

55. The Tokyo round is coming to its period of most intensive work at a time when there is growing recognition of the emergence of a significant number of middle-income countries, many of which possess growing industrial sectors and whose concerns to expand overseas markets are understood by my Government. Some of these countries

<sup>2</sup> 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.H.D.10), part one A, resolution 93 (IV).

are our neighbours. Some of their products pose special difficulties for sectors of the Australian community. An expansion of world trade would go a long way towards maintaining the very impressive pace of development they have achieved.

56. Progress towards a new international economic order will be influenced also by the transfer of real resources to developing countries. Much of the development debate has hitherto focused on the aggregate levels of such resources. But it is not simply a matter of increasing the volume of aid. The quality of aid, particularly its relevance to the needs and priorities of the recipient countries themselves, is at least as important as quantity. In both these respects, I believe Australia's record is a good one: 425 million Australian dollars have been allocated to official development assistance for 1977/1978, an increase of 12 per cent. In United States dollar terms, the programme is approaching the half billion dollar mark. Virtually all of this assistance is in grant form. Our contribution to multilateral agencies will increase by 47 per cent in this financial year, reflecting the confidence we have in the major United Nations agencies, particularly UNDP. We have made significant further progress in untying aid for bilateral projects; over-all Australian bilateral aid is already substantially untied. My Government has undertaken multiyear commitments covering the major portion of our bilateral programme, as well as several multilateral organizations. Important new initiatives in regard to the funding of local costs of projects have also been undertaken. As a major food supplier, Australia is fully aware of the global concern to meet basic food requirements and to improve food security. Australia has recently announced several important new measures relating to food aid, including a substantial increase in food aid assistance and a commitment to contribute to an international reserve for emergencies.

57. My delegation had hoped that it would prove possible for the General Assembly to reach agreement on the assessment of the outcome of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation. The Conference was a most important event, and Australians applauded the framework it provided for the concurrent examination of an enormous range of issues. Many of these issues were, and are, complex and not easily solved. The greatest achievement of the Conference lies in the exposure of these complexities, the greater understanding which I believe all participants derived in consequence, and the creation of an atmosphere conducive to future dialogue. The concrete results of the Conference have fallen short of the expectations of many, but results there were. We recognize them for what they are, another step along the path towards equity, justice and rationality in international economic relations.

58. I have spoken of the North-South dialogue in terms of the global economic issues and discussions which are most familiar to us and which capture most of the headlines, but I believe it is important that we not lose sight of the progress which is being made at other levels, in less dramatic gatherings. That progress is a reminder that not everything must wait on the solution of the big problems. As an example of what I have in mind, I draw the Assembly's attention to a development of great importance

at the recent meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Port Moresby in regard to law of the sea and fishing matters. The independent and self-governing island Governments of the region decided at Port Moresby to co-operate closely with each other on the declaration of the 200-mile fisheries or exclusive economic zones and to establish a regional fisheries agency to enable them to secure the maximum benefits from the living resources of such zones. Australia warmly welcomes these developments and is co-operating with other countries in the region in securing agreements which will help to realize the important potential to be derived from maritime resources.

59. If any one thing has characterized international affairs in the last year, it has been the unprecedented and very significant attention given to the question of human rights. This has not developed suddenly and unannounced. It is a response to forces which have been at work over a period of years. Among these are: the articulate demand in Western societies over the last 10 years for a foreign policy which specifically reflects democratic and liberal values; the third world's stress on human rights in its fight against *apartheid*, and its demand for a new international economic order; and the sustained, eloquent and courageous effort by oppressed people in many countries to draw the world's attention to their plight. Together these seem to indicate the likelihood of a trend towards a greater stress on the moral dimensions of international politics in general, and human rights in particular.

60. Australia takes its human rights seriously. Our election to the Commission on Human Rights in May of this year gives an additional reason for doing so. The question of human rights is too important a matter to be dealt with in terms of rhetoric and gesture, too important to be subordinated to political manoeuvre or made a matter of public relations. It is related in the most direct way to questions of human suffering, human dignity and freedom. If we cannot take it seriously, we would do better to stop talking about it at all.

61. There are very difficult problems to be worked out. The problem of selectivity on the part of Governments—or, for that matter, of special interest groups—in expressing concern about human rights is one of them. Such selectivity is not necessarily evidence of cynicism, though it is often advanced as such. Given that Governments have a multiplicity of responsibilities, it is inevitable and proper that their commitment to human rights should be balanced against other valid commitments. These commitments include not only a concern for the national interest but, in the case of the great majority of Governments, the promotion of international peace and order. The tension between the promotion of human rights and the maintenance of détente between the super-Powers, for example, is not an artificial trumped-up thing; it really exists, and it does present hard choices. Such choices involve not merely the weighing of human rights considerations against those of "realism", though that is often unavoidable; sometimes they involve weighing human rights against other goals—such as peace, international order, national cohesion—which also represent moral values, and sometimes these other goals will prevail. The fact that they do is evidence, not of cynicism or hypocrisy, but of the essential nature of moral choice.

62. The problem of the different meanings and priorities given to human rights in different cultural, social and political contexts is an extremely important one. Given our geographic position, we in Australia have a pretty lively sense of this. What, for instance, is the proper relationship of civil and political rights to economic and social rights? Is it the case that economic rights are in some sense more fundamental than political rights, as some Governments maintain, or is the relationship more variable, ambiguous and complex than that? There is evidence, both in the form of behaviour at elections and in the form of political protest movements, which suggests that people are not indifferent to political rights, even when they lack economic rights.

63. Again, what is the relationship between individual rights, which are the ones classically stressed in Western thinking, and collective and group rights, often stressed by the third world?

64. And again, how should the existence of real internal threats to civil order and peace within a country influence our expectations concerning respect for human rights? Should we expect the same standards of behaviour from a Government under the pressure of such threats as we expect from a Government having the good fortune to enjoy an essentially peaceful and orderly domestic situation? Is there a legitimate distinction to be made between Governments whose problems are largely of their own making and ones which have inherited deep-set structural and cultural problems?

65. All these are extraordinarily difficult questions. They are made more difficult by the fact that sometimes good arguments are misused and misapplied. But if the concern for human rights is going to find expression in practical, effective terms, and not be relegated to the sphere of Utopian aspirations, they are questions which demand our attention.

66. No situation in the world more forcefully illustrates the importance of the issue of human rights than does that in southern Africa, where the systematic neglect and the violation of those rights have created an explosive state of affairs. Australia's attitude to the imperative issues of human rights which still remain to be resolved in southern Africa was forcefully expressed by the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Malcolm Fraser, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London in June.

67. More recently, I had occasion—as leader of the Australian delegation at the World Conference for Action against *Apartheid*<sup>3</sup>—to make very clear our stand on that issue, and to survey the practical measures we have undertaken in respect of it. At Lagos, as earlier at Maputo,<sup>4</sup> there was an impressive degree of consensus on the problems—and on the consequences of not resolving them.

68. It is heartening that important initiatives have been launched to find peaceful negotiated settlements in Rhodesia and Namibia. The Anglo-American proposals for

Zimbabwe have provided a foundation for a peaceful settlement in keeping with the demand for majority rule and independence. The world, and the Zimbabwean parties to the dispute, will have cause for congratulation if the opportunity is seized and reason and generosity prevail.

69. Again in relation to Namibia, we see a significant initiative in train. And again this initiative draws its strength from the persistence of the international community in its demand that the Territory should achieve independence through free elections under the supervision of the United Nations. Australia, in the United Nations Council for Namibia and elsewhere, has worked for this goal and commends the current effort for its achievements.

70. There appears to have been a significant shift in the policies of the South African Government toward Namibia. This shift is very late, and it is in response to international pressure, but it does offer a glimmer of hope that the path of dialogue is not completely closed.

71. With southern Africa, the Middle East situation remains the major danger to international peace. In fact, in our view, it constitutes the single most dangerous and volatile point of potential conflict in world politics. As any further outbreak of war in the region would almost certainly eclipse previous ones in terms of destructiveness, and as it must also be considered doubtful whether it could be contained, the resolution of the conflict is of concern to all Members.

72. I take this opportunity to place on the record once again the Australian Government's recognition of the need for early settlement between Israel and the Arab States. The Australian Government continues to consider that the general principles on which a settlement should be based are those set out in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Any settlement will also have to take account of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The efforts which President Carter's administration has made, and is continuing to make, to foster negotiations between the parties are greatly appreciated by the Australian Government. In the context of the important need to maintain this momentum we should much regret the intrusion of potentially disruptive elements into the negotiating process.

73. In coming to terms with all the critical international problems which confront us, it is as important to give thought to finding appropriate and effective means as it is to give thought to the ends to be sought. It is with this well in mind that the Australian Government has been active during the past year in promoting an initiative on review of the multilateral treaty-making process. In my speech to the Assembly last year I gave some indication of the importance which we attach to treaty-making as an element in United Nations activity. The multilateral treaty is an important—if not the most important—instrument of adjustment in the international community. It evidences the coming together of our sovereign wills in a precise and focused manner.

74. However, vital though multilateral treaties are in the life of this Organization, we have never collectively addressed ourselves to the question: What is the best way in

<sup>3</sup> Held in Lagos from 22 to 26 August 1977.

<sup>4</sup> International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, held in Maputo from 16 to 21 May 1977.

which to go about making such treaties? We must satisfy ourselves that we are using the most efficient methods to convert our ideas for co-operation and improvement into clear and acceptable treaty language. The process of gestation of a multilateral treaty is both sensitive and complex. We must ensure that it makes the least possible demands upon our administrative and financial resources. The human skills which are involved in the conferences, committees and working parties and other meetings which eventually lead to a treaty text are also badly needed to perform other services.

75. Our aim, therefore, is to invite the United Nations to direct its attention to these important procedural matters. If the system can be improved, let us improve it. If it cannot be improved, let us at last have the satisfaction of knowing that the present methods are as perfect as deliberate consideration can make them.

76. We have consulted widely before introducing item 124 in the agenda. The positive terms of the responses which we have had from other States have been very gratifying. In all quarters, in all regional groups, the prospective utility of this item has been acknowledged as evidenced in part by the number and range of States which have joined us in sponsoring it. As the first stage in an assessment which must be spread over several sessions, we now look forward to a serious and constructive debate in the Sixth Committee.

77. While we hope for success in this and in other possible efforts to improve the working tools at our disposal, we must at the same time continue to confront the many serious problems which face us in this increasingly complex and interdependent world. I have discussed what my Government believes are the most pressing and significant of these problems. There are two observations that can be made about all of them. The first is that, so far as solving them is concerned, time is a wasting asset. Delay, waiting on events, will only magnify the problems. Indeed, in some cases delay must lead to disaster. If we are to act effectively, we must act quickly. My second observation is that the solution of these problems will depend crucially on the mustering of the necessary political will. Difficult and complex as these problems are, they will become insoluble only if we decide to treat them as such. Someone has made the acute observation that decadence begins when people can no longer ask, "What are we going to do?", but rather "What is going to happen to us?"—when, that is, will surrenders to events, and resignation and fatalism take over.

78. They must not be allowed to take over. Our fate will not be determined by some inexorable historical laws nor by objective circumstances. It will be determined by the way we respond to the challenges which confront us; it is in our own hands.

79. Mr. FORLANI (Italy):<sup>5</sup> Mr. President, allow me, first of all, to join the previous speakers in conveying to you my warmest congratulations and best wishes and to associate myself whole-heartedly with the expressions of appreciation which have been voiced for the outstanding work of your predecessor, Mr. Amerasinghe, and for the work that the

Secretary-General has accomplished with his usual efficiency. To you, Mr. President, I wish to convey my feelings of complete confidence, bearing in mind the closeness of the ties which unite our two countries and the special contribution which the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has made to the strengthening of peace and to the development of international co-operation in Europe and throughout the world.

80. This year, in particular, a significant event has occurred in the history of our two countries which provides a confirmation of the possibility of resolving controversies in a way both new and just. I am referring to the ratification by our respective national parliaments of the Agreements signed at Osimo in 1975.<sup>6</sup> With the entry into force of these important agreements—and not without a grave sacrifice, which, however, it accepted with the conscience of the perspective it opened—Italy has put an end to a period of uncertainty and strain in its relations with the neighbouring and friendly people of Yugoslavia, and the foundations were thus laid for increasing fruitful co-operation between the two countries. This was an important event, not only for the parties directly concerned but also, I believe, for all those members of the international community which may find themselves confronted by similar situations. In accordance with the principles on which Italy bases the conduct of its foreign policy, we followed in this instance the method of the peaceful settlement of disputes, which consists in systematically and patiently searching for points of convergence and opportunities for co-operation. Italy therefore feels entitled to propose this method to the Assembly again at a time when new tensions and new conflicts are being added to those inherited from the past and threats to the peace of peoples become more serious, making the task of peace-keeping even more burdensome for the United Nations.

81. With this session of the General Assembly, the great family of the United Nations also includes the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Republic of Djibouti.

82. May I be allowed to associate myself whole-heartedly with those who have addressed words of welcome and good wishes to these new Members and to their delegations here present.

83. Italy already enjoys relations of friendship and co-operation with these States and proposes to amplify and develop them in the common interest.

84. The United Nations has thus taken a further step, which we consider to be particularly significant, towards the goal of universality, which we believe is essential for the effective discharge of its functions and for the strengthening of its role and authority.

85. In this respect, we welcome and fully approve of the report on the work of the Organization [A/32/1] presented to the General Assembly at this session by Secretary-General Waldheim. In particular, we share the basic idea underlying the whole report, namely, his appeal to all Member States to harmonize their respective national

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Forlani spoke Italian. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.

<sup>6</sup> Treaty on the Solution of Border Questions and related agreements, signed at Osimo (Ancona) on 10 November 1975.



interests in all sectors—political, military, social and administrative—with the long-term interests of the whole international community.

86. Since strains and dangers on the international level originate not only from tensions between States but also from disputes and conflicts within States, between individuals, groups and their institutions, it is particularly urgent that greater efforts be made to enable the United Nations to play a larger role in the protection of human rights. We are therefore interested in any proposal and any useful initiative in this field, and we pledge our full support for the proposal to appoint a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, while we also feel that the procedures envisaged in Economic and Social Council resolution 1503 (XLVIII) should be strengthened.

87. Italy is convinced that the individual person should be the focal-point of any institution which the international community seeks or proposes to set up, and that the dignity and the freedom of the individual person must represent the foundation, the reference point and the final aim of any system of guarantees between States. The United Nations must be able to respond in adequate terms to this appeal, inherent in contemporary history, and to this mission. This is the dramatic demand arising from a way of thinking that is becoming increasingly rooted and widespread in the world conscience and which, because of its growing intensity, can no longer be classified as a mere humanitarian reflex. To recognize it and to recognize its political nature is an act of realism, even though the differences of opinion as to the best means of satisfying it remain great.

88. From the respect for and adherence to this mission, the United Nations can derive the impetus to act in a way that must be all the more incisive because the main problems afflicting mankind are becoming more acute and remain unsolved.

89. In this respect, I wish to refer to the views expressed on Monday [7th meeting] in this forum by the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs in his capacity as the current President of the Council of Ministers of the European Community.

90. Italy is particularly aware that the continuation of the present deadlock in the Middle East has grave implications both for the security of the region and for international peace itself. We are especially aware of the urgent need to make a determined effort to reactivate, with the involved participation of all the interested parties, effective peace negotiations within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East. In order for that to be possible, all the parties must make the maximum effort to summon up a firm resolve and a new determination to overcome distrust and renounce mutual preclusions.

91. Italy is deeply aware of the need for a prompt resumption of the peace negotiations, and has therefore reiterated on numerous occasions its readiness to contribute to the search for solutions and to the stage of implementation, namely, through participation in a system of international guarantees within the framework of the United Nations. In the context of a global arrangement, the

Arab side will have to be ready to accept the right of Israel to live in peace within secure and recognized frontiers, just as Israel must be willing to recognize the national rights of the Palestinian people.

92. We consider that the participation of the representatives of all the countries directly concerned, including the representatives of the Palestinian people, must be ensured in the peace negotiations in an appropriate manner, to be worked out in consultation among all the parties concerned.

93. On several occasions Italy has stated the principles on which, in its view, the action aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace settlement must be based. As for the substance of the problem, they call for: the necessity of the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all the territories occupied in June 1967 and refraining from all the measures—and I refer to the new ones as well as the old—which consolidate the *fait accompli* of the occupation, and therefore represent a course of action directly opposed to the desirable one: respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all the States of the region within secure, recognized and internationally guaranteed frontiers; concrete recognition of the legitimate right of the Palestinian people, who cannot be denied a fatherland, to express their own national identity, also through the constitution of a State entity.

94. With great anxiety we also observe the other signs of conflict and distrust that darken the Middle East horizon and retard the prospect of a settlement. I refer in particular to the continuation of tension in southern Lebanon, a possible source of uncontrollable events. I should like to express the hope for the prompt cessation of the threats which still menace the unity, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon and which impede the process of national reconstruction resolutely undertaken by the Lebanese Government on the basis of the inter-Arab agreements of autumn 1976.

95. In Cyprus, too, there still exists a serious situation of painful confrontation. We are convinced that a satisfactory settlement of the Cyprus dispute must be based on the objective of safeguarding the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the country. This can emerge only from a direct dialogue between the parties concerned and from the will to reconcile the divergent community needs in the higher interests of all Cypriots. We therefore continue to address to both parties the warmest appeal to explore together the path of dialogue and compromise.

96. It is not only in the eastern Mediterranean that signs of tension, uncertainty and conflict persist; unfortunately we also find them, to an increasing extent, in the African continent, where they also provide opportunities for external interference and for artificial confrontations, both ideological and political, among the countries of the continent themselves, at the expense of their priority requirements of development and co-operation.

97. In the Horn of Africa we are following with deep concern the heightening of tensions and, regrettably, of conflicts which are bringing grave sufferings to those friendly peoples and which run the risk of altering the

delicate equilibriums of an area of vital importance for international peace and co-operation.

98. The positive solution of the question of Djibouti, which has attained independence peacefully and whose accession to the international community we welcome, has not yet been followed by appropriate negotiations for the solution of the other delicate problems of the region.

99. Given the situation that has arisen between Ethiopia and Somalia, the most urgent and essential objective is that the two countries should find the way to reduce tension and to bring about the conditions for a constructive dialogue. To these two African countries, with which we are bound by profound ties of friendship and co-operation, we therefore address a warm appeal for peace from this prestigious forum of the United Nations General Assembly.

100. The international community must do its utmost to encourage the initiatives that are being carried out within the framework of the principles and purposes of the Organization of African Unity in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The search for more stable and peaceful arrangements in the area, if they are to permit forms of fruitful co-operation among all the countries of the Horn of Africa, must be pursued through negotiations mindful of the aspirations of their people.

101. We are also convinced that, in order to prevent the extension and exacerbation of the conflicts in Africa, we must stamp out as rapidly as possible the remaining vestiges of the colonial past and firmly oppose racist policies. The strategy which has recently been worked out in various international forums and which has found its most advanced formulations in the declarations of Lagos<sup>7</sup> and of Maputo<sup>8</sup> must be implemented through firm and co-ordinated action on the political and economic levels with the purpose of pressing for just and realistic negotiated solutions. In firmly and whole-heartedly supporting this line of action, we hope that it may be implemented by interventions designed to avoid bloody clashes between the forces that are most directly confronting each other.

102. In the case of Southern Rhodesia, Italy supports the plan recently worked out by the United Kingdom with the support of the United States. Italy considers this plan as a comprehensive attempt to ensure a rapid, effective and ordered transfer of all powers to the peoples of Zimbabwe.

103. For Namibia, the negotiating process initiated by the contact group of the five members of the Security Council provides the parties most directly concerned with a most valuable opportunity to ensure the exercise by the Namibian people of their right to self-determination and independence and to the exercise of their sovereignty.

104. Here I should like to pay a tribute to the spirit of sacrifice and to the moral determination of those who in South Africa have decided to endorse the values of

<sup>7</sup> See *Report of the World Conference for Action against Apartheid* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.XIV.2), chap. X.

<sup>8</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-second Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1977*, document S/13344/Pov I, annex V.

democracy, civil liberties and human dignity. Among them are men of all colours and creeds. Some of them have fallen along the difficult road they had chosen, and for all of them I wish to pay a tribute to the memory of Steven Biko, who just before his death was appealing for a non-racial society which would be just and equal for all and in which colour, creed and race would not be reasons for division or hatred.

105. For the international community, the persistence of *apartheid* in South Africa poses problems, a valid response to which must be commensurate with the growing opposition of the majority of the South African population to a régime which is guilty of the most extreme examples of racial discrimination and violations of human rights. This response can only consist in the creation of a society open to contributions from all its ethnic members and to participation of all its citizens on the basis of equality.

106. On the other hand, the news from other continents is more positive. In this connexion, I should like to recall my visit last June to the People's Republic of China, which further contributed to the strengthening of fruitful ties and co-operation between the two countries. Events of great importance for the international community have taken place this year in Asia. After the crises of previous years, that continent can today rediscover in a framework of greater détente and stability in inter-State relations a climate that favours the development among its countries of forms of closer collaboration which will pave the way for peace and economic development. We hope that such forms of co-operation may become deeper and more constructive in the years to come and that the causes of tension and crises that still exist in the area can be removed in a spirit of justice and fairness.

107. Also, in inter-American relations certain developments encourage dialogue and understanding. Both the approval of the documents presented to the June Assembly of the Organization of American States and the recent signature in Washington of the agreements between Panama and the United States constitute proof of the will of the parties concerned to follow the path of negotiation and reconciliation of their respective claims. The presence at the signing of those agreements of the Heads of State from North and South America appears to us, moreover, to confer on those agreements and on the method followed in achieving them a significance which goes beyond their specific legislative content and which underlines the general spirit of Pan-American co-operation and solidarity.

108. The United Nations has a unique and irreplaceable role to play in tackling such problems as development and economic co-operation.

109. The situation of the world economy continues to present disturbing features. We are indeed confronted by the persistence of marked imbalances in the international economic system, which, far from developing in accordance with expectations, has witnessed *inter alia* the continuation of serious inequalities between industrialized countries and developing countries and also inequalities within both categories of countries.

110. The basic inadequacy of the strategies so far proposed to confront the serious problems of development

may be attributed certainly to the objective conditions of the present international economic situation, but also to the difficulties of perceiving the peculiar structural differences in the situations of the individual developing countries and of applying specific remedies to them.

111. Those considerations underline the need for a renewed effort to achieve more and better results in the field of economic co-operation, establishing moreover an order of priority in the use of available resources. Italy is firmly convinced that the time has come to establish a new international economic order which would allow all States to follow the path of development most suited to their requirements and traditions and to play a more important role in the international decision-making processes. This goal will be successfully attained if we prove able to begin to solve existing problems, especially those concerning raw materials, trade, the transfer of technology and indebtedness, which are crucial for both developing and developed countries.

112. The achievement of the new international economic order must be based on a concept of development to be assessed not only in quantitative terms but also, and above all, in terms of the social components which are to be closely connected with it. I am referring to the need to seek higher levels of nutrition, health care, education and housing, as well as adequate employment opportunities and an equitable distribution of wealth.

113. The international community must base its own programme and action on the establishment of the prerequisites and material conditions which will allow the primary requirements of life to be met in all parts of the world. The objective of our co-operation efforts must be the gradual elimination of those obstacles which, in many parts of the globe, still impede the satisfaction of needs which constitute the basis of any other kind of concern which may be expressed about the dignity and fulfilment of the human person.

114. For those reasons Italy, too, is committed, whether bilaterally or multilaterally, to facilitating the economic and social development of the developing countries.

115. Moreover, the recognition that destabilizing factors exist in the international economic system and that we still have not solved many problems which characterize relations between the industrialized world and the developing countries necessarily lead us to emphasize the interdependence of the various economies and the growing awareness of the indivisibility of prosperity and progress.

116. I should like at this point to comment on the results of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation. Undoubtedly those results have fallen short of expectations, even though the desire to continue the dialogue has been reiterated. The discussion of one point—for example, energy—was clearly inconclusive, since it was not even possible to agree on a forum for its continuation.

117. On both the national and international levels, Italy is applying and promoting specific energy-saving measures and hopes that those countries whose energy consumption is relatively high will also increase their efforts to facilitate

access to energy sources by those countries which most need them for their development.

118. The reduction of consumption will have only relative significance, however, unless it is accompanied by a decisive effort of diversification based on nuclear energy suitably integrated, where possible, with the exploitation of other renewable sources. In this regard, Italy has noted with concern that in many countries programmes seem to be slowing down and that at the international level difficulties have been encountered in working out forms of co-operation for the peaceful development of nuclear energy.

119. We must make a joint effort to solve existing problems so as to allow mankind to count on this irreplaceable resource, with due respect for environmental requirements and non-proliferation. The prospects for energy consumption in the coming years do not, in our opinion, permit delays and indecision.

120. In this respect, the Italian Government considers that we must follow the path of dialogue and work out practical forms of co-operation in order to achieve a positive solution of these problems, which are so closely bound up with the needs which must be faced by numerous developing countries deprived, like Italy, of natural resources in this sector.

121. For this purpose too, the Italian Government considers favourably the Secretary-General's proposal for the establishment of an energy institute within the United Nations system [see A/32/I, sect. VII].

122. Ours is a foreign policy of peace, solidarity and co-operation which, in conformity with precise national requirements and on the basis of a broad parliamentary convergence, continues to develop within three separate but interdependent frameworks: the European Community, the Atlantic Alliance and the United Nations.

123. Italy is resolutely committed, with all its resources, to the building of a united Europe. For us, the election by direct universal suffrage of the European Parliament represents a highly significant moment in a democratic process aimed at achieving a more advanced stage of political, economic and social integration. Moreover, the procedures under way for the admission to the European Community of Greece, Portugal and Spain, while confirming the solidarity of the European Community in the democratic choice which those countries have made, will also enlarge the external projection of the Community itself.

124. Indeed, the European Community has already demonstrated its desire to be, not an egoistic and autarchic body defending positions of privilege, but a body which, instead, is open, in the largest possible way, to all forms of useful co-operation.

125. The second major reference point for Italy is the Atlantic Alliance, in which it participates with the unshakeable conviction that this Alliance still plays a decisive role in the maintenance of an equilibrium essential for safeguarding peace and developing a constructive dialogue in Europe.

126. The third and largest sphere of external activity in which Italy participates is the universal sphere of the United Nations, which we feel is the most appropriate forum for dialogue, negotiation and meeting with all the countries of the world, and particularly the developing countries.

127. The traditional support of my Government for the principle of the universality of the United Nations includes all the specialized agencies, which, together with the United Nations, constitute a unique and irreplaceable system of international co-operation.

128. We cannot, therefore, but express our concern at the intentions expressed in the United States to leave the oldest of the United Nations specialized agencies, the ILO, which today still plays an important role in the elaboration of international norms and policies in the labour field. We are confident that the United States, overcoming its otherwise understandable motives for dissatisfaction, can continue to make its contribution to the ILO so as to keep its original characteristics and operating efficiency.

129. Italy also whole-heartedly supports the efforts of the United Nations to achieve disarmament.

130. Besides the moral judgement that we must express as we face the serious diversion of resources which, in the final reckoning, results from any arms race, and beyond any criticism we are bound to make of the tendency to pile up weapons of death and destruction, I believe that we must say aloud how mistaken it is to seek stability through military balances, in a continuous progression, when this could be achieved and defended at levels much less onerous for everybody. To defend the security of States and to prevent their peoples from sacrificing an excessive and ever-increasing share of the fruits of their labours, the only solution is the gradual, balanced reduction of existing military deterrents.

131. To follow the path of arms limitation, moreover, means not only meeting the needs of life and development, which are immediate and urgent, but also promoting that relaxation of tension among States which may help to bring about, without necessarily indulging in Utopian hopes, concerted dialogue on the subject of general disarmament. With a view to a similar effort, the special session of the General Assembly next May represents a most valuable opportunity for the international community, and Italy, which, together with other countries, sponsored the initiative at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, is constructively and actively working, especially in the Preparatory Committee, for its implementation and success.

132. The preparation of a programme of general and complete disarmament also involves the establishment of certain priorities in a harmonious and balanced framework. Italy considers that these priorities must include both the search for significant measures of nuclear disarmament and efforts to make progress along the path leading to conventional disarmament, and in particular to the prohibition of chemical weapons. We therefore attach vital importance to the current negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States for a limitation of nuclear weapons, and we hope that they will be accompanied by further progress

towards specific reduction in existing atomic arsenals, as provided for in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This Treaty is a highly important instrument also for achieving increased international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and we hope that all those States which have not yet signed it will be able to do so.

133. In order to encourage a balanced limitation of armaments, we must intensify and extend throughout the world the process of détente which in Europe was initiated some years ago and which in Belgrade is now about to receive its first verification.

134. In this respect, I wish to point out that the Italian Government has always thought that the Belgrade meeting should tackle concretely and constructively the task entrusted to it by the Final Act of Helsinki to promote, without prejudice to a coherent development of détente, a renewed effort to implement all the provisions of the Final Act by the 35 signatory States. This view is reflected in the final document issued by the Preparatory Meeting, and there is every reason to hope that the debate about to take place in the Yugoslav capital will develop in accord with expectations.

135. In order to ensure that détente is further consolidated and becomes an irreversible process in Europe, we think that we should all increase our efforts to promote that freer circulation of men, ideas and experience which will allow us to understand ever more clearly how the interests and the aspirations of peoples have a common denominator.

136. Mr. President, allow me to conclude by saying that I am certain that, under your highly respected leadership, the work of this thirty-second session of the General Assembly will be fruitful and will be able to respond to the expectations of the international community. I can assure you that the Italian delegation will do its utmost to help you achieve this goal.

137. Mr. VAN DER STOEL (Netherlands): This session of the General Assembly opens under circumstances clouded in uncertainty and fraught with persistent dangers to world peace. There is cause for deep concern over the great political and, above all, moral issues of our time. There is doubt about the capacity of the United Nations to meet the challenges it is facing. In this situation the Assembly must praise its luck in having found you, Mr. President, ready to chair this session. The Netherlands Government and people have always admired your country's strong sense of independence. I congratulate you most warmly.

138. On behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, I wish to extend a warm welcome to the two new Members of the Organization, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Republic of Djibouti.

139. In his annual report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General shows grave concern over the state of the world and of the Organization. Indeed, the positive facts and developments are overshadowed by negative events and situations. Free elections and a return to democracy contrast with increased violations of human

rights. Progress in the North-South dialogue and prosperity in some parts of the world are clouded by unemployment and inflation, protectionism, persistent mass poverty and lack of progress in achieving structural change in world economic relations. Progress towards détente in Europe and the absence of war in some regions have to be measured against the dangerous stalemate in the Middle East, growing violence in southern Africa and the increased threat of nuclear proliferation.

*Mr. Ulrichsen (Denmark), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

140. I wish to stress the moral implications of the issues which this General Assembly is again called upon to solve. Too often the moral responsibility of the Members of the United Nations tends to be overlooked and neglected in our preoccupation with selfish national interests, and yet there is no higher code of conduct for the nations of this world than the Preamble to the Charter, which contains the basic human values which should guide the behaviour of States and the community of States: collective responsibility for common problems, tolerance, national self-restraint and readiness to compromise, justice and respect for human dignity and individual rights, concern for the poor and oppressed.

141. The same Charter provided instruments, institutions and procedures for co-operation to realize these high values. But can the Organization still cope with today's world? There is a paradox: universality has been virtually obtained, but, at the same time, nations seem to turn away from the Organization by creating parallel structures and by frustrating the very system of co-operation through unwarranted politization. The other side of the medal is that frustration caused by lack of progress in solving vital issues leads to politization and alternative institutions. It is disquieting that lengthy talks on strengthening the United Nations and on restructuring its economic and social arm have brought us nowhere.

142. It is against this background that I wish to address myself to some of the key issues of today. On a number of these problems the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium has clearly stated the position of the nine members of the European Community: he has stressed the political will of our countries constructively to co-operate towards their solution. In this same spirit I should like to add some remarks on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

143. In the Middle East, for the first time perhaps since the beginning of the conflict, there is now hope for a genuine peace conference to start working out a lasting settlement. Responsible statesmen of the countries concerned have voiced their desire for peace. Everywhere the conviction is growing that the state of war must come to an end and that the time is ripe at last for devoting the invaluable human and material resources in the region to peaceful development. In this situation, it is of course of vital importance that all Governments concerned should refrain from any statement or policy, in particular with regard to the West Bank, that could constitute an obstacle to this pursuit of peace.

144. The situation in southern Africa is a source of growing anxiety. The death of Steven Biko symbolizes the

denial of fundamental rights which the black people of South Africa still have to suffer. At the World Conference for Action against *Apartheid* in Lagos, the deep concern of the Netherlands Government and people was expressed when we advocated a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa under Chapter VII of the Charter and when we pointed to the inevitability of economic measures directed against that country under the same Chapter, should the Government of South Africa refuse to introduce fundamental changes in its society without further delay. We said so last year, but there is hardly any change at all. The Netherlands has for many years applied an embargo on all arms deliveries and has put an end to export-credit guarantees. Further steps are considered, such as the curtailment of new investments.

145. The Lagos Conference has signalled to South Africa more clearly and incisively than ever that the policies of *apartheid* are totally unacceptable and that their continuation will inevitably have serious consequences. At the same time it has followed a constructive approach by calling in its final declaration on the Government of South Africa to let all people, irrespective of race, colour or creed, including the white minority, participate as equals in determining the destiny of their nation. We fervently hope that South Africa will understand this signal and will respond to the appeal addressed to it by abandoning *apartheid* before violence takes over.

146. Developments in Namibia and Southern Rhodesia have reached a critical stage. The Netherlands supports the intensified international efforts of the United Nations and of the five Western members of the Security Council to break the stalemate in Namibia and solve the problem on the basis of democratic elections under the supervision of the United Nations so as to enable its people to exercise the right to determine in freedom the destiny of their country. The Netherlands Government strongly endorses the Anglo-American proposals on Southern Rhodesia. I urge all the parties concerned to grasp what looks like a last opportunity for peaceful transition to independence through elections on the basis of the principle "one man, one vote". The Netherlands is prepared to contribute to a Zimbabwe development fund on condition that such a fund is acceptable to the future Government of a free Zimbabwe elected on the basis of majority rule.

147. One of the most burning moral issues in today's world is the question of human rights. To promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedom is one of the basic objectives of my country's policy. Human rights is more than ever before arousing deep public concern. The Final Declaration adopted at the conclusion of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, with its clear obligations in the field of human rights and the policy of the American Administration, are clear evidence of this fact. But there is also the sinister fact that widespread and persistent violation is increasing in many parts of the world. Too often, however, in the United Nations other motives and interests prevail over genuine human rights considerations. The fully legitimate action by the United Nations with regard to a limited number of specific situations is outbalanced by inaction or even total silence in a much larger number of cases that give rise to equal or greater anxiety. The United Nations has even failed to act against

the scourge of terrorism and the taking of hostages. This Assembly must make a determined effort to come to grips with this outrage to everyone and every people.

148. The struggle for human rights comprises not only civil and political rights but equally economic, social and cultural rights. The realization of the totality of those rights is imperative for achieving the full development of the human personality. The promotion of human rights includes the achievement of just social and economic structures; it forms an indispensable element of the development process.

149. However, I cannot accept the thesis that the observance of fundamental freedoms should be subordinated to the realization of social and economic advancement. Inability to guarantee the enjoyment of one basic right should never serve as a justification for violating another one.

150. The United Nations has a crucial, twofold task in the field of human rights: standard-setting and implementation. The impressive body of humanitarian standards laid down in conventions, declarations and resolutions needs continuous evaluation, elaboration and completion. This session of the General Assembly should work and make further progress on the issue of political prisoners and religious intolerance. Fully in line with the momentum created by International Women's Year, this session should finalize the draft convention on the elimination of discrimination against women. Let me stress in this respect the role of the United Nations in improving the status of women.

151. The task of the United Nations in the field of implementation is difficult and delicate. Under the Charter the United Nations has the power and the duty to create adequate machinery for the protection of human rights. Existing machinery is inadequate and even in danger of being curtailed, but more regrettable is the lack of the political will to pursue human rights. There is a huge gap between theory and practice, between proclaimed standards and actual protection and observance. Bridging this gap is first of all up to Governments and the people themselves, but the United Nations can and must make a strong and effective contribution to this end.

152. This Assembly will again discuss the human rights situation in Chile. If the Government of Chile is sincere in its self-professed concern for human rights it should allow the Allana mission<sup>9</sup> to come and see for itself. But continued concern over Chile must not lead us to ignore serious and persistent violations of human rights elsewhere in the world. There also the United Nations should act.

153. I welcome the entry into force of the two United Nations Covenants on Human Rights. My Government will ratify the Covenants as well as the Optional Protocol on the individual right of complaint in the near future. But the procedures for implementation under these instruments represent only a minimum. They do not make it possible to react in an appropriate manner to urgent and serious violations of human rights. The time has come for the

United Nations to create the office of the Commissioner for Human Rights who can make inquiries and render good offices and advice in concrete human rights situations. The human rights machinery already available in the United Nations—I refer to the Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission—must in the meantime be strengthened. As of now open or disguised hostility to the cause of human rights prevents these institutions from being fully used. Thus it can happen that the intergovernmental structure of the United Nations sometimes acts as a barrier to the voices of the oppressed being heard. I wish therefore to stress the importance of non-governmental organizations in the promotion of human rights as an indispensable source of information and as a tool for public education and support for the victims of oppression. The Netherlands will oppose efforts to smother the voice and the rights of these organizations.

154. In economic terms the world is not much better off. The international community continues to be faced with economic and social conditions throughout the world that call for urgent and imaginative action but to which policy responses have so far been inadequate. Governments around the world are faced with painful and difficult policy choices affecting directly the well-being of their citizens. In the industrialized world the fight against inflation and unemployment requires sacrifices in a state of affluence; but, what is worse, in many developing countries recession adds desperate dimensions to already difficult situations.

155. The issue of development and growth is no longer a matter of concern and immediate interest to the third world only. What is at stake today is the future and the management of the world economy as a whole in the interest of both developed and developing countries. In spite of serious efforts the United Nations system has so far proved inadequate to meet in a coherent manner these new, interrelated challenges of development in the third world and the preservation of growth and economic activity in the industrialized world.

156. Whether or not it is called a new international economic order, a fundamental readjustment of international economic relations and national policies is now called for. That is the lesson of the 1970s.

157. In the wake of the sixth and seventh special sessions and other United Nations conferences, the Conference on International Economic Co-operation was another milestone in the North-South dialogue. The results of the Conference were important but limited because it failed to produce a break-through in the negotiating process and because it failed to recognize the need for structural change. I regret that the resumed thirty-first session<sup>10</sup> could not reach agreement on the evaluation of the Conference and on its follow-up.

158. The immediate task for this session is to revive and intensify the political momentum, to start or pursue serious negotiations on specific issues, and to prepare for the future. To start with, it is a matter of urgent necessity for the Governments of developed and developing countries

<sup>9</sup> *Ad Hoc* Working Group on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile appointed in conformity with resolution 8 (XXI) of the Commission on Human Rights.

<sup>10</sup> *Sec Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 108th and 109th meetings.

alike to be united in warding off the ominous forces of trade protectionism and in sustaining the import demand of developing countries by more aid transfers or otherwise. This, in turn, will have a stimulating effect on the economies of the industrialized world.

159. A new, practical, more direct approach is required for the selection of specific issues to be negotiated between those most concerned. I refer to commodities, debts, trade, investments. In these negotiations a differentiation of instruments is needed according to the specific positions and conditions of the developing and developed countries concerned. The negotiations must take the common interest of rich and poor as the essential point of departure. They must be consistent with global strategies and aims already agreed upon.

160. In the meantime, the world community must now start preparations for a new development strategy, for the implementation of a new international economic order in the interest of both developed and developing countries. Such a strategy should contain new elements: urgent attention to meeting basic human needs in developing countries in the context of structural change in developing as well as developed countries; participation of the people, including youth; greater emphasis on the role of women in development; diversification of instruments according to needs and conditions; and also measures and targets for sustaining growth and economic activity in the industrialized world as part of a joint effort for a new global compact for development.

161. In view of the enormous tasks before us, I particularly welcome the launching of the Brandt Commission.<sup>11</sup> This Commission can perform a crucial complementary function and have a catalytic effect on the preparation of a new United Nations development strategy.

162. Among the global problems which can only be solved by a common effort, the energy issue is one of the most urgent. If adequate measures are not taken now, a new and more serious energy crisis in the 1980s is almost inevitable and will affect not only the poorest countries but also the economies of the rich. The United Nations has so far failed to respond to this challenge.

163. The rich countries consume a disproportionate amount of the world energy supply. Accordingly, it is primarily their responsibility to conserve energy, to promote intensified exploration and exploitation of conventional energy sources, and to develop alternative sources. Not nearly enough has been done so far. The Netherlands Government will work in all appropriate forums for active, joint and well-co-ordinated policies in this field.

164. I wish, however, to sound a word of caution. In my view the energy situation is serious but not so desperate that we should not carefully judge all possibilities for enlarging the supply of energy on the basis of their consequences and side effects. The sense of urgency must not lead us into haste and premature decisions. Much more

can be done to achieve higher energy efficiently. A recent conference sponsored by UNITAR has shown that the sources of recoverable fossil fuels are far from being exhausted and that a much higher recovery rate is feasible.<sup>12</sup> There are promising alternative resources of renewable energy if, at least, technological developments in this respect get more support than hitherto. I hope that the preparatory work on a United Nations conference on new and renewable sources of energy will give a strong impetus to our activities in this field. This can be of tremendous benefit for the poorest countries and for all of us. The United Nations can and must play a more active role in matters of energy research and development, and I trust that this General Assembly will support the relevant Economic and Social Council resolution of last summer, its resolution 2119 (LXIII).

165. Given proper and timely efforts by all concerned, the scope for energy savings and for developing alternative supplies is such that a wise, anticipatory energy policy will make it possible in the long run to balance supply and demand of energy.

166. I see no compelling reason to rush headlong into the development of nuclear energy. A race in nuclear technology, if left unchecked and uncontrolled, could lead to dangerous and undesirable side effects.

167. I wish to draw particular attention to the deadly threat of proliferation of nuclear weapons, which calls for measures without delay. The non-proliferation Treaty and the IAEA safeguards constitute important political restraints. Their political and practical value should not be underestimated. However, new and sophisticated nuclear technologies are being developed which make it easier to cross the threshold of nuclear military capability. Action is necessary in two directions. First of all, the existing system of safeguards and controls must be expanded and strengthened. I would urge that the IAEA studies on the storage of fissionable materials be speeded up and intensified in order to arrive rapidly at an international plutonium storage régime under IAEA auspices. Secondly, we urgently need an inherently safe nuclear fuel cycle which would not contain significant amounts of weapons-usable materials. We must make civilian nuclear technology proliferation-resistant.

168. The Netherlands Government, therefore, warmly welcomes President Carter's proposals for an international nuclear fuel cycle evaluation and will actively participate in the Conference to be held in Washington next month on that subject. It is my fervent hope that this evaluation will result in a truly co-operative effort of suppliers as well as consumers of nuclear material and technology, without discrimination, in order to limit the risks involved in the use of nuclear energy and at the same time to satisfy the basic energy needs of all countries. For this result to be achieved, it is essential that the outcome of the evaluation should not be prejudged in any way. The further spread of sensitive technologies which increase the threat of proliferation of nuclear arms must be avoided.

169. The early conclusion of an effective and comprehensive test ban will greatly strengthen the non-proliferation régime and other measures to curtail the nuclear arms

<sup>11</sup> Independent Commission on International Development Issues.

<sup>12</sup> See *The Future Supply of Nature-Made Oil and Gas* (New York, Pergamon Press, 1977).

race. This raises the question of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. The high expectations with regard to the potential benefit of such explosions have not been fulfilled; in my view the time has come to eliminate the basic inequality between nuclear weapon Powers and non-nuclear weapon Powers in this field. This should be achieved by a comprehensive test ban which would also prohibit nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes by individual nations and under which nuclear Powers would assume the same self-restraints as the non-nuclear Powers. It is time to cut off this dangerous road to both horizontal and vertical proliferation. Here I have also in mind the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. I regret that up till recently these talks have made little progress and may perhaps not lead to agreement before the first interim agreement of 1972 lapses in October. I feel, however, encouraged by the promising developments in the discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union in the last few days. Curtailing the strategic nuclear arms race is a matter which allows no further delay.

170. It is my fervent hope that the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, to be convened at the initiative of the non-aligned nations, will create the new political impulse to fruitful and effective multilateral disarmament negotiations in which, in our view, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament must play an important role. The special session must give high priority to nuclear disarmament, but it should also tackle the problem of the increasingly dangerous trade in conventional weapons. Whether or not that session will succeed in turning the tide will depend on our common effort and political will.

171. All these pressing problems have in common their deep moral implications. Racial discrimination, terrorism, the torture of prisoners, widespread suppression of human freedom and social injustice have roused the conscience of the world, which will not rest until these immoral practices are banned. It is immoral to have plenty and to continue to let hundreds of millions live in poverty and misery. Our conscience cannot rest when a minority consumes and wastes the bulk of the world's energy resources without caring for the bulk of the world's people. It would be inadmissible by hasty action and short-sightedness to allow the danger of nuclear proliferation to go unchecked.

172. The institutional machinery for dealing with today's manifold problems has been inadequate and, in some cases, altogether lacking. The United Nations has played too passive a role, a role of reacting to, rather than pre-empting, dangerous events. Have Member States lost confidence in the United Nations? And if so, why? I do not believe in Utopia, but I for one am still convinced of the overriding value of the Charter and of the great potential of the Organization.

173. The world problems of today can be solved if Member States have the political determination to make the system work. The seventh special session demonstrated that it can work if States are prepared to bring vital matters before the United Nations for negotiation on the merits of the case and at a high political level. This applies to the General Assembly itself but even more so to the restricted key organs of the United Nations: the Security Council and

the Economic and Social Council, which provide ample possibilities and instruments for both formal and informal negotiations.

174. I urge Member States to make full use of the International Court of Justice, which has adapted its procedures in order to meet almost any case or dispute between Members in a thorough and expeditious manner.

175. Speaking about international law, I wish to draw the attention of the Assembly to the initiative of Australia, supported by the Netherlands and other States, to include in the agenda of our session the item "Review of the multilateral treaty-making process". This initiative is an example of the many possibilities for innovation and strengthening the United Nations system which Member States under the Charter have at their disposal.

176. Last but not least is the Secretariat, which Dag Hammarskjöld so brilliantly described and defended in his address at Oxford University on 30 May 1961 and which he characterized as "an instrument, additional to the normal diplomatic methods, for active and growing service in the common interest". The Articles of the Charter are explicit enough. The history of the United Nations has set ample precedent: the Secretary-General and the heads of the specialized agencies have the authority for initiative and inspiration. I urge them increasingly to use this authority in consultation and interaction with the inter-governmental organs for the common interest of Member States and the Organization.

177. This Organization was created on the morning after the nightmare of the Second World War as a new, more perfect instrument for peace. The Charter remains our most precious guideline for international co-operation. But co-operation does not take place by itself; it must be constantly fostered. Let us be aware of the ever-growing number of problems which can only be solved by international co-operation in common institutions. Time is of the essence. Many problems become more intractable as time goes by. Let us therefore pledge ourselves anew to effective co-operation so that the generation of the year 2000 will be able to give a positive verdict on the efforts of the generation of today.

178. Mr. DE MEDEIROS FERREIRA (Portugal):<sup>13</sup> It is with great pleasure that I extend to Mr. Lazar Mojsov, the representative of Yugoslavia, my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes on his election as President of this session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. I do this with all the more pleasure since he represents a friendly nation with which Portugal in recent years has established relations of mutual respect and benefit, quickly reaching a level of close friendship and co-operation, to which the official visit to Portugal next month of Marshal Tito, at the invitation of the President of the Portuguese Republic, Ramalho Eanes, will bear witness.

179. I should like to direct a few words of sincere appreciation and thanks to Mr. Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe, the representative of Sri Lanka, another

<sup>13</sup> Mr. de Medeiros Ferreira spoke in Portuguese. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.



friendly nation, to which Portugal has for several centuries been linked historically and culturally, for the manner in which he presided over the thirty-first session of the General Assembly and guided its work with such efficiency and distinction.

180. I am especially pleased to greet the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, to whose enlightened vision of international life, sense of history and justice, and high human and diplomatic qualities the United Nations and the very community of nations owe so much.

181. I am also pleased at this time to salute the admission to the United Nations of the Republic of Djibouti and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, expressing the hope that a close co-operation will soon be established within the United Nations between the delegations of Portugal and of these new Member States, whose admission represents yet another step not only towards the conclusion of the decolonization process undertaken by the United Nations but also towards the universality of the Organization, which is so much to be desired.

182. Last year, my country voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 31/21, which then recommended the admission of Viet Nam to membership in the United Nations. This year we had the honour of sponsoring the draft resolution that approved the admission of Viet Nam to the United Nations.

183. With the admission to the United Nations, still during the last session of the General Assembly, of the People's Republic of Angola—which we had strongly supported and greeted with deep joy—all the nations emerging from the policy of decolonization initiated by Portugal on 25 April 1974 are now fully represented in the United Nations. These nations bear witness to the determination with which Portugal has sought to be in step with history and to meet, not only the thinking of the United Nations, but, above all, the legitimate and natural aspirations of the peoples whom we had colonized for centuries.

184. I greet all the representatives of the community of nations here present, but I direct a very special salute to the representatives of Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe—countries with which Portugal and Brazil today form a vast human community linked by blood, history, tradition, culture and, finally, a common language in which I am addressing the Assembly today, a language that, as I stated here last year,<sup>14</sup> we believe is bound to play an increasingly important role in the task of bringing men together and helping them to free themselves from alienation.

185. We trust that in the future that role will be acknowledged by the United Nations itself through the recognition of Portuguese as one of the official languages of the Organization.

186. It may be pointed out in this connexion that the Portuguese language has, in fact, already been used as a working language in international meetings that have taken

place under the aegis of the United Nations, as in the recent International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia held at Maputo.

187. We believe, therefore, that the Portuguese language can be instrumental in helping men overcome their difficulties in every field—ideological, technological, political and social.

188. Last year, I had an opportunity in this Assembly to outline the major principles which guide democratic Portugal in international relations and which are enshrined in our Constitution.

189. Since then, during the first year of the Constitutional Government, the Republic of Portugal has acted in accordance with those principles.

190. One of the efforts of our diplomacy that I should like to point out in particular is Portugal's pending request for admission into the European Economic Community made in March of this year, and we are expecting a reply.

191. The spirit that prevailed in the talks which Prime Minister Mario Soares had in the capitals of the nine countries members of the Community, and which I was privileged to follow enables us to envisage this accession with confidence.

192. Our commitment towards a democratic, strong and united Europe is now total. This democratic Europe should not, however, be conceived as an end in itself, but rather as a factor of stability and world peace as well as a natural ally of the developing countries. A democratic Europe is, for Portugal, a basis for a world-wide policy of understanding and co-operation.

193. To achieve this all European nations, even those with different political régimes, must maintain the continent in a climate of détente. We thus attach great value to the work of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe now proceeding in Belgrade. The mere fact that the Conference is taking place is, for us, a most encouraging sign.

194. We shall go to Belgrade in a constructive spirit, ready to recognize the positive results achieved following the Final Act of Helsinki, but also seeking to strengthen its implementation.

195. It is our belief that détente in Europe will encourage the possibility of achieving an international order that will be more stable and less affected by the spectre of violent conflict. If such an understanding is possible in Europe, then certainly it can be in other regions.

196. In this light, Portugal considers the presence in Belgrade of the countries of the Mediterranean area to be a means of associating the greatest possible number of nations with it and with the effort towards such an understanding.

197. The world continues to be clouded by very serious problems calling for the increased attention of the community of nations. The General Assembly will examine

<sup>14</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 22nd meeting.

them all, and we hope, for our part, to make a positive contribution, if not towards their respective solutions, at least towards their clarification and better assessment.

198. I shall refer to two of them in particular, because of their seriousness and because they are certainly those which the Portuguese Government regards with the greatest attention in view of their specific nature, the interests and values at stake, and the multiple affinities that link us to the peoples concerned.

199. As a nation both European and Atlantic, we are bound to Africa, and not only to Portuguese-speaking Africa, by multiple ties that are centuries old. We cannot be indifferent to anything that occurs in Africa not only because of its effects on international order, but also because of the real esteem in which we hold the peoples of Africa and the respect we have for their struggle to put an immediate end to all those situations that bear the intolerable stamp of colonialism or represent an unacceptable denial of the most basic human rights.

200. Portugal cannot fail to add its efforts to those of all nations and all political forces in the world which condemn the stubborn persistence in southern Africa of political concepts, institutions or forms of government that, whatever may be the arguments invoked in their defence, seem designed merely to ensure the survival of an unjust political and social order and to postpone satisfaction of the legitimate desire of the peoples of southern Africa to be masters of their own destiny.

201. For these reasons, the Portuguese Government hopes that the independence of Namibia, with full respect for its unity and territorial integrity, will not be delayed. We trust that the diplomatic efforts being made to bring together the different parties involved in this matter will meet with success so as to end, through negotiation, the illegal occupation of Namibia.

202. In this respect, I should like to recall Security Council resolution 385 (1976), which constitutes a framework for an acceptable solution of this problem. If this is not achieved, it will not be possible to avoid an escalation of the armed conflict that has been taking place for years to achieve the liberation of that Territory, a conflict caused by the intransigence and stubbornness of the occupying Power.

203. By the same token, the Government of Portugal expresses its hope that the rebel régime of Rhodesia will shortly come to an end. The aggravation of the situation in that Territory has serious implications for the peace and security of all the countries in the area, and causes justifiable apprehension within the international community. Evidence of this can be seen in the attacks against Mozambique and incursions into its territory which have been condemned by the Security Council.

204. We hope that a solution can soon be found to put an end to the tragedy now taking place there, thus enabling the establishment in Zimbabwe of a true majority Government. There is no other way to avoid further sacrifices in human lives and the further heightening of racial tensions and hatred. Besides, the continued deterioration of the

conflict may render the intervention of outside forces unavoidable.

205. In this respect I feel that the United Nations should lend its utmost attention to the recent proposals made by the United Kingdom aimed at restoring legality in Rhodesia and at solving the Rhodesian question, proposals which were fully supported by the Government of the United States.

206. At the same time we expressly condemn the doctrine as well as the practice of *apartheid*. We take this position all the more firmly since, whatever the errors Portugal was accused of during its colonial period—errors which the Portuguese democrats never failed to condemn—all forms of racial discrimination have always been abhorrent to us. The end of racism should in no way signify the separation of races by continents, but should instead mean their co-existence and interpenetration in the areas where history has brought them together. In this spirit, Portugal recently attended in Lagos the World Conference for Action against *Apartheid*.

207. Another area of the world—the Middle East—has become in the past 30 years the scene of a tragedy that, despite all efforts to end it and notwithstanding the repeated affirmations of the countries involved that they wish to arrive at a peaceful solution, has already resulted in many thousands of victims, has been and probably will continue to be a grave threat to the peace of the world, and constitutes a flagrant example of how fear, false notions of security, and a sectarian spirit can mislead those who govern.

208. Portugal does not have direct interests in that region. However, the vicissitudes of history have bound us by culture and blood to the peoples who have taken part and have been victims in this drama.

209. It seems intolerable to the people and Government of Portugal that millions of human beings continue to live in the Middle East under the threat and sometimes under the harsh laws of war in spite of all the efforts made to find a peace formula that should ensure the right to exist to every State in the region, without exception, and the right of the Palestinian people to create its own homeland.

210. A formula will have to be found which, while guaranteeing to Israel the respect of its borders and of its very right to exist, will definitely prevent it from continuing, under whatever pretext, to occupy territories which it does not own and which were conquered by force 10 years ago, and from trying to extend its influence on them through the illegal establishment of settlements, the purpose of which is merely to consolidate, if not to perpetuate, a *status quo* clearly and justly condemned by the international conscience. Portugal associates itself with this condemnation, and has not done so earlier for the sole reason that it considers this rostrum of the United Nations to be the most adequate place to do it.

211. I repeat, a formula will have to be found depriving Israel of the authority it claims to have to deny the Palestinian people the right—which, after all, it claims for itself—to be the master of its national destiny, a formula

that would enable the Palestinian people to see its right to create its own homeland unanimously recognized by the international community.

212. Portugal supports the rapid convening of the Geneva Conference with the participation of the representatives of the Palestinian people in such a way as to recognize its aspirations and to give Israel security assurances.

213. In the Far East my country still maintains formal responsibilities with respect to the Territory of East Timor. As we have repeatedly stated, Portugal has no claims or interests there other than wishing to conclude, in the best possible manner, the process of decolonization of all the Non-Self-Governing Territories under its administration. We believe that this can be achieved only by respect for the right of the Timorese people to self-determination and independence, as stated in resolution 1514 (XV), applicable to all peoples under colonial domination. In the circumstances that are known to all, this can only take place through compliance with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council on this matter.

214. Within its limitations, my Government is ready, as it has always been, to give the United Nations all possible co-operation in this field.

215. I should like at this stage to lay before this Assembly some of the thoughts which come to our mind when we consider the history of the United Nations and the demands with which we are confronted in present-day international relations.

216. If we analyse the activities carried out by the United Nations to this day, if we try to ascertain in what fields its action is now more necessary, more urgent, we may safely conclude that the United Nations is entering a new phase of its existence.

217. This Organization was conceived and its structures drawn up during the Second World War; it started to function when memories of past tragedies and sufferings were still fresh and when consciousness of the threat of an even greater catastrophe in the event of another war was vivid. Understandably, under such circumstances the maintenance of peace and international security were the main concerns. Thus we can note that the various United Nations bodies during the first years of their existence, therefore, devoted a major part of their work to the task of trying to avoid the eruption of international conflicts or of trying to solve, through peaceful means if possible, those conflicts which could unfortunately not be avoided.

218. It is obviously not easy to evaluate the significance of the actions—or even of the mere existence—of the United Nations in the course of these events. It is difficult therefore to assess the specific contribution of the United Nations towards the prevention of a given conflict or the solution of a given crisis. It is particularly difficult to say to what extent the fact that a third world war did not break out was due to the United Nations. But we may safely conclude that the fact that we have lived in a situation of relative peace is linked to the existence, and to the actions, of the United Nations, as was the solution of many conflicts.

219. But peace and security do not constitute the sole aim of the United Nations. And if it is obvious that war has caused tragedies which human sensitivity would consider it intolerable to see repeated, it is equally obvious that situations of suffering and sacrifice persist, affecting a great part of mankind—situations which in some cases are no lighter than those brought about by war.

220. On the other hand, the attention of an international organization would naturally be focused more intensely on situations extending beyond the borders of States. The most flagrant example of this was unquestionably the case of peoples not enjoying their own independence, of peoples dominated by other peoples—in short, the case of colonial situations.

221. It is therefore not surprising that, once certain structures aimed at reducing the risk of another world war had been set up, the United Nations should have launched a large-scale campaign against colonialism. It should not be forgotten that this action was prompted by solidarity, and sometimes by political interests which were not always directly related to the degree of justice or injustice prevailing in each colonial situation; but unquestionably, in my mind, these situations constituted a field in which the intervention of the United Nations was morally just, legally in accordance with the aims of the Charter, and politically viable.

222. The action of the United Nations in the field of decolonization is unfortunately not complete. There still exist situations which, owing to their dimensions and seriousness, require that the efforts undertaken in this sector be in no way weakened. But it seems that the end of the road is in sight, and it is no longer hazardous to say that the days of colonialism are numbered.

223. We have every reason to welcome the changes that have occurred in the fight against colonialism, but we must remember that victory in this field will allow the United Nations to concentrate its efforts in other fields where situations exist which the international community cannot ignore and which call for urgent and effective action.

224. The first problem to be faced, concerning which we must urgently overcome the current deadlock and achieve visible progress, is the question of disarmament.

225. We are perfectly aware of the complexity of the negotiations on disarmament. We recognize the legitimate concern of States regarding their security and defence. But the present situation is clearly unacceptable, and no one can have the slightest doubt as to the urgency of finding a solution.

226. It is therefore with renewed hope that we await the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament to be held in 1978—not because we expect it to approve sensational armament reductions, but because we feel that that session will represent an important step towards the establishment of a new mentality, of a new spirit in which these questions must be considered. For only with a new spirit can the present situation be overcome. Without it, no machinery, no negotiation, can dispel the constant threat of apocalyptic destruction under which we live.

227. While pledging the total co-operation of the Portuguese Government I appeal to all States represented here boldly and resolutely to make every effort and to use all the resources of their imaginations to find solutions to this problem, which has a decisive bearing on other problems facing mankind today. We must, however, bear in mind that the factors of security essential to small nations are not always those brought forward by the great Powers.

228. I believe it can be said that the situations causing the greatest amount of suffering to mankind are mainly due to one of two reasons: to the fact that human beings are denied the effective exercise of their legitimate rights, or to the fact that they find themselves in a position in which, even though no repressive action is exercised against them, they are unable to fulfil their most basic needs.

229. Regarding the first type of situation, the answer must be found in the defence and protection of human rights. The existence of the second type of situation underscores the need to establish a new international economic order. The two main tasks of the United Nations in the phase following decolonization must therefore be the protection of human rights and the establishment of a new economic order in the world.

230. It must of course be noted that these objectives are enshrined in the Charter and have, in one way or another, been pursued by the United Nations during all the years of its existence. The fundamental change that we believe has taken place lies in the fact that more favourable conditions now exist and that a greater sense of urgency is now being felt concerning the attainment of these objectives.

231. As regards human rights, the efficiency of the actions of the United Nations has been limited by the existence of suspicions hindering international co-operation in this field. However, we consider that unavoidable difficulties can in no way constitute an excuse for complacency or passivity.

232. To ensure the full protection of human rights and to build a new and more just economic order—those are the challenges facing mankind today. The two aspects are in our view inseparable.

233. Portugal has a very particular interest in the protection of human rights and is engaged in the process of becoming a party to a series of international instruments aimed at the effective defence of those rights. Of these I should like to recall the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,<sup>15</sup> and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

234. As I already had the opportunity of stressing a year ago, it is not surprising that Portugal attaches particular significance to the protection of human rights. The experience of a dictatorial régime which ignored the most elementary individual rights and guarantees has clearly shown us the importance of respecting them, and in this matter our Constitution contains clear and mandatory provisions.

235. In speaking of human rights, I cannot fail to emphasize the necessity of giving very particular attention to the protection of the human rights of migrant workers. We believe this to be a question concerning which international organizations bear special responsibilities. The Portuguese Government and its diplomacy are firmly resolved to explore all existing possibilities in this field and to seek with other countries better solutions to this problem.

236. By the same token, the establishment of a new economic order also raises some specific problems that imply the alteration of structures we have traditionally thought of as being matters within the internal jurisdiction of each State. In order to undertake the modification of such structures it is necessary to bear in mind that the world has become more interdependent, that the destiny of one man is increasingly linked with that of others and that the areas of international co-operation must be progressively expanded.

237. No doubt the North-South dialogue has intensified in recent years. Various institutional formulas have been attempted in the search for the necessary balance between rich and poor nations. One of the most striking examples was the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, which ended in Paris in June last. The conclusion reached—that dialogue must continue in the appropriate forums—remains important. No one can doubt that the United Nations and its specialized agencies are one of those forums, if not the principal one. The United Nations will therefore have to prepare adequate institutional arrangements to cope with such tasks. Spontaneity in the economic field is no longer acceptable.

238. In this connexion, the work taking place within the United Nations with respect to the law of the sea and a new régime for the oceans deserves a special mention.

239. Portugal continues to take an active part in the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and to follow developments associated with the establishment of a new régime for the oceans of the world that will take into account both the necessities of the world community and the spirit of the new economic order.

240. We note with satisfaction the progress achieved during the sixth session of the Conference. However, we remain apprehensive concerning the difficulties that still persist in some areas, difficulties that must be overcome in a spirit of compromise so that a text containing the general consensus and representing an acceptable balance between the various positions and interests at stake can be arrived at.

241. We believe it to be of major importance that the convention codifying the new law of the sea be adopted in the near future, not only because it would represent a major contribution within the framework of the United Nations towards peace and mutual understanding but also because it would provide the small coastal States with guarantees for the respect for their rights, particularly those regarding the use of resources.

242. On the other hand, the convention would provide guarantees to the technologically developed countries and

<sup>15</sup> Signed at Rome on 4 November 1950. For the text, see United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 213, No. 2889.

safeguard their vital interests as maritime Powers, also assuring the security of the large investments necessary for the exploitation of the sea-bed and the ocean floor. However, it is not sufficient to establish a new legal régime for the oceans without ensuring at the same time the institutional conditions that will facilitate its application and without contributing to the necessary international co-operation.

243. If it is true that organs that are part of the United Nations system and have competence in ocean affairs have played an important role in this area, it is also true that they have not always been able to keep up with new needs and with the changes and problems arising from new technologies. In our opinion, this gap between institutions and functions must command the attention of the higher bodies of the United Nations. Adjustments and improvements—some already under way in the specialized organs and others requiring the creation of new machinery for co-operation—should be integrated in a rational and efficient way to meet the new requirements of the international community. Priority should be given, *inter alia*, to increasing the aid given to Member States which need international assistance, in particular the developing nations, thereby facilitating the application of the new régime governing the oceans and ensuring that they can thus derive greater benefits for their economic and social development.

244. We thus believe that, once the Conference enters its final stage, it would be advisable for the General Assembly to consider this important matter.

245. My Government, wishing to contribute as far as it can to international co-operation, has taken the initiative of offering Lisbon as a possible site for one of the bodies that may be established as a result of the Conference on the Law of the Sea, namely, for the Law of the Sea Tribunal, and we hope that this offer will be favourably considered by the Member States.

246. Another very important role of the United Nations to which I should like to devote a few words concerns co-operation in matters which are predominantly the internal affairs of a State but which by their nature, significance or dimension transcend the boundaries of that State. My country faces such a situation today, and I should like to refer to it.

247. It is well known that decolonization of the Territories which in 1974 were under Portuguese administration led to the arrival in Portugal of hundreds of thousands of people, a number all the more impressive when we bear in mind the size and the normal population of my country. It is perhaps relevant to recall and analyse some aspects of that event.

248. First, the influx of these people was a direct consequence of decolonization, a decolonization undertaken after the revolution of 25 April 1974 in strict accordance with the objectives of the United Nations and within the framework defined in the Charter and in General Assembly resolutions, and in close co-operation with the United Nations.

249. Secondly, the people concerned come from different regions of the world and are of various nationalities.

250. Thirdly, Portugal, although aware of the problems that could arise therefrom, decided that the most immediate and effective means of facing the situation would be to admit those peoples into the country without placing any obstacles or barriers to their entry.

*Mr. Mojsov (Yugoslavia) resumed the Chair.*

251. Fourthly, the international community, aware of the special nature of that phenomenon as well as interested in the fact that those peoples should be given the possibility of moving to a territory of their own choice, contributed financially to their transportation and even to some settlement costs.

252. From what I have just said it must be concluded that, although we are dealing with a phenomenon taking place within the borders of a given State, it is in fact something of interest and concern to the entire international community. Portugal, being the most immediate and convenient destination, did not hesitate to admit all those who sought entry, neither setting up obstacles nor imposing conditions. With regard to the subsequent expenses, it does not seem fair that Portugal alone should have to shoulder the burden of financing a task that appears to be of interest to the international community—all the more so when, bearing in mind the amount of those costs and the limited resources we possess, such a solution would impose heavy sacrifices on the Portuguese people.

253. The international community and particularly certain United Nations organs have already given us some assistance in this field. Unfortunately, the financial burden that we continue to carry appears to exceed our capabilities and it is therefore probable that, in the near future, we shall have to make, possibly in agreement and co-operation with other countries having ties with the populations concerned, an appeal for a wider participation of the international community in the solution of this problem.

254. I cannot fail in this regard to mention the agreement reached between Portugal and the People's Republic of Angola concerning the return to Angola of nationals of that country, as well as the assistance—limited though it may be—given by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in connexion with the admission on Portuguese soil of persons expelled from Mozambique.

255. Last year I had the opportunity to refer to the role of the United Nations and its decision-making machinery and to point out some inherent weaknesses of that machinery. The wider sphere of action that I have just advocated for the United Nations seems to give greater urgency to this question, and it therefore also seems justified to reflect upon it once again.

256. The various United Nations organs, when adopting resolutions on matters submitted to them, must as far as possible be true interpreters of the interests of the international community. But the adoption of a resolution expressing those interests does not automatically result from the use of a given formula or a given machinery. It is

therefore necessary that the various States, at such time as they concur in the expression of the will of a United Nations body, be conscious of the fact that they are agents of the international community, and that for that very reason they must neither take wholly discretionary positions nor exclusively defend their own specific interests in the matter under discussion.

257. The attainment of this objective clearly depends also on the improvement of the whole system and the acceptance of certain rules of conduct concerning the definition of positions in the United Nations. But the main element seems to lie in the political will of States to see to it that United Nations resolutions truly reflect the interests of the international community. To ensure that, the principle of equality among States must find its maximum expression within the United Nations. Only thus can all other universal principles on which the Organization is founded enjoy full recognition and implementation.

258. Mr. NOGUES (Paraguay) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Once again I am honoured to have this opportunity to address this distinguished international forum, and I wish briefly to put forward my Government's views on the extensive agenda before us.

259. In particular, I wish to bid welcome to the eminent diplomat presiding over this Assembly, Mr. Lazar Mojsov, whom I wish every success in his difficult tasks. We are confident that his well-known competence and skill will stand him in good stead.

260. I wish also to extend our best wishes to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, to whom we are grateful for his tireless efforts in the service of the international community.

261. At the beginning of my statement I should also like to bid welcome to the two new States that have just joined our Organization. We hope they will find here the broad and just path leading to their well-deserved prosperity.

262. We have grown accustomed, from the news in the daily press, to hearing the word "détente", as if it could magically usher in a new era in international relations and in the balance of world power. However, our community is, at this very moment, gravely concerned over explosive situations liable at any moment to destroy the values of our civilization. We are not referring solely to those areas that show disturbing signs—whether real or potential—of disrupting peace and security, but also to a more indefinite, vague area where subversion, under the banner of certain ideals, has terrorized mankind in pursuit of evil designs to establish new, deceptive political systems that oppress the citizen, suppress freedom and subjugate nations.

263. More than one eminent representative of the Latin American countries has in this universal forum brought out the fact that the world is faced with an unwarranted, painful choice: while the representatives of the major Powers who hold in their hands the responsibility of power and domination proclaim the end of the cold war and its replacement by the fragile reign of détente, entire peoples are confronted dramatically by subversion and terrorism encouraged from beyond their boundaries by

omnipotent forces whose designs for implacable domination know no bounds and even extend to our continent.

264. Paraguay, which is experiencing an era of peace, security, tranquility and order unprecedented in its turbulent political history, is concerned over this abdication of the universal conscience.

265. Paraguay, one of the vast majority of countries that do not participate in final decisions of power or domination, firmly believes in the moral values that ennoble life within the framework of order and of civilized, harmonious international coexistence.

266. My country has placed its hope in the work and historic mission of the United Nations, which is the only viable course in the search for a brighter prospect for a mankind yearning for peace and well-being.

267. Hence we view with concern the emergence of certain threats to peace and security, wherever they may occur. Technology has performed prodigious feats, and has accustomed us to a leisurely existence; technology has also turned the entire world into a village filled with suspicion, where everyone warily eyes his neighbour. And our fear grows when those sources of friction are maintained, for reasons I need not mention here, beyond the framework of the United Nations and its bodies, with criminal disregard for the provisions of the Charter specifically designed to ensure the rule of reason and law.

268. Nevertheless, Paraguay is confident that sound judgement and, above all, a spirit of justice will enable us to find proper solutions to the problems which are of concern to us all, such as the civil war in Lebanon, the situation in Cyprus, the perennial war in the Middle East, the burning issues that beset the length and breadth of Africa, and the other problems which thwart our legitimate desire to defend ideals worthy of our status as human beings.

269. Paraguay will always be prepared to support whatever measures may be adopted by the international community to curb terrorism. Here I wish to recall that the protection of human rights should apply with the same earnestness and zeal to the innocent victims of the scourge of terror which has so pitilessly been unleashed.

270. This noble concern for basic human rights, which my country shares and respects, has, however, been invoked in various United Nations bodies with narrow, biased "selectivity".

271. It is paradoxical that, despite the chilling figures that have been adduced regarding the unspeakable acts of genocide that take place in certain countries, on the pretext of setting up new power structures an attempt has been made to deny other peoples their sacred right to defend their self-determination, freedom and traditional life style.

272. Paraguay has taken, and will continue to take, whatever measures are needed, within a strict legal framework, to protect and defend its age-old traditions and its democratic, independent way of life. Ours is a democracy which knows no racial or other segregation, nor is there any distinction on the basis of class or wealth. Our independence is not limited by foreign or domestic forces.

273. Paraguay does not wish to live in denial of those values, because, were that to happen, life itself would no longer have the meaning and dignity which is ours by virtue of our history, a source of pride that gives us strength in the daily struggle for existence.

274. One of the more pressing items on your agenda is that of disarmament. The basis is now being laid for the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on that subject in 1978. Meanwhile, the specialized agencies tell us of the enormous sums being invested in armaments—and not only by the great Powers—in a race which cannot lead the world to an era of peace and tolerance but only to a period of doubt and great danger. Conversely, economic conditions in the developing countries are deteriorating daily, in a world where the challenge of progress and well-being in most nations depends on the very triumph or failure of mankind and on a true peace.

275. Another session of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea concluded recently in this very city without the land-locked countries, such as Paraguay, being assured that their just claims will be reflected in the final text of a future international convention.

276. Paraguay believes in the inalienable right of the land-locked countries to the riches of the sea, the common heritage of mankind. It is in that spirit that we wish to negotiate bilateral solutions to this exciting fundamental challenge which concerns the right of all nations to the riches of the sea.

277. My Government wishes to stress the useful and commendable efforts of our Organization as it holds plenary meetings on matters vital to man's environment throughout the world. I refer here to the United Nations Water Conference, which took place in Mar del Plata, and to the United Nations Conference on Desertification. The use of sophisticated and ambitious technology challenges nature, and it is well that the whole world should meet to deliberate these subjects which relate to the proper use of natural resources and to ensuring the healthy state of the earth's ecology; otherwise, all those who inhabit this little segment of the universe known as earth would run an even greater risk to their lives.

278. As on other occasions, the Government of Paraguay wishes to voice its satisfaction at stressing the importance of the mission being carried out in our country by UNDP, and we would express our appreciation to those countries co-operating with it which have provided their technical and financial assistance and have performed truly worthy tasks closely linked to Paraguay's development.

279. Countries like Paraguay are also concerned over the growing difficulties which, regardless of all the efforts being made inside and outside the Organization, make it particularly difficult to establish a more just international economic order wherein countries exporting raw materials and commodities can be encouraged in a way to promote their progress and the well-being of their peoples.

280. The Government of my country is constantly devoting its efforts to the harmonious development of our

entire country and to the steady increase of our exports in general, but there are certain factors beyond our country which disrupt our efforts. There is the well-known problem of the low prices of raw materials on international markets. Now there are also obstacles created by industrialized countries because of prices imposed on our exports. That is true of beef exported from Paraguay. For many years now we have not had access to certain traditional markets in the European Economic Community.

281. Paraguay is also seriously concerned over another matter which has been raised at many international meetings and is a major problem within the United Nations system. There has been reference to a desire to reduce technical and financial co-operation extended to those countries that are economically "taking off", in favour of those that are in a less advantageous position economically. That would create automatically an intermediate level of countries which would be deprived of assistance they sorely need. In the light of views which have been put forward, one could expect that the countries involved would be practically all those of Latin America.

282. Another fact which should be mentioned on this occasion and which is also of concern to the Government of my country is the meagre representation of our countries of the Latin American group in the higher bureaucratic positions within the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies. Reliable statistics show that among 26 high positions we have absolutely no representative. The least one can say is that this unjust situation adversely affects the foundation of the United Nations system, that foundation being proportionate geographical representation.

283. Just three weeks ago in Washington the new Panama Canal treaties were signed. It was a momentous occasion in view of the presence of the Presidents or representatives of our countries, and it was evidence of our common faith and our identical hope. We welcome the fact that fruitful dialogue prevailed over sterile confrontation.

284. In conclusion, I wish to express my most sincere hope that this General Assembly will make an effective contribution to the advent of a freer, more just and more humane world for our sons and the sons of our sons. There can be no substitute for that if mankind is to continue along the path of self-betterment.

285. The PRESIDENT: The representatives of Democratic Kampuchea and of the Comoros have requested to be allowed to exercise the right of reply. Members will recall that the General Assembly at its 5th plenary meeting decided that statements in exercise of the right of reply should be limited to 10 minutes. In view of the lateness of the hour, I am sure representatives will understand my request that they co-operate in adhering to that limitation. I call on the representative of Democratic Kampuchea.

286. Mr. THIOUNN PRASITH (Democratic Kampuchea) (*interpretation from French*): This morning [10th meeting] the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France deliberately made grave accusations against Democratic Kampuchea and its people. We reserve our right to return at length to these malicious accusations, which are devoid of any justification,

but the delegation of Democratic Kampuchea would like to take this opportunity to bring to the attention of the General Assembly some clarifications concerning the intentions and perfidious manoeuvres of France with regard to Democratic Kampuchea and its people.

287. First of all, let me specify that the people of Kampuchea, having suffered under the yoke of French colonialism for over a century, like other peoples in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, is fully aware of the nature of that colonialism which today pretends to defend human rights. Indeed, through a century of colonization many of our compatriots have lost their lives in defence of the most elementary human rights and liberties. During that century French colonialism has oppressed, enslaved and massacred our people and plundered the wealth of our country, including the inestimable treasures of our monuments at Angkor.

288. During that century of colonization our people struggled, at the cost of the greatest sacrifices, to regain their independence, freedom and dignity. Our people did not wish to dwell on this painful past and hoped that French colonialism for its part would have learned all the necessary lessons. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. On 18 March 1970 the French Government became an accomplice in the coup d'état inspired by the clique of the traitor Lon Nol and the CIA. Throughout the war of imperialist aggression waged by the United States, the French Government supported and aided the traitorous Lon Nol clique and thus participated in the destruction of our country and in the massacre of a million of our compatriots who lost their lives during the war.

289. After our liberation on 17 April 1975 the French Government welcomed the traitors of the Lon Nol clique. And even today it harbours those traitors, organizes them against our Government and people and incites them to a feverish activity aimed at denigrating and calumniating the efforts of Democratic Kampuchea and its Government in their work of defence and reconstruction being carried out in independence and democracy with their own resources.

290. The French Government has thus constantly interfered in our internal affairs, and this in the name of France's so-called friendship for the Khmer people. The least that can be said is that this is a strange concept of friendship. The people of Kampuchea know only too well the consequences of that so-called friendship, which has brought upon them only mourning, plunder, suffering, misery and devastation. But the people of Kampuchea highly appreciate the French people, and has a real friendship for them, because they shared in their combat against French imperialism and colonialism.

291. Secondly, I should like to clarify the fact that since the total and definitive liberation of 17 April 1975 our people has courageously undertaken, in full independence and sovereignty and with its own resources, the defence and construction of an independent, united, peaceful, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea, sovereign in its territorial integrity, in a society in which happiness, equality, justice and true democracy reign, without rich or poor, without exploiting classes or exploited classes; a society in which all people live in harmony and great

national union, participating together in the task of production, construction and the defence of their country.

292. The society in which our people now live is one in which the most elementary and fundamental human rights are respected. The people live in honour and dignity, benefiting from all the moral and material conditions of life which improve daily with the economic and social development of a country devastated by more than five years of an American imperialist war of aggression.

293. We are a nation of 8 million people in a country which could support twice if not three times the present population, thanks to our economic and social policy, which reflects the deepest aspirations of our people. They devote themselves with enthusiasm and ardour to the construction of this new society in which they are truly the masters of their destiny and of their country. They are proud of the victory of 17 April 1975, which freed them totally and definitively from imperialist and colonialist oppression and exploitation. They are proud of the considerable achievements secured by their own efforts, proud of their right to live in honour and dignity, proud of their right to work, proud of their right to study, proud of their right to love their country and to decide for themselves their destiny and that of their country.

294. In its relations with foreign countries our country is inspired by goodwill and the firm determination to maintain friendly relations with all countries on the basis of equality and mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. On the other hand, it resolutely opposes any interference in its internal affairs.

295. The statement of the representative of the French Government this morning has the merit of confirming before the General Assembly of the United Nations that the French Government remains deeply attached to its imperialist and colonialist policy, which is hostile to the people of Democratic Kampuchea and its Government. It has the merit of making it clear that the French Government pursues a policy of aid, assistance and devoted support for the remnants of the traitors of the Lon Nol clique, the assassins of the people of Kampuchea, and that it pursues its policy directed against the present task of defending and building Democratic Kampuchea.

296. In fact, the attitude of the French Government merely reflects its anger and rancour, and that of imperialist and colonialist circles in France, against the people of Democratic Kampuchea, who have regained control of their destiny and that of their country, who have recovered possession of their wealth and their national resources which had been exploited and pillaged for 100 years by French colonialism, and who have recovered their honour and their dignity which had been trampled underfoot for 100 years by French colonialism.

297. The attitude of the French Government is in fact only the reflection of its rancour at the repeated rebuffs to its attempts to calumniate and denigrate Democratic Kampuchea and its people.

298. There is no need for me to say that after having made so many sacrifices to regain their right to be masters of



their own destiny and that of their country and to regain their national identity the people of Kampuchea will not cease to oppose any attempt to bring back French colonialism or impose any other form of colonialism, any act or form of oppression, exploitation, domination or interference in the internal affairs of their country.

299. The people of Democratic Kampuchea and its Government will persevere in their efforts to succeed in their task of defending the fruits of the revolution and the country and that of national construction based on the principles of independence and sovereignty and on their own efforts.

300. Mr. ABDALLAH (Comoros) (*interpretation from French*): I shall have the opportunity during my statement in the general debate to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to direct the work of the present session, and to recall the privileged nature of the relations between my country and your own.

301. For the moment I will confine myself to using my right of reply to respond to the remarks made by the Foreign Minister of France with regard to my country.

302. I should like to recall here that the vote to which he referred in his statement and which was carried out in the Comorian territory of Mayotte took place in flagrant violation of the principles of our Charter and the relevant resolutions on decolonization adopted by the General Assembly, particularly as regards the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte.

303. The only vote which is recognized by the international community is the global referendum of 22 December 1974, which resulted in a more than 95 per cent vote in favour of independence within the political unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros.

304. In the same statement the Foreign Minister of France spoke of misunderstandings. There have never been misunderstandings, at Government level, at the level of the people of the Comoros or at the level of international bodies. The unity of the Republic of the Comoros is the outcome of the common history of its people with regard to its culture, its language and its Islamic religion.

305. France, from 1889 until the referendum of 22 December 1974, in conformity with the plain facts which I have just cited, had for more than a century and a half, by its laws, its rules of public administration, recognized and enshrined the political unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros.

306. In conclusion, I should like to say with great sadness that the statement made by the French Minister this morning made no decisive contribution to the solution of the problem of the Comorian island of Mayotte. France's willingness to conduct a dialogue was hardly apparent in the statement of the French Minister. Despite such a negative attitude, my Government remains ready to welcome any initiative, from wherever it may come, if it is likely to lead to a just and equitable settlement of the problem.

*The meeting rose at 7 p.m.*