



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

**AGENDA ITEM 25**

**The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives: report of the Secretary-General**

1. Mr. MUÑOZ LEDO (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish to express to you, Sir, my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you once again demonstrating the qualities that have made you a great diplomat and that have brought you to the presidency of the General Assembly, as a significant step in your fruitful career.

2. We congratulate you also on having scheduled this debate at such an appropriate time, when the international community can bring all the weight of its political and moral authority to bear on encouraging the immediate endorsement of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [A/39/562, annex], and on counteracting the interventionist and militaristic trends that still prevail.

3. A year ago the General Assembly adopted, by consensus, resolution 38/10, in which it reaffirmed the right of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to decide their own future freely and condemned the acts of aggression against the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Central American countries. The Assembly expressed its firmest support for the efforts of the Contadora Group and urged it to persevere in those efforts. It also urged the States of the region and other States to desist from or to refrain from initiating military operations likely to aggravate the situation and hamper the negotiating process.

4. During the time since the adoption of that resolution, the members of the Contadora Group have been exerting great efforts to promote regional dialogue and to give it material form in a legal instrument expressing political commitments and establishing a basis on which to ensure the stability, peace and progress desired by the peoples of the area.

5. The revised draft of the Contadora Act was the result of intense negotiations. It is a well-balanced synthesis of the legitimate interests of all the Central American Governments. The process of revision, which was concluded on 7 September, demonstrated the primary role played by those Governments in the peaceful settlement of their disputes and made possible the definition and harmonization of common principles and purposes as well as many points

of agreement constituting a consistent framework of understanding.

6. The task undertaken during the past year has been arduous and extremely complex, because it has been carried out in a climate of hostilities, interference, threats, pressures, clandestine operations and armed incidents. It suffices to recall that on three occasions during this period the Security Council has had to meet in order to examine the serious situation in Central America.

7. The provisions of resolution 38/10 that proscribe political pressures and military activities that are contrary to a negotiated solution have not been respected by all States, and, among other things, a considerable increase in the interventionist activities condemned by the Assembly has been noted. My Government has stressed that the negotiating effort has been severely affected by wide-ranging actions that have exacerbated tensions and created mistrust in the region. My Government has stated that increased foreign military presence and overt or covert support to exogenous groups whose purpose is to overthrow established Governments have been obvious obstacles to détente.

8. Our diplomatic tasks have thus been carried out in a paradoxical situation. On the one hand, the Central American peoples' will to peace and the inclination to dialogue of their Governments are increasingly evident and deserve broader support from the international community. On the other hand, strategies of domination that abet the conflicts from outside continue to prevail and are even being strengthened. In those circumstances the results obtained through the Contadora effort and the favourable position taken by the Governments directly concerned should be viewed as extremely valuable and should be given resolute support by the community of States.

9. We trust that the General Assembly will know how to assess the delicate moment in which we now find ourselves and the importance of signing those agreements. They could mark the beginning of a new era for coexistence in Central America and could further encourage the reversal of the regrettable trends that predominate in the international arena and that have made a norm of non-compliance with international law and the violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

10. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Bernardo Sepúlveda, stated in the Assembly [5th meeting] our deep conviction that the Contadora Act faithfully responds to the requirements of stability in the region and called upon Central American Governments to assume, as a matter of urgency, the juridical commitments contained in the Act. He stressed that the final purpose of this instrument is to safeguard the independence of States, to prevent the

continued destruction of human and material resources and to open up opportunities for economic, political and social development through honourable, just and responsible agreements born out of conciliation and not out of imposition. Mr. Sepúlveda also appealed to Governments with ties and interests in the region to lend their unequivocal and clear support in order to bring an end to the arms race and the armaments trade, naval, land and air manoeuvres and the presence of foreign military advisers and bases. He noted that respect by the Central American countries for the agreements reached would inevitably lead other States to assume appropriate obligations.

11. No pretext can be advanced in favour of political and military intervention. The Act recognizes that peace resides not only in the solution of the differences existing among Governments in the region but also in internal stability based on pluralism, on improved participatory democracy, on representative systems and on the promotion of legitimate processes of national reconciliation.

12. These are internal commitments to be entered into by the Central American Governments on the basis of sovereignty in keeping with the principle of the self-determination of peoples, a principle that presupposes non-intervention in the internal affairs of those States. One requirement would be the immediate cessation of all forms of foreign interference in order that peace might be consolidated, and not the inverse, as some would like. What is ultimately at stake is the independence of Central America.

13. The Act further recognizes the right of all States in the region to security based on balance and reciprocity. There is no intention to grant undue advantages to anyone, even less to perpetuate a climate of fear and mistrust. The instrument contains specific, interrelated commitments covering the various causes of breaches of the peace, compliance with which would lead to the attainment of genuine collective security.

14. Among those causes are the deep roots of the Central American crisis, which reach back into a past of colonialism, exploitation and inequity. In that connection the Act recognizes the primary role played in development by institutions for economic integration and provides for a long-range programme to change, with active international co-operation, the living conditions which underlie the conflicts in the region.

15. The instrument encompasses the creation of a Verification and Control Commission for Security Matters, as well as *ad hoc* committees to follow up on political, economic and social affairs. Mechanisms for verification, monitoring and follow-up provided for in the Act fully respond to the problems that have been identified in the course of a lengthy process of negotiation. Of course they can be improved and ways could be found of strengthening them, but that is no valid reason to delay the entry into force of agreements that are essential to the establishment of a new system of relationships among the Central American States. Even less acceptable would be pressures in that regard from centres of power whose responsibility for events in the region is obvious.

16. What is of ultimate importance in an international treaty is the political will to comply with it. That is why we appeal not only for the signature of the Act and the Additional Protocol but primarily for

a sincere commitment on the part of all States to contribute to bringing about an era of peace and prosperity in the region and to cancel a prolonged cycle of hegemonistic ambitions to which is due most of the backwardness and conflict in Central America.

17. The Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group countries turned to the United Nations to promote, within its competent bodies, the support of the international community for the prompt signature of the Act. They reported to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council on the results of their actions and requested the distribution of the revised text of the Act as an official document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council. This was done on 9 October in document A/39/562-S/16775.

18. We thank the Secretary-General for the interested attention he has given to our work and the faithful way in which he has reproduced in his report the data we transmitted to him. We trust that he will use his powers under the Charter and his high political authority to help bring the process to its conclusion. We also hope that the Security Council will respond in a manner in keeping with the seriousness of the situation that we face and the magnitude and significance of this Latin American effort, fully endorsed by its resolution 530 (1983).

19. In the general debate at this session almost all delegations expressed their solidarity with the Contadora Group and support for its efforts and the Act. Not a few of them denounced the acts of aggression against Nicaragua and rejected the various forms of foreign interference in the internal affairs of the Central American countries. We trust that those expressions will be translated into consistent and sustained pressure by the Member States for the attainment of the objective of peace in the area. The Contadora Group is acting on behalf of the international community, not in its place, and it is not our purpose to endorse political passiveness or complacency in the face of injustice.

20. We recognize the extraordinary political value of the ministerial declaration of the non-aligned countries in the part referring to Latin America and the Caribbean. In keeping with its principles, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries said that it was opposed to aggression and interventionism and in favour of diplomatic negotiations aimed at guaranteeing equilibrium and development in Central America, away from the confrontation between the super-Powers.

21. I must stress the relevance of the Conference of Foreign Ministers held at San José on 28 and 29 September last between the member countries of the European Economic Community, Spain and Portugal, the five Central American countries and the countries of the Contadora Group. In addition to the historic significance of the commitment of those nations to the development of Central America, without any intent to interfere or dominate, it is worth mentioning their unconditional support for political solutions coming from the region and their clear rejection of attempts to settle these problems through force.

22. Despite this growing solidarity, certain events have occurred since the Act was delivered to the Central American Governments on 7 September last. The statements made by the interested countries had led us to suppose that the Act would be signed

quickly. However, this has not yet happened, for various reasons and because of events that are well known. International public opinion should not be distracted from our primary objective, which is to establish the basis for a just and lasting peace within an equitable framework that is binding on all.

23. The Contadora Group has persevered in its resolve to complete its two-year effort, which has resulted in the only universally accepted way to reduce tension in the area and bring about progress. Meeting at Madrid on 17 October, the four Foreign Ministers decided that it would be advisable to incorporate the observations made by the Central American countries which contribute—I repeat “contribute”—to greater precision of the language, without attempting to reopen a substantive debate or to change the assumptions and principles which are the basis of the Act.

24. We are certain that the common political will of the Governments of the area will make possible a speedy conclusion of the process. We know that a number of paths can be followed in the search for peace. The dialogue initiated by the Government of El Salvador with representative political forces is a promising step which, furthermore, responds to the urging of the international community. The same is true of the dialogue of Manzanillo, encouraged by the Government of Mexico, between the Republic of Nicaragua and the United States.

25. Contadora has also facilitated mechanisms of détente to prevent bilateral incidents—the case of the border between Nicaragua and Costa Rica is one example—and has taken various initiatives to promote political communication and economic and social co-operation between the countries of the region.

26. All of these steps which contribute to peace could be consolidated and others could be taken if we made a reality as soon as possible of the commitments which are their framework and encouragement, eliminating the presence of foreign forces in the region, which obstruct dialogue, limit sovereignty and distort understanding.

27. It was in that spirit that Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela prepared draft resolution A/39/L.6, which I now have the honour to introduce. The draft resolution urges each of the five Central American Governments to speed up its consultations with the Contadora Group with the aim of bringing to a conclusion the negotiation process with the early signing of the Contadora Act, thereby facilitating full compliance with the commitments provided for in the Act and the entry into force of the various mechanisms for implementation and follow-up. It also urges all States, in particular those with ties to and interests in the region, to respect fully the purposes and principles of the Contadora Act and the commitments undertaken by virtue of their accession to its Additional Protocol. It calls upon the Secretary-General, in accordance with Security Council resolution 530 (1983), to report at regular intervals to the Council on developments in the situation and to submit to the General Assembly, by 15 December 1984 at the latest, a report on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

28. In the light of the unanimous support that the international community has given to the Contadora process, we are certain that this draft resolution, like that of a year ago, will be adopted by consensus.

29. Before I conclude my statement, permit me to refer to the message delivered a few months ago by President Miguel de la Madrid to a joint session of the United States Congress. The head of State of Mexico emphasized then that “Contadora is a Latin American effort to resolve a Latin American problem”, maintained that “dialogue is possible, as is a negotiated solution to the conflicts” and emphatically rejected “without exception, military schemes which would gravely endanger the security and development of the region”. He said:

“Our continent should not be the stage for generalized violence which, as has occurred in other parts of the world, is increasingly difficult to control: it is obvious to our countries that reason and understanding are superior to the illusory effectiveness of force.

“We are convinced that the Central American conflict springs from a lack of economic resources, from political backwardness and from the social injustice which afflict the countries of the area. Consequently we cannot accept that it should be viewed as part of the East-West confrontation and that structural reforms and changes in some countries should be perceived as a threat to the security of the other nations of the hemisphere.”

30. There is still time to avoid the automatic application to our region of the strategies of military escalation that have nurtured the arms race at the global level. There is still time to face up to the real causes of the problems and to resolve them rationally.

31. Peace in Central America could mark the beginning of a broader process of détente, disarmament and peaceful coexistence. Therein lies the ultimate significance of our efforts.

32. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Venezuela on a point of order.

33. Mr. SUCRE-FIGARELLA (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I was very surprised to see that a document is being distributed to representatives that is apparently official and refers to alleged statements by the Foreign Minister of Venezuela on the Contadora Act and the specific situation in Central America. I wish to make it clear that the document was not issued by the Embassy of Venezuela. We do not know where it came from, and I feel that it is serious or significant that such a document could have been distributed without authorization.

34. Secondly, with regard to the text of the document, I wish to state that my country's position has been quite clear, as expressed in the joint communiqué issued on 17 October at Madrid [A/39/604, annex], in which the four Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group affirmed that the revised Contadora Act was an important step in the process of negotiation, but that they also viewed with interest and in a positive light the objections raised by other countries; and that, with a view to reaching an overall solution to the problem, they were willing to meet again to analyse comprehensively the final position *vis-à-vis* the text of the Contadora Act.

35. That is why I wish to make it very clear that the document that has been distributed was not issued by the Embassy of Venezuela and that I am totally unfamiliar with its contents, since I have not received any official information on it from the Government of Venezuela. The official position of the Govern-

ment of Venezuela will be presented by me when I speak next.

36. Mr. CHAMORRO MORA (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Sir, allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Your diplomatic gifts, your firm defence of the principles underlying the Organization and the exemplary tradition of third-world orientation and solidarity of your country's foreign policy are guarantees that you will guide our work in such a way that its results will be a positive contribution to the cause of world peace and stability.

37. During the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, when, at the request of Nicaragua, the agenda item "The situation in Central America: threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives" was discussed for the first time, certain statements had just been made by the President of the United States, among them: "I believe in the right of a country to have recourse to covert action whenever and wherever it considers that such action serves its own interests." At that time our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, resolutely repudiated this imperial concept of the use of covert action, the most concrete manifestations of which have been acts of intervention against independent States through the assassination of political leaders, terrorist attacks against defenceless settlements and destabilizing actions using mercenary forces.

38. With regard to this presidential statement, and because I consider it of the greatest interest, I shall quote a paragraph from Mr. D'Escoto's statement at the thirty-eighth session [47th meeting], because it is closely related to another situation that is being widely discussed and which has caused shame and alarm among the people of the United States and the international community. I am referring to the psychological warfare manual for guerrillas [A/39/596, annex]. Mr. D'Escoto said:

"Therefore what concerns us is not merely Mr. Reagan's words, but the application of that philosophy, which in the final analysis reflects the total departure of the United States from present-day international legal order and from the community of civilized nations. We have felt it important to begin our contribution to the item . . . by referring to what future generations will surely know as 'the Reagan doctrine', because this is precisely where we can find the root cause and essence of the current Central American crisis, which is of such concern to Nicaragua, to the region's peoples and to the world community as a whole." [47th meeting, para. 7.]

39. It is also important to recall, as it is closely related to the political, economic and social crisis in the region and the possibility that it may become a military conflict with regional ramifications, the statement by the representative of the United States in the Security Council, Mrs. Jeane Kirkpatrick, during the debate on the invasion of Grenada: "The prohibitions against the use of force in the United Nations Charter are contextual, not absolute."<sup>1</sup>

40. Today, one year later, we are here again to denounce the policy of State terrorism of the Reagan Administration and to reiterate once again my Government's desire for peace, despite the dirty, undeclared war that we are daily confronted with.

41. We know that we run the risk once again of being accused of sensationalism by the United States, based on allegations that our complaints about a possible direct or indirect invasion are false. The United States is unaware, or tries to be unaware, that it is its indiscriminate aggression, its threats, attacks and hostile actions that have obliged us to turn to the Security Council and to call for the inclusion of the question of Central America on the agenda of the General Assembly. It conceals, or seeks to conceal, the fact that a decision has already been taken to resolve the problems of Central America by military means. I wish to state emphatically that it is our complaints, together with the declarations of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and peace initiatives such as those of the Contadora Group, which have thus far held off this invasion.

42. So many events have taken place this year that they cannot pass unnoticed; they are too important and serious in regard to the present situation in the region for me not to mention them. Anyone would have thought that after the massive efforts to achieve consensus adoption of General Assembly resolution 38/10, Central America would have become an oasis of peace and tranquillity.

43. Unfortunately, words and political commitments can often be solemn, while the reality, in which are reflected the facts and Governments' true leanings and commitments to peace, is just the opposite. What has prevailed in the end has been the implementation of the military alternative and the political decision to resolve the problems of the region by force, regardless of the death and destruction involved, even for the people of the United States itself, and regardless of the danger of the outbreak of a regional war.

44. Since the discussion of the item at the thirty-eighth session and since the early months of this year, the imperial aggression against Nicaragua has not merely continued, but has been stepped up sharply.

45. The buildup of the United States military presence in the waters and on the territory of Central America between January and April 1984 is a matter of public knowledge. Military manoeuvres became permanent, following hard upon one another; the military presence grew considerably and also became permanent; the level of armaments was raised to unprecedented heights; military installations were modernized and new ones were built; training and technical military instruction ceased to be carried out only in the Panama Canal Zone and spread to the regional training centre established in Honduras. There was wide knowledge too of the presence of a greater number of military advisers, in contravention of the executive branch's commitments to the Congress. Moreover, the covert operations carried out by the United States Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] and its mercenaries reached a high level of sophistication; its attacks increased and a series of terrorist actions began, with the goal of assassination, kidnapping and indiscriminate destruction.

46. Early in February 1984, the Security Council met to take up our complaint regarding an incursion into our territory, on 2 February, by six aircraft of the push-and-pull and fighter bomber type, which attacked a unit of the Sandinist People's Army and a civilian communications centre at Volcan Casitas; and regarding an incursion, on 3 February, by undetermined warplanes, which attacked the Ano-

sentillo sector. All these actions took place in the west of our country, specifically in the Chinandega department.

47. On that occasion Nicaragua asserted that these attacks constituted a qualitative leap forward in the war machine directed against our country and emphasized the responsibility of the United States Government. We also put forward specific data about the Big Pine II and Big Pine III military manoeuvres which the United States had been carrying out as a form of threat against our country. We also complained of the construction of a new \$160 million military base and of the permanent presence of United States military personnel on Honduran territory.

48. Barely two months later, on 29 March, we were again obliged to call for a meeting of the Security Council to complain of the accelerated buildup of military operations by CIA mercenaries using aeroplanes, helicopters and speed-boats in their criminal attacks and carrying on an air and naval war which culminated in the mining of Nicaragua's principal Pacific and Atlantic ports. The mining of our ports at that time was not only the ultimate expression of the dirty undeclared war carried out by a great Power against a small country, but was a commercial and economic blockade intended to weaken our economic situation; it endangered the right of free navigation and trade, in violation of Security Council resolutions and of international law. Because of the level of sophistication needed, it also meant the direct involvement of United States citizens working for the CIA and of United States armed forces, who carried out their actions with the use of speed-boats operating from a United States mother-ship on the high seas.

49. With regard to that debate and to the draft resolution sponsored by Nicaragua<sup>2</sup>—which gained 13 votes in favour, 1 abstention and the veto of the United States—it is important to recall that the United States delegation, notwithstanding the consternation and indignation of the international community, avoided a clear response to our complaints, suggesting that this was a problem among Nicaraguans. Then, only a few days later, officials of the Reagan Administration, in response to pressure from international and domestic public opinion, including the press and Congress, publicly admitted—thereby contradicting their United Nations representative—the direct participation of CIA agents through the employment of the methods we had denounced; an action which, as former Vice-President Walter Mondale said recently at the last presidential debate, filled the people of the United States with shame and tore at their conscience.

50. On 9 April 1984, because of increased covert operations by the CIA, we decided to submit an accusation to the International Court of Justice against the United States regarding its criminal policy of State terrorism against the people's Sandinist revolution. On 10 May, at our request, the Court ordered a series of provisional measures. The Court decided, *inter alia*, in paragraph 41.B.2 of its Order, that

“The right to sovereignty and to political independence possessed by the Republic of Nicaragua, like any other State of the region or of the world, should be fully respected and should not in any way be jeopardized by any military and paramili-

tary activities which are prohibited by the principles of international law, in particular, the principle that States should refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or the political independence of any State, and the principle concerning the duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of a State, principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the Charter of the Organization of American States.”<sup>3</sup>

51. It is interesting to note that on 6 April of this year the United States, in view of the perplexity of the international community, transmitted to the Secretary-General a communication in which it sought to disregard the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. That communication, which was submitted three days before Nicaragua submitted to the Court an application against the United States, is one of the many attempts by the United States to evade international law and justice. In this respect, in the presidential debate on 21 October, candidate Mondale said, “We had to decline for the first time in modern history jurisdiction of the World Court because they would find us guilty of illegal actions.”

52. The last time my Government had recourse to the Security Council to complain of imperialist aggression was on 7 September,<sup>4</sup> after the shooting-down of an American-made UH-500 helicopter taking part together with three push-and-pull aircraft in combat operations that cost the lives of two United States citizens, Dana Parker and James Powell, members of the paramilitary group called Civil Military Assistance, which has with impunity been transporting military hardware and taking part in combat alongside President Reagan's “freedom fighters”. As members will recall, those deaths caused a considerable stir in the United States, and a number of investigations were carried out by the United States press, which found that that group had broad freedom of movement notwithstanding the fact that several months earlier it had been under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

53. Also on 7 September, the United States representative said in the Security Council, “The United States has not sent personnel to Nicaragua in order to destabilize its régime.” To make it clear, I repeat, the United States has not sent personnel to Nicaragua in order to destabilize its régime. He also said, “I shall conclude by stating once more that the United States is not trying to overthrow the Sandinist Government.” That declaration astonished us, because we could see how they were publicly conducting discussions on different variants related to their secret war.

54. In order to repudiate such affirmations, by way of example I shall simply refer to some of the replies given by the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan, in the recent presidential debate. Referring to the CIA manual he stated:

“We have a gentleman down in Nicaragua who is on contract to the CIA advising supposedly on military tactics, the Contras. And he drew up this manual. It was turned over to the agency head of the CIA in Nicaragua to be printed.”

Let me repeat that so that members can see clearly the contradictions between the statements of the representatives of the United States here in the General Assembly or the Security Council and the statements of its President and its principal spokes-

men: "We have a gentleman down in Nicaragua who is on contract to the CIA advising supposedly on military tactics, the Contras. And he drew up this manual. It was turned over to the agency head of the CIA in Nicaragua to be printed."

55. During the past year we heard on many occasions statements by President Reagan and his Administration opposing terrorism. They have posed as international arbiters on this matter in order to determine, indicate and judge that anything that in their opinion deserves the name is terrorism. If knowledge and use of terrorism by a State were necessary qualifications for the role of arbiter, we would have no doubt that the present Administration of the United States could carry out that role better than any other Government, person or organization. Of the long list of criminal acts carried out by the Reagan Administration against my country through the CIA, some have come to light. Two of the most important are the responsibility of the CIA for exploding oil dumps in our main Pacific port, Corinto, and its responsibility for and direct participation in the mining of our principal ports in March. These facts make it quite clear who is telling the truth and who is denying or hiding it; who is the victim of aggression and who is the aggressor; who is using political means of self-defence and who is using terrorist methods of attack.

56. National and international public opinion learnt with indignation of the preparation and distribution of a document entitled "Psychological Operations in Guerrilla Warfare". That manual, drafted by the CIA for the mercenary gangs that every day kill Nicaraguans, is a manual of instruction giving guidance for the perpetration of crimes against the Nicaraguan people and their leaders and encouraging kidnapping, assassination and even the contracting of hired killers. The authorship of the document is no longer in doubt. All levels of the present Administration, including President Reagan himself, have accepted it unblushingly. To that we must add as background that, according to recent information in the American press, assistants to CIA Director William Casey and to the United States representative to the United Nations, Mrs. Jeane Kirkpatrick, discussed in 1982 the need for a manual of this kind.

57. We maintain and vehemently insist that the preparation of that manual must not be seen as an isolated, insignificant fact. The manual is nothing less than the printed version of the philosophy of the present Government of the most powerful nation on Earth; it is the measure of its moral stature, the most eloquent expression of its repudiation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and its latest assessment of respect for the norms of its own law and the international legal order.

58. However, I would not claim to be alone in describing that shameful conduct, because United States citizens in the ruling circles of that country have also taken on this task. Congressman Edward Boland described it as repugnant and a disaster for United States foreign policy, also asserting that the manual was evidence that the secret dirty war against Nicaragua is intended not to halt the alleged arms traffic to El Salvador but to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government. Senator Christopher Dodd said, "This Administration has been vociferous in its denunciation of State terrorism, but this document makes that position a mockery. If this is not State

terrorism, I do not know what is." Senator Claiborne Pell said, "The Administration has launched an aggressive anti-terrorist campaign and at the same time seems to have become involved in the very terrorist activities that we condemn elsewhere." Congressman Thomas Downey said, "If the position of our Government is that it employs killers, this is opposed to the position of the President and to the condemnation of terrorism."

59. I wish to present to the members of the General Assembly the following questions, which each can answer according to his own convictions. Is this or is it not State terrorism? Is it or is it not in conformity with the laws of the United States itself and with its international commitments?

60. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has on innumerable occasions made emphatic appeals for the cessation of aggression against the Central American peoples and in particular against Nicaragua. This year, after the mining of our principal ports, an urgent meeting of the Movement's Co-ordinating Bureau condemned the laying of mines and urged that there be an immediate end to all foreign military manoeuvres and activities in the territories and along the coasts of Central America, the establishment of foreign military bases and all threats, attacks and hostile acts against Nicaragua. Subsequently, at the meeting of ministers and heads of delegation held in New York from 1 to 5 October this year, these concerns and denunciations were reiterated, and it was pointed out that the events of the past year, particularly those involving air and naval combat, resulting in the death of thousands of Nicaraguans and heavy economic losses and with the objective of destabilizing and toppling the Government of Nicaragua, increased the danger of a regional war.

61. The non-aligned countries did not confine themselves on either occasion to detailing foreign military activities and acts of aggression against Nicaragua. On both occasions our Movement quite clearly pointed out that those acts were contrary to the spirit of the peace-making efforts of the countries of the region and that they were obstructing the dialogue necessary for a negotiated and political solution to the problems of the region.

62. This clear position of our Movement in drawing attention to the true obstacle to the attainment of long-overdue peace in our region should give the rest of the international community reason for reflection. Exactly a year ago in the debate here we pointed out that the other process, the anti-Contadora and anti-dialogue process, was rapidly gaining ground. This process is explained in the words of United States Under-Secretary of Defense Fred Ikle when he says that the negotiations are not sufficient to resolve the problems and conflicts in the Central American region but that a military victory is necessary. This concept must be ended and replaced by a genuine commitment which will go beyond words, put an end once and for all to war in Central America and support the Contadora Group and the non-aligned countries in their quest for peace.

63. The crucial date in the history of the peace-making process which was started two years ago by the Contadora Group was 9 September 1983, when the Document of Objectives,<sup>5</sup> containing the 21 points constituting the basis for peace negotiations in Central America, was formulated. Within that framework Nicaragua made an official proposal entitled

“Legal basis for guaranteeing the international peace and security of the States of Central America”. Furthermore, last year Nicaragua decided to request the General Assembly to include on its agenda the item we are now discussing. On that occasion we ran into firm opposition from those who felt that gunboats were the only means of opening the way to peace. They argued, in this connection, that our initiative was designed merely to destroy the effectiveness of the Contadora Group and to block approval by the Central American countries of the Document of Objectives.

64. Notwithstanding all the false and obscure warnings fabricated in connection with the inclusion of this item, the results proved once more that Nicaragua was right, and the objective for which my country has worked tenaciously was achieved. The international community as a whole responded by giving its support to General Assembly resolution 38/10, which in practice meant universal political support for the Contadora Group and the cause of peace in the Central American region.

65. There were similar circumstances and accusations during the discussion of this issue in the Security Council, which met at Nicaragua's request, which led to the adoption by consensus of resolution 530 (1983). But those were not the only two occasions on which Nicaragua supported the efforts of the Contadora Group. Every act and every peace initiative by the Nicaraguan Government was designed to achieve that end. In that spirit, under the auspices of the Contadora Group, a joint Costa Rican-Nicaraguan verification commission was established, which has been a useful instrument in dealing with border problems, exchanging information and verifying acts committed by counter-revolutionary elements which jeopardize relations between our two brother countries. In the same spirit, we have repeatedly made proposals for direct dialogue with the Honduran authorities which, without pre-conditions of any sort, would make it possible to establish a basis for agreements guaranteeing relations of co-operation and mutual respect between the two countries. The purpose of this is no secret, nor is it difficult to explain. We are a young revolution which is threatened and subjected to aggression by a great Power, a revolution which every day pays with the blood of its best sons the price of its survival.

66. It is our deepest belief, therefore, that only a genuine regional effort, such as that initiated two years ago by the countries of the Contadora Group and which enjoys the resolute support of the international community, will make it possible to find a way to avoid a tragic repetition of history and bring about a new period of intracontinental and intraregional relations.

67. This year, the second year of Contadora, the efforts of that Group have continued with greater intensity, culminating in the Contadora Act for Peace and Co-operation in Central America, of 7 September 1984 [A/39/562, annex]. That Act is the outcome of a lengthy and intense process of consultations and negotiations with the Central American Governments, and it represents a transcendental step and the fulfilment of the arduous peace-making efforts of the Contadora Group.

68. Nicaragua, having thoroughly studied the document, and setting national interests aside for the sake of peace in the region, notified the Contadora Group

of its full willingness to sign the Contadora Act immediately and without any reservations or modifications.

69. Immediately after my Government's announcement, the United States State Department made known its observations on the Act and since that time has carried out an intensive campaign of pressure designed to reopen substantive discussions and thus delay the signing of the Act. Everyone is aware that these delaying tactics have no other purpose than to impose upon Nicaragua unacceptable conditions and to wait for a politically more favourable time in order to strike a sudden blow without the obstacle of political and legal commitments already entered into. Fortunately, the member countries of the Contadora Group are fully aware of the danger involved in this kind of position and have publicly stated the need for a prompt signing of the Act after the text has been refined in a manner which does not involve reopening substantive discussions. This point was reiterated in the joint communiqué issued at Madrid on 17 October by the Contadora Group Ministers [A/39/604, annex]. It is necessary that now, at a time so decisive for peace in Central America, the whole community of nations should close ranks with the Contadora countries and not allow manoeuvres alien to the cause of peace to prevail and prevent the prompt conclusion of the commitments contained in the Act of 7 September.

70. If the Government of the United States truly supports the peace-making process in the area undertaken by the Contadora Group and now in its final phase, as it had maintained until days before the announcement of immediate and unreserved acceptance of the Act by Nicaragua, the United States today has an opportunity to confirm its position by announcing its willingness to support the Additional Protocol to the Act for all those countries desirous of contributing to peace and co-operation in Central America. Only such an attitude can turn into reality a type of support which, with some justification, has been viewed with the suspicion that it is designed merely as electoral rhetoric for domestic consumption.

71. We welcome the statement of those European countries which, on the occasion of the Conference of Foreign Ministers held at San José on 28 and 29 September between the countries of the European Economic Community, Spain and Portugal and the Contadora and Central American countries, announced their willingness to pledge their support for peace in Central America by signing that Additional Protocol. The debate on this item today is an excellent opportunity for the United States also to reiterate its commitment to peace in Central America and do likewise, in other words, to state its decision to sign the Additional Protocol.

72. This year, unlike the previous session of the Assembly, the member countries of the Contadora Group have taken the initiative of preparing and presenting a draft resolution [A/39/L.6] focusing on the peace-making efforts of the four countries and stating their points of view on the crucial moment which the process has now reached, trying to win the broadest support from the international community for the prompt completion of the process. This draft resolution, we believe, coincides with our viewpoint on this matter, and in this respect my delegation wishes to state its most vigorous support for it and to encourage the entire community of nations to state in

the same way their support for the work of the Contadora members, support which is essential at this moment for the prompt signature and ratification of the agreements contained in the Act of 7 September. Therefore we hope the international community, echoing the words of Mr. Muñoz Ledo, representative of Mexico, will now be in a position to support this draft resolution by consensus.

73. We believe that there is a long and exhaustive list of facts and arguments which show that the dangers have not been eliminated and that the gravity of the situation persists—as can be seen, for example, in paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's recent report [A/39/562]. In a manner contrary to the efforts of the Contadora Group, the United States continues to carry out large-scale military manoeuvres in the region, and threats and attacks continue against the sovereignty and independence of Nicaragua. We believe that this policy of aggression which the United States is continuing against my country, in violation of all international norms and principles and which has cost thousands of Nicaraguan lives and millions of dollars in losses, must be brought to an end. This incontrovertible fact is what has prompted my Government to submit a draft resolution [A/39/L.7] designed to win the broadest support, in the hope that the international uproar will lead those responsible for this war of extermination against our people to review the matter. This draft resolution, we believe, does not go beyond what has already been accepted by everybody and asks for only one thing, that is, the end of aggression against Nicaragua. We therefore hope that the clear, resolute support of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the international community will constitute a firm expression of their determination to bring about peace in the region and the cessation of aggression against my country through a favourable vote for draft resolution A/39/L.7.

74. In conclusion, I wish to state emphatically that the international community has reached a time when positions have to be properly defined in relation to matters of concern to the whole of mankind and also to the grave crisis afflicting Central America. In this respect, the international community has to decide whether it is going to choose peace and contribute to peace by the adoption by consensus of the Contadora process and the adoption of the draft resolution of Nicaragua, or whether it is going to allow the spectre of regional war to approach and, by remaining indifferent to the war situation in our region, have to answer to future generations. We hope—and we are certain—that the Members of the United Nations, the members of the international community and the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries will choose peace.

75. Mr. AL-ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The importance of the debate on the situation in Central America is highlighted by the attention given to the political and military situation in that region by the majority of countries during the general debate at this session. The ministers and heads of delegation of non-aligned countries attending the thirty-ninth session have expressed, in the final communiqué [A/39/560, annex] adopted at their meeting held from 1 to 5 October, their profound concern that, in spite of the appeals of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and of the General Assembly, the situation in Central America has deteriorated dangerously as a result of increasing

recourse to imperialist policies of intervention through the use of the territories of some States for acts of aggression against their neighbours, the establishment of military bases and overt and covert attempts to destabilize the Nicaraguan Government by such means as mining its principal harbours, in violation of international law, as well as multiple acts of aggression, pressure and economic sabotage perpetrated against the countries of the region.

76. My delegation would like to reaffirm a number of very important points which must be taken into account in evaluating the situation in Central America. They can be summarized as follows.

77. First, the Foreign Minister of my country, in his statement before the General Assembly on 27 September 1984, said:

“We support the efforts of the Contadora Group to establish peace and stability in Central America, free of the influence and interference of the United States in the internal affairs of the region, and call on the United Nations to concentrate its efforts in support of the peoples of the region in their struggle against this intervention.” [11th meeting, para. 399.]

78. We reaffirm our conviction that the Contadora Group initiative constitutes the best path towards a political settlement in Central America. This initiative and the intensified efforts deployed by the Contadora Group for the past two years have won the support of the Security Council in its resolution 530 (1983) and of the General Assembly in its resolution 38/10. The Secretary-General, in his report on the situation in Central America [A/39/562], has underlined the special importance of the Contadora Group's efforts. Those efforts have come to fruition in the Contadora Act on Peace and Cooperation in Central America, which was issued in September 1984 and which constitutes the best peaceful means of arriving at a political settlement in the region.

79. It is important to point out that Nicaragua has agreed to abide by that Act in its entirety, without any reservation. We call on the remaining States in the region to follow Nicaragua's example. We also find that the determination of the States to bring about peace and co-operation in Central America is linked to their commitment to the Act and the guaranteeing of its full implementation. At this session we must reaffirm once again our support for the Contadora Group's efforts and unmask and condemn all attempts to impede and circumvent it through pressure on the countries to abandon their commitment to it.

80. Secondly, at the same time as we reaffirm the right of all countries in the region to peace, self-determination and the free choice of their future without any foreign intervention under any spurious pretext, we reaffirm that peace in the region will not be achieved unless there is respect for the right of Nicaragua to sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence. This condition will not be attained while Nicaragua faces the perils and aggressions and threats arising from the escalating covert and overt military activities carried out and financed by the American Administration in violation of the principle of the non-use of force in international relations. The presence of military bases and the carrying out of military manoeuvres in the region and the training for and organizing and financing of



military acts of sabotage by mercenaries in order to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government have become matters known to all. Responsible officials in the American Administration have themselves affirmed their involvement in them. The recently published CIA documents reveal some of the dimensions of these operations, including the carrying out of political assassinations in Nicaragua.

81. These activities are not new. The record of the United States and the CIA in Cuba, Chile and Guatemala and the invasion and occupation of Grenada all underline the continuation of this aggressive policy and intervention in the internal affairs of other States. Democratic Yemen condemns the aggressive policies and practices aimed at undermining the independence and sovereignty of Nicaragua. Once again we reaffirm our solidarity with and support for the Government and people of Nicaragua under the leadership of the Sandinist revolution. We call on the international community to redouble its support to Nicaragua in consolidating its independent economic and social development, to secure the success of the elections which will take place on 4 November and thwart all attempts to impede the holding of those elections, and to take urgent and effective practical measures to face the aggressive and subversive activities which are contrary to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and which increase the threat of war in the region. There is a need to intensify the dialogue with a view to reaching a political solution to the problems of the region. We call upon the American Administration to abide by the text of the Order of the International Court of Justice issued on 10 May 1984.<sup>3</sup>

82. Thirdly, the meeting of ministers and heads of delegation of the non-aligned countries has emphasized the need to arrive at a comprehensive political settlement in El Salvador through negotiations and with the participation of all political forces which represent the Salvadorian people, including the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front-Revolutionary Democratic Front. With their aspiration for a comprehensive political settlement of their worsening internal conditions caused by imperialist intervention in their internal affairs, the Salvadorian revolutionaries responded positively in agreeing to engage in a dialogue with the Government with the goal of ending the civil war and establishing peace and stability in El Salvador.

83. While we welcome the opening of a dialogue for a comprehensive peaceful settlement in El Salvador and the assurances by the parties that they will pursue the negotiating process, we see the need for such negotiations to achieve fruitful and positive results that will allow the Salvadorian people to enjoy stability. We warn against all imperialist attempts which seek to impede a political solution to the problem and to maintain the option of a military solution, which they have thus far failed to achieve.

84. In conclusion, we hope that the debate at this session on the situation in Central America will lead to positive results that will advance the process of a political settlement in Central America and lead to a relaxation of tension in that region, thereby serving the interests of its people as well as peace and international security.

85. Mr. KRISHNAN (India): It was almost a year ago that the General Assembly adopted by consensus

resolution 38/10 on the important item that we are once again considering today. That resolution was the product of prolonged and painstaking efforts, notably on the part of the Member States of the Contadora Group—Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—directed towards reconciling differences of perception and approach and evolving a consensus in the Assembly. It also reflected an admirable spirit of flexibility and compromise on the part of the States concerned, particularly those most directly affected by the serious situation in the area.

86. The adoption of resolution 38/10 by consensus was perceived by many of us, at least by the more optimistic among us, as the possible harbinger of peace and stability in a region afflicted by tension, instability and strife for many decades. We had hoped that the efforts of the Contadora Group, bolstered by the unanimous support of the international community, would progress rapidly to a successful conclusion. It was also our hope that the spirit of accommodation embodied in resolution 38/10 would be reflected in the situation on the ground.

87. The report of the Secretary-General on this item [A/39/562] provides an up-to-date picture of the developments during the last year. The comprehensive statement of the representative of Mexico has provided us with relevant and significant information concerning the evolution and culmination of the Contadora process. Undoubtedly, the untiring endeavours of the Contadora Group and the degree of progress that these efforts have achieved are more than the proverbial silver lining in the cloud; indeed, a month ago many of us were led to believe that these endeavours were on the point of achieving final success and that all that remained was the signing of the revised Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America. Regrettably, however, as recent developments have made it clear, final agreement is so near and yet so far. As one reaches out to grasp it, it seems to recede farther.

88. Even while the degree of success registered by the Contadora efforts are cause for optimism and hope, the situation on the ground has remained a matter of serious concern. We have heard this morning the important statement by the representative of Nicaragua, who has once again informed the Assembly, in vivid and lucid terms, of the threats and pressures, the trials and tribulations to which his country continues to be subjected. During the past year, we have been witness to a ceaseless flurry of accusations and counter-accusations regarding incidents of interference and intervention, of aggressive and provocative acts, of the threat or use of force. Three times this year—six times in the last two years—the Security Council has met to consider complaints by Nicaragua. The mining of Nicaraguan ports and harbours early this year, on which the Security Council was prevented from taking a decision, was the subject of an order by the International Court of Justice of 10 May 1984, in which the Court upheld the Nicaraguan claim and indicated certain provisional measures.

89. Instability, strife and tension are not new to Central America; successive generations in that part of the world have not known what it is like to live in peace and to be left to determine one's own destiny free of external pressures, interference or intervention. The causes of instability in Central America are rooted as much in endemic socio-economic problems as in the propensity of those outside the region to

meddle in its affairs; the latter has only served, in the course of time, to aggravate the already serious latent socio-economic maladies rather than to ameliorate the problem. Contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations [*resolution 2625 (XXV), annex*] and the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States [*resolution 36/103, annex*] policies and acts of intervention and interference have increased. The level of confrontation and conflict has grown to alarming proportions and poses a serious threat to peace and security.

90. That the situation in Central America remains a matter of grave concern to the international community is manifest from the fact that the ministers or heads of delegation of as many as 68 Member States found it necessary to lay stress on it in the general debate of this session of the General Assembly. As for the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, it has followed developments in the region with particular attention. At their meeting held in New York from 1 to 5 October the ministers and heads of delegation of the non-aligned countries to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly

“recalled the concern expressed at the Seventh Non-aligned Summit in New Delhi at the increasing deterioration of the situation in Central America and the hope expressed at the Summit that a cessation of military manoeuvres or demonstrations of force would help reduce tension and facilitate the necessary dialogue for the achievement of political and negotiated solutions of the problems of the region” [*A/39/560, para. 81*].

Later on in the final communiqué the ministers and heads of delegation:

“expressed the view that new developments since the last Ministerial Meeting, which are mainly manifested in the developments of an aerial and naval war, resulting in the deaths of thousands of Nicaraguans and heavy economic losses with the objective of destabilizing and toppling the Government of Nicaragua, increase the dangers of a regional war and obstruct the dialogue necessary for a negotiated and political solution to the problems of the region” [*ibid., para. 82*].

The ministers and heads of delegation further “called for an immediate end to all threats, attacks and hostile acts against the people and Government of Nicaragua” [*ibid., para. 83*].

91. I can do no better than to reiterate this position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries with regard to the situation that confronts Nicaragua, a fellow non-aligned country with which India enjoys ties of friendship and co-operation.

*Mr. Abdul Kadir (Malaysia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

92. In El Salvador important developments have taken place in recent weeks. We welcome the dialogue initiated between the Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation-Revolutionary Democratic Front and the Government. It is a matter of concern, however, that the armed internal conflict has continued unabated and even intensified. We hope that violence and conflict will abate in the coming weeks and that the parties concerned will pursue their dialogue with a view to achieving a comprehensive

political settlement that would bring lasting peace based on justice and respect for human rights.

93. Few would disagree that the problems of Central America can be resolved only by political means. We believe that the efforts of the Contadora Group represent a unique attempt at finding regional and negotiated solutions by and among the countries of Latin America. To quote once again from the final communiqué of the recently held ministerial meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries:

“The ministers and heads of delegation expressed their conviction that the Contadora process represents a genuine regional initiative and the best opportunity to achieve a solution to the crisis through political means. They noted with satisfaction the progress achieved so far towards a solution, and that the elaboration of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, of 7 September 1984, . . . is a fundamental stage in the culmination of the negotiating process for the attainment of peace in the region.” [*Ibid., para. 84*].

94. As I mentioned earlier in my statement, many of us who have been following closely the evolving scenario with regard to the Contadora efforts were convinced that the revised version of the Contadora Act was, for all practical purposes, an agreed document. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report, the Ministers of the Contadora Group had indicated to him that the revised version of the Act was the result of a process of intensive consultations and exchange of views with all the Central American countries and reflected an effort to integrate the various contributions and reconcile those aspects on which divergencies remained. It is to Nicaragua's credit that it agreed to subscribe immediately and without reservations to this Act. It is one of the strange ironies of the situation that its ready and willing response should evoke not the praise that it deserves but suspicion of its motives. We hope that the other countries involved, which have closely participated in the elaboration of the Act, will not be left behind in accepting the Act. We should like to echo the call made in the draft resolution submitted by the Contadora Group [*A/39/L.6*], urging each of the Governments of the Central American countries to speed up its consultations with the Contadora Group with the aim of bringing to a conclusion the negotiation process with the early signing of that Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America, thereby facilitating full compliance with the commitments provided for in the Act and the entry into force of the various mechanisms for implementation and follow-up.

95. In this connection, I should like to invite the Assembly's attention to the joint communiqué issued by the Foreign Ministers of States members of the Contadora Group after their recent meeting at Madrid of 17 October [*A/39/604, annex*]. They have agreed on the desirability of incorporating those observations made by the Central American States which could contribute to giving greater precision to what is enunciated in the Act without modifying the balance achieved in the document. We hope that further consultations will be conducted in this spirit so that the Act can come into force as early as possible.

96. The situation in Central America remains a matter of grave international concern—concern fully

shared by the Government and people of India. We in India may be geographically remote from the area but, like the rest of the world community, we have a vital stake in international peace and security as well as in respect for the fundamental purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and basic norms of international conduct. Peace, stability and progress cannot rest on the quicksand of policies based on interference and intervention, on the use or threat of use of force or the imposition from outside of ways of life or systems of government; they must be built on the foundation of an acceptance of popular aspirations, expressed through democratic institutions and processes, of a pluralism of values and systems, of good-neighbourliness, of political dialogue and peaceful coexistence. Any other way must surely fail.

97. The Contadora Group has made a remarkable contribution in clarifying the atmosphere in the region and confirming the validity of these principles. The Act elaborated by the Contadora Group represents a dynamic, constructive and forward-looking approach. It will be an act of farsighted statesmanship to adopt it as the framework for establishing a new era of co-operative relations in the region. We call upon all the Governments concerned to seize this opportunity, because it may not come again.

98. Mr. ALBÁN-HOLGUÍN (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The support of the international community, voiced by 120 representatives during the Assembly's general debate, has encouraged us and motivated us to pursue the struggle for peace in Central America. My Government expresses its gratitude for the generous words spoken here about the task of the Contadora Group and for the important statements made with regard to solutions for Central America. Now that the general debate has concluded, it is appropriate to review which fundamental principles everyone supports, which steps have been taken in the Contadora Group, the present status of the activities for peace, and what the final effort should be to ensure that harmony flourishes in the region.

99. The President of Colombia, Mr. Belisario Betancur, gave the following interpretation of the task of the Contadora Group at the thirty-eighth session:

"Central America is an example of structural problems which must be solved by its peoples, and by them alone, within the sovereign framework of their genuine aspirations and their institutions. This is the purpose of the actions of the Contadora Group, which seeks to meet a need in the process of bringing peace to the region. It takes as a basis the common objectives of Mexico, Venezuela, Panama and Colombia, together with the firm support of all Central American countries, in working for conditions of freedom in which each country may determine its own future.

"Violence, tensions, incidents, underdevelopment and injustice are all symptoms of a crisis in which coexistence and self-determination have been forgotten and which sees the super-Powers shamelessly interfering in lands where peasants leave the sowing of seeds to take up unfamiliar weapons—and to dig their own graves." [19th meeting, paras. 34 and 35.]

100. In a joint work which the world knows as the Contadora philosophy, the heads of State of the four countries, with the co-operation of their foreign

ministers and advisers, made a diagnosis, asked for understanding among the parties, sought dialogue, suggested agreements, submitted compromise formulas and knocked at the doors of the powerful, asking for their understanding of our thinking and their support of our efforts.

101. In that context, in July 1983 the Presidents of Mexico, Panama, Venezuela and Colombia signed the Cancún Declaration on Peace in Central America,<sup>6</sup> which formally opened the Contadora process, and in September of the same year the Foreign Ministers of those countries presented the Document of Objectives,<sup>5</sup> with the active participation of the Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. The heads of State of those five countries welcomed the Document a few days later. The overriding tenet of that instrument was that the observance of the principles of international and American law had to govern and condition the actions of the Contadora Group and of States. Special emphasis was placed on the self-determination of peoples, on non-intervention, on the sovereign equality of States, on the peaceful settlement of disputes, on refraining from the threat or use of force, on respect for the territorial integrity of States, on pluralism in all its manifestations, on the full functioning of democratic institutions, on the promotion of social justice, on international co-operation for development, on respect for and the promotion of human rights and the prohibition of terrorism and subversion.

102. During the successive talks, dialogues, statements, negotiations, meetings, visits and speeches throughout the year, those principles have been held to be the general and comprehensive basis of all actions. In other words, they have been regarded as something indivisible. Some cannot be selected and others discarded; rather, all form a solid structure on which peace in Central America will be built.

103. Finally, on 7 September of this year the Foreign Ministers sent to the Presidents of the Central American countries the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America [A/39/562, annex]. In the message transmitting that document it was explained that the revised version of the Act was the result of a process of intensive consultations and a broad exchange of views with all the Central American Governments, which made useful contributions towards revising and improving the Act and facilitating consensus that could lead to the adoption of legal commitments binding on all parties. The Ministers also pointed out the imperative need for other Governments with interests and ties in the region to respect the right to self-determination of the peoples of Central America and to undertake to replace force with negotiation, understanding and co-operation among all Central American Governments.

104. The Act sets forth basic priorities for action in the economic and social fields, without which any peace effort would be nugatory and short-lived. The document notes the need to restore confidence in the area. We understand that only confidence can create lasting bases for dialogue and co-operation among nations. It also sets forth the factors that are the root causes of destabilization, and it creates, *inter alia*, a Verification and Control Commission for Security Matters to ascertain compliance with its objectives.

105. Following completion of the first peace-keeping stage, the Act urges addressing the processes of social change designed to rescue Central America from its long period of discontent, injustice and structural poverty. In this connection, very significant and useful steps have been taken, such as the dialogue that took place on 28 and 29 September at San José among the Foreign Ministers of the countries of the European Economic Community, Spain and Portugal, the five countries of Central America and the four countries of the Contadora Group. The joint communiqué of those Foreign Ministers [A/39/539, annex] is a model of optimism and balance with regard to the affairs of the region.

106. After the Act was submitted to the Central American Governments for study, a process of adjustment and review was begun to consider the concerns expressed by those Governments. In a joint communiqué issued at Madrid on 17 October [A/39/604, annex], the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group announced their satisfaction at having received from the Central American Governments expressions of their willingness to sign the Contadora Act as soon as possible. In that connection, the five Governments of the region made clear their positions, and their observations will be very useful in concluding the present stage of the process and in refining the instrument proposed. The Ministers agreed on the advisability of incorporating the comments of the Central American countries which would contribute to a greater precision of the language of the document without altering the balance achieved therein.

107. The draft resolution in document A/39/L.6, which was submitted by the four member countries of the Contadora Group, attempts to summarize the statements made here by representatives of the various States. It strives to lend very necessary support to the peace effort, which is at its most crucial stage, and urges the Central American States to welcome the terms of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America once the review process has been concluded. Colombia requests that that draft resolution be adopted by consensus.

108. The member countries of the Contadora Group are proud of their work, for they know that they did not betray either the hopes of the peoples of Central America or those of the world community. Colombia expresses great satisfaction with the peace talks that have begun in El Salvador, and it will lend its support that they may be successful.

109. The profound concepts contained in the Contadora Act will make them a positive contribution to international law. Armistices almost always occur when one of the parties to the conflict is the victor and the other the vanquished, and the terms generally reflect the will of the victor. In the Contadora Act we find neither; it strives to achieve a broad reconciliation in order to arrive at negotiated solutions to the differences in that it joins fundamental values with a realistic approach. The Act includes provisions for political commitments, security matters, economic and social affairs and for the implementation and follow-up of its provisions.

110. Colombia has always put its trust in the effectiveness of dialogue and negotiation, even in circumstances in which serious periods of confusion and violence prevail. It is pleased to note that the Act

institutionalizes those principles with a view to understanding and coexistence. That will create a vital factor for order in relations among the States of the region and for the maintenance of peace and security.

111. Thus the diplomatic mission of dialogue is fulfilled by bringing all the interested parties to the negotiating table. From the beginning, that was the concern of the Contadora Group—to give an example of patience and dedication so as to leave no room for doubt, despair or indifference.

112. In the Central American region the process of economic and social development has been thwarted by a long-standing system of social injustice that has prevailed in some areas of the region and that has been a breeding-ground for armed movements and violent confrontations. There was a time when mercenaries took advantage of that state of affairs, plundering wealth and then fleeing, or when dictators were set up in the region by foreign countries.

113. The economy of Central America took a more satisfactory turn in the years after the Second World War, with annual growth rates of over 5 per cent, but in recent years the cost of fuel, high interest rates, the closing of foreign markets and their deterioration and the low sales price of domestic products have led to a serious crisis that weighs heavily upon all the countries of the region. The Central American people need economic aid and do not understand why they do not receive it, bearing in mind that, since their population is not an overwhelming burden for any system, resources in friendly countries could be offered to them.

114. The political and economic crises made possible the exploitation of a situation that had been brewing for some time, under the covetous gaze of those who always take advantage of turbulent situations.

115. For two years the Governments of the Contadora Group have devoted their determined efforts to consolidating democratic institutions, stimulating the economy, restoring social justice, confirming the right to self-determination and returning peace to the area. We have not been motivated by the selfish desire to dominate, by the vanity of the rulers, by the lust for wealth or by the desire for preferential treatment. We wanted to take part in this crusade for peace simply because we wish to help countries that are our neighbours and friends to find tranquillity, prosperity, happiness, freedom and peace.

116. When the Contadora Group completes its task it will have the satisfaction of knowing that the Central American countries will be the masters of their own destiny. But the seriousness and complexity of the current problems forces us to give careful attention to the matter and to be continually vigilant, since a setback would increase tensions to their worst levels yet.

117. Of all the conflicts in the world recorded year after year at the United Nations, the only one to which a solution has been found through a serious legal instrument in less than two years from the beginning of the process is that of Central America. No one has cast doubt on the pure intentions of the Contadora leaders, who decided to involve their countries in the quest for peace. As President Betancur has said, our continent “wishes to be a territory not of confrontation but of reconciliation. We do not aspire to the privilege of being the setting for the

destruction of one or another. Rather, we wish to see conflicts settled by peaceful means, in the civilized way of mutual recognition of the inherent rights of man, which is the emblem and the strength of the Contadora Group”.

118. Personalities and international organizations, including the United Nations, Pope John Paul II, the European Parliament, the Organization of American States, the Foreign Ministers and heads of delegation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and almost all speakers at this session of the Assembly have expressed their sympathy with the Contadora effort. We thank them and accept what they have said at its true value.

119. Some have shown impatience over the gradual steps required at every stage—consultations, agreements, compromises and understandings. But we have all understood that the best endeavours of the Group have touched on the essential difficulties and offered procedures for solution. It is to be hoped that the events of these times will not be viewed as bitter struggles between brothers but as periods of necessary compromise in a region where the population seeks sincerely and tenaciously its integration, the active exercise of peace and the change to serious democracies where freedom and human rights are respected.

120. Now that it is about to conclude another of the crucial stages of its work, the Contadora Group will rise above everyday difficulties, since it is convinced that it will see prosperity and justice flourish and will help find the tortuous road to peace in a region that is very close to our hearts, a road that does not begin or end with us but towards which our generation has a serious commitment and bears a heavy responsibility.

121. Mr. SUCRE-FIGARELLA (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Venezuela, a member of the Contadora Group, attaches great importance to this debate on the situation in Central America. On this specific topic, few actions have been so relevant as those carried out for almost two years by the countries—Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—grouped under the generic name “Contadora”.

122. Knowing that the complex conflicts in Central America are a threat to the security of all, our countries decided, with a true historical vocation and independence of mind, to undertake this peace initiative. Nobody can deny that it is a positive contribution to the development of international relations, designed to help sister countries confronted with a series of disputes fraught with dangerous consequences. We regard those countries in the same spirit and with the same understanding; I refer to Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

123. It is therefore not surprising that we should take the opportunity of this debate to tell all the members of the international community represented here the present situation with regard to the efforts to bring peace to Central America.

124. The best testimony to our determination is draft resolution A/39/L.6, presented to the Assembly by the four member countries of the Contadora Group, which most of you have been able to read. Its terms are clear and are not open to biased interpretation. We wish the world to know that the hard work done over many months of constant meetings and

last-minute, exhausting travelling is now about to reach its conclusion. The Secretary-General recognizes this in two of his reports, one dated 21 June 1984<sup>7</sup> and the other, more recent, dated 9 October 1984 [A/39/562], which gives an overall account of the most important exchanges between him and the various negotiators. In the first-mentioned report, the Secretary-General expresses, in a precise manner, “satisfaction at the information given to me regarding the progress achieved through the diplomatic approaches of the Contadora Group to the Central American Governments.”<sup>8</sup> These approaches have taken form in what has come to be known as the revised version of the Contadora Act on Peace and Co-operation in Central America.

125. The basic intention behind the draft resolution is to request the countries involved in conflict to come to an agreement in order that the Act may finally be implemented and to induce the international community to offer its solidarity and its support for the complete success of the negotiations. That is the true meaning of this debate, which is clearly reflected in the draft resolution drawn up by the Contadora Group. Our essential objective is to keep the peace.

126. We could have introduced other elements into the analysis by considering the special circumstances of each country, but we agreed that the most important thing was to find a common denominator, a deep-rooted consensus sufficiently objective to enable us to establish a real community of interests, to show the world that there exists a Latin American will to find solutions to our conflicts.

127. Between Contadora and the Central American countries a genuine dialogue came into being, an interchange of ideas and interests that I would venture to describe as unique at the present time. In no case was there any paralysis of the negotiating channels, and countries and Governments subject to different pressures and contrary political tendencies sat down at the negotiating table, always ready to talk and to try to lay the bases for an effective settlement.

128. We all know how difficult the situation in Central America is. Accumulated socio-economic injustices have combined with rivalries that extend into the field of world geopolitics. That is why it is easy to apportion blame and absolve of responsibility. But the spirit that guided the Contadora Group is far from such a presumptuous attitude. We did not want to play into anyone's hands. Moreover, in Central American history and in the history of our countries there are indeed many contradictions, but if we can look at events with our own standards of conduct then we shall be able to establish civilized norms to satisfy our peoples' aspirations.

129. The possibility of peace in Central America is more than a simple process of negotiations skilfully conducted within this or that pattern. It is much more important. It is the beginning of a new historical awareness that will give our peoples the power to think out their own problems, to find their own solutions beyond ideological simplifications or mere compromises of interests.

130. “Contadora” means a new process in the order of international principles. We have to ponder the meaning of the fact that, despite all the internal and external pressures, it has proved possible to carry forward a process that will establish new formulas for international law, new practices to stimulate confi-

dence, new measures to control the arms race and new formulas for socio-economic change. Contadora must be seen in this context of greatness and vision of the future. However, the essential thing is that unless we adopt an independent judgement and a readiness to compromise we can never reach an understanding.

131. This was very well put in the joint communiqué issued at Madrid on 17 October last [A/39/604, annex] by the Foreign Ministers of the member countries of the Contadora Group when the King of Spain awarded them the 1984 Prince of Asturias Prize as an acknowledgement of their efforts. The Ministers remarked that “the essence of any negotiation required each side to yield to some extent, in the interests of a higher purpose”, and for that reason the Contadora Act “would have to reconcile the positions and interests of the five countries directly involved”.

132. Each of those countries has its own problems, even though they have shared a common history. In the past all those problems were resolved arbitrarily, a new oligarchy replacing the old one. There were moments of freedom and justice, but the most anachronistic forces were always dominant. For the first time it seems that a new attitude is taking shape with which solid structures of peace can be laid down in order to achieve democracy and justice.

133. Of course, all this will be meaningless unless the Central American countries themselves actually want it. Certainly the countries view one another with some distrust. There is a crisis of confidence that seems to exclude readiness for a settlement. If that were so we would be losing a unique historic opportunity, because what we want to create is a means for coexistence on the basis of principles of equality and respect, and not a means of producing artificial accommodations. Thinking out the problems on a small scale and finding excuses for claims to power is not always the best way to proceed to changes and agreements.

134. The world today is subject to many regional conflicts. In the past they were the sources of international tensions that led to the horrors of war. While the United Nations has promoted a climate of greater negotiation, the lessons of the past have not always been learned. Nevertheless, there exist various bodies that have been set up under the Charter of the United Nations to deal with such conflicts. This Act that we are acclaiming today in essence arises from this supreme inspiration: to analyse carefully the peace initiatives that have been taken to resolve one of the most acute regional conflicts of our time.

135. I do not wish to be overly optimistic, but I believe that I am not exaggerating if I state that the United Nations has before it one of the most coherent, well-intentioned and practical attempts to find a solution to one of those conflicts. Therefore we must not let ourselves be misled by circumstantial factors, however important they may be.

136. Historical experience shows that what is circumstantial is always the seed of what may turn out to be an evil of greater proportions. The circumstantial in the specific case of Central America is the failure to realize that the spirit and norms established by the Contadora treaty contain the instruments for an understanding. When this is lost from sight, extremism takes the place of mature and sensible reactions.

137. No one will be so naïve as to allow circumstances to drag them along and thus abandon their own national interest. But in the Contadora process there has been so much dialogue, everyone has become so aware of one another's views and of the motives behind the various arguments and interventions that it is impossible for the parties to deceive each other. I venture to say that one of the reasons why the other members of the international community have viewed the efforts of the Contadora Group so favourably and have believed in good faith that they can solve the problems of our brothers in Central America is because they have understood the conditions which determined the complex but sincere aspect of the Contadora Act.

138. Let us not forget that in the face of other regional conflicts, leaders who have intervened have let themselves be swayed by passions or have believed in this or that international strategic position. The perspective of independent judgement has been lacking and political affairs have been viewed from an impersonal distance, with everything seen in terms of high military strategy.

139. I wish to see a more human perspective in the regional conflict of Central America. We know that the great Powers' attention is focused there. But if the Contadora treaty really translates the historical conditions of the region, a dimension can be introduced that will make the achievement of its peoples' aspirations more accessible.

140. The meaning of this debate must be to make those countries that are not familiar with the Contadora efforts aware of their real significance. This is not the time to make use of arguments to discredit this or that country; it is the time to unite to save this fine opportunity for peace in Central America. I do not wish to indulge in false idealism or facile attitudes. However, I could say that this is the debate of hope. It is true that it faces issues that are complex and difficult to solve, but precisely because there is no other path in sight, the understanding specified by the norms contained in the treaty, which may be revised, could have the effect of taking us in the right direction.

141. I always think that when a truth is self-evident there is some reason for it. Contadora is not an exception to this rule; its truth is self-evident. I believe that when the conflicts of the region get worse, when there are outbreaks of violence and when apprehensions of various kinds appear, it is logical for many people to wonder what has been the point of the efforts at accommodation made by the Contadora process, and thus its prestige seems to crumble.

142. But we must remember that this is a relatively recent process, and that the subversion has been present for a long time. It is best, therefore, not to despair when looking objectively at the facts. The Contadora process is fortunately coming to an end. The opinions of the countries concerned have begun to be heard. As the Madrid communiqué said, “the Ministers agreed that it was appropriate to incorporate the comments made by the Central American countries in order to lend greater precision to the statements without modifying the balance achieved in the document”.

143. When that happens we shall know if the Contadora process has been of any use. But let us set aside ideologies and limited interests and give it a

chance to show what it can do; then the United Nations can say whether its task of setting the norms for international peace has found in the Contadora treaty an incentive and an expression which can vindicate the lofty task entrusted to the Organization by its founding Charter.

144. I believe that it is time for us to ask ourselves a few questions. Who stands to benefit from peace in Central America? What are the true interests which guided the Contadora countries? Are not new prospects for understanding opening up to the countries of Central America? Has not the Contadora initiative, even without agreeing on a final document, contributed to avoiding consequences which could have been calamitous for the entire region? A positive answer to those questions confers no miraculous gift on the activities of the Contadora Group. But if the answers to those questions have had a positive influence, it is because the goals have been to create a climate of peace, to stimulate true democracy and to promote necessary reforms in support of social justice.

145. Let us reflect briefly on what this means in a world afflicted by the most acute confrontations. A political analysis of any society will show us the level of excess and contradiction to which human efforts are subjected. Normally, many of these situations tend to be polarized according to the political patterns of our age. Contadora, however, has attempted to focus on the problems from a different point of view, attempting to define a specifically Latin American alternative.

146. Our dilemma is that each society tries to find its own version of what constitutes justice for a society. When these versions are so contradictory that they give rise to civil war, it is difficult to surmount the problems without determining a winner and a loser. The rules of the game are thus dictated by whomever holds or controls the principal centre of power. Triumphant revolutions always seek to govern with the spoils of their enemies.

147. But the Contadora Group, by changing these laws of social change, is trying to propose a new set of rules. It has been written that, in general, the unchanging rule in Latin America has been revolutions. As there were no elections, the only way to gain power was to seize it by force. As there was no sense of justice, it was best to exploit the masses and to pile up a fortune. As there was no public opinion, it was best to pressure the opposition in order to deny it freedom of speech. All of us—in Central America particularly, but also in other parts of the continent—have experienced this. It is clear that much of what is taking place can be explained by these circumstances. The real problem resulting from this is not that of founding societies which make their own rules, thus creating a source of false authority. The point is to transform chaos into stability for the people, to overcome the past with conditions for a better present and to develop a dialectic of change which will ensure respect for civilized principles.

148. That is the meaning of the conflict now engulfing nearly the whole of Central America. What is new is that for the first time there is a search for another way out, looking to transform a barbarous past into a better future, where civil war gives way to political coexistence, backwardness to progress, and dependence on outside Powers to a true sense of independence. These interpretations may be thought of as Utopian, as mere academic exercises lacking all basis in the social facts. But these efforts have been given form in the contents of the Contadora treaty; these are the various instruments which must be applied; these are the rules of a game which, if respected, could create another human dimension.

149. These ideas, as exaggerated or irrelevant as they might seem, are the ideas which I am putting forward in this debate. Despite everything, they reflect the essence of a concern, the culmination of an apprenticeship. The apprenticeship of societies subjected to mutual destruction can lead to an order which will return to Central America the sense of its unity; thus can a true process of recovery begin.

150. We must not forget that a few years ago the experiment of Central American unity worked relatively well; its common market was one of the most effective that ever existed in Latin America. That was the case, but it resulted in crisis because of an inability to overcome civil disintegration and totalitarian practices. But it can be reborn. The terms of the Contadora treaty instil that belief in my delegation.

151. That is why Venezuela views with hope the accomplishments of the Contadora process, and that which it might still accomplish. With that conviction, my country sponsored draft resolution A/39/L.6 and respectfully urges the other countries represented here to give it their unanimous support.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*

---

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-eighth Year, 2491st meeting.*

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, *Thirty-ninth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1984*, document S/16463.

<sup>3</sup>*Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States of America), Provisional Measures, Order of 10 May 1984, I.C.J. Reports 1984*, p. 169.

<sup>4</sup>See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-ninth Year, 2557th meeting.*

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, *Thirty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1983*, document S/16041, annex.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, *Supplement for July, August and September 1983*, document S/15877, annex.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, *Thirty-ninth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1984*, document S/16633.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, para. 4.