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President: Mr. Hamilton Shirley AMERASINGHE
(Sri Lanka).

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate

1. The PRESIDENT: This morning we shall begin the general debate. Before I call on the first speaker, I should like to request members to bear in mind the decisions taken by the General Assembly at its 4th plenary meeting, on 24 September 1976, regarding the procedure concerning the general debate, particularly in connexion with the list of speakers, the expression of congratulations after a speech has been delivered and the exercise of the right of reply.

2. To be more precise, I should like to draw attention to the recommendation of the General Committee contained in paragraph 5 (c) of its first report in document A/31/250, which was approved by the General Assembly and which reads as follows:

“Out of consideration for the other speakers and in order to preserve the dignity of the general debate, delegations should refrain from expressing their congratulations in the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered.”

I must rely on the co-operation of representatives in securing compliance with that decision.

3. To facilitate the planning of the work of this Assembly, it has also been decided to close the list of speakers in the general debate on Wednesday, 29 September at 6 p.m. Representatives wishing to participate in the general debate should therefore inscribe their names with the Secretariat before 6 p.m. on Wednesday, 29 September.

4. Mr. AZEREDO DA SILVEIRA (Brazil): Allow me first to say how pleased I am to see Ambassador Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe vested with the presidency of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Ambassador Amerasinghe is a man who enjoys great prestige in international forums, in which he has

served with particular distinction as the representative of the Government of his noble country, Sri Lanka, and his presence presiding over the work of this General Assembly is a guarantee of calm and proficiency in the lofty functions which the international community has called upon him to perform.

5. I should also like to address a word of sincere appreciation to the Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Mr. Gaston Thorn, for the relevant contribution he made to the General Assembly as President of its thirtieth session.

6. Moreover, I am happy to be able to welcome the Republic of Seychelles on the happy occasion of that State's becoming a Member of the United Nations. The Brazilian delegation wishes to establish a close and friendly relationship with the delegation of Seychelles and hopes to co-operate intimately with that delegation when we deal with the items on our agenda.

7. In recent years the United Nations has become the target for mounting criticism levelled against its operation. The time has certainly come to place these criticisms, which are at times quite blunt, in true perspective. It would not be difficult to ascertain how much of this attitude is self-serving. Such an attitude does not meet the most enlightened interests of nations, those very interests which justified the creation of the United Nations and its later call to universality. Therefore, it is always opportune to reaffirm, in a constructive manner, that the international responsibility of this Organization derives from commitments freely and spontaneously undertaken by States under the Charter of the United Nations, commitments which do not admit of exceptions or reservations.

8. The United Nations is a political organism immersed in a world which is also political. The United Nations, in reality, constitutes the only political forum of universal scope at the disposal of States. In addition to fulfilling the normative functions laid down in its Charter, the United Nations must deliberate on the international problems the Member States bring to it in order to safeguard their national interests at the international level.

9. Accordingly, international problems of the most varied nature are included in the agenda of the General Assembly, and those problems must be discussed according to the procedures set forth in the Charter and in the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. As is only natural, such discussion entails characteristically parliamentary behaviour and attitudes. It would be illusory to think that such procedures and related behaviour could ever be isolated from the political circumstances that generated the problems and from those surrounding their discussion. The

United Nations does not function in a world apart from the real world where political facts take place. Events in this hall are not independent of the real context of international relations. Quite the contrary, what happens here reflects a wider political reality. That reality explains better than words the atmosphere of frustration and tension which at times prevails in this forum. The debates in the General Assembly and the resolutions that this body, more than any other major organ of the United Nations, has the capacity to adopt make equally apparent the hopes and the disappointments of the Member States and portray both the advances and the set-backs in the international political process.

10. In recent years international life has gained much in complexity. Not only have new States been admitted to the United Nations but also increasingly varied matters are being subjected to international rule, as witness the current cycle of great thematic conferences held under the aegis of the United Nations. This broadening of the scope of multilateral negotiations may or may not be of benefit to the majority of States. In many cases, it is; in others, it may also serve to direct attention towards problems of secondary importance, an attention that should, first and foremost, be concentrated upon the fundamental issues of international security and the harmonious development of nations. For the process of universal negotiation to produce lasting results, however, it is necessary to keep it under the authority of the principle of sovereign equality, a principle that ensures to States equitable participation in international decisions affecting the future of each State and of mankind as a whole.

11. It must perforce be recognized that, as an organization essentially devoted to promoting international peace and security, the United Nations does not present a record of important gains in recent years. The picture is rather one of institutional and operational impasses. The machinery of collective security seems to be obstructed, decisions are delayed and, when they are taken, they meet frequent obstacles in the way of their implementation.

12. This weakening of the central functions of the Organization is symbolized by the deadlocks that characterize the proceedings of the Security Council. The unrestricted use of the veto continues to leave room for apprehension, particularly as no special diligence can be noted on the part of some permanent members of the Security Council to seek negotiated solutions for the delicate questions submitted to that body. It seems paradoxical that two apparently contradictory tendencies coexist on the world scene, namely, a relaxation of international tension, especially between the super-Powers, and a weakening of the collective security machinery of the United Nations.

13. Such deadlocks are found in almost all multilateral efforts in the field of international security, as can be seen from the deadlocks which over the years have dominated the negotiations for both disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and peace-keeping operations.

14. Stalemates in the political field are one aspect of the stratification that characterizes the present international structure. Perhaps only the advances made towards decolo-

nization allow us to discern a trend away from that stratification, a trend that holds out new possibilities for positive interrelations and for a more just international order.

15. We are living in an era marked by dissent and by the persistence of areas of international tension, as well as by the permanence of generalized conditions of underdevelopment. I do not now intend to list these areas of tension, but the eye is immediately caught by what is happening in Africa and in the Middle East.

16. Southern Africa, where racial oppression persists, is today not only seized with unrest and fear, but also devastated by violence and slaughter. In the face of recent events, the items now on our agenda concerning the problems that afflict that region have taken on unprecedented importance. Brazil has always been in favour of peaceful solutions for those problems and has always been convinced that there was no time to be lost in arriving at them. Our opinion, repeatedly stated over the years, was that, unless solutions were promptly reached, the region would be irresistibly drawn into open conflict. Unhappily, we have no reason to revise our diagnosis, but we should still like to believe that the unanimous international repudiation of the injustices committed will serve as a grave warning to those that consider it possible to continue to maintain racial oppression. It is our hope that the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, who still have not achieved their independence, may soon be able freely to exercise their true national will.

17. In the Middle East, alongside the Lebanese tragedy, which Brazil particularly regrets because of the ties of all kinds that we have with Lebanon, the same basic problems still exist, problems that have for years been challenging the political ability of the international community. The reactivation of these problems is a disquieting prospect, one that is always possible and always present.

18. The experience of the last few years confirms the widely shared perception that, in the absence of speedy and just solutions for regional conflicts or disputes, such disputes end up by acquiring a wider international character, thus disseminating to other regions and to the international system as a whole an unrest which was initially localized. Contrary to what might have been expected, the present situation of relative international strategic balance has not created favourable conditions for the prompt correction of those localized situations. The Brazilian delegation is convinced that, in dealing with these difficult issues, more intensive use should be made of the United Nations not only because the Organization offers the parties opportunities for negotiations but also because, among the principles of the Charter, there is one concerning the non-use of force or the threat of force in international relations.

19. Sadly, it is today considered commonplace to affirm that the disparity between the developed and the underdeveloped countries has become flagrantly unbearable and that it is urgent to negotiate concrete measures to correct it. Four sessions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD] have already been held and, ironically, not one but two decades have, one

after the other, been declared to be United Nations Development Decades. A variety of formats of negotiation have been attempted during that period. We have participated on the international level in case-by-case approaches; we have negotiated work programmes on different themes; we have been present at countless generic declarations. All those efforts have led to such scanty results that their paucity is now universally acknowledged.

20. There is increasing frustration, as much in practice as in theory, over the whole basic issue of international trade and the economic and social development of the less-developed countries. If we exclude the oil-producing countries from our analysis, we can see that the net transfer of capital from the developed areas to the less-developed ones is becoming a myth. In net terms, that flow may shortly run from south to north. And while the relative participation of the less-developed countries in world trade is dwindling, there is a disproportionate increase of their presence in generating the surplus that is accumulating in the balance of payments of the main world business partners.

21. All that is all the more surprising since it can be shown that if the financial transfers of the developed countries to the developing ones were directed into productive sectors, they would not detrimentally affect the possibilities for economic growth of the developed countries themselves. Studies prepared by experts of the United Nations show that if, as a hypothesis, the net flow of capital to non-oil-exporting developing countries reached in the next few years levels compatible with the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade—that is to say, an average rate of increase of the gross national product of at least 6 per cent—the income of the developed countries members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development would increase at a rate faster than the present one. Contrary to what superficial reasoning might lead one to believe, the effective implementation of measures designed to maintain the international buying power of the developing countries would not have a negative effect on the developed countries but would benefit them by increasing their income and their rate of employment. Moreover, it is possible to predict that this expansion would occur precisely in the less inflationary sectors of their economies.

22. The debate about the essence of the problem of under-development has lost its impetus, although attitudes persist that seem to wish to impute to the developing countries an alleged guilt for their conditions of economic backwardness. This determination of historical guilt lacks any practical sense and should not be used to avoid or postpone concrete negotiations, or to lead countries to fail to take more constructive stands in international economic negotiations. The so-called sterile confrontations have their origin precisely in the general frustration felt by the under-developed countries at the diplomatic immobility that such attitudes engender or stimulate.

23. To this negativism, founded on alleged reasons drawn from the past, there recently has been added another, this one addressed to futurological concerns. It is alleged that for ecological reasons the economic development of the under-developed countries of today is no longer practicable.

Now, the stagnation of the poorer areas of the globe cannot be the price to be paid to conserve the environment. What is really necessary is to proceed to a broad reorganization of the world economy so as to correct the acute disparities both in the distribution of the means of production and in the patterns of consumption. Invoking ecological motives in order to frustrate expectations for development would be a new and unacceptable form of domination that would meet with the opposition of all those peoples that have been subjected to colonialism and that, despite all the predications to the contrary, knew how to organize themselves politically in order to achieve their independence and to preserve it, as well as to struggle for their economic autonomy.

24. As this century draws to a close, the people of the world have a right to social and economic development, and it is a right they do not intend to give up.

25. The other face of the struggle for development is the increasing interdependence of States. Opening the general debate of last year's session of the General Assembly,¹ I had the opportunity to dwell on the distinction Brazil believes should be drawn between the present vertical interdependence—that is, one based on a rigid and discriminatory international stratification—and a desirable horizontal interdependence that would be founded on a legitimate community of interest and on equitable sharing of the world's wealth by all States.

26. Today I wish to add that the persistence of under-development, resulting as it does in the continued political and economic marginalization of most developing countries, will inevitably hold back the evolution of the process of interdependence of States itself.

27. It is especially disquieting to note that, although external trade may be more and more significant for the economy of developing countries as a whole, the share of these countries in the international flow of trade—the oil exporters naturally excluded—is less and less important in percentage terms. The great majority of developing countries is losing ground in the global exchange of goods and services, and what is more, even as suppliers of raw materials to developed countries, which more and more have taken to trading among themselves. If this trend continues, developing countries will be pushed farther and farther to the edges of the international economic system.

28. As a result, the integration of the world economy is being carried out at the cost of a radical disequilibrium that it is urgent to correct. It is unacceptable for the process of interdependence to continue indefinitely to accentuate exclusively the expansion of the strength of the great industrial centres, where the essential part of the world's technical and economic capacity is concentrated.

29. It is necessary to give a new meaning, more just and more open, to the dynamics of interdependence. The imbalance that distorts it must be speedily eliminated and the only way to do that which is consonant with the

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2355th meeting.*

general interest is to create international conditions for the real and not just the apparent overcoming of economic under-development. An essential facet of the joint efforts we should undertake along these lines is the narrowing of the technological gap, not only by transferring technology from north to south but also by establishing an international structure which will facilitate the production by developing countries of the technology they need.

30. An awareness of these new needs is, happily enough, being spread. There are those who think, however, that obsolescence of States will be the inevitable counterpart of the general process of interdependence. I do not think so. World economic integration cannot dispense with the role of States, which, far from being mere cartographic facts, reflect ineradicable political realities. On the contrary, for interdependence to continue on its course with a minimum of attrition and as a rational, consensual and harmonious process, it can only be based on the independence of States and on the gradual elimination of the economic disparities between them.

31. I have attempted to show that disequilibrium and disparities are not limited to the socio-economic field but also permeate the sphere of multilateral political negotiations. These disparities will remain as long as there is an unyielding conflict between development and under-development, as long as the transition from the latter to the former economic stage is obstructed by external factors, as long as here and in other forums impasses continue to impede operative understandings for the removal of international obstacles to development.

32. It is in this context that the United Nations must do more than simply reflect international reality; in fulfilment of the functions conferred upon it by the Charter, the United Nations must discharge a positive role in changing the present international structure. In spite of all the difficulties, Brazil still cherishes the hope that we can carry out this task by taking the path of comprehension and understanding among States, understanding and comprehension based on sovereign equality, on equity and mutual respect.

33. Mr. OLSZOWSKI (Poland):² Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the high office of President of the current, thirty-first, session of the General Assembly. We greet you as a representative of a country linked with Poland by relations of long-standing co-operation.

34. Considerable work was done by the previous, thirtieth, session of the General Assembly presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg, Mr. Gaston Thorn.

35. We are happy to welcome in our midst the Republic of Seychelles as a new Member of the United Nations.

36. We favour the prompt admission to the United Nations of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, which has paid dearly for its right to independent existence. This

² Mr. Olszowski spoke in Polish. The English version of his statement was supplied by the delegation.

State satisfies all the requirements for membership set out in the Charter and should take its rightful place in the United Nations family.

37. We also support the admission of the People's Republic of Angola to membership in our Organization.

38. Since the thirtieth session of the General Assembly further progress has been made in restructuring international relations on the basis of the principle of peaceful coexistence among States with different social systems. Poland, together with other States of our socialist community, is taking an active part in consolidating that positive trend through the expansion of bilateral relations, constructive participation in the work of the United Nations and other multilateral efforts aimed at the strengthening of international security, the ending of the arms race, the making of progress in disarmament, the removal of centres of tension and the expansion of all-round international co-operation. Such a policy is in conformity with the vital interests of our people as well as those of all the States and peoples of the world.

39. We attach great importance to the continuation of the Soviet-American dialogue, the results of which are of great significance for the maintenance of world peace. Particularly important in this latter respect are the talks on strategic arms limitation.

40. There is an ever-growing conviction that situations of conflict in the world of today have to be solved through negotiations. It is through discussions and negotiations, and not through increasing tensions in international relations, that we should seek solutions for the pressing problems of the modern world.

41. The network of agreements on bilateral and multilateral co-operation among States with different social systems is being expanded, thus forming a lasting foundation for peace. The climate of relations has improved, and there is growing understanding of the vital need to respect the interests of all parties.

42. On the European continent a start has been made on the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe signed by the leaders of 35 States of Europe, the United States and Canada in Helsinki on 1 August 1975. The 10 principles of inter-State relations embodied in the Final Act of that Conference are being consolidated to serve as a foundation of international relations. They are reflected in numerous agreements and statements covering different fields of international endeavour. They have also been reaffirmed in bilateral documents agreed to by Poland with France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Portugal and other countries.

43. The practice is taking shape of holding regular political consultations pertaining to bilateral relations as well as to matters of a regional and global nature. This is illustrated by numerous meetings at the highest level.

44. An important contribution to the easing of tensions in Europe has been made by the agreements concluded between the Polish People's Republic and the Federal

Republic of Germany during the recent visit to Bonn of Edward Gierak, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. Originating in the Treaty of 1970,³ the agreements have opened up a new phase in co-operation between the two countries.

45. We are witnessing a marked expansion of Poland's relations with the Nordic countries, as is shown, *inter alia*, by the very recent talks of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Poland and Iceland in Reykjavik. We evaluate highly the state of our relations with Finland, Denmark and Norway. We also count on the further expansion of Poland's traditionally fruitful co-operation with Sweden, our partner and neighbour across the Baltic.

46. The recommendations of the Helsinki Conference are gradually being carried out in different fields of international co-operation. Confidence-building measures, as recommended in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, are taking practical shape.

47. Full implementation of the Final Act ought to be the paramount and long-term objective of all its signatories. The results of the Conference have created a climate conducive to the adoption of all-European initiatives, furthering the continuation of the venture initiated in Helsinki. Of special importance is the Soviet initiative to convene all-European congresses devoted to such matters as the protection of the environment, transport and energy. This initiative harmoniously combines the strengthening of the climate of political co-operation with the solution of economic problems which are important for all European States and with the expansion of broad scientific contacts.

48. The socialist States have put forward a proposal designed to provide a solid basis for co-operation between the two big economic groupings of Europe and the respective members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance [CMEA] and the European Economic Community. We hope that, in accordance with that proposal, it will prove possible to begin business-like discussions and without undue delay conclude a relevant agreement. Also, co-operation in the field of culture and education is becoming ever broader in scope.

49. At the same time, bilateral relations, including those in the economic field, have become wider ranging and richer in content. Trade exchanges have increased. Of growing importance are agreements on co-operation in industry which, following the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, are becoming a significant stabilizing factor in economic relations. A notable role is played by agreements on scientific and technological co-operation. Yet, in order fully to ensure long-term and lasting foundations for the development of economic relations, there is a need to eliminate, wherever they still exist, limitations and barriers in international trade and to create further conditions for a growth of trade turnovers beneficial to all States.

50. As one of the signatories of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, Poland is determined to implement its

³ Treaty on the Bases for the Normalization of Relations, signed at Warsaw on 7 December 1970.

provisions consistently, and counts on a similar approach on the part of its partners.

51. There are reasons to believe that the Vienna talks on the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe will produce results which will take into account the security interests of the States concerned. Poland stands ready to take further joint action towards the prompt conclusion of an appropriate agreement.

52. We strongly believe, therefore, that we are fully justified in assuming that an historic break-through has taken place in relations among the States of Europe. There are realistic chances that these positive trends will embrace all the regions of the world.

53. We have studied with close attention the decisions of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries.⁴ We are particularly appreciative of the appeal of the Colombo Conference for

"the global relaxation of international tension and for the participation of all countries on an equal basis in the solution of international problems" [See A/31/197, annex I, para. 25].

By the same token, the strengthening of détente, and its extension, in all spheres of international relations, to all regions of the world, is in the interest of all States. Consequently, all States must adopt an active stance and be willing to come half way in considering different initiatives for strengthening peace and intensifying co-operation; they must regard the world as an organic community of the destinies of all mankind.

54. The progress of détente in the world is not automatic. It does not depend on objective conditions alone, but also on specific political actions by the forces which are jointly shaping international relations.

55. It is with concern that we are following the actions of those who are bent on reversing the course of history. In an attempt to increase tensions and step up the arms race, they are trying to undermine the process of détente, building up armaments, keeping tensions and conflicts alive, resorting to acts of aggression, discrimination, economic exploitation and interference in the internal affairs of States which are instituting progressive reforms. These circles and their objectives are served, *inter alia*, by a widely expanded apparatus of subversive propaganda, such as the so-called "Radio Free Europe" or "Radio Liberty". Their activity, representing as it does a flagrant interference in the domestic affairs of States, is contrary to the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation and universally accepted rules of international relations.

56. Developments in the Middle East, including the tragedy of Lebanon, pose a direct threat to peace. The only effective way to settle the problem is by the return to the Arab countries of the territories occupied by Israel in 1967 and by a comprehensive political settlement which would take due account of the interests and rights of all States and

⁴ Held at Colombo from 16 to 19 August 1976.

peoples of the region, including Israel, as well as the right of the Palestinian people to its own statehood.

57. The removal of dangerous tensions in Cyprus calls for the safeguarding of the independence and territorial integrity of the island and for solutions in conformity with United Nations resolutions.

58. We lend our support to the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to secure a peaceful and democratic unification of Korea and the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Korean peninsula.

59. The time has come, in keeping with United Nations resolutions, finally to put an end to the racist régimes in Namibia, Rhodesia and South Africa. The struggle of the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia for independence, the question of the liquidation of all the remnants of colonialism and the elimination of *apartheid* require the resolute support of the entire international community. The rationale of historical justice makes it compelling that the inalienable rights of the peoples of Namibia and Zimbabwe to their sovereign statehood be secured unconditionally and without delay.

60. The persecution of Chilean patriots by the Fascist régime gives rise to the strongest condemnation. We demand the immediate termination of terror and violence, which extend also beyond the frontiers of Chile.

61. Threats to the peaceful future of nations originate from lack of respect for the principles of peaceful coexistence. Violation of these principles leads to international conflicts. Poland, together with other socialist States and all the forces of peace, will act with perseverance for the removal of such threats, for the further improvement of the political climate and the creation of conditions favouring lasting security and co-operation among nations.

62. This determination to work consistently towards détente has found its expression in the resolutions of the Seventh Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party and in the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as well as in the documents of the Congresses of other communist and workers' parties of the socialist States.

63. There is every indication that among the important and urgent tasks of our Organization which first and foremost should attract our efforts is the question of eliminating the threat or use of force in international relations, ending the arms race and entering upon the road of disarmament.

64. The prohibition of the use of force has been embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, in numerous bilateral and multilateral international documents and in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The practice of international relations reveals, however, that further collective efforts are necessary to turn this principle into a universally binding and practically applicable rule of international law. All this in fact concerns the focal problem of our times: that of war and peace.

65. Putting an end to the arms race is the concern of peoples and the responsibility of Governments. The race is

continuing faster than ever and becoming more and more dangerous. It is imperative that the pace of disarmament efforts be harmonized with that of the processes of détente. Without concrete progress in the task of disarmament, the process of positive political transformation in the world may become inhibited or even suppressed. This cannot be allowed.

66. We welcome the elaboration by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament of a draft of an important convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques [*see A/31/27, annex I*]. This draft convention amply testifies to the existing feasibility of achieving progress in the field of disarmament. It also confirms the fact that the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which through its painstaking efforts has already brought about the conclusion of several important agreements, remains a valuable negotiating forum.

67. We have welcomed the Soviet-American Treaty of 28 May 1976 on limitation of underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. We hope that this Treaty will bring closer the prospect for a comprehensive test-ban treaty and will help in the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy for the benefit of man.

68. I should wish to draw the Assembly's special attention to the proposal concerning the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons [*see A/31/27*] as a most outstanding and far-sighted initiative. It is certainly by far easier to prevent the introduction of new weapons than to remove them from the already existing stockpiles. Here, too, negotiations can and should be accelerated. Hence, and taking into account the great significance of the problem for the international community, we propose that the General Assembly should call upon the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva to intensify the efforts already initiated with this end in view.

69. We wish to advance an analogous idea with regard to negotiations concerning the complete elimination of chemical weapons. Poland, as is known, was one of the authors of the draft convention on the matter. Speeding up work on the convention is a vital imperative.

70. We reaffirm in full our support for the proposal to convene a world disarmament conference with the participation of all States⁵ and declare ourselves in favour of initiating without delay concrete preparatory work to this end. Previous sessions of the General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions also supporting other disarmament proposals. The time is ripe to give the ideas contained in them the tangible form of international agreements.

71. We have often called attention in this forum to the inseparable relationship between strengthening détente and progress in disarmament, on the one hand, and the acceleration of the socio-economic development of all countries, on the other.

⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 97, document A/8491.

72. It is correctly assumed that in the world of today war and hunger are the most dangerous enemies of mankind. Peace, as the only foundation of development, is the *sine qua non* for their elimination.

73. By strengthening peace and security and consolidating the processes of détente, the international community is building a political infrastructure for the establishment of a new and just division of labour in the world economy.

74. What is involved here is the creation of conditions making it possible to implement all progressive and legitimate recommendations of recent important international conferences, particularly the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and the fourth session of UNCTAD. In performing the tasks stemming therefrom, we shall thus be reinforcing the material basis of peaceful coexistence and strengthening international security.

75. All interested States should participate in solving problems arising along the path towards the establishment of the new international economic order in the world economy. The solutions to be adopted have to take due account of the differences in their socio-economic systems as well as in the levels of their economic development. They ought to include the main flows of international economic relations and areas in those relations pertaining both to the developing countries and to east-west co-operation.

76. Within the United Nations system, Poland participates in the formulation of new principles and mechanisms to govern international economic relations. Allow me at this juncture to recall the significance of the resolution on the examination of long-term trends in the economic development of the regions of the world [*resolution 3508 (XXX)*], adopted on Poland's initiative at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly. We trust that the studies in question will reveal the growing interrelationships in the development of individual regions as well as new vistas for the acceleration and expansion of economic co-operation among all States.

77. The growing economic potential of Poland and of other members of CMEA favours the expansion of all-round international economic co-operation. This should develop ever more harmoniously, since any disruptions resulting from world market fluctuations and other impediments adversely affect the economic situation of individual countries. Therefore, Poland is vitally interested in the further stabilization of conditions for economic co-operation. Long-term agreements on economic, scientific and technological collaboration represent a valuable instrument in this regard.

78. My country attaches substantial importance to the work of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. Indeed, its success depends on a readiness to seek compromise solutions which would take proper account of the interests of all States and groups of States in such basic matters as the exploitation of the sea-bed, the status of the economic zone, fishing, and scientific research.

79. The issues of the contemporary world cannot be solved without creatively tackling questions of social progress and acute social problems, and especially without adopting measures to satisfy elementary human needs. That

is why Poland has put forward an initiative in the International Labour Organisation for the elaboration of an international convention on the universal right to work.

80. One of the important premises for the socio-economic progress of each country is that of cultural values which therefore, too, require special protection. As is known, Poland has made a proposal that this important topic be taken up by the United Nations.⁶ We welcome with appreciation the report on the subject submitted by the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [*A/31/111*], in accordance with resolution 3148 (XXVIII), concerning the initiation of a programme of studies in that field. We wish to propose that at the present session the General Assembly adopt a resolution recommending continuation of the studies.

81. It is not progress alone but the peaceful future of our globe as well that depends upon the upbringing of young generations. The importance of this question was eloquently stressed two years ago from this very rostrum by Edward Gierek, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party.⁷ This idea should never escape the attention of the United Nations.

82. Détente calls for persistent efforts by all States Members of our Organization. More concerted action is necessary to achieve its further progress. The first and foremost requirement is respect for the principles of peaceful co-operation between States and a renunciation of all action from a position of strength. This is, in fact, indispensable for equitable international co-operation and the progress of mankind.

83. The decisions that we are bound to take at the thirty-first session should contribute to the acceleration of the processes of détente in the world and to turning them into durable and universal phenomena. In the new international situation, circumstances are becoming more and more propitious for the United Nations to play its constructive and increasing role. But at the same time the Organization's tasks and responsibilities grow in scope.

84. Hence there is a need for a greater effectiveness of the Organization. May we again point out that the strengthening of the functioning of the United Nations does not lie in the revision of the Charter but in a fuller utilization of its provisions, especially with regard to actions for the consolidation of world peace and the establishment of more equitable economic relations and co-operation in the social area.

85. While on the subject of the role of the United Nations, I cannot fail to express our appreciative recognition of the activity of the Secretary-General, Mr. Waldheim, who spares neither diligence nor devotion in implementing the tasks of the Organization.

86. I wish to reiterate our assurance that Poland will continue its steadfast support for all the efforts of the United Nations, in consistency with its statutory purposes and principles.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Twenty-eighth Session, Annexes, agenda item 63, document A/9394, para. 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2264th meeting.

87. Mr. OREJA AGUIRRE (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to say a few words of farewell and a few words of welcome. My words of farewell are for the outgoing President of this Assembly, Mr. Thorn, whom I congratulate most cordially for the manner in which he has discharged his mission, during which he placed at the service of the United Nations all his generous energies, his political talents and his diplomatic abilities. My words of greeting are to welcome you, Mr. President, at the head of this General Assembly of the United Nations and to congratulate you, on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf, on your election to the presidency. The political training and experience that we know you to possess and that have been displayed on many occasions, most recently in your wise leadership of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, your brilliant record of diplomatic service and, finally, your outstanding personal qualities are a guarantee of wise direction and inspiration for the work that this Assembly is now beginning. At the same time I wish to extend my congratulations to the officers of the General Assembly in view of the distinction, fraught with heavy responsibilities, that has been conferred on them.

88. This Assembly, as a new proof of the universality of the Organization, has approved the admission to membership of the State of Seychelles. My Government warmly congratulates and welcomes it and we wish to maintain with it relations of friendship and co-operation in every field.

89. At this time I am particularly pleased to pay a tribute of admiration and gratitude to our Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, on the completion of the first period of his term of office in a post of such significance for peace and stability in the world. Mr. Waldheim has always been equal to the discharge of that heavy responsibility. It is thanks largely to him and to his competence, prudence and impartiality, that the United Nations has been able to face up to this particularly sensitive period of its history.

90. This is the first time that a Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Spain has addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations. My country is now going through a period of transformation of its internal organization which, because it is the will of the people of Spain, of the Government and of the Crown, will lead to the establishment of a democratic system based on the recognition of the principle of the sovereignty of the people.

91. Therefore at the beginning of my statement in this forum I cannot fail to mention that aim as, of necessity, it influences the plans and achievements of our foreign policy. The Spain which its people and Government desire must acquire a new image and discharge a greater role in the concert of nations.

92. It is our firm will, as our final objective, to make our national community more vigorous and united with all its characteristic diversity, and to combine freedom and diversity with order, and we are convinced that this community, a community which would offer that rare and constant unanimity in the understanding of its interests and to the subordination of its differences about which the Spanish writer Angel Ganivet spoke, would lead us to

greater participation in international affairs and allow our voice to be heard more clearly on all those grave problems which are of concern of the community of nations.

93. The Government of Spain is very much aware of the objective facts of the prevailing international state of affairs and the limitations imposed thereby. Spain, which belongs to a particular geographical area and has inherited cultural and historical ties, can today count on a certain potential that will enable it more readily to reconcile principles, interests and facts and to articulate and defend the permanent principles of the foreign policy of Spain effectively and with the utmost vigour:

94. This Organization, the United Nations, came into being with the triple purpose of saving "succeeding generations from the scourge of war", reaffirming "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person" and promoting "social progress and better standards of life". In substance, our common undertaking consists of defining new and more satisfactory margins of security, a security which will cease to bear the imprint of the alternatives in the distribution of balances and influences and will be based on the needs of mankind and on respect for his freedom and aspirations. In this fundamental task the Organization should have a double role. On the one hand, it should contribute to the standardization of rules of conduct which are generally accepted in the international community and adjust those rules to the needs of a pluralistic, changing, moving world. On the other hand, it should facilitate the collective legitimization of the expectations and aspirations of mankind at the cross-roads.

95. These ideas constitute for us a point of reference and an expression which should be the nucleus and nerve-centre of our efforts. The kind of security that had as its only objective the avoidance of war was always futile. Behind hostile conflicts, the symptoms of profound diseases, lie the unjust situations which provoke and feed them. We would be gravely mistaken in our actions if, in seeking security, we were not to combine the necessary maintenance of peace with effective implementation of, and true respect for, all human rights, the only solid foundation for a real peace, and with firm co-operation on a world-wide level, which would lessen injustices and shorten the distances between communities and individuals.

96. With regard to the maintenance of peace, Spain notes the existence of a positive fact: the three decades that have passed since the end of the Second World War have not witnessed any generalized conflict. Man in the 1970s has undoubtedly a deeper sense of security than in the 1950s or in the 1960s. The existence of this Organization has contributed to this, as has the dissuasive effect of a possible conflagration which, as it would of necessity be nuclear, would be cataclysmic.

97. All this is encompassed in one reality: the process of the polarization of world political forces, the formation of which Spain followed from afar, since we did not participate in the Second World War, and of which we were more a passive than an active witness. This polarization has swung from side to side in what we might call the great argument of modern times, oscillating according to the mood of the times and the rhythm of underlying tensions from the

initial dangers of the "cold war" to the improved methods of accommodation which we know as "détente".

98. That Spain which today I have the honour to represent does not wish to be, nor can it be, a mute witness to things that affect or may affect us very directly. We are European and Western by vocation and geography; we are part of the cultural and political family from which we derive our philosophy and to which our system of beliefs and values is related. We are aware of the existence of a divided world, and we have a limited hope in détente, because the more painful asperities of the cold war have given way to more bearable forms of coexistence; because, while ideological confrontation subsists, some means of possible co-operation and understanding have been opened up; and because, finally, this is perhaps the method most in accord with historical fact that we have found to keep the intensity of conflicts from resulting in armed encounters.

99. But a static consideration of détente runs the risk of undermining and eroding one of the essential functions of the United Nations—that of being an instrument of pacification in international life—because, basically, we must sincerely recognize that détente means nothing more than a more advanced stage of the former concept of the balance of power. In it elements subsist which we should like to see progressively banished from international relations: the division of the world into zones of influence, the maintenance and even the increase in level of armaments, and the persistence of armed conflicts in certain areas which are sometimes merely a concentration of tensions of a greater magnitude.

100. For Spain, a Mediterranean country, those open or concealed conflicts which today gravely jeopardize peace and stability in the *mare nostrum* are direct threats to the security of the region and, consequently, to world security. We give maximum priority to our concern with the objective of a prompt and satisfactory solution of the Middle East conflict on the necessary basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and with the inclusion of three equally necessary and interdependent elements: the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab territories; international recognition and guarantee of the frontiers of all the countries of the region; and recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people. We wish to believe that a negotiated solution to the conflict on these bases is not far off, although we must, with profound alarm, recall the dispute that has for months afflicted Lebanon and that has introduced new factors of uncertainty in the area, taking a very high toll of human lives.

101. In the Mediterranean we also recall the continuation of the crisis in Cyprus which, with the instability and suffering it brings, continues to be a serious threat to the sovereignty, integrity and independence of a State Member of this Organization.

102. In southern Africa, neglect of the basic obligations of the Charter has so far created circumstances of the utmost gravity. Peaceful coexistence between the countries of the area requires the elimination of any policy not based on the scrupulous respect of human rights. It is my hope that the important advance in the solution of the problem of Rhodesia, to which so much has been contributed by the

Secretary of State of the United States, will be consolidated by a process which will, without reservations or qualifications, establish the right of the peoples to self-government on the basis of the principle of majority rule while guaranteeing the rights of the minority.

Mr. Peacock (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

103. The persistence and multiplication of localized conventional conflicts have been one of the most dangerous characteristics of the international community in the present decade. Such conflicts are tolerated without thought and, sometimes, selfishly, as a lesser evil and a substitute for an irreversible nuclear confrontation. They nevertheless create a threatening dialectic of unforeseeable consequences; in turn, they are directly fostered by something that has ceased to be the natural activity of the military industry and has become an unbridled arms race. We cannot dissociate the idea of security from that of disarmament, nor envisage the indefinite maintenance of a paradoxically armed détente. In the precarious state in which we find ourselves, we are still obliged to recognize the need to maintain our respective arsenals in the conditions which each State considers sufficient for the defence of its immediate security. We believe, nevertheless, that this trend should be radically altered, as soon as possible and with the decisive participation of the United Nations.

104. The bilateral or multilateral efforts which are being made, even though we recognize that the results are limited for the time being, deserve our full attention and support. But, since those efforts are restricted as regards the number of the negotiators, they can never replace the general conference that should be held under United Nations auspices before 1980—as was recently proposed at the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Colombo—to establish basic principles and make commitments so as to pave the way for substantive negotiations on general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

105. On the other hand, along the way to security, Spain believes in the need to strengthen security systems at the regional level. That is why we actively participated in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and intend to continue that participation with renewed effort at all its later meetings. Therein we find the beginnings of a negotiation to replace confrontation and a unitary concept of security which covers all aspects of that term.

106. While the maintenance of peace constitutes one aspect of security, another essential element is human rights. Ultimately, the last beneficiary of security is man himself. But man today, in large sectors of our world, suffers from a wounded dignity and an insufficient recognition of his human rights. United Nations bodies, in conformity with the purpose of the establishment of the Organization, have not faltered in their mission to promote and favour the universal enjoyment of those rights, in the conviction that it is only by guaranteeing the effective exercise of those rights that it will be possible to build peace and stability among nations on indestructible foundations. The Government of Spain has endorsed those purposes and, as its representative, tomorrow I shall sign

the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966. With that act the Government of Spain wishes to express its firm will to make respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms a corner-stone of its domestic and foreign policy.

107. Today more than ever firm action is needed for the defence and international furtherance of human rights, and for this task the universal community of nations, embodied in this Organization, will always have the favour, support and endorsement of Spain. The international order is undergoing an accelerated process of humanization and in this we see one of the most promising signs of change and transformation in our universe.

108. An intolerable kind of violation of human rights in our time is terrorism, which disregards even the innocent victims and constitutes not only an attack on human rights but also a threat to the sovereignty of States by subjecting them to unacceptable blackmail and pressures. It is urgent for the international community to undertake co-ordinated action to prevent those deeds and to eliminate their causes. My delegation will support every initiative for creating appropriate international instruments and for achieving that purpose.

109. Finally, within this chapter on human rights, I should like to mention the problems entailed in emigration, where human and family considerations are so interlinked with social, economic and labour factors. Here one premise must clearly prevail: everything must be subordinated to the dignity of the emigrant as a human being. It would be a grave threat to that dignity to consider the labour of the emigrant as mere merchandise subject to the fluctuations of the law of supply and demand of international labour. It is precisely in these moments of world-wide economic and labour crisis when the international community must most of all guarantee the emigrant's right to security and stability of labour.

110. I stated at the beginning of my statement that together with peace and respect for human rights it is essential to achieve meaningful international co-operation.

111. It can quite rightly be affirmed that co-operation is the infrastructure of security, an affirmation which in our times acquires its full significance when we view the profound crisis which the world economic order is undergoing. But in the course of the last 12 months some significant events have taken place, which Spain cannot fail to mention, in world economic relations and, more particularly, with respect to the new courses of co-operation which have been opened up by the dialogue with the developing countries.

112. Starting with the seventh special session in September last year and because of the general recognition of the fact that growth of the world economy cannot continue to render more acute the imbalance between the industrialized and the developing countries without endangering international peace and security, it has been possible to lay down more sincere conditions for continued dialogue, a dialogue which must start with the need to build a new economic order on the basis of the requirements of

international co-operation so that the concept of sovereignty may be reconciled with the urgent needs of an interdependent world.

113. The elements of the new dialogue and the reasons for hope should not, however, cause us to forget the immediate state of affairs. We have not yet completely overcome the effects of the major depression which the world economy has suffered since the end of 1973. Economic and social progress, which is one of the principal objectives of this Organization, today requires a global approach which can only be achieved by concerned action on the part of all institutions of the United Nations system.

114. In this spirit, Spain, clearly aware of its role as a country in the process of economic development, although we have been very gravely affected by the consequences of the crisis, is participating in the Conference on International Economic Co-operation in Paris. That Conference, with all its limitations, must be regarded as a step forward in the joint consideration of world problems in the fields of economics and co-operation, so long as its agreements can later be endorsed in universal forums and implemented by the international community.

115. Along these lines and quite apart from any evaluation of the results of the fourth session of UNCTAD, which this Assembly will take up, my Government wishes here to repeat its support for the declaration made on the occasion of the closure of UNCTAD by 16 European countries, including Spain,⁸ a declaration which, in my opinion, represents a milestone of paramount importance by recognizing the need for an integrated study of the subject of raw materials so as to put that subject in its right place in the new international economic order.

116. My Government realizes and acquiesces in the vast universal importance of this new co-operation and we are prepared to participate in it in every forum to the best of our ability. Urgent needs persist, and among them is the need for assistance for development channelled through the United Nations. In this respect we hope that the steps taken for the establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development will prove positive. Spain has already announced its intention of contributing to that Fund.

117. It has been a matter of special satisfaction for my Government to sign the Barcelona Convention,⁹ which started a genuine plan of action with specific regional application to combat the pollution of the environment in the Mediterranean area. My Government considers that a regional approach to this problem can very effectively assist in solving the problems of the environment at a world-wide level.

118. My Government is also pleased with the establishment of the World Tourism Organization, which, by decision of its members, has established its headquarters in Madrid. In expressing our satisfaction at that decision and in expressing our appreciation for the confidence placed in our country as the headquarters of that Organization, I

⁸ See document TD/217, annex VIII.

⁹ Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution, done at Barcelona on 16 February 1976.

wish to repeat the firm willingness of my Government to offer its knowledge of the subject and its complete co-operation for the solution of the problems of world tourism.

119. My Government also intends to participate actively in the international conference on debt to be held at the beginning of 1977. The question of debt-financing is particularly acute for solving the financial problems of the developing countries, and unless we arrive at a formulation in principle that could be of general application, all those countries will encounter an overwhelming obstacle in their struggle for economic improvement.

120. Spain, which is a maritime country *par excellence* and which has national interests to protect, attaches the utmost importance to the success of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which has just concluded its fifth session and has scheduled another session for May and June of next year. It is our hope that the Conference will be able to draft a treaty on the multiple and complex aspects of the law of the sea, which will duly take into account the genuine and legitimate interests of the various States, and consequently will be generally accepted. We trust that at the next session it will be possible to overcome existing difficulties and that there will be a genuine spirit of negotiation and co-operation. I can assure Mr. Amerasinghe—and at this point I address him also as President of the Conference on the Law of the Sea—that the delegation of Spain will always be ready to co-operate with him.

121. While Spain understands and acquiesces in the need for effective international co-operation, at the same time it recognizes and nurtures, as a particular and constant guideline of its foreign policy, the special links between Spain and the Iberian-American republics. As we see it, the fact that we belong to Europe, in the unification of which we wish to take part, does not exclude those strong ties; indeed we would cut ourselves off from Europe if we did not actively and consciously consider it an important part of our European task to contribute to a better European understanding of Iberian-American affairs. Spain believes that it understands those affairs because it feels solidarity with those countries as with its family; and we think that we can bring other countries not so circumstanced to a greater understanding of them. My country does not claim that it would take on functions to which it has not been called, nor offer services that have not been requested, but nor can it forget its own history and family ties. That is why I should like to say, for what it may be worth for better understanding between these two great regions of the world, that in every possible dialogue between Iberian-America and Europe, Spain, which continues to be European, will never cease to be Iberian-American as well.

122. In this policy of solidarity with Iberian-America, my country considers it essential to make a cultural synthesis of our affairs, without losing sight of our wealth of differences, to intensify the necessary and vital transfer of technology and to seek a satisfactory readjustment of the terms of trade. Spain commits itself to endeavouring to attain these goals.

123. Lastly, in the same policy of solidarity, we are pleased at the prospects opened by the declaration on the

Panama Canal which was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States at its sixth regular session held in Santiago, Chile, from 4 to 18 June 1976. The course of bilateral negotiations on this matter, as well as in regard to Belize, leads us to expect fruitful results, for which we fervently hope. The same holds true for the problem of the Malvinas Islands. In all these cases, I hope that our Iberian-American brothers realize that Spain is always with them.

124. We are likewise committed to friendship with the Arab peoples. Our support for the just causes of the Arab nation remains unalterable, and I am pleased to proclaim it so today. Our cultural links and the fund of friendship and mutual understanding show us the political ways and means and plans of co-operation which are called for today.

125. One subject which has been considered as a priority by this Organization and to which I shall devote a few comments is decolonization. Spain, which in former times extended its political action over the entire world, has brought to an end its history as a colonial Power, reversing a process which was started in past centuries. Freed from that responsibility inherited from history, we have this year for the last time transmitted information to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as prescribed in Article 73 of the Charter, in our capacity as an administering Power of a Non-Self-Governing Territory for the period ending on 26 February 1976. On that date we officially communicated to the Secretary-General the information that Spain had ceased all its international obligations with respect to the Sahara [A/31/56]¹⁰. The General Assembly had already taken note of this when it adopted resolution 3458 B (XXX). Stability in that geographical area and the achievement of forms of co-operation in the Maghreb, which would do so much to promote the well-being and development of the peoples of the region is of general interest.

126. Decolonization has been one of the major achievements of the United Nations and it is perhaps the outstanding event of international life in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, remnants of colonialism continue to exist; the flagrant example of Gibraltar represents a breach of the territorial integrity of my country. I wish here to recall the words of His Majesty the King of Spain when, in the first message from the Crown, he fully espoused that cause, recalling that for generations we Spaniards have struggled to restore the territorial integrity of our country.

127. The perpetuation of this colonial situation, supposedly in accordance with the wishes of a population to which Spain, through Great Britain, has repeatedly offered every kind of guarantee of their legitimate interests, is so preposterous and artificial, at a time when realism and goodwill are resolving far more difficult problems, that it is essential and urgent for Great Britain and Spain in the near future to find a way to re-establish the unity and territorial integrity of Spain. That this can be done without forgetting the legitimate interests of the residents of the area is something that Spain abundantly demonstrated by making generous proposals for a solution to the British Govern-

¹⁰ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1976*, document S/11997.

ment, 10 years ago now, proposals which were never seriously taken into account and which Spain is at all times ready to reformulate in terms of the present circumstances.

128. I shall not here repeat the history of the consideration of this item at the United Nations, a history which owes so much to the exemplary figure of one of my predecessors in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fernando María Castiella. I merely wish to point out that the relevant resolutions of successive General Assemblies urging negotiations for the definitive settlement of this colonial problem have not yet been put into practice. The Government of Spain has been and is always prepared to begin these negotiations and to find a means for the solution of the problem.

129. I shall now conclude with a few considerations on this Organization, which, with difficulties and contradictions, with limitations and doubts, has for three decades discharged an essential and valuable negotiating and pacifying function in the international community. For this function to attain its greatest dimensions and to fulfil its potential, it is essential that all Members realize the historic mission incumbent on them to improve the United Nations mechanism. I shall not go into the details of some items which will duly be dealt with by the various Committees, but I wish to reaffirm the determined will of the Government of Spain to participate fully in this effort at renewal, whether it is the important task of the Charter review, that of strengthening the role of the Security Council in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 2734 (XXV), that of the establishment of a system of permanent vigilance over peace or that of establishing, within the Economic and Social Council, a permanent world economic commission.

130. But the improvement and institutional updating of the United Nations will not in itself suffice to allow the Organization to discharge the functions incumbent on it in the world of today. It is necessary that there be an energetic political will among the Member States to overcome what the Secretary-General described as the old systems of conduct, which tend to place the United Nations at the service of particular and incidental policies of Governments. Only in this way will we be able to create the dynamic instrument of institutionalized co-operation which the world needs.

131. The President of this session of the General Assembly may rest assured that the co-operation of Spain in the pursuit of all these lofty purposes will never be found wanting, so that this thirty-first session of the General Assembly may constitute an important step forward along the path this Organization is following for the common good of the international community.

132. Mr. LIEVANO (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is a matter of great good fortune that the deliberations of this session of the General Assembly are being presided over by Mr. Amerasinghe, who represents his country, Sri Lanka, with singular authority. His outstanding human and intellectual qualities, as well as his brilliant performance at international conferences, have earned him the respect of the world community. We are delighted at being presided over by a distinguished personality from

Asia, a continent whose ancient cultures have bequeathed us a legacy of wisdom and spiritual serenity, so necessary at a time like ours when mankind is drawing near the disasters it has been approaching—even calling into question the survival of the species—because of the ever more marked imbalance between material progress and the slow progress of the spiritual values which bind men together in every great civilization.

Mr. Amerasinghe (Sri Lanka) resumed the Chair.

133. We are pleased also to take note of the admission of the Republic of Seychelles as a State Member of this Organization.

134. Since the last session of the United Nations General Assembly there has been no change in the negative image of this Organization in the press and other communications media of the great Powers. What these media organizations have failed to mention, however, is that while there have been an increasing number of confrontations in international forums, such confrontations have not been exclusively a mark of United Nations conferences. Internal tensions in the world community have become more acute in many critical areas because of the absence of serious efforts to create a more balanced international order or because these efforts, when they have been made, have not enjoyed effective support from nations that are primarily responsible for maintaining peace. International institutions, like national institutions, have only a limited capacity for establishing coexistence when applied to human groups or State entities between which there persist unresolved causes of discord.

135. Some people think that the United Nations enjoyed a golden age in its first few decades but that in recent years the Organization has entered into a period of inevitable decadence attributable to the influence exercised on it by new countries which until recently were only allowed scant participation in international affairs. That idea stems from a conception of world politics in which it was assumed, with unfounded optimism, that power relations and economic relations, as they existed in the world before the war, were satisfactory and that all that was needed was to remove the threat of totalitarian régimes for the existing civilization and international order to fulfil the aspirations of the peoples. It was assumed that the democratic machinery which in the victorious nations had determined the nature of the States and the distribution of wealth would result in beneficial effects for the entire international community.

136. But that was not the case. What some nostalgically considered to be the golden age of this Organization was in fact a time when relations of dependence and unequal distribution of wealth in the world were not properly examined; nor was there any serious insistence on the fulfilment of promises made during the difficult years of the war with regard to a new order. It was a time when the Organization served to strengthen alliances and blocs among countries, which led to the tense atmosphere of the cold war and to ferocious localized wars in various parts of the planet. At that time the press and other communications media in the great Powers were unstinting in their praise of those who had conceived an organization which was so superior—so they said—to the League of Nations of Geneva.

At that time, no objections were raised in the budget departments of those Powers to the prompt payment of their assessments.

137. But that situation could not last. The legacy of inequality was like a millstone fastened to the established order and could hardly be institutionalized with the help of the United Nations. The massive economic and social transformations in the past few years have been and are reflected in bitter confrontations in world forums, but this cannot be attributed exclusively to the immaturity of young nations nor to their limited familiarity with the machinery of compromise, which for centuries had been the pride of nations that have designed institutional systems to facilitate and create broad domestic consensus on their fundamental problems.

138. If controversy in international organizations, in which for years the great Powers were the leading protagonists, has increasingly come to be replaced by radical antagonisms, with such unexpected and of course discomfiting guests as the new developing nations, this is a result of the fact that the advanced countries of the world were determined to preserve the excessive advantages they enjoyed under the established order, even though the premises which had served as the basis for that order since its very origins had disappeared; and these origins did not go so far back as to constitute the kind of legal precedent to which so much value is attached in systems of law based on tradition rather than written norms.

139. In the past, the construction of an international order was the result of the efforts of statesmen to achieve a relative balance between the ambitions and interests of the great Powers of the time. The duration of that order was subject to the maintenance of this balance by the exclusion of new Powers or outsiders that might disturb it.

140. In the contemporary world there has been an unsuccessful attempt to revive the old models of international order based exclusively upon the agreement of the great Powers. The failure of such efforts results from the impact caused by the concerted action of weak and traditionally poor countries whose participation is now essential if we want to invest the international order with the legitimacy that comes from longevity and stability. Today the world is undergoing a crisis created by the vacuum that has in turn been created by the absence of a consensus expressing the aspirations of the international community as a whole.

141. It is therefore understandable that it was only recently that some statesmen of foresight in nations which bear some responsibility for the maintenance of peace initiated a slight change of course in the foreign policies of their countries. Those who acted in this way knew that peace and concord cannot be decreed, nor imposed solely by power, but result from a delicate balance which can be achieved only when aspirations which genuinely reflect the aims and variety of interests of an era form part of the international order. This fruitful endeavour, which has been the achievement of great leaders of history whose names are indelibly printed on long periods of peace, is not an easy one to consummate. Furthermore, those who attempt it as a rule have to cope with the opposition of their fellow

citizens, who often fail to understand the need to make concessions or to renounce the use and abuse of the advantages and prerogatives of power and wealth.

142. Our era is not exceptional in terms of the recurrence of a phenomenon, familiar because it has appeared with similar characteristics in other periods of profound crisis. Hence the statesmen of the great Powers who have made an effort to approach with sympathy the possibility of building a world order which will not mean putting new labels on old inequalities have been the object of furious opposition in their own countries. The ancient Chinese saying, uttered as a curse, might well have been spoken against them: "May you live in an interesting age."

143. The growing indifference of affluent societies to world problems reflects the desire of increasingly broad sectors of their populations to enjoy their prosperity to the utmost while attaching ever less importance to international problems. That indifference has significantly influenced those societies to strive to reduce the attributes of executive or administrative offices whose orientation in foreign as well as domestic policies they view as an impediment to unlimited enjoyment by their citizens and voters of the good life, which the abundant resources and technology of their countries permit.

144. It would be wrong not to recognize this development if we remember that it is the broadening of the executive powers of administration which for some decades now has enabled affluent societies to fight the domestic concentration of wealth and to impose mechanisms for its more equitable distribution. What can the world and the underdeveloped countries expect in the future if, in their dialogue with the highly industrialized nations, they will not be dealing with the type of Governments which, because they were able to do so, imposed some discipline on the major private powers in their economies, on their monopolies, their labour and trade-union organizations and their transnational communication empires, but will instead be dealing with internally weakened Governments, Governments therefore fearful of those power groups? The latter, as though in a post-industrial state of feudalism, will gradually fill the vacuum left by an administration devoid of strength, devoid of the capacity to take decisions, which is essential to reduce the inequalities which exist and are becoming greater in the international community. This new international isolationism, masquerading as democratic or moral concern, and the institutionalization of the weakening of governmental authority in affluent nations are not a happy augury for the future. They would appear to be an attempt to preserve in the world an anonymous imperial power fragmented into private pressure groups free of the burden of responsibility which all power entails.

145. The fact that this is happening arises from the belief still prevailing in affluent societies that their prosperity and well-being are exclusively the result of the intelligence and superiority of their peoples. And because of that belief they refuse to analyse the extent to which the prosperity and extravagance so characteristic of their economic organization have depended and still depend on an income distribution governed by a world market that is influenced by power mechanisms or by monopolistic systems on an international level which have enabled them to retain the

surpluses generated by the marketing of the products of developing countries at low prices.

146. It is not compatible with the aspiration to create more stable conditions in the world for the major consumer countries to respond to the well-intentioned attempts of developing countries to reach agreements between producers and consumers of raw materials with indifference or hostility and then for them to feel that there is aggression against them and to proclaim that the world economy is in danger when producers of raw materials join forces to defend their incomes.

147. One of the beneficial effects of the rise in oil prices, which in affluent societies is known as the energy crisis, was to bring out into the open the very high degree to which the standard of living of affluent societies is linked to the low prices of the export products of the developing countries. This experience has already unleashed a chain reaction and will inevitably lead to a search for new patterns of balance in the economic relations of the world.

148. We are not unaware that among the great Powers the idea is gaining ground that it has become unjustifiable to maintain the level of foreign-aid funds of the past few decades for developing peoples. Nor are we unaware that it is thought that such funds could be better used for transforming the suburbs of their cities; for the education of their young or their war veterans; for medical and hospital services for their citizens; for increasing unemployment benefits; for improving police forces; for the treatment of delinquents or drug addicts; for protecting their parks; for adequately equipping their libraries or museums and for maintaining a level of conspicuous consumption which does not correspond with man's spontaneous needs but is promoted by a vast advertising community which is frantically attempting to create artificial needs, thus encouraging the squandering of the scarce resources of this planet.

149. It is not for us, of course, to challenge the right of affluent societies to allocate their surplus funds for the improvement of the quality of life of their citizens and to encourage unnecessary consumption rather than to cooperate in lessening the alarming economic inequalities which exist on a world-wide scale. But it is our hope that, similarly, without any show of surprise, it will be recognized that we enjoy an identical right to organize ourselves in order to defend the proper remuneration for our exports so that income therefrom will permit us to remedy the consequences of backwardness, make the subhuman life in our suburbs more bearable, prevent the deterioration of our environment, lower the illiteracy rates of our populations, close the gap between the rural and the urban populations, create medical and hospital services in order to eradicate diseases caused by malnutrition and endemic sickness, provide jobs for the unemployed, and protect ourselves from the Mafias which finance the traffic in drugs from the territories of the great Powers and with that traffic export to us all the home-grown means of corruption. And, on the subject of international trade, we also trust that they will not invoke the so-called comparative advantages when seeking to ensure a market for the highly effective products of the industrialized nations, while regressing, at the same time, to the crudest protectionism

when it comes to safeguarding the interests of their economic enterprises which, because they are inefficient or obsolete, cannot compete with exports from developing countries.

150. Events of the last decades indicate that there cannot be an indefinite postponement of a new international division of labour more in keeping with realities of the day. This new division must be organized in such a way that the developed nations, which have a complex and highly sophisticated technology, take some steps towards opening their markets not only to raw materials or tropical products but also to the manufactured products of those countries which have already embarked upon the initial stages of industrialization. This will contribute to increasing and balancing world trade and will strengthen a more equitable and desirable type of economic relations between the north and south on our planet. The nature of these relations and the adjustments it will be necessary to make in their traditional standards will be the major theme of international policy in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

151. This vast transformation will imply concessions and responsibilities on both sides; it will require prudence and wisdom on the part of the leaders of the affluent nations and the peoples in the process of modernization. Just as it would be reprehensible for great nations to abuse their power so as to impose solutions which are inordinately in their favour—such abuses would tarnish their image and lessen their options to defend peacefully their legitimate interests—so it would be, and is, equally reprehensible to follow the undesirable practice of debating political items, the natural forum for which is this Assembly, at conferences of the specialized agencies, to the grave detriment of the services which the United Nations renders, and should render, to Member states. The same criticism can be applied to acts of violence and terrorism which jeopardize the lives of innocent third persons and are frequently carried out in the name of the right of peoples to fight for their independence. Terrorism invites the repudiation of world opinion and brings about a loss of prestige for the cause which those who use terrorism as a political weapon claim to defend. This is already happening. A formula for co-operation between Governments and the United Nations must be found so as to seek out and punish those who perpetrate acts of violence and piracy, and who, by means of terror, threaten the fundamental freedoms of human beings for the purpose of demanding of States that they violate their own laws.

152. There is likewise an urgent need for a specific legal definition of outer space and of geo-stationary space communications, because recent experience and foreseeable developments within the next few years have brought to light glaring gaps and omissions in the conventions in force on the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. These conventions fail to take into account, for example, the use of outer space for profit; and nothing at all is said about the legal and physically immutable existence of the segments of the synchronic geo-stationary orbit which generate rights by reason of being permanently situated within the territorial airspace of several equatorial countries Members of the United Nations. Such is the case of Colombia, which lies between 70 and 75 degrees west of Greenwich.

153. My country does not object to free orbital and communications transit as required for the devices envisaged in and authorized by the International Telecommunications Convention, as long as those devices traverse the territorial airspace in a gravitational flight from a practicable height. But we make a clear exception in the case of devices which it might be intended to establish as fixtures on the segment of our own synchronic geostationary orbit.

154. As Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, I am pleased to state to you my confidence that the deliberations of this Assembly will result in effective progress in the difficult task of arriving at compromises which will not mistakenly underrate the legitimate hopes of the pauperized masses of the world, on whose discontent no lasting international order can be built. The concessions essential to a consolidation of the legitimacy of a new world order must be granted, to a large extent, by the nations in which wealth has been accumulated through the ages, and not by peoples whose resources have been ill rewarded for centuries, with the result that prosperity and well-being have been concentrated in limited areas of our planet.

155. As representative of my country in a forum that has gained such prestige from the learned words of so many eminent personalities, I am bound to express the hope of my fellow citizens that the antagonisms which today seriously divide the international community will find peaceful solutions in channels constituted by the norms of law which give form to the Charter of the United Nations. Let us at any rate remember that we are not living in an age of calm when historical time passes with soothing evenness; in our day, time flows like those large tropical rivers whose currents become impetuous and devastating as they approach the cataract.

156. Mr. ARYAL (Nepal): Mr. President, first of all I should like to convey to you and, through you, to the representatives gathered here the greetings and best wishes of my Sovereign His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev for the success of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

157. Let me associate myself, Mr. President, with the sentiments expressed by various speakers in extending to you our sincere congratulations on your election to the high office of the presidency of this session. The Assembly, in electing you as the President, has bestowed a fitting recognition and honour upon you as a distinguished diplomat and statesman of a great Asian country, Sri Lanka. The vast knowledge and experience you have gained in your distinguished career will undoubtedly contribute to the success of this session. May I extend, on behalf of my delegation, assurances of our full co-operation with you in the discharge of that heavy responsibility of which you and all of us are so well aware.

158. Mr. President, just a month ago your beautiful island country had the honour of acting as host to the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries. We still vividly recall the success of the Conference and, also, the warm hospitality accorded to us by the Government and people of Sri Lanka, with whom we have close and cordial relations. We shall cherish for a

long time to come the attitude of understanding and co-operation shown to us by your Government at the Conference.

159. I also take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for the services rendered by your distinguished predecessor, the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, Mr. Gaston Thorn, who discharged his functions as President of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly in a most exemplary manner.

160. My delegation is happy to welcome the Republic of Seychelles in our midst as an independent and sovereign country. The admission of Seychelles to the United Nations is a positive step towards the attainment of the principle of universality of this Organization. This clearly manifests the decline of colonialism and also indicates the principle of the equality of nations.

161. We welcome the reunification of Viet Nam. My delegation is confident that the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam will soon find its rightful place in this world Organization and play a dynamic role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

162. Every year we gather in this Assembly to review and seek solutions to major world problems. Positive and satisfactory developments have taken place in certain parts of the world, but by and large we are still confronted by the same old issues and problems which have taken most of the time of our debate. The situation in the Middle East remains critical; *apartheid* and racial discrimination still endure in southern Africa; and the arms build-up seems to be the main preoccupation of the major Powers. Among other issues, the questions of Korea and of Cyprus remain to be solved. The problem of the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor countries remains as acute as ever and more pressing than before.

163. As a peace-loving nation, Nepal is deeply concerned over the situation in the Middle East, which remains explosive. Nepal is of the firm belief that any problem or dispute, given goodwill and co-operation between the parties involved in the crisis, can be peacefully solved through constructive dialogue and negotiations. But peace will not prevail in the Middle East so long as Israel continues to occupy forcibly and illegally Arab lands. We plead once again, as we have done in the past, for the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied since 1967. It is equally important that Israel cease all its activities which relate to demographic change in the occupied territory. In my delegation's view, any solution leading to a settlement of the Middle East problem must take into consideration the national rights of the Palestinian people, especially their right to create a homeland of their own. Furthermore, a just solution of the Middle East problem must ensure the right of every State in the region, including the State of Israel, to live within secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

164. At present, the worst form of chaos, turmoil and war prevails in Lebanon, a small non-aligned country at one time peaceful and beautiful. For more than a year the people of Lebanon have been deprived of peace and tranquillity. My delegation wishes to express our profound

sympathy to the people of Lebanon for the sufferings that have been their lot through no fault of their own. My delegation strongly feels that Lebanon should be left free to decide its own destiny.

165. Phenomenal progress has been made in the field of decolonization, but the last remnants of colonialism, oppression and racial discrimination still subsist in southern Africa. The South African régime is making every effort to convince the international community that it is undertaking reforms in South Africa, that it is keen for a settlement in Zimbabwe and that it is leading Namibia to independence soon. The so-called reforms in South Africa have so far proved to be more propaganda on the part of the racist régime to divert world opinion from the struggles of the majority black people for self-determination and independence. The racist régime is not only denying fundamental rights to the majority black people, in contravention of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, but is also trying to accelerate the fragmentation of the international Territory of Namibia into so-called "Bantu homelands" in defiance of the decision of the International Court of Justice.¹¹

166. The decision of the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session to bar the South African delegation from participating in the work of the Assembly was motivated by the desire that the Pretoria régime should come to understand and appreciate the basic values of human life, and thus terminate its heinous policy of *apartheid*. But the recent killings at Soweto and at other black townships in South Africa clearly indicate that the South African régime is not yet willing to abandon its inhuman policy of *apartheid* and racial discrimination. The decision of South Africa to grant so-called independence to Transkei is nothing but "eyewash" and only serves to perpetuate the political domination of the racist régime.

167. In Zimbabwe, the racist minority régime continues, in spite of its promises for constitutional reforms, to resort to ruthless oppression, repression and exploitation of the indigenous people. My country has always supported and will continue to support the people of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe who are waging just and legitimate struggles for equality, freedom and national independence. Furthermore, we welcome any constructive effort that may help attain the legitimate aspirations of the majority people of southern Africa.

168. The situation in Cyprus remains as grave as ever. Cyprus, a small non-aligned country, still endures the consequences of foreign intervention. The cessation of all foreign interference and the withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from Cyprus are vital if constructive dialogue is to take place between the two Cypriot communities. Nepal firmly supports and respects the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of the Republic of Cyprus. Thus, as in the past, we will continue to reject the notion of a State within a State. However, the continuing stalemate in Cyprus indicates that no genuine

efforts are being made by the parties involved in the dispute to solve the Cyprus problem. We appeal to the two Cypriot communities to forget their minor differences and resume negotiations once again with a view to finding a just solution to this problem.

169. Nepal supports the reunification of more than 50 million Korean people in a single nation. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea are the principal parties to this problem, and we believe that reunification should be peacefully achieved through the efforts and agreement of the parties concerned. The international community should encourage them to resume negotiations to that end.

170. It is encouraging to note that some progress has been made in the field of disarmament, but, unfortunately, the arms build-up continues to proceed at an alarming rate. My country continues to express its deep concern over the stockpiling of nuclear weapons. As a peace-loving nation, we also oppose all proliferation of nuclear weapons and their testing in all environments. My country believes that a comprehensive test ban is the principal step towards nuclear disarmament. Hence, we appeal to the nuclear-weapon States to resume negotiations in good faith and without further delay on a comprehensive test-ban agreement.

171. Billions and billions of dollars are spent annually on discovering new types of sophisticated nuclear weapons. We feel that, in view of the deteriorating condition of the world economy, the nuclear-weapon States should channel part of their armaments budget to assistance to developing countries. Such a step would not only improve the economy of the developing countries but also create a favourable atmosphere for international peace and security.

172. We find that nuclear arms proliferation is no longer limited to the major Powers. There are also emerging Powers which have the capability of developing nuclear arms and are keen to acquire sophisticated nuclear weapons. The arms build-up has been the major concern of all peace-loving countries, and therefore my delegation feels that a world disarmament conference should be held under the auspices of the United Nations as early as possible.

173. Let me take this opportunity once again to reiterate my delegation's support for General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), regarding the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. Our continued support for that declaration is based on our desire for peace and stability in that sensitive area. We hope that all possible efforts will be made to implement the declaration as early as possible.

174. Similarly, my delegation considers that the proposal of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations for a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality is a constructive effort towards the strengthening of the peace, stability and development of the South-East Asian region. We fully and strongly support this effort. My own country has offered itself as a zone of peace, and this has been clearly reflected in several addresses and speeches by His Majesty the King of Nepal. Recently during the Fifth Conference in Colombo, His Majesty King Birendra made the following observations:

"In February last year, I made the proposition that Nepal be declared a zone of peace. This proposition

¹¹ *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970), Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 1971, p. 16.*

implies a desire, on our part, to look for a permanence in our country's destiny when, free from turmoil or turbulence, we can work out our future in peace and freedom. For a country placed in a geo-political situation such as that of Nepal, there is nothing unnatural about harbouring a desire for peace. Nepal wants no situation, either for the present or in perpetuity, that leaves room for tension, fear or the anxiety of instability. This is not to suggest that the Nepalese have misgivings about other countries. Far from it, we have relations of peace, friendship and co-operation with all countries of the world, particularly with our neighbours, and our efforts to develop these relations further on the basis of co-operation and understanding continue. For the moment, we are wholly committed to an orderly and uninterrupted economic development for our people. Being a small land-locked country, we hardly can afford to waste our resources on presumptions. On the contrary, exigencies demand that we continue to intensify our efforts at economic development. Hence the zone of peace proposition, which in our view gives substance to our faith in the principles of both the United Nations and non-alignment."

The proposal for a zone of peace is, therefore, an expression of our desire to carve out a permanent destiny for our nation in an atmosphere of absolute peace and tranquillity. In this connexion, I want to make it very clear that Nepal is prepared to enter into all necessary commitments, such as a guarantee against the use of our soil for any hostile activity against another country. We believe that the institutionalization of peace alone can make for the speedy and uninterrupted development of my country.

175. We are now in the middle of the Second United Nations Development Decade. The International Development Strategy for this Decade [*resolution 2626 (XXV)*] has been biennially reviewed, and the mid-term review was also made during the last session. During the last four years, we have seen two special sessions devoted exclusively to economic problems. The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States was also adopted [*resolution 3281 (XXIX)*]. In spite of such resolutions and programmes of action, the question still remains, Has there been substantial progress on the economic front? The answer, to our regret, is in the negative. The world economic situation continues to present a depressing picture. Though the economy of the developed countries has somewhat recovered from recession, the deteriorating conditions of the developing countries have further worsened.

176. The trend of growth of the least developed among the developing countries is even more alarming. If no special measures are urgently taken to mitigate their specific problems, not only will the gap of economic disparity between them and the developed countries continue to widen but also the very basic problems of food, clothing and shelter faced by the vast majority of people, who are virtually hungry and naked, will continue to grow more acute and complex. Urgent and increased international assistance and co-operation should, therefore, be generously forthcoming for alleviating the plight of these less fortunate among the developing countries.

177. It is a matter of regret that the record of present international assistance shows a discouraging downward trend. The contribution of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product by the developed countries set as the target in the Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade has not been realized; and the volume of international assistance is actually decreasing both in percentage and in real value. During my statement before this body last year¹² I suggested that the assistance for international development should be conceived of as "international taxation" for the richer and developed countries, so that they might gradually accept it as their responsibility and obligation to contribute towards international economic development. I still hold this view, because I strongly feel that, though the primary responsibilities for economic development lie with the countries concerned, the developed countries have a special responsibility for bettering the lot of developing countries through generous assistance in terms of both finance and technology.

178. My delegation is convinced that the new international economic order should be further pursued with a view to the more successful implementation of its action programme, so that all countries of the world could justly and equally share the benefits of the world's prosperity.

179. We are aware that the fundamental problem of the developing countries lies in the pattern of their economy itself. The economic pattern of the developing countries, which are mainly dependent on the production and distribution of primary goods and raw materials, is responsible to a great extent for their disadvantageous position in the world economy. The restructuring of the world economic order, by consolidating the positions of countries producing raw materials and primary goods, has been the main subject of discussion in various international forums for quite some time. New measures have been suggested and various initiatives taken with a view to their implementation by the Group of 77 in Manila, in Nairobi and, recently, in the Conference on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries.¹³ Though at Nairobi final agreement could not be reached on the integrated programme for commodities, nor could the proposal for a common fund for financing the internationally owned buffer stocks be unanimously adopted, it is, however, a matter of satisfaction that a basis, or rather a framework, for future action has been laid down. We are of the conviction that, with political will on the part of the developed countries to co-operate with their less fortunate brethren, the future negotiations to be carried out by UNCTAD over the period of 18 months, in accordance with the mandate given to it at Nairobi, can yield fruitful and equally acceptable results in these fields.

180. Apart from the question of commodities, trade, manufactures, finance and external debt, the transfer of technology, co-operation among developing countries and trade with countries having different economic and social systems are some of the areas of vital concern for the economic development of the less developed countries—

¹² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2377th meeting.*

¹³ Held at Mexico City from 13 to 21 September 1976.

that is, of the developing countries. We are aware of various painstaking negotiations being carried out in all these fields in various international forums, including the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation. Though the outcome of the Paris negotiations—the north-south dialogue, as it is called—has not been so encouraging, we very much hope that the current session of the General Assembly will review the progress of the Paris Conference and persuade the participating countries to continue the dialogue to reach a commonly acceptable formula which might provide a valid basis for future international economic co-operation.

181. The Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, recently held in Colombo, has come up with many important decisions and an action programme in various fields of economic co-operation among developing countries, on the one hand, and international economic co-operation, on the other. As economic co-operation among the developing countries forms one of the important agenda items of the present session, the decisions of the Fifth Conference might serve as a useful basis for discussion on that subject. The United Nations forum might, we believe, greatly contribute to fostering and further developing the economic co-operation among the developing countries which has been accepted to be one of the most important and necessary factors for rapidly improving the economy of the third world.

182. As a representative of a least developed and land-locked country, I would fail in my duty if I did not explain the additional hardship borne by my country. The geographically disadvantageous position arising out of the land-locked character of my country—which is the main obstacle to our economic development—coupled with many other serious problems is responsible for the least developed nature of our economy. Through you, Mr. President, we implore this body to give serious consideration to the specific and other related problems of countries in this category, because without the recovery of the low-income and poorest group of countries from prolonged economic hardship, the economic uplifting of the developing countries as a whole is not conceivable. The question of filling the gap of economic disparity between the developed and the developing countries will be a matter of frustration to the poorest and weakest if they are left behind without due attention being given to their problems. We fully realize the importance of the proposal for reviewing the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade and very much hope that the revision [item 65] will include special measures of priority for mitigating the problems of such countries.

183. The Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which just concluded its fifth round of negotiations without agreement, cannot be viewed in isolation from the efforts to establish a new international economic order which is the preoccupation of all countries today. In the context of a new international economic order, the Conference on the Law of the Sea must evolve an international convention which is just and equitable. Such a convention cannot be just and equitable if it fails to take into account the legitimate rights and interests of all countries, including the land-locked ones. However, it is regrettable that the coastal countries have remained adamant on certain issues that vitally concern the land-locked countries. It should not be forgotten that pressure tactics being used by the coastal countries do not yield fruitful results and cannot help to promote international co-operation and understanding. There have been several multilateral conventions in the past. The convention to be adopted by the Conference on the Law of the Sea should be one that is acceptable to all. My delegation hopes and trusts that the forthcoming session of the Conference on the Law of the Sea in May will be able to elaborate a convention to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned.

184. My country being a land-locked one, the question of transit trade and access to the sea is of paramount importance for our survival as a sovereign, independent entity. We insist on the recognition of free access to the sea and unrestricted transit in terms of free flow of goods and people as the natural right of land-locked countries. We urge the coastal countries and the international community to recognize the difficulties of land-locked countries and take a positive attitude in this regard.

185. Before I conclude, allow me to say a few words about this Organization, which has emerged as a community of nations. My delegation reiterates its faith in this august body which, despite its occasional reverses, has played a vital role in maintaining international peace, security and understanding. This world body has been seized of, and taken decisions on, major issues such as the establishment of a new international economic order, food, population, the environment, the law of the sea and so many others. The creation of a new world order is the responsibility of all—big or small, developed or developing. We strongly believe that no nation can live in peace and amity unless the entire family of nations represented by this world body is developed as an organic whole. This end can be achieved if all of us, particularly the countries which are in a more advantageous position, are willing to sacrifice a little of our interests for the common good of mankind.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.