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NEW YORK

President: Mr. Paul J. F. LUSAKA
(Zambia).

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

1. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of El Salvador, Mr. José Napoleón Duarte, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

2. Mr. DUARTE (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, it is an honour for my delegation, and especially for me personally, to extend to you on this occasion the most sincere and cordial congratulations on your assumption of the duties of President of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

3. This Assembly will deal with many of the major problems of international society, as well as the options and procedures which may enable us to solve them, thus consolidating understanding, peace and security among nations. I should also like to express the gratitude of the people and Government of El Salvador for the constant and tireless work conducted by the Secretary-General in his indefatigable efforts to achieve that peace, security and co-operation among all the peoples.

4. I came before the General Assembly in 1981, at its thirty-sixth session [*17th meeting*], as President of the Revolutionary Junta of El Salvador to explain to the world the crisis which was facing my country and to explain to you the process of democratization which we proposed to accomplish and which we have indeed fulfilled, in holding the first free elections in El Salvador to elect the National Constituent Assembly, which brought back a state of law and received, without any reluctance whatsoever, from the Revolutionary Junta, the full powers of a democratic and a republican nation.

5. That message was received with satisfaction by representatives at the United Nations, although scepticism led them to doubt the possibility of free elections proposed by a *de facto* Government which had committed itself to ensuring that its people would come in large numbers to vote, even under fire, to demonstrate its desire for democracy and its rejection of violence.

6. We fulfilled that commitment, but the Salvadorian people went further when it established the Provisional Government and held two rounds of presidential elections, which are an historic confirmation of the will of our people, who want to find the road to peace through the path of democracy.

7. I am very happy to state here before all the peoples of the world that El Salvador, despite having gone through one of the most difficult periods in its history, has given specific examples of what a people can do and obtain when it truly believes in democracy as the best possible way to solve the differences which are inherent in all organized societies.

8. That offering of my people to freedom entails great sacrifice. This process to democracy, peace and social justice culminated on 1 June 1984, a date which is indeed a milestone in the history of El Salvador because, for the first time in half a century, we have established a Government which is truly democratic and which has directly and freely emanated from the sovereign power of the Salvadorian people.

9. I now come, bearing the banner of my country as a symbolic gesture of the legitimacy of my Government, to appear before the nations of the world and to speak with the authority vested in me because of the support of my people, to speak of the peace so ardently desired by all Salvadorians, to speak of the benefits of that peace to which we are entitled and for which we are striving, to speak of our irreversible desire for democracy. I should like to speak about the peace of Nicaragua, of the guerrillas and Contadora, and to make an appeal to reason and fraternity which we deserve in Central America. I want us to be reasonable and to reconcile our differences.

10. For more than four years, El Salvador has suffered from the effects of a merciless war which has caused us bloodshed and impoverishment. More than 50,000 Salvadorians have been the innocent victims of a fratricidal confrontation. More than half a million persons have had to leave their homes and their property. Subversive forces have engaged in a campaign of terror and systematic destruction, and our people is tired of it. It must end.

11. One after another, the speakers who have preceded me at this rostrum have referred to peace in the strongest of terms. Peace undoubtedly is the greatest yearning of all men, and its maintenance is the main function of the United Nations. I, too, come before the Assembly to speak of peace in the same strong terms.

12. But I shall not refer to the dangers confronting the world as the consequence of the unbridled arms race, nor to the threat of total destruction represented by the senseless accumulation of nuclear weapons, although, of course, I share the concerns of all of you, as well as your frustration in the face of the seeming inability of the community of nations to fulfil not only the letter but also the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

13. I shall not speak of nuclear confrontation because others have done so here with great eloquence and profound knowledge of the problem.

14. May I therefore be permitted to depart from the usual procedure and, in greeting all the nations of the world, I should like to take this opportunity to describe and define the position of my Government in the face of the problems and the crisis which beset us, because in this manner I shall also establish the principles of the foreign policy of my country, which is based on peace and harmony among all human beings.

15. I am convinced that to provide this information is part of the responsibility which we have taken upon ourselves in the face of disinformation, stereotypes and commonplace statements. We must dispel uncertainties, clarify goals and purposes, state the course we intend to take and inform the world of the reality of life in El Salvador. This is a task which we must undertake so that the action of democratic countries may be carried out with confidence and in support of our struggle to achieve real democracy in our country; in support of our desire for the juridical equality of States, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, and the self-determination of peoples; in support of our vigorous opposition to foreign interference and any kind of political, economic, juridical or ideological pressure exerted by one nation upon another.

16. The crisis is worsening because of the grave situation in Central America: the imbalances in the international economic system, trade imbalances, excessive protectionism in the terms of trade, unemployment, external indebtedness and a series of other negative factors which have an increasing effect on our weak economic structures and are leading us to a historic crossroads. Thus, El Salvador will always support the efforts of the Group of 77, which has been striving tirelessly to bring about a new international economic order more in keeping with the principles of justice.

17. Central America, which is involved in a political, social and economic crisis, is experiencing acute problems, but these are not irreversible. It is possible to find formulas for understanding and appropriate political and diplomatic solutions.

18. Confronted by this complex picture, El Salvador has always acted rationally because of our strong desire for a peaceful, democratic solution in Central America which would strengthen the security of the region by means of understanding, economic and social integration, and consistent respect for the norms and principles of international law.

19. El Salvador's conduct has always been based on its dedication to the principles and tenets which govern relations between States. We are convinced that adherence to those principles is an indispensable requirement for the harmonious coexistence of international society. El Salvador thus fulfils its international commitments and regrets that some countries that speak half-truths and deliberately conceal their own violations appear before various bodies of the United Nations not in order to settle differences but rather to use those bodies as a mere platform for propaganda, regardless of the cost and the degree to which they undermine this body, whose protection they claim to seek.

20. El Salvador believes that the Contadora process is the only course open to us. In this context, we support an honest regional dialogue, so that we Central Americans may determine our destiny on the basis of a consensus. We must not become the tools

in a struggle of the interests and ideologies of foreign Powers and certainly not the mere instruments of those Powers, thus denying our own nationalism and characteristics and frustrating the aspirations of our peoples and their right to live in peace and freedom.

21. Peace in Central America must be based on the establishment of a genuine democratic process in the political, economic and social fields, which will enable us to leave behind the contradictions, deprivation and backwardness which most of us have suffered in the past.

22. The international situation continues, regrettably, to show all the signs of the East-West confrontation, which is tending to spread, thus producing a negative effect on rational thinking and coexistence in various regions. Unfortunately, Central America has also suffered from such confrontation. However, diplomatic efforts are now being made with regard to our area. In this context, the use of the good offices of the Contadora Group has our support.

23. My Government is grateful for the constructive work done by the four countries that make up the Contadora Group: Venezuela, Colombia, Panama and Mexico. We appreciate the proposals and efforts undertaken by the Group, which have received the support of the General Assembly and offer the best way of achieving the peaceful solution of the conflict, which is so painful for all of Latin America. We have co-operated fully with those countries in trying to create understanding and unity among all the peoples of Central America.

24. We attach great value to those efforts for the preservation of peace. Thus, we shall, as we have agreed, present before 15 October our comments on the revised Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [A/39/562, *annex*], which was submitted to us on 7 September last. We are trying to achieve peace by means of dialogue and on the basis of regional arrangements within the framework of the Contadora process.

25. I should like, on behalf of the democratic Government of El Salvador, to sign an agreement that will be in keeping with the efforts of the Contadora Group. But such an agreement must be right and just for El Salvador. It must strictly guarantee the application of the 21 points which have already been accepted by all the parties in the Document of Objectives adopted on 9 September 1983.¹ The agreement must ensure appropriate measures for the verification and control of everything that is agreed. We must make sure that the obligations that we undertake to put an end to the presence of foreign military advisers and eliminate military aid from abroad must provide for the strictest controls and, at the same time, entail for all the commitment not to support or continue to give assistance to terrorist activity against our legitimate democratic Government.

26. The history of my country is similar to that of many of the underdeveloped countries in the world. If I describe it briefly, many representatives listening to me will find amazing similarities with the history of their own countries. It is the history of a common struggle, of anguish, of triumphs and of failures. It is a common history of ideals—it is our history.

27. El Salvador emerged from colonialism to become an independent State on 15 September 1821, as a member of the Federal Republic of Central America. The struggles between the conservatives and the

liberals culminated at the end of the century in the absolute triumph of the latter. From that time on, a coffee oligarchy controlled the economic and political life of our country. The larger and better ranches, banking, and trade in the principal export products were in their hands. Controlled elections led to a succession of Presidents of the Republic who were the representatives of that oligarchy until 1931. Then, for the first time, a progressive party came to power, but a few months later it was defeated. The world crisis, the fall in coffee prices and the losses suffered by the peasants led in 1932 to a popular uprising, which was put down by force. After that, an alliance emerged between the armed forces and the oligarchy, which used it to keep political control and economic privileges. Following a dictatorship that lasted for 13 years, and after 1944, various military Governments, Government juntas and provisional Presidents came to power. In 1984 the first civilian Government in 50 years was elected by the free vote of the people.

28. That is the history of my country and my people. However, it is important to dwell briefly on the history of the last 20 years. In 1964 we began a more or less free electoral process, with elections for deputies and municipal councils. That led to a growth of opposition political parties. In 1968 they were on the verge of achieving power when their democratic aspirations were frustrated, and this led to fraud and the imposition of the party officially in power. In 1972 the opposition triumphed but the Government again frustrated the will of the people. From that time, all democratic leaders were persecuted and political parties opposed to the Government in power were eliminated. In 1977 a last effort was made to establish a democratic process and once again the people's aspirations were ferociously crushed.

29. Thus, frustrated by the lack of freedom, the people lost faith in the democratic process, and the situation of economic and social injustice drove them to despair. Armed opposition as a way to attain power began in 1972, broke out again in 1977 and led to widespread violence in 1978.

30. In the face of the blocking of the path to a democratic alternative and the impossibility of changing the economic structures, the thesis of violence gained strength as the sole means to free the Salvadorian people.

31. By the end of the 1970s, polarization between a rightist military dictatorship and its possible violent overthrow by Marxist sectors seeking power had almost completely eliminated a democratic solution.

32. In October 1979, a group of officers and officials acting on behalf of the armed forces overthrew the ruling authoritarian Government and issued a proclamation pointing out the corruption of the system of government and promising to open the path to democracy, as well as to undertake a series of structural reforms and, in particular, to lay the bases for thorough agrarian reform.

33. The Revolutionary Junta that was set up that year included, along with the armed forces, the political parties and the social, economic and religious forces that still believed in a democratic solution and that had harshly criticized those who had taken up arms. The Communist Party, the National Revolutionary Movement—of social democratic orientation—and the Christian Democrats

took part. The armed subversives stepped up their attacks against the new régime. Many thought that the triumph of the guerrillas was imminent and, in the face of that possibility, the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party left the Government and its democratic position and joined the armed struggle.

34. At the same time, the leaders of the mass movements also withdrew and joined the guerrillas. In other words, they all burned their bridges and opt 1 for armed struggle and violence as the sole solution. I believe that this attitude was their first historical error: to abandon the democratic political struggle and the struggle of the masses and opt exclusively for armed struggle.

35. In accordance with the historical analysis carried out by the subversives, in applying their ideological position to reality they never thought that the Salvadorean armed forces would break their traditional alliance with the oligarchy and that, therefore, the economic and social reforms could ever be achieved. They thought that the establishment of a pluralist democracy would continue to be a Utopian goal and out of the question.

36. The only political sector that did not lose faith was the Christian Democratic Party—my Party—and by means of an agreement with the armed forces it rebuilt the 1980 Government. Despite the negative forecasts of the extreme left, with the active participation of the armed forces the most profound agrarian reform in Latin America was carried out, the banking and finance system was reformed and foreign trade was nationalized. These reforms brought in hundreds of thousands of peasants as a major social and political force, henceforth organized in co-operatives and in owning the best and biggest ranches of the country.

37. Faced with the faulty analysis of the extreme left that structural changes were impossible, the subversive groups made a new and fatal mistake with the most serious consequences for their objectives: in acting in the same way as the extreme right they lent themselves to bringing about the failure of the reforms. Thousands of peasants were murdered, as were hundreds of Christian Democrats; crops were burnt, houses and machinery destroyed, and the publicity campaigns of both extremes denigrated, both nationally and internationally, the reforms that had been initiated. Their only success, however, was to distance the people from extreme positions and to begin to strengthen the democratic revolution.

38. In January 1981, when the subversives launched the first so-called final offensive, the people rejected them and the subversive, terrorist action failed. We all know that nowhere in the world can guerrillas triumph without the support of the people.

39. The second step taken by the Revolutionary Junta was to call for truly free elections to draft a new constitution. On that occasion, I came before the General Assembly. The 1982 parliamentary elections, in which the rightist and other political parties participated, attest to the will of a people to accept the path to democracy to solve its problems and to repudiate the path of violence. Thousands of international observers verified the legitimacy of the electoral process and all were able to see how the Salvadorian people went out to vote in the midst of guerrilla attacks. This new mistake by the subversives with respect to the electoral process, in which more than

80 per cent of citizens of voting age took part, further distanced them from the people.

40. In 1984 the Salvadorian people again exercised its right to vote and elected the President of the Republic. Hence, I pride myself on being the first freely elected President of El Salvador in the last 50 years.

41. Many of those who took up arms did so out of rebellion and frustration: they wanted agrarian reform, they fought for a banking system that would serve the majority and they wanted respect for the will of the people through free elections. These justifications were valid in 1979; today they have lost all validity.

42. At that time it could be argued that the objective and subjective conditions were in keeping with the historical dialectics of the class struggle and that, in response to rightist totalitarianism, the concept of revolutionary violence should gain validity and force.

43. The Marxist strategy of a prolonged people's war against imperialism and the oligarchies, the oppressors of a people deprived of justice and freedom, was based on that concept, and thousands of young people joined a process that began with social confrontation and civil disobedience and went on to the use of arms in the various phases of the destruction of life and the destruction of services and firms, until it resulted in the greatest crisis in our country's history.

44. I am convinced that the historic path of mankind is not one of violence but of democratic revolution.

45. It is understandable that those compatriots who left El Salvador years ago cannot or refuse to understand that things have changed; however, I know that the great majority of Salvadorians, and even the guerrilla commanders and fighters roaming about in the mountains of our homeland, are aware of this new situation.

46. I wish at this point to address some observations to the nations that have committed themselves, in one way or another, to undermining my country, as well as to the guerrilla leaders—not to those who are living comfortably in and are giving orders from Managua or Havana, or from other nations that claim to be democratic but in fact export violence and murder—but to the guerrilla leaders who are in the mountains of my country, those who withstand the elements, unsheltered, those who are aware of the real position of the Salvadorian people when they attack the villages and who are waiting—in vain—to be welcomed as liberators, when the truth is that their purpose is to oppress those people. I am addressing myself to the leaders who take their ideals for reality; to those who are mistaken about the people because they have a different view of truth; to the leaders who are now committing this historical error.

47. The guerrilla leaders in the mountains are aware of this dilemma, but they are egged on by subversive leaders from abroad who try to conceal this truth and distort this reality in order to justify their anti-historical position before the whole world.

48. The people of El Salvador now have no doubt that subversive violence has lost its mystique and its *raison d'être*. Terrorist violence has become an end in itself, which proves that its objective is no longer liberation, and certainly not democracy.

49. In El Salvador the terrorists have committed excesses but they have failed, because the people do not support them and because we have the political will to build a united, pluralistic and democratic society. By persisting in their anti-historical obstinacy, they have dedicated themselves to the oppression of the simple peasants who are the victims of their reign of terror; they are robbing and killing people; they are leaving citizens without any means of communication because they are blowing up bridges, roads and railroads; they are destroying electrical power lines and water systems; they are setting fire to plantations producing coffee, cotton and food crops. That leaves the poorest element of our population without work or hope.

50. It is so easy to destroy what took years to be built for the people! Services which are needed by the people and which took so many years to build up, the infrastructure that is part of our national heritage and that was established by the efforts and sacrifice of our people, can be destroyed in an instant by the criminal hand of the terrorist, who uses dynamite and is financed by nations that have in mind only world domination and are perhaps labouring under a misunderstanding of history.

51. Unfortunately, the Revolutionary Democratic Front does not understand that we are experiencing a new reality, and therefore it is still trying to change things that no longer exist: a medieval agrarian structure, a financial structure at the service of the interests of a minority, an army at the service of a political system dominated by an economic élite. All those things no longer exist. In 1979 a profound process of change began, and it has been consolidated. Today we have a new agrarian structure which has placed our best lands at the service of the peasant. We have a new financial structure which supports and strengthens the new agrarian structure. We have a new trade structure for the products that we traditionally have exported, and this makes available to the country the hard currency thereby generated. We now have an armed force that works for the people. And we have a people that has demonstrated its unshakeable faith in democracy and has elected a Government by its own free will; we have a people that is working, suffering and dying to achieve peace and justice.

52. From this rostrum I ask those who advocate the ideology of armed subversion in El Salvador to change their strategies because of the new reality in my country. The El Salvador that they left in 1978 and 1979 is not the El Salvador that exists in 1984. Today our country is breathing the air of freedom. Political parties are respected and encouraged. The people freely choose their leaders. Abuses of authority and violations of human rights have been reduced to the very minimum, and those who commit them are prosecuted and punished. Banks are lending large sums to peasants who are actively participating in the social and political struggles. There is a very different society in El Salvador today.

53. This new reality is misunderstood by the members of the Revolutionary Democratic Front, because they live outside our country; it is being experienced today by all the Salvadorians who have not abandoned their homeland. But it has penetrated the guerrilla forces. We know this from the testimony of the guerrillas who have abandoned their weapons and violence and have set out on the path to peace. We know it because the guerrillas are not getting so

many volunteers and are obliged to fill their ranks with young people. We know it because they are becoming weaker each day.

54. For all those reasons, I address the Salvadorian guerrillas and ask them to accept the new reality, to stop killing our brothers, to stop destroying bridges, to stop destroying the infrastructure of the nation, the public transport services, the plantations and the railroads. In a word, I ask them to stop killing and destroying and, together with all the rest of our people, to engage in the building of a new country, a free and democratic country in which peace will be the basis for our development.

55. Ever since I became President by the freely expressed decision of the citizens of my country, I have been aware that the main task of my mandate is to achieve social harmony and internal peace in El Salvador, which has been convulsed by a conflict with both internal and external causes. The time has come to put an end to that conflict. I am more convinced today than ever before that the existence of this conflict not only affects the life of my compatriots but is an element of friction that threatens the peace and security of other nations of the world, and particularly of our brother nations in Central America.

56. Hence, there could be no more appropriate time than this, when I am at this rostrum, to make before the peoples of the world an offer of peace, which would ensure for all Salvadorians—without any distinctions flowing from political or ideological position—social harmony and security.

57. This offer is made within the framework of the Salvadorian Constitution, which has established the system of democracy and political pluralism, under which the most varied ideologies can coexist.

58. Of course, the acceptance of this proposal by all sectors—those that are in opposition to my Government, within the constitutional system, as well as those that are fighting by violent methods—will require a change of mental attitude, under which hatred will be replaced by understanding and tolerance. For, after all, the peace which is manifested by outward signs is but the result of an individual and social state of mind which rejects aggression and all forms of violence and promotes dialogue and the democratic political struggle whose results are seen at the ballot box.

59. Quite naturally, it is hard to convince those who up to now have viewed weapons and violence as the only way to ensure their political space that there can be a climate in which they can express their own thoughts without thereby suffering reprisals from their adversaries.

60. But I have come here to affirm that, as President of the Republic and Commander of the Armed Forces, I am in a position to maintain those measures which, within our constitutional process, make it possible for them to abandon an attitude that runs counter to the history of the political evolution of the people of El Salvador. Furthermore, in due course I shall propose to the Legislative Assembly general amnesty for political crimes. We are exercising control over abuse of authority and eliminating all the methods of repression that have existed in our country in the past and that have in part been at the root of a rebellion for which there is no longer a need.

61. This means that I am offering the security of a political place within a pluralistic, constitutional,

democratic system which my Government is defending.

62. As part of those efforts, I invite the heads of the guerrilla movement now in our mountains to come without weapons to the village of La Palma, in the Department of Chalatenango, at 10 a.m. on 15 October, the anniversary of the insurrection movement of 1979, and in the presence of the representatives of the Churches and the world press, to discuss with us the details and scope of this proposal for their incorporation into the democratic process and the establishment of an atmosphere of freedom for the next election. I am convinced that our people, tired of so much violence, will take this proposal as a sign of hope emanating from its lawful Government.

63. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of El Salvador for the important statement he has just made.

64. Mr. MBOUMOUA (Cameroon): At such a critical crossroads in history, when international peace and security are threatened by illusions created by advancements in science and technology, when preoccupation with conflict among the powerful nations of the world creates a leadership vacuum in the international community, the well-deserved election of a son of Africa to the presidency of the General Assembly is singularly important. There are signs that from Africa, the cradle of creation, a peace-sustaining wisdom may light the darkness of misunderstanding, of belligerency and of underdevelopment.

65. Mr. President, you have been a source of pride for Africa as a result of your activities in the United Nations. Your election is also a tribute to your great nation, Zambia, and its noble leader, President Kenneth Kaunda, whose dedication to productive humanism brings distinction to our continent and to contemporary thinking. In sharing this great moment of opportunity, the Cameroon delegation extends fraternal wishes for your success in providing inspired leadership in the months ahead.

66. We also share the sentiments of gratitude and the felicitations expressed to your illustrious predecessor in office, Mr. Jorge Illueca, President of Panama. By bearing with such distinction the dual burden of President of the General Assembly and President of his nation, he demonstrated the traditional Latin capacity for dedication at its qualitative best.

67. Permit me to pay a tribute also to the Secretary-General, whose person and office symbolize the lofty ideals that launched the Charter of the United Nations. In spite of the grave odds he must face in trying to promote the harmonization of the actions of States for peace, we would encourage him never to be frustrated in that noble cause. We feel sure that it will inspire him to know that there are many nations, including Cameroon, which seek to provide sustenance for the quest for lasting peace as a matter of national policy.

68. The Cameroon delegation also wishes to take this opportunity to welcome Brunei Darussalam as the 159th Member of the United Nations. [*The speaker continued in French.*]

69. It is a matter of grave concern that we have today arrived at the point where the very *raison d'être* of the United Nations is continually being called into question by the incessant arms race in all

its various aspects, which constitutes the most pernicious factor of instability and global insecurity but to which, unfortunately, the international community seems to have become accustomed. As a result, our generation is living through the most highly militarized period in time of peace in the history of mankind. Paradoxically, this growing militarization in no way helps strengthen world security and stability; on the contrary, it constitutes a major factor of destabilization in contemporary international relations.

70. It is encouraging additional military expenditures, increasing suspicion and mistrust between States, stimulating war preparations, exacerbating political tensions and endangering social and economic structures that are already highly precarious, in particular those of the developing countries.

71. As we hold this session the international situation continues to be marked by violence or the threat of violence, and the storm-clouds of a nuclear holocaust constantly hover over us because of the qualitative and quantitative proliferation of nuclear weapons. This alarming situation, added to the absence of progress in disarmament efforts and the limitation of arms, is casting considerable doubt on the deliberations of the Assembly.

72. The United Nations was, I have no need to remind the Assembly, created following the massive destruction caused by the Second World War, with the primary objective to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Those who drafted the Charter of the United Nations, witnesses of the agony of the world as a result of that tragic conflict, clearly understood that, without peace and security, no constructive activity was possible in any field.

73. In other words, disarmament is the essential path we must take in order to attain the primary objective of the United Nations, the maintenance of international peace and security; it is therefore easy to understand why, ever since its founding, the Organization has devoted particular attention to this goal. In so doing, it has always provided a forum for deliberations and negotiations, as well as a focal point for proposals, recommendations and other initiatives by the international community, aimed at contributing to disarmament and awakening public opinion in a greater number of Member States and in the world in general to the dangers of the arms race and the benefits of disarmament.

74. In the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly [*resolution S-10/2*], which was adopted at the first special session devoted to disarmament, in 1978, and confirmed in 1982, at the second special session devoted to disarmament, the General Assembly stressed the central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Such initiatives served to enhance the authority of the Organization even further and to expand the range of multilateral activities related to disarmament.

75. Notwithstanding their scope, such actions—and this includes the series of partial agreements on disarmament that have already been concluded—represent no more than a few very limited first steps. In fact, they have neither done away with the arms race nor reduced the military capabilities and potential of States. On the contrary, that race has been stepped up to a dangerous degree and is now being extended to space itself. States have continued to

stockpile weapons of increasing deadliness and to carry out military research to produce even more sophisticated weapons, to the point that nuclear weapons now represent the most serious peril facing mankind. All this means that genuine efforts must be made to reverse and halt the present trend in the arms race.

76. Unfortunately, neither in the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva, which embraces 40 nations, or in bilateral negotiations in the East-West context has any noteworthy result emerged to give promise of a better future. The arms race is worsening, threatening the security of States and hindering social and economic development, particularly that of small and medium-sized States. Never has the need for disarmament been so acutely felt; never has effective disarmament been so remote. In spite of the sustained efforts of the international community, progress in the disarmament field has for years been extremely limited, and we now seem actually to be sliding towards the abyss without any glimmer of hope that the situation can be resolved.

77. It is impossible to overemphasize that disarmament is an essential element of any arrangement for true world security.

78. We therefore think that the celebration next year of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, four decades after the end of the Second World War, should provide a good opportunity to undertake an exhaustive examination of the Organization's role in disarmament. Such an analysis would make it possible to identify new ways and means of strengthening the central role and responsibility of the United Nations in disarmament and of promoting substantial progress in this field. We propose, therefore, that at this session the General Assembly call upon one of its competent subsidiary organs to examine the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and to submit a report on this subject at the fortieth session, next year.

79. This proposal reflects our profound conviction that, in a world that is today threatened with a nuclear holocaust, the United Nations alone constitutes the ideal framework for global negotiations in the interest of our collective security. For the small countries in particular, the Organization represents a genuine ray of hope.

80. Throughout the world, agriculture, animal husbandry, education, health and so on are in tremendous need, while at the same time countries are spending vast sums on armaments. I am thinking not only of the economically and militarily powerful countries, but also of small countries that are forced to purchase armaments for their own security, to protect the integrity of their territory and to stand firm against all kinds of destabilizing factors. In so doing, they are forced to divert their attention from productive goals.

81. In Africa, urgent measures are needed to eliminate the growing threat posed by the South African *apartheid* régime not only to the region but to international peace and security as well. We note with concern the facts set forth in the report on South Africa's nuclear capability [*A/39/470*], which again confirm South Africa's ability to manufacture nuclear weapons and its determination to increase that capability despite the solemn Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted in 1964 by the Organization of African Unity [*OAU*],² and the

repeated demands of the General Assembly that South Africa refrain from developing or acquiring nuclear weapons. We would like here to express our appreciation to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the OAU for the quality of that report. We would also like to express our appreciation to the IAEA for the recent intensification of its efforts to determine the implications of the development of South Africa's nuclear capability. That is a very urgent problem that could, if not solved, dangerously undermine the steps now under way in favour of nuclear non-proliferation and could fuel the arms race in Africa.

82. We appeal, therefore, to all countries, and in particular to the nuclear Powers, as well as to the United Nations and the IAEA, to co-operate with the OAU in combating nuclear proliferation in South Africa.

83. At this moment of grave international concern, there is no need to stress the importance of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. That Declaration testifies to Africa's firm determination to protect world peace through disarmament—first and foremost, nuclear disarmament. We therefore support the recommendations of the National Seminar on Peace and Disarmament, held at Lomé from 6 to 9 August 1984, which include the establishment of a regional institute for research on peace and disarmament and the convening in 1985 of a regional seminar on peace and disarmament, with the participation of the States of Central and West Africa.

84. We believe that all these initiatives can help to arouse and focus public interest in our region on the dangers of the arms race and, at the same time, serve to promote efforts to strengthen security and development at the subregional level.

85. We are convinced that disarmament should be at the epicentre of any collective effort aimed at promoting security and development. In order to achieve that goal, we must have a comprehensive strategy bringing together at one and the same time a commitment on the part of the international community to attack the problem of the arms race at its roots by combating fear, suspicion, distrust, oppression, racism, colonialism, inequality, injustice, hunger, ignorance and disease; by strict respect for the non-use of force in international relations; by the establishment of a system of collective security based on the Charter of the United Nations; and by the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and the reduction of all military arsenals to the strict minimum necessary for the maintenance of internal order and the protection of territorial integrity. In this connection, the nuclear Powers should formally and unconditionally undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against countries that do not possess them. We therefore support the conclusion of a formal international legal instrument on this subject, as advocated by the non-aligned countries.

86. At the same time, the great Powers that bear particular responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security must renounce escalation, the race for supremacy, hegemonist ambitions and the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. It is also imperative that they resume dialogue, both bilaterally and within the framework of the United Nations, with a view to bringing about the quantita-

tive and qualitative limitation of their nuclear weapons with the final goal of general and complete disarmament. All States must abide by the purposes, principles and provisions of the Charter.

87. The characteristic of our age is clearly the increase of tension in international relations. Without risk of error, I think we can say that everyone is aware that the present world crisis is due to the policies of expansion and force practised by blocs and that this crisis calls for determined, global and, above all, urgent action to eliminate the risks of violence and to bring about a negotiated settlement of major international issues.

88. We have here a crisis of détente. This is accompanied by the intensification of confrontation in the old hotbeds of crisis and the expansion of tension to all parts of the world, which entails the emergence of new hotbeds of conflict. Moreover, the deepening of the world economic crisis and the persistence of injustices which are prejudicial to economic relations among nations are exacerbating the already grave difficulties affecting the developing countries. The security and independence of many States have been threatened by interference in their internal affairs, military intervention and attempts to impose different social systems.

89. In the face of these dangers besetting the world, there is a need to bring about global solutions, while taking action, as a matter of urgency, to halt the arms race, to put a brake on the use of force, to prevent intervention and interference in the internal and external affairs of sovereign States, and to co-ordinate efforts to free peoples from colonial oppression and foreign domination.

90. Thus, in Namibia it has become quite clear that one more year has elapsed while the prospects for the independence of that international Territory are just as remote as ever. South Africa continues to resort to new stratagems to prevent the application of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). In the view of my Government, any policy tending to create a link between the independence of Namibia and the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola is unacceptable. Cameroon, a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, wishes to reassert its unswerving support for the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO] in its struggle for the liberation of Namibia. The Security Council must take the urgent and decisive measures called for in Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations in order to enforce respect for resolution 435 (1978), which remains the only acceptable framework for the accession of Namibia to independence.

91. In South Africa itself, we are witnessing with culpable indifference the worst extremes of brutality, massacre and imprisonment of those brave enough to oppose an odious system. That inhumane system has strained its efforts to combine so-called constitutional reforms—which, incidentally, were flatly rejected by their alleged beneficiaries—with a policy of satellization of neighbouring countries through military pressure and economic intimidation.

92. The application of oppressive laws is being pursued tirelessly. We condemn this illusionary reformism, and we are gratified to note that the Security Council did the same in its resolution on the subject adopted on 17 August [resolution 554 (1984)]. We call for the immediate liberation of all those imprisoned by the South African racist authorities

during the most recent electoral masquerade. There can be no compromise as regards the principle of equality of all human beings or the need to enforce respect for this principle in practice. That is why the Security Council must continue its consideration of measures to increase international pressure on South Africa to make it change its attitude. Cameroon, which is a member of the OAU Liberation Committee, will continue to help the liberation movements in their struggle against *apartheid* and to promote in South Africa a democratic society respectful of the dignity and equality of all its citizens.

93. In our view, the racial problem in that country seems more and more to transcend the simple concept of respect for human rights and to have become a genuine aspect of the whole problem of liberating an oppressed people. Our resolute support for the liberation movements of South Africa—the African National Congress of South Africa [ANC] and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania—finds here its political and ethical foundation.

94. With regard to Western Sahara, where the situation remains a matter of concern, we think that this problem should be dealt with on the basis of the principle of the self-determination of peoples. A solution can be found by the application of resolution AHG/Res. 104 (XIX), adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its nineteenth ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 6 to 12 June 1983.³

95. With regard to the situation in Chad, the position of Cameroon was recently reaffirmed by Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon: our Government is encouraging the efforts of the régime in N'djaména to promote national reconciliation and unity in Chad, with a view to the reconstruction and development of the country. As in the past, Cameroon is ready to contribute to all efforts, bilaterally, subregionally or on the African level, with a view to safeguarding the independence, territorial integrity, stability and peace in Chad.

96. The recent evolution of the situation in that country, marked by the withdrawal of foreign troops, while removing a political-ideological impediment to the opening of dialogue among the Chadians, at the same time also highlights the fact that the solution to the Chadian problem cannot be a military one but is essentially political.

97. It is up to the Chadians themselves to make an effort to rise above individual, ethnic or racial differences, personal ambitions and ideological intransigence, in order that the supreme interests of the Chadian nation may prevail. Having said this, we fear that the disengagement of foreign troops—the presence of which, like it or not, did, in fact, preserve a “no war, no peace” situation—is leaving a dangerous void, which may very well exacerbate the state of belligerence in a climate of ambition, conquest or territorial reconquest. We would venture to hope that all possible precautions have been or will be taken to prevent any possible violations of this disengagement agreement.

98. In the final analysis, it seems to us that the withdrawal of foreign troops from Chad should have been preceded or followed by the setting up of a neutral force which could have intervened. Why not a United Nations peace force capable of facilitating the process of dialogue with a view to national reconciliation?

99. We are following with the same concern other regions of the world where conflicts and tensions which may threaten international peace and security are developing in a dangerous way.

100. In the Middle East, the right of the Palestinian people to a homeland, the sovereignty of Lebanon and the Iraq-Iran conflict are key issues upon the solution of which depends the advent of a just and lasting peace throughout the region.

101. With regard more particularly to the Palestinian problem, we would hope that the Arab countries would help their friends—who consider the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people—and not pose problems as regards their cohesiveness or the mobilization of their peoples to the banner of Palestinian resistance.

102. In Cyprus, Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Central America, no solutions can be found without strict respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.

103. The deterioration of the international climate has had very grave repercussions on the already highly alarming economic crisis. Indeed, in spite of the projections of the developed countries during the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly with regard to the end of the present economic recession, the advantages resulting from the so-called recovery have not extended to the whole of the community of nations, particularly the vast majority of the developing countries, which continue to languish in poverty.

104. The economic asphyxiation confronting most young countries and the dangers and disorders to which the international monetary and commercial system is prey constitute disturbing factors which add to an already stormy international climate the prospect of generalized instability.

105. This inadmissible situation is not simply the result of cyclical fluctuations in the international economic system. It reflects the inadequacy of the structural balances inherent in the current economic system.

106. The experience of recent years proves that the world economy cannot be healthy if the development efforts of the developing countries continue to come up against ever-increasing protectionism, high rates of exchange, lower prices for their products, high interest rates, a deterioration of the terms of trade, severe balance-of-payments problems, a decline in financial capital and a swallowing up of vast resources in arms programmes.

107. The accumulation of these problems has drastically reduced the capacity of the developing countries to undertake important investment projects or to continue to support projects and programmes that are necessary for economic growth. Furthermore, it has obliged those countries to reduce the volume of their imports from the industrialized countries. That in turn has adverse consequences for the recovery process. In addition, it gives the clearest proof that there can be no lasting economic recovery in the developed countries without the simultaneous economic development of the developing countries. The stability of any sustained global economic growth is inextricably linked to the interdependence of developed and developing countries. Although this interdependence has often been reaffirmed, as in the

Declaration of the London Economic Summit of the industrialized countries, held last June [see A/39/304], the fiscal and monetary policies followed by those countries continue to impede the effective participation of the developing countries in the process of recovery and economic growth. This policy of obstruction is also continuing to block most of the negotiations under way in various international bodies.

108. This is the right place to deplore the feeble results of the sixth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held at Belgrade from 6 June to 2 July 1983. That session unfortunately did not make possible the establishment of a new consensus which would have put the world economy on a new path. I must also express our disappointment at the failure of the Fourth General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, held at Vienna last August; its conclusions clearly failed to live up to the hopes of the international community. We hope that, during this session, the General Assembly will do everything possible to reach a consensus on two matters of vital importance to the third-world countries—industrial restructuring and the financing of development projects in those countries.

109. The solutions to these numerous problems lies in dialogue and co-operation within a broad framework which takes account of the links between the various factors in economic development. It is in this spirit that the General Assembly, in so many resolutions adopted since 1979, in particular resolution 34/138, has called for the launching of global negotiations on the establishment of a new, more just and equitable system of international relations. Despite the praiseworthy efforts of Mr. Illueca, President of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, to secure a consensus on the procedure and agenda for such negotiations, the deadlock on this issue continues. We are convinced that the present economic crisis makes it more necessary than ever that these negotiations be launched immediately. We continue to believe that the two-phase approach advocated by the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, and reaffirmed by the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77, held at Buenos Aires from 28 March to 9 April 1983, can give a new impulse to the search for ways and means to break the current deadlock.

110. In Africa, a continent rich in natural resources and development potential, the persistence of the economic and social crisis continues to cause the international community grave concern. For some years, our continent has suffered an unprecedented and prolonged drought and the most adverse effects of the world economic recession. This critical situation is aggravated in particular by the acute food crisis in most of the African countries. In this context, the recent initiatives taken by the Secretary-General and other heads of organizations in the United Nations family deserve our appreciation and support. These initiatives in support of the efforts of the African countries themselves should be based on permanent resources available in the long term if they are to bear fruit. It is therefore desirable that the various institutions concerned take the necessary measures to give the various African programmes in the system the appropriate scope, priority and resources.

111. Solving the economic problems cannot of itself lead to development. We must harmoniously integrate the multi-dimensional aspects that are characteristic of man, for the benefit of whom all true development efforts must be organized. Human rights—civil, political, social, economic and cultural—are among these aspects.

112. This year the United Nations has been very active in all the fields that I have just mentioned. I could give as examples the meetings of the Commission on Human Rights, at Geneva, and of the preparatory body for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, at Vienna; the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, at Geneva; and the International Conference on Population, at Mexico City. Cameroon actively participated in all those meetings.

113. My country, which has put man at the centre of its concerns, has laid down a body of legislative measures, supported by judicial machinery, making truly effective the protection of human rights guaranteed by the Constitution. For seven years, Cameroon has been working to promote understanding of, research into, education in and popularization of human rights, through seminars organized in collaboration with the Henri Dunant Institute, at Geneva, and with UNESCO and UNITAR. Moreover, in recent years we have acceded to many international instruments on human rights.

114. The status of women is of prime importance to my country. This means that women must be closely linked with all stages of the economic and social development process, particularly in preparing plans and formulating policies and in decision-making. The establishment of a ministry dealing with the status of women and of a consultative committee to improve the status of women in Cameroon stems from this humane concept of development, which centres its efforts on all sections of our society.

115. I must mention the fate of a category of people who have been pushed out of their own countries by hazards and uncertainties of all kinds. I refer to refugees. They benefit from the great concern shown by our Government, which recently submitted to the UNHCR three projects whose implementation would contribute greatly to improving the position of refugees in Cameroonian territory.

116. In December 1982, a document of historic scope created a new milestone in the achievements of the United Nations. The new United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,⁴ certainly the most important and most complete juridical instrument to be adopted since the Charter of the United Nations, represents the first universal recognition of the rule of law with regard to the oceans.

117. We are happy that a growing number of States are signing or ratifying the Convention. The results of the meeting of the Preparatory Commission for the International Sea-Bed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, held at Geneva from 13 August to 5 September 1984, are very encouraging. They will surely open the way to the signing of the Convention by a number of industrialized countries. We believe that all countries with the means or potential should have the opportunity to join the group of pioneer investors in the exploration of the sea-bed.

118. The purpose of part XI of the Convention, whose text was patiently negotiated, is to allow for a wise exploitation of the resources of the sea-bed under a well-ordered juridical régime. This legal framework remains crucial for international peace and security.

119. We shall continue to make our modest contribution to ensuring that the Convention and its related resolutions⁵ are properly implemented. As the delegation of Cameroon emphasized at the end of the second session of the Preparatory Commission, held at Kingston from 19 March to 13 April 1984, we must resolutely and unequivocally implement the relevant provisions of those instruments. It is against this background that Cameroon shares in the concern recently expressed at Geneva by the Group of 77 about the provisional agreement on the exploration of the sea-bed to which certain industrialized countries have subscribed.

120. Moreover, holding the sessions of the Preparatory Commission must no longer give rise to the same problems as in the past. Resolution I, adopted by consensus at the same time as the Convention, requires that those sessions be held at the headquarters of the future International Sea-Bed Authority. Therefore, the Secretary-General should take all the necessary measures to establish a viable secretariat at Kingston, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly. I take this opportunity to express to the Government of Jamaica our appreciation of the excellent facilities and hospitality offered for the meetings of the Preparatory Commission there.

121. Nearly 40 years after its creation, the United Nations today is the target of serious doubts on the part of the international community; many, apart from the public at large, are increasingly wondering about the *raison d'être* and the future of the Organization. Its authority is becoming weakened; its resolutions and decisions are not being implemented, particularly those of the Security Council, the collective body which was supposed to represent our common desire to act decisively whenever international peace and security are threatened. If almost four decades of existence have paralysed the structures of the Organization, it is particularly the lack of political will of Member States that has considerably eroded its credibility. As a corollary, multilateralism is dangerously declining; there are clear signs of this, mainly the current decrease in the resources made available to institutions such as UNDP, the fact that many States, particularly the more powerful ones, do not hasten to resort to the machinery offered by the United Nations to resolve issues of world-wide interest and, to some extent, the difficulties experienced now by UNESCO. We support the appeal launched by the Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization [A/39/1], for a strengthening of multilateralism, renewing the position of his colleagues on the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination in its overview report for 1983/84.⁶

122. We are living in an era in which problems tend to take on global proportions because of the interdependence of nations, which is being consolidated by daily advances in science and technology. Thus we must use reliable international mechanisms in order to derive the greatest profit for our common destiny.

123. We must therefore strengthen our faith in the purposes and principles of the United Nations and

constantly see to it that the structures and functioning of its organs are kept up to date and made more democratic. Along these lines, there is an urgent need to pursue the present revitalization of the Economic and Social Council. We also hope that consultations on improving the functioning of the Security Council, begun in this body, will find an early solution in terms of concrete proposals, taking into account the various views expressed by the political groups in the Assembly.

124. With regard to innovations or reforms undertaken in the structure and management of the Secretariat, these must be carried out in accordance with guidelines given by Member States in various deliberative bodies. Cameroon, which attaches great importance to the equitable geographical composition of the Secretariat and to its efficient functioning, supports the Secretary-General in that regard.

125. We should like once again to express our dedication to the United Nations and to multilateral institutions. We hope that they will continue to have the strong support of Member States, particularly the wealthier countries, in order to become the defenders of the higher common interests of mankind, of which peace, collective security and access to well-being for all are the main elements.

126. We are taking part in this session, as in so many other sessions, in a spirit of dialogue, tolerance and concord. As was recently stated by our President, Mr. Paul Biya:

“Cameroon, land of peace and openness, continues to practice a policy of friendship, co-operation without boundaries, and non-alignment, with full respect for its independence, sovereignty and fundamental options.

“This policy applies to all sister countries of Africa, neighbours as well as distant countries, with which we seek active solidarity for the total liberation of Africa, the consolidation of the Organization of African Unity and the solution of the problems of the continent. It also guides our relations with many other States in the world, as well as with many international organizations.

“Cameroon will continue its development through an active and realistic presence on the international scene and will continue to offer the world the reassuring and edifying picture of a young, united, peaceful, stable and prosperous nation, which is making a modest contribution to the maintenance of peace, the strengthening of understanding, friendship and co-operation among nations and the promotion of civilization throughout the world.”

127. Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): The delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic wishes to congratulate you, Sir, upon your election to the important post of President of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly and wishes you success in the discharge of your responsible functions, which you have assumed in the year of the twentieth anniversary of the independence of Zambia and its entry into the United Nations.

128. The near universality of the United Nations, which now has 159 Members, and the content of the items on its agenda impose upon the Organization the task of working on the basis of strict observance of the Charter of the United Nations for the solution of urgent problems such as international disarm-

ament and security, total decolonization, economic and social progress, and the maintenance of the international rule of law. However, there is one problem whose solution will determine not only the progress of mankind, but its very survival. This is the problem of eliminating the danger of war and, above all, eliminating the threat of a nuclear catastrophe.

129. The majority of the statements in the general debate have testified to the fact that most States, regardless of their social system, ideology or way of life, recognize the absolute priority of what is literally the task of tasks.

130. However, the course of events in the world continues to be a matter of great concern. The risk of a nuclear conflict has sharply increased as a result of the policies and actions of the United States and some of its closest allies. The course they have taken aimed at securing military supremacy over the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, an unrestrained and across-the-board escalation of the arms race, power politics and diktat in international relations and, ultimately, world domination has been taken to extremes and is pushing the world towards a confrontation which in the nuclear age can mean only one thing: universal nuclear disaster.

131. This cannot be concealed by the expediency of the rhetoric of high-ranking United States officials about "peaceful intentions", which does not contain the faintest sign of readiness to translate these words into deeds—all the more so when the words we hear them using are not even the same.

132. How are we to reconcile, for example, assertions of "peaceableness" with repeated statements that they have the right to deal the first nuclear strike, their intention to acquire the capacity to win a nuclear war, to acquire military superiority and to undertake "a crusade" against socialism? How are we to reconcile the statement of the President of the United States that "spheres of influence are a matter of the past" with his statement that: "Today the world is expecting leadership from America. America for its part turns its eyes to its Marine Corps"? In actual fact, how are we to reconcile the moderate tone of the words being used with the deep and irrepressible impulse to brand the Soviet Union "an outlaw" and immediately bomb it? It is only at the movies that you can play one character one day and another character the next.

133. Washington now proclaims its readiness for "constructive talks with the Soviet Union" since "America has restored its power." Yet, in practice, the United States not only fails to put forward its own constructive proposals, but it is unwilling even to follow the good example of the Soviet Union or to heed the appeal of the United Nations and renounce the first use of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union proposes to agree that relations among States possessing nuclear weapons should be governed by certain norms and principles which would be in keeping with the vital interests of all peoples. The Soviet Union has made these peaceful principles the very basis of its foreign policy and is ready at any time to come to an agreement with the other nuclear Powers on the joint recognition of such norms and on making them binding. The United States and its partners in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] refuse to do this. The Soviet Union and its allies have called for a treaty between the Warsaw Treaty Organization and NATO on the non-use of force and the mainte-

nance of peaceful relations. The United States is doing its very best to get out of this. Nor can we see on the part of the United States any readiness to implement the United Nations declarations on the prevention of nuclear war and on educating peoples in the spirit of peace and other decisions designed to prevent any "limited" or "protracted" nuclear wars and to take real disarmament measures. There has been no response from them to the proposal of the Mongolian People's Republic [A/39/141] for the adoption by the United Nations of a declaration on the right of peoples to peace.

134. We can only conclude that the United States has its own concepts of dialogue and talks. Only recently, the Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Shultz, stated in so many words: "We know, as surely as we know anything, that negotiations and diplomacy not backed by strength are ineffectual at best, dangerous at worst." In other words, the United States only wants talks where it can lay down American conditions. All its talk about negotiations is obviously something it wants just to cover up its hegemonistic designs. The reality is that its policy of using the territory of a number of Western European countries as launching pads for American first-strike nuclear missiles remains unchanged. Furthermore, in addition to the increasing palisade of missiles, they now want to divide Europe by an explosive dynamite strip. In actual practice, what is the meaning of all this talk about the "absence" of pre-conditions and the "desire" of the United States Administration to hold talks? It means constantly targeting on the Soviet Union and its allies new types of American nuclear missiles, totally rejecting the constructive proposals of the Soviet Union and, at the same time, calling for talks. Surely, this is political duplicity.

135. There is a need for dialogue, there is a need for talks, but an honest dialogue, serious talks. Washington must show by deeds that it really wants talks. The Soviet Union has put forward proposals for a radical reduction of nuclear armaments which would in no way be detrimental to anyone's security interests. The Soviet Union is ready to consider these questions seriously at the negotiating table as soon as the United States removes the virtually insurmountable obstacles which it has erected with a view to securing military supremacy.

136. The position of the Soviet Union is clear and consistent. It is based on the following words of the founder of the Soviet State, Vladimir Ilich Lenin:

"We shall do our utmost to preserve peace in the future, we shall not shrink from great sacrifices and concessions in order to safeguard this peace.

"There are, however, limits beyond which one cannot go. We shall not permit treaties to be flouted, we shall not permit attempts to interfere with our peaceful work."

137. The United States Administration is now claiming that it wants disarmament and is even proposing a journey—during the next 20 years or so—down the road of disarmament negotiations. But this American road-map does not show either the routes or the final destinations. All it shows are the barriers, old and new, plus the intention to get whatever it can out of anyone who chooses to travel along this toll-road. Meanwhile, the United States keeps coming up with more and more military programmes. Physical preparations for nuclear war are in full swing: ever new nuclear-weapon systems

are constantly being planned, developed and manufactured: the MX and the Midgetman intercontinental ballistic missiles, the B-1 and the Stealth strategic bombers, long-range cruise missiles of every basing mode, the Trident submarine nuclear missile system, the Pershing II missile, neutron bombs and shells. This list, I am sorry to say, could be extended. According to mass media reports, three new warheads are being added every day to the United States nuclear arsenal. These systems are now many times more accurate and their basic characteristics make it clear that they have been designed for use as first-strike weapons. The United States military budget is reaching fantastic heights: \$300 billion.

138. With all this disarmament rhetoric, has the United States Administration halted or scrapped even one of these programmes? Quite the contrary, they are in a hurry to stake out new ground for the arms buildup. They are now extending the arms race to new environments and are making no attempt to conceal their intention to follow a policy of heightening tension and confrontation for decades to come. They repeat over and over again their fallacious argument that it is only by carrying out such dangerous and adventuristic programmes that it will eventually be possible to create the conditions for agreement on arms reductions—on Washington's terms, of course.

139. There is a growing movement in the world in favour of freezing nuclear arsenals. On the initiative of the Soviet Union and other countries, the General Assembly has adopted a number of resolutions calling for this. However, the representatives of the United States are always against it. The leaders of six States on different continents have appealed, in a Joint Declaration [A/39/277], for an end to the arms race and for a nuclear-weapon freeze. While the Soviet Union welcomed this initiative and once again reaffirmed its readiness to take such steps on a reciprocal basis, the United States has ignored this appeal.

140. Circumstances have given a high priority on the international political agenda to the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. The Soviet Union has put forward a number of initiatives—in the United Nations and elsewhere—designed to solve this problem and has unilaterally undertaken not to be the first to deploy any type of anti-satellite weapons in outer space, whereas the United States has refused to engage in talks on preventing the militarization of outer space. The United States has tested anti-satellite weapons and is now preparing to continue those tests. It has set up a special space command and is now in the process of establishing a joint armed forces space command. It is building a command centre for military operations in outer space. A new presidential directive has been signed on the deployment of new weapons in space.

141. The Soviet Union has submitted to the United Nations for its consideration a new proposal entitled "Use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind" [see A/39/243]. It provides for urgent measures to be taken to prohibit for all time the use of force in outer space and from space against the earth, as well as from the earth against targets in outer space, and for the prohibition and elimination of all types of attack systems in space. The idea is that outer space should be used for solving major problems of economic, social and cultural development, such as studying the earth's

natural resources, controlling natural disasters, food supplies, improving transport and communications, developing new materials and technologies, and other problems. It is proposed that States join efforts in this area and, among other things, work for the eventual creation of a world organization for the use of space for the benefit of mankind. The Soviet proposal has met with a favourable response in the United Nations, and we hope that no one will obstruct its implementation.

142. There is no way that the current United States position—no matter how nebulously phrased—can be sold as evidence of a constructive and serious approach on the part of the United States Administration to the central problems of peace and security. The unwillingness to engage in constructive negotiations has also been demonstrated by the United States position at the Conference on Disarmament and at the Vienna Talks on Mutual Reduction of Forces and Armaments and Associated Measures in Central Europe, where it has blocked even the slightest progress in these matters. At Stockholm, instead of seeking ways of strengthening trust and security and achieving disarmament in Europe, it has been attempting to facilitate the efforts of its special services to find out about the structure and activities of the armed forces of the Soviet Union and its allies.

143. If one looks at what Washington has actually been doing—whether it be in the field of nuclear, chemical or conventional arms, zones of peace or nuclear-free zones, or reductions in military expenditures—everywhere the picture is the same. The United States is against solving these problems on the basis of the principle of equality and equal security.

144. It is time it learned the lessons of the history of the last few decades, namely, that attempts to impair the security of others inevitably leads to the diminishing of one's own security. There can be no winners in the arms race.

Mr. Tsvetkov (Bulgaria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

145. To conclude this part of my statement devoted to the subject of preventing nuclear war and of disarmament, I would like to refer to a point recently made by Konstantin Chernenko, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

"We make an unequivocal appeal to the United States and its allies: it is time for them to reaffirm by concrete deeds their share of responsibility for the fate of the world, to realize the futility of a policy based on a position of strength and on reliance on the arms race, and to demonstrate real, rather than a mere ostensible, readiness to engage in dialogue and negotiations in order to find mutually acceptable solutions to problems on which the future of mankind depends. The Soviet Union is not wanting in such willingness."

146. The declarations by the United States about its desire for peace and stability cannot be reconciled in any way with the increased intensity with which it is extending its great-Power ambitions to embrace the whole globe. Furthermore, the United States is increasingly using NATO in these efforts. Steps are being taken to extend the geographical range of activity of this bloc and to use it as a tool of the

policy of force and diktat in various parts of the world.

147. Pursuing the militaristic policy of attempting to secure military superiority and winning a dominant position in the world and striving to realize their dangerous ideas of "a policy based on strength", "crusades" and "psychological warfare", the forces of imperialism are taking action, including the use of armed force, designed to undermine the socio-political system of other countries, thus putting into practice the policy of State terrorism. A look at any part of the world will make it obvious that, by destabilizing the situation throughout the world, Washington's militaristic policies are terrorizing nations and peoples. The existing hotbeds of tension and crisis situations are being aggravated and new ones are being created; undeclared wars are being waged against a number of independent States.

148. Co-ordinating its actions with its "strategically" in Tel Aviv, Washington is seeking to remove from the agenda the question of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to create their own State, which is the key to a Middle East settlement. Despite the efforts of the Secretary-General, the United States is frustrating the implementation of the United Nations decision to convene an international conference on the Middle East with the participation of all interested parties, including the PLO. Moreover, the United States itself has brutally shelled Lebanese territory and continues to encourage Israel in its aggressive policy against Arab peoples and in carrying out its "creeping annexation", naked terror and violence in the occupied Arab lands.

149. Increasing pressure is also being felt by independent Mediterranean States. Owing to an accelerated process of militarization, the Mediterranean is turning into a zone of immediate danger to the peoples inhabiting that region. Acts of military provocation have been undertaken against Libya. The situation in Cyprus continues to remain unresolved, and the right of the Cypriot people to territorial integrity and unity without foreign military presence and interference in the internal affairs of that non-aligned State is being trampled on.

150. Turning to another region—Central America—here too, in an attempt to suppress the struggle of peoples for socio-economic changes, for freedom and independence, the United States is working to exacerbate the situation. Socialist Cuba continues to be subjected to wanton attacks and acts of hostility.

151. Undisguised attacks are being organized and carried out against Nicaragua, including the mining of its harbours. The waters of the Pacific and the Caribbean are being plied by United States naval flotillas with marines on board. Their main task is to terrorize and intimidate the people of that country, whose sole desire is to be master of its own destiny. In order to prop up its stooges, the blood-stained butchers of the people of El Salvador, Washington is continuing its shameless interference in the affairs of that country. The land of Grenada, a small, peace-loving country, which has never in any way threatened anyone, is being trampled upon by the iron-heeled boot of United States Marines.

152. The United States is stubbornly refusing to accept the peace initiatives of Cuba and Nicaragua as well as those of the Contadora Group with respect to a peaceful settlement in Central America. That is not surprising because the United States has already used

military force 82 times against 11 Latin American countries, and it wants to be able to continue this practice of banditry in the future.

153. Another region of open and increasingly wide and dangerous interference by the imperialist forces is the African continent, where attempts are being made to impose neo-colonialist bonds on the newly independent peoples, limit their sovereignty and deprive them of the right to take their own decisions. South Africa and its protectors are blocking the independence of Namibia. The "constructive co-operation" between Washington and Pretoria and the moves to prevent the Security Council from taking effective measures against the *apartheid* régime encourage the racists in their open aggression against neighbouring countries and create new and dangerous hotbeds of tension.

154. United States monopolies have invested approximately \$14 billion in South Africa's economy and are making a fortune out of exploiting the indigenous population of South Africa. It is not surprising, then, that already at this session of the General Assembly, the United States delegation has refused to support an African draft resolution calling for the struggle against the policy of *apartheid*.

155. Recently, all kinds of pressure have been applied with increasing persistence against some Asian countries in order to draw them into global adventurist designs and to step up the militarization of the Far East. The United States is strongly opposed to acceptance of the proposal of the Mongolian People's Republic for the conclusion of a convention on mutual non-aggression and the non-use of force in relations between the States of Asia and the Pacific.

156. It is frustrating the efforts of the Indian Ocean nations to turn that region into a zone of peace because, according to the head of the Pentagon, "this is a region where the terms 'parity' and 'equality' are unacceptable to us; we must have military and naval supremacy".

157. The unresolved Korean question is not adding to stability in the Far East. The proposals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which provide for the withdrawal of United States forces from South Korea and peaceful reunification of the country without any outside interference, are a good basis for the solution of that problem.

158. Dangerous intrigues continue unabated around the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. The foes of the Afghan people, including those who boast about their commitment to democracy, are trying to disrupt the construction of a new, genuinely democratic life in that country. While paying lip-service to a political solution to the problems which have arisen around Afghanistan, they are in effect doing everything possible to impede it.

159. There are possibilities of such a solution. They are offered by the constructive proposals of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and we fully support them. In fact, only one thing is necessary, namely, the cessation of the foreign armed intervention against Afghanistan and interference in the internal affairs of that sovereign non-aligned State.

160. The only way to ease tension in South-East Asia is to renounce the policy of State terrorism. We strongly support the well-known proposals by Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea for a peaceful settlement

of the problems of that region and its transformation into a zone of peace, stability and co-operation. The attempts to impose politically bankrupt outcasts, no matter how they are dressed up nowadays, on the people of Kampuchea through all kinds of illegal moves and manipulations are intolerable. It is high time they were thrown out of the United Nations and the People's Republic of Kampuchea given its place in international organizations.

161. The intensified military activities in the Persian Gulf, the waters of which are increasingly patrolled by large United States naval formations, have a destabilizing effect on South-West Asian countries. Such is also the purpose of the United States Central Command, which seeks to turn that vast region into a military and political springboard and to threaten the security interests, sovereign rights and independence of the peoples of the region.

162. In order to protect the sovereign rights of the peoples and to put an end to the imperialist habit of dictating to other States, the General Assembly must emphatically censure as inadmissible the policy of State terrorism and any actions by States aimed at undermining the social and political system in other sovereign States. This is the aim of the relevant proposal made by the Soviet Union [A/39/244] and supported by a number of delegations.

163. It is noteworthy that at this session—more often and more extensively than at any other session—representatives of imperialist Powers are hypocritically referring to some “sudden” and “unexpected” economic, financial and debt problems of the developing countries. These ringing declarations cannot conceal the fact that through so-called free enterprise the imperialists are severely exploiting the economically weak countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, from which they extract each year up to \$300 billion. The London Economic Summit of the seven Western countries, held last June, has not made things easier for those who belong to the Group of 77. Nor does the United States spare even its highly developed “partners.”

164. The socialist States consistently advocate the restructuring of international economic relations on an equitable, democratic basis and support the corresponding demands of the developing countries. The high-level Economic Conference of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, held last June in Moscow, supported the progressive demands of the developing countries that their full sovereignty over their natural resources and economic activities be ensured. The Declaration of the Conference, entitled “Maintenance of peace and international economic co-operation” [see A/39/323, annex II], underscores the need to ensure the economic and social development of every country, whereas to all appearances the United States and its allies intend to pursue their policy of exploitation. The net result can only be a wider gap between industrialized capitalist countries and developing nations, which will be in even greater difficulty tomorrow. The arms race, which is being escalated by Washington and its NATO allies, is having a pernicious effect, too, forcing the developing countries to spend more money on arms than they receive as development aid.

165. The whole world is aware who is working for peace and who is dreaming of military solutions. In this context, we cannot but point out that all sensible

people are greatly concerned over the increasing attempts by the United States and its NATO allies to call into question the entire structure of agreements aimed at ensuring peaceful, stable progress in Europe. The United States and some of its NATO allies are virtually conniving with the neo-Fascist forces that are reappearing and seeking revenge. The countries of the socialist community and all others that cherish the cause of peace resolutely condemn any manifestations of a policy aimed at undermining the foundations of the post-war European settlement. They will not allow the tragedies of the past to happen again.

166. It is a cause of serious concern that last summer, in disregard of international agreements and decisions, the Council of the Western European Union, at the request of the Federal Republic of Germany, lifted the ban which prevented that country from manufacturing strategic bombers and long-range missiles. Thus, the Federal Republic of Germany will be able to build and deploy its own long-range offensive weapons capable of threatening the security of not only neighbouring but also distant States. It should be recalled that the Federal Republic of Germany, as one of the successors of the former Reich, is bound by the Potsdam Agreement, which decreed that never again would German soil become the source of a threat to neighbouring countries and to the world at large. This prohibition must be strictly observed.

167. Nikolai Slyunkov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, has said the following:

“We are not dramatizing the existing situation. At the same time, there are no grounds for carelessness or complacency. The lessons of the past and the aggressive designs of imperialism oblige us to be vigilant and ready for anything that may happen.”

168. This year the Byelorussian SSR is commemorating the fortieth anniversary of its liberation from the Fascist invaders. The Soviet people paid by the millions with their lives, grief and suffering for this liberation. Since the Second World War, there has been a 33-fold increase, as compared with 1940, in the industrial potential of the working people of the Republic, despite the loss of one quarter of its population and one half of its national wealth during the destruction inflicted by the war. We are successfully dealing with the tasks of economic and social development in the current five-year plan. The commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of our liberation has also demonstrated the will of the people to peace and its determination to prevent another war.

169. In 1985 mankind will be celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the great victory of the forces of reason and peace in the Second World War and the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, which is part of the post-war peace arrangements for the world. We must take advantage of these forthcoming events to strengthen our ranks on the basis of unswerving observance by all peace-loving forces of the Charter and the progressive decisions of the United Nations, so that by concrete deeds we may promote the strengthening of international peace and security and eliminate the nuclear threat.

170. No question, however important it may be, can be allowed to overshadow the issue at the basis of the founding of the United Nations—that is, the question of how to preserve peace. It is the duty of every State individually and of all the States Members of the United Nations to do everything they can to ensure that people can live in peace in the remaining 15 years of the twentieth century and can enter the third millennium, not with fear for the future of civilization but, rather, with certainty about the limitless prospects for the development of civilization.

171. The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is ready to co-operate with other States to achieve those goals.

172. Mr. BEMANANJARA (Madagascar) (*interpretation from French*): The General Assembly's choice of Mr. Paul Lusaka to preside over the work of its thirty-ninth session gives us cause for real pride, because the recognition of his distinguished qualities is a tribute paid not only to his country, Zambia, but to Africa as a whole. We assure him that the delegation of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar will exert every effort to support the actions he will take under his mandate and on behalf of our common ideals.

173. We express again to Mr. Jorge Illueca our thanks for the responsible, clear-sighted and committed way in which he presided over the thirty-eighth session, despite the strains involved in his lofty duties.

174. Finally, my Government is particularly aware of the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General for the benefit of Madagascar and Africa as a whole, and we once again express to him our support and our confidence in his mission of peace and in his determination to return multilateralism to its place of honour.

175. The exchanges of view that have been taking place during the general debate confirm our belief that, despite certain signs that in other circumstances might have been encouraging, uncertainty persists and disquiet and pessimism are the order of the day. Indeed, in analysing, as we must, the causes for the divisions in our world, we must note that the North and the South are not getting down to a dialogue on the establishment of a new order; the organization of the developing countries is still in an embryonic stage or is split up; there has been a chronic blockage of East-West relations for five years now; and out-moded and inadequate solutions to regional conflicts, the by-products of that tension, are envisaged.

176. There are some who have settled down into this state of generalized deadlock, and peoples might have adapted to this if it could have been proved to them that the world in which they were living was the best reflection of their rights and aspirations. But during the past few months we have witnessed an onslaught of phenomena, the mere listing of which gives an idea of the insecurity all around us: the repetition of rigid positions; the quest for unilateral advantage; the strengthening of the policy of blocs; the refusal of concessions or compromise; displays of force alternating with appeasement; the diplomacy of brinkmanship and preparation for confrontation. Everything that is happening makes it appear that the three pillars of international co-operation—peace, security and justice—have been reshaped to justify

actions motivated by the utmost egotism and a kind of Messianism.

177. As a non-aligned but committed country, we believe that in East-West relations the natural differences of interests cannot be disregarded and, hence, that nothing can replace peaceful coexistence and détente, which can re-establish peaceful conditions without confusing myth with reality. Much has been said this year about confidence- and security-building measures. Some advocate a global approach based on principles; others prefer a selective, and therefore limited, method. But the peoples, whose consciousness has been raised by the peace movement, need above all the confidence that can replace entrenched positions, deterrence and balance.

178. Is it not true that if the security interests of everyone, and not merely the great Powers, were taken into account, nuclear deterrence would lose its *raison d'être*? Is it not true, too, that confidence would make it possible to emerge from a process which, in the name of balance, has accelerated the race in nuclear and conventional weapons? Finally, is it not true that a commitment to collective, rather than polarized, security could induce peoples to subscribe more frequently to negotiations and to hope for their success, denouncing all provocations that could derail them?

179. On many occasions we have said that we cannot blindly follow the experts and technicians on their ground. In the United Nations we are obliged to reason in terms of policies that are responsible and designed to ensure the survival of civilization. That is why we wish to lend our support and solidarity to any undertaking that would bring us closer to the fundamental aspiration of the peoples—that is, the restoration of peace. That holds true for the proposals on the prohibition of the militarization of space, the halting of the course of naval armament, the banning of chemical weapons, and a nuclear freeze.

180. Argument about the complexity of the problems does not justify avoidance of their consideration. Declarations of intention must necessarily be followed by action. Negotiations will be difficult, and the obstacles along the way cannot be minimized. Negotiations will have the merit of making international public opinion better aware and will facilitate application of our collective intelligence to the solution of conflicts in the South.

181. But let us not be misunderstood. The relaxation of tensions in the North can be brought about only through the reduction of conflicts, and such reduction will be meaningful only if it takes place within the framework of a global approach. We cannot merely say that the solution of regional conflicts depends on the will of the great Powers alone. We all intend to shoulder our responsibilities.

182. If one thinks about it, the situation in southern Africa would not be what it is if, apart from spheres of influence, some of us were not tempted to be led by the notion of traditional strategic responsibility. Despite our protests, our denunciations and our condemnations, extenuating circumstances are always found for the *apartheid* régime, which it would seem it would be best to control in order to stabilize the region, putting aside, if need be, black consciousness. Is this not tantamount to ensuring the survival of the minority racist Power in order better to defend values some label democratic in an environment that is viewed as hostile?

183. But this is only one of many contradictions. We want to put an end to the cycle of violence, yet some discreetly or openly applaud when the cycle of injustice is coupled with the adoption of so-called constitutional reform. Very little importance is attached to the military and economic pressures on the *apartheid* régime, but these are included in a strategy that should presumably lead to mediation and negotiation. Some advocate pragmatism and patience, but in the name of the struggle against international terrorism they want to do away with SWAPO and the ANC, whose authenticity, representational character and historic role in the liberation of Africa need no longer be demonstrated. The front-line States are being subjected to intolerable blackmail, and none can be fooled as to its purpose. Who could for a single moment believe that the Pretoria régime has suddenly seen the light and the virtues of dialogue, non-aggression and good-neighbourliness? In truth, the only possible answer is an immediate increase in support and international assistance for the front-line States in order to give them the means to face up to aggression that is all the more pernicious since some might support it.

184. For us, as for the great majority of the Members of the United Nations, the course to be followed is clear. Whatever stratagems may be used, Namibia will become independent. The democratization of political, economic and social relations in South Africa will bring about the day when the black, the white, the Coloured and the Asian populations are free of the *apartheid* régime and its collaborators. Our dignity as Africans is incompatible with the continuing detention of Nelson Mandela, and we demand his immediate release. We affirm that southern Africa can be an area of true harmony, peace and co-operation only when an end has been put to the political and economic hegemony of the racist régime and to foreign interference.

185. We also continue to believe that the interplay of strategic and political interests has made decolonization go astray in Western Sahara. After years of bitter discussions, confrontations followed by accommodation, at its last summit conference, Africa succeeded in achieving unanimous agreement on ways and means of restoring peace in the region. Is the scheme proposed by the OAU perhaps not fully in keeping with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respect for the inalienable rights of the Saharan people? Has the United Nations perhaps been wrong in supporting it, with the few reservations we are all familiar with?

186. Such a thesis cannot be sustained, nor can it explain the intransigence of Morocco, the ostracism of certain circles *vis-à-vis* the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic or the rumours designed to give credit to the argument that the OAU should drop this case in favour of other bodies. The application of the African solution to the Saharan problem should not be unduly delayed by considerations that would mean our shirking our responsibility *vis-à-vis* the Saharan people. Because we intend to meet this responsibility, we maintain the common African position, which is that there should be a cease-fire and withdrawal of the Moroccan troops from Western Sahara so that there may be a peaceful and fair referendum.

187. In this connection I should like, on behalf of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar, to hail the withdrawal of foreign troops from Chad, which will

make it possible for the various factions and groups to meet and try to find a solution that will be in the interests of the people of Chad and in keeping with the resolutions of the OAU, without replacing African and even international solidarity with paternalism.

188. Finally, as a representative of my President, Mr. Didier Ratsiraka, and of my Government and as a son of that great continent that is the object of so much greed and struggles for influence, I cannot fail to invite my brothers and sisters to settle our political problems first and foremost among ourselves.

189. The Democratic Republic of Madagascar would be failing in its duty if it did not appeal for awareness of the solidarity and affirmation of the identity of African men and women and their ability to contribute to the solution of the problems afflicting our continent.

190. The similarities between the situations in southern Africa and western Asia have been mentioned on several occasions, and in such precise and objective terms that it seems unnecessary to revert to them in great detail. I shall therefore confine myself to certain considerations that might help bring about understanding of our position and lay the foundations for analysis.

191. In 40 years, the fundamental facts of the question of Palestine, at least as regards the United Nations, have remained unchanged. Arbitrariness, domination and exploitation persist in that region, while adjustments introduced following various tensions but with disregard for law and equity have hardly contributed to an acceptable solution. At the same time, the PLO, like every liberation movement, is going through a difficult period which the play of powers in the region have not helped. Thus, there is oscillation between solicitude and ostracism, between sympathy and indifference, between ambiguity and support. Finally, the programme drawn up by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is relegated to dead-letter status, as is the international conference proposed by the non-aligned countries. Prospects for negotiations at the Security Council level are hampered by the exclusion of the PLO.

192. The result is a diplomatic void on the international level, one that cannot be filled by reaffirming Security Council resolution 242 (1967)—at this point largely outdated—nor by the increasing number of unilateral or bilateral initiatives. Such negative factors reflect the internal and external tensions in the region and are being used either to force us to accept *faits accomplis* or to make us better accustomed to the state of latent war, or even to accept the worst of paradoxes in which a people who have been promised a homeland now have a State, while another people, whose right to a State has been expressly recognized by the United Nations, find themselves being offered a homeland as a kind of consolation prize. In the face of this impermissible disparity, the only solution is the restoration of the rights of the Palestinians and an international guarantee of those rights in order that an end may be put to the suffering and devastation to which the Lebanese and the Palestinians have been subjected for so long.

193. For the same reasons, in the Iran-Iraq conflict we are following very closely the response to the Secretary-General's three-part appeal for the protection of the civilian populations victimized by a

frenzied fratricidal struggle that is casting an unnecessary shadow over the image of non-aligned unity.

194. In other parts of Asia, we find peoples being caught up between present and past interests that pursue their course without regard to those peoples. From Afghanistan to Korea, the peoples' aspirations to normal relations, to peace, to co-operation and to stability are constantly being frustrated by ideological or strategic considerations.

195. No one can accept a situation such as that in Cyprus, where a succession of *faits accomplis* and unilateral steps have taken us ever further from a solution that should have been freely accepted by both communities, equal in rights and obligations. No one can be against the idea that the situation around Afghanistan should return to normal and that the Secretary-General's mediation in that matter should be allowed to continue and lead to direct negotiations. No one thinks of thwarting the joint efforts being made by the States of Indo-China and the States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations to narrow their differences and to organize co-operation and coexistence among them in accordance with respect for each party's freedom of choice. However, we can demand that in all such actions account be taken of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of non-alignment, and, in particular, the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference.

196. Those are also the principles to which we appeal when we assert the need to normalize the situation in the Korean peninsula and to bring about peaceful, independent reunification there, free from outside interference. In that connection, the proposals recently put forward by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for tripartite talks constitute a positive contribution towards the resumption of dialogue between North and South Korea.

197. In Central America and the Caribbean, events in recent months have sounded a note of alarm for the development of international relations. We believed that the proposals of the Contadora Group had been accepted by the parties concerned, and we were already gratified at the fact that Nicaragua had risked the alternative of peace by subscribing to the terms of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [A/39/562, annex]. Unfortunately, other pre-conditions have been raised, and we very much fear that the opportunity to find a peaceful political solution to all the problems in Central America and the Caribbean may have been frittered away.

198. Before ending my remarks on this subject, I should like to refer to the question of the Indian Ocean and the Malagasy Islands. My Government reaffirms its determination to continue, within the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean, to work for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2832 (XXVI), containing the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. Any demonstration or escalation of great-Power presence in that area, such as foreign military bases and installations, logistical support services and the stockpiling of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, contrary to the oft-expressed will of the States of the region, would constitute a flagrant violation of that Declaration. Such activities are liable to jeopardize the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and peaceful development of the States of the region.

We are convinced that the immediate convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean, scheduled to be held at Colombo in the first half of 1985, is the only way of reducing tension in the area. In this connection, the Government of Madagascar regrets that some States, through their negative attitude, have tried in an unwarranted manner to delay the convening of that Conference and, thereby, the summit meeting of interested and concerned States proposed by the President of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar.

199. As to the Malagasy Islands in the Mozambique Channel and the Indian Ocean, their status as belonging to Madagascar has been confirmed by relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the OAU, as well as by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. My Government hopes that the exploratory talks recently held in Paris will be pursued and will contribute to drawing up a solution in keeping with respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and mutual advantage.

200. Lastly, as an island State that contributed to the negotiation and conclusion of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,⁴ Madagascar wishes to reaffirm its support for that legal instrument and to state, further, that the resources of the sea-bed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction are and remain forever the common heritage of mankind. It is for that reason that we deplore any arrangement or mini-treaty, past, present or future, that may be prejudicial to the provisions of that Convention.

201. Like the continued existence of so-called regional conflicts, the economic problems afflicting developing countries remain a subject of great concern for the future of international peace and security. The tentative recovery to be observed in certain industrialized countries has not restored order to monetary and financial markets, nor has it halted the wild fluctuations of exchange rates or brought interest rates down to tolerable levels. The prices of raw-material commodities have continued to fall and the terms of trade have continued to decline, while the spectre of protectionism has arisen.

202. When the crisis got under way, the third-world countries were urged to carry out economic adjustments, and most of them did so with courage and logic. Their sacrifices, however, have not been recompensed. How, indeed, can the conditions for a sound and lasting economic recovery be re-established when the international environment is not propitious, when the minute growth in exports is swallowed up by the burdensome weight of indebtedness, when the real flow of capital to the developing countries has never been as low as it is today, when so-called austerity measures have increased domestic social tensions and when structural problems inherited from a lengthy colonial period remain? If we add to that the effects of disasters of all kinds, we find we have very little ground for hope and perseverance.

203. Of course, at times we do see signs of encouragement. The international community seems to have awakened to the daily tragedy of our countries. Africa, which is at the very bottom of the scale of development, is now the focus of attention of assistance organizations. There are many programmes of action, and so-called emergency assistance measures are proliferating.

204. Without underestimating the need for these measures, we cannot overemphasize, as was done in the Special Memorandum on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis, adopted by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa,⁷ the importance of producing in the United Nations a general, consistent and concerted framework for action to rehabilitate and revitalize African economies. At the same time, we must pursue a global approach to the problem of indebtedness, which cannot be dissociated from that of interest rates.

205. Indeed, if the industrialized countries refuse to take the necessary measures, or claim that they are powerless to bring down these rates to more tolerable levels, they should at least agree that their effects should be mitigated for the developing countries. Moreover, all of us on both sides must be realistic. Through realism, we can conceive of machinery which would preserve the interests of both the creditors and the debtors, by establishing, for example, a link between debt-servicing and the level of export earnings. This would have the effect of revising certain rules applied by the Club of Paris. Through realism, we should also recognize that the developed countries have something to gain by increasing the flow of assistance for development to the least privileged countries. Through realism once again, we should concede that the conditions attaching to the assistance rendered by Bretton Woods organisms often leads to results contrary to those sought. Through realism, finally, we should not seek to camouflage the asymmetrical and inequitable nature of the processes of adjustment and multilateral control.

206. These thoughts should not be allowed to obscure the importance of South-South co-operation. Within this context, we recall the proposal of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar for the creation of funds for the development and stabilization of commodity prices. Five years after it was put forward, this proposal remains as relevant and as urgent as ever, because far from wishing to replace arbitrarily international monetary and financial organizations, the machinery proposed would be complementary to them and would represent the contribution of the South to the necessary reform of the current system. A summit conference of third-world countries on economic questions would undoubtedly enable us to go into further detail on our commitment to South-South co-operation.

207. The solution to our economic problems remains, first and foremost, the responsibility of each country and each Government. For our part, in spite of the political, economic and social costs of adjustment programmes, we have taken important measures for adjustment which have made it possible to obtain encouraging results: reduction of the budgetary deficit, increase of the gross national product, and improvement of current accounts and the trade balance.

208. An analysis of the conduct of States Members of the United Nations demonstrates that some see the Organization merely as an idea, an abstraction, and would deny it a role in the promotion of harmonious international relations. But this is a paradox which verges on contradiction. Those very States that would deny an institutional role to the United Nations attach disproportionate importance

to the votes cast here, instead of considering them, if those States wish to be consistent, as having a purely indicative value with regard to a given situation. Others, however, rise above the essentially evanescent nature of ideas and are struggling to confer on the Organization a positive role of vigilance and monitoring which would reflect the international conscience and make of it a true assembly of peoples, a privileged forum for the exchange and clash of ideas and views among nations.

209. Our position on all the questions debated at the United Nations is in keeping with the principles of sovereignty, mutual respect and non-interference. We respect the diversity of opinions and divergence of interests which are manifested in this body. We understand that a country can, without necessarily being hostile to us, adopt a mode of conduct different from our own, because outside the bilateral context it acts in accordance with its own principles, its particular commitments and specific priorities.

210. A member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, we remain true to ourselves by our refusal to become a pawn in the East-West confrontation. Our determined devotion to multilateralism and internationalism reflects our allegiance to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and we share the views and concerns expressed on the subject by the Secretary-General. In the final analysis, the goal of the United Nations, as set forth in the provisions of the Charter, is not to provide a convenient forum for the venting of differences between Member States, or crystallizing their differences; rather, its purpose is to guide us towards the necessary common will to respond to the fundamental aspirations of all our peoples for a world of peace, security and justice. For our part, we assure anyone sharing these views of our readiness and, indeed, our commitment to meet this challenge.

211. Next year we shall be celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. We should mark this event by making of the Organization the symbol of hope for a desperate mankind threatened with sudden annihilation by unbridled technology; the symbol of a better world where man, having finally restored his dignity, will be able to devote himself increasingly to the service of the common good, that is, the good of the peoples; in short, the symbol of responsibility genuinely shared among nations working together for the most noble causes.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

NOTES

¹See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1983*, document S/16041, annex.

²See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 105, document A/5975.

³For the text, see resolution 38/40, para. 1.

⁴*Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.

⁵*Ibid.*, document A/CONF.62/121, annex I.

⁶E/1984/66.

⁷E/1984/110, annex.