

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TWELFTH SESSION

Official Records



699th  
PLENARY MEETING

Thursday, 3 October 1957,  
at 10.30 a. m.

NEW YORK

## CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Agenda item 9:	
General debate ( <u>continued</u> )	
Speech by Mr. de Lequerica (Spain) . . . . .	251
Speech by Mr. Fawzi (Egypt) . . . . .	256
Speech by Mr. Padilla Nervo (Mexico) . . . . .	260

President: Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand).

## AGENDA ITEM 9

### General debate (continued)

1. Mr DE LEQUERICA (Spain) (translated from Spanish): The Spanish delegation extends its very warm congratulations to Sir Leslie Munro on his election. Rarely has a man of greater authority, more imbued with the true spirit of an international assembly and with a more extensive scientific and diplomatic background, served as our President. Moreover, the personal charm, earnestness and cordial good humour which accompany his ability make the Assembly's choice a particularly happy one and assure us that the result of his labours will be equally happy.

2. We offer our congratulations also to Mr. Hammarskjold on his reappointment as Secretary-General. Mr. Hammarskjold has shown true qualities of statesmanship in dealing with the most difficult world problems. The United Nations can be glad to have him as the Assembly's spokesman and the executant of its decisions.

3. The eleventh session of the General Assembly, which recently came to an end, was the first in which Spain took part. We are well satisfied with our experience. The work was momentous, at times dramatic, and in many respects completely successful. Rarely has the United Nations demonstrated greater effectiveness than in confronting one of the problems dealt with during our last session: I refer to the question of Suez, which was one of unqualified importance whose exemplary solution will, we hope, carry weight with all of us. If other endeavours to make right prevail and to establish justice have not yet met with the same final success, the tenacity with which the United Nations is pursuing this end and the headway it has made in eliciting the facts and building up strong moral pressure in the case of Hungary, lead us to hope—confident in the good sense of all who are working on it—that there also success may be achieved.

4. The world of today is not a very happy place. We have heard speeches which might fill us with anxiety and even terror. To tell the truth, we feared the dangers even before we knew them as precisely as they have been outlined here.

5. In the year 1,000 A.D., with less reason than now, many people, in Europe especially, gave way to terror and thought that the end of the world was at hand. They made ready for death; they abandoned their work. Moreover, they were assailed by plagues, by private wars—evils common enough in the history of mankind. They had black moments of despair and surrender and almost wished to bring the world to an end, against the will of its Creator. Their fears did not materialize because they had no physical foundation whatever and were only collective hallucinations.

6. But today the situation is different; today there are many more reasons for fearing the end of the world than there were in the year 1,000. Fearful inventions, the hitherto unforeseen disintegration of matter, can destroy the essential elements of life unless the moral sense of mankind prevents it. The progress of science has brought great help for our ills and has given us wonders of relief from pain; and man's desire to know and to create awakens many of his noblest qualities. But it has also brought about the diabolical apparition of technical means capable of annihilation, of destruction, beyond all imaginable limits.

7. The future does not look promising. At present these techniques are still in the hands of the great Powers, which can reach agreement among themselves. We can all work to find solutions and to avert destruction and hope has not been lost. Nevertheless we may well tremble at the prospect of the continued advance of science, which is likely to place the means of destruction within the grasp of the individual. Why not? Other secret and obscure formulae in the field of applied science finally become available to the individual.

8. Tomorrow men may be able to manipulate practically unlimited means of destruction and to employ them with their own hands. Private pharmacies and laboratories may be able to produce substances with frightful effects. Individuals will also be able to use small atomic devices. I can imagine, in dark moments, that in fifty years' time some chemist in Andorra—and I deliberately choose that peaceful and pastoral little country, nestling in the Pyrenees between France and Spain—will be able with the mixtures and devices available to him, to launch from the roof of his house waves of destruction which will wipe out Paris, London, Lisbon, Madrid, Rabat and Rome. This is not nonsensical, nor does the demented act of my imaginary Andorran chemist lie outside the diabolical possibilities of scientific progress.

9. Yet the modern world, unlike that of the year 1,000, remains calm even in the face of real dangers. A number of the speakers in this general debate have already commented on that fact, though without allowing it to reassure them. And it is true that what we must do is not to calm our apprehensions but to assess the situation with serenity.

10. Qualities deeply ingrained in the human spirit hearten us in the face of danger. The fear of destruction cannot quench the sturdy flame of the soul. Classic wisdom condemned the idea that through fear of death we should abandon the will to live. And mankind today, in this moment of peril, remains faithful to that wisdom and searches for a way out without fear and without surrender.

11. We are seeking political remedies here. Much of the work of politics consists in dispelling phantoms, analysing dark and apparently insurmountable dangers and seeking, in the process, chinks and fissures in the solid front they present. A policy of armaments is the first remedy. Today, as it happens, we are discussing disarmament. But what the world desires above all—let us say so frankly—is that the nations capable of maintaining the present moral order shall be well armed. It is somewhat paradoxical that we, who are not yet sufficiently armed, should give our opinion on the proper time and procedure for disarmament. But in doing so we are paying homage to world conscience, to which we must all be sensitive. That, too, is why we lay stress on armaments, on the need for the solid strength which will guarantee the human race a little tranquillity.

12. In many periods of history there have been dangers of invasion and violence similar to those we face at present, but never has there been the prospect of such destruction as that which modern science has made possible through the invention of nuclear weapons and the hydrogen bomb.

13. Those of us who do not possess great military strength can best contribute to the balance of forces and the disarmament that balance makes possible by unreservedly co-operating with the free nations, and especially the most powerful among them, in the defence of the world. Disregarding minor points that are easily settled, Spain decided upon a policy of full co-operation with the United States in this task, and joint defence bases have been set up on our territory.

14. Great progress has been made in this direction. The joint labours of the United States and Spain in the establishment of these bases have been accompanied by sincere popular enthusiasm, equalled no doubt in other countries but surpassed in none. With a strong sense of history, in the face of clever and ill-intentioned propaganda, the Spanish people have clearly understood the decisive bearing of the American effort and the need to support it. I do not say this—I have referred to it on another occasion—without a certain embarrassment about praising the powerful, which can be almost more difficult than denouncing them.

15. The clear, concise and unadorned speech delivered in such strong tones by the United States Secretary of State in this debate [680th meeting], during which he spoke of practical solutions and specific dangers, placing them geographically, will, I am sure, be received with enthusiasm in my country. The hard, lucid reasoning of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom likewise reassured and encouraged us. Political intelligence and the virtue of decisiveness still flourish in old Europe.

16. Does this mean that we desire violence? On the contrary. The old aphorism that only dynamic and supple strength can guarantee peace is still palpably true. Let us not lose ourselves in futile pretence; in

the history of civilization force at the service of justice has always been one of the important sources of progress and freedom. We therefore believe that until broad, sincere and secure agreements are reached on the questions of disarmament and co-existence, it is essential that we should remain alert and well armed.

17. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a worse crime than that of leaving the free world defenceless without a code of international guarantees to protect it against all its enemies. Spain supports today and will always support any reasonable and serious plan of disarmament. We shall joyfully greet the day on which peoples living far apart and antagonistic races lay aside all rancour and clasp hands in the name of coexistence and peace. But until such time as this becomes something more than a project, a dream or a hope, the law of existence obliges us to keep our gates well guarded. "What is an advantage for the law-breakers is that there is no law against abuse, and that it does not call forth the condemnation and moral censure of the whole world", the Head of the Spanish State said, speaking of disarmament.

18. The Marquis of Santa Cruz, our Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who is the vice-chairman of the delegation to the United Nations which I have the honour to lead, echoed those words only a few days ago at the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in London, when he said:

"Unfortunately effective disarmament is not possible without prior effective international control. A system of collective security within the framework of the United Nations would represent a gigantic step forward in the solution of the problem."

19. Are there any possibilities of agreement, even initial and minimal agreement, to halt the armaments race? If so, it is our duty to take advantage of them, and Spain will do its utmost to assist. Should the United Nations initiate a broad campaign of information and education about the horrors which a new world war would bring, as the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs proposed from this rostrum [685th meeting]? Then let us set to work at once. Spain will not be backward in the conviction and enthusiasm it brings to this wise step. May disarmament, subject to international inspection by the United Nations, come in due course. But let us take great care that those who disarm in good faith are in no danger of being put to the sword, like the Holy Innocents of the Gospel.

20. We certainly hear intelligent and attractive sounding proposals from the other side—from the Soviet Union—on means of agreement to halt the armaments race and establish solid safeguards through the publication by all countries of more or less complete information which would enable us to determine the state of military organization and preparation for war in each country. That is the path to follow, there is no doubt of that. Those of us who have most faith in the need for strength must hasten to follow it, heedful, of course, of the directions of those who know in detail, factory by factory and observation post by observation post, all that must be known about that vast organization, for in general all we know is that certain countries possess great armaments.

21. If confidence existed, if the world could believe the words of those who today represent what we con-



ceive to be a threat to the form of life and civilization preferred by the immense majority of mankind—including themselves, probably, when the illusions of their experiments have been dispelled—the problem would be simple. But there is the danger of the possible Trojan horse, if a moment of distraction or of unfounded confidence leads us to falter on the hard, grim and unattractive road of resistance. Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes, the prophetess warned the besieged Trojans. The Trojans did not listen to Cassandra and Troy suffered a grim fate.

22. It is difficult to have confidence in the USSR. Firm in our resolve not to judge the internal political life of other countries, we would in no way concern ourselves with that great country if its leaders confined themselves to domestic activities. But they cross their frontiers, absorb huge peoples and implacably subjugate others who wish to be independent, without hiding their intention of extending their doctrine and their political influence to the whole world. And it is probable that the Soviet Union is ruled by that most terrible of all governmental species—a group of people who wish to experiment on living beings. There is no violence or even cruelty that those who are possessed by extreme convictions and find a way to put them into practice, without regard to frontiers or legal barriers, will stop at. As there is unfortunately little likelihood of a sudden moral transformation, only precautions and unequivocal international guarantees can put an end to the bloodless Sebastopol—to speak in terms of the Russian past—which constitutes the free world's relationship with the Soviet Union.

23. Another policy which would help to ward off the "millenium" and its horrors would be to seek a universal readjustment between the position of the peoples who have largely directed the world for the last 150 years and that of the others, who have now reached maturity and must take their places and be received there with the respect that is their due. The arrogant attitudes and the old concepts of precedence which were, in the last analysis, based on historical accidents, must disappear—and it can be said that they have disappeared or are disappearing.

24. In this matter, the Spaniard can always speak from his firm anti-racist conviction, which has been demonstrated—as I have remarked before—in the admirable racial mixtures with which we have enriched the world and its culture. Spain's creative work in new lands—which it goes against the grain to call colonization in the current meaning of the term although Mr. Trujillo, the representative of Ecuador, clearly explained the other day [691st meeting] the different shades of meaning the word can have—that work was very different, as is proved above all by the quality of the people who are descended from it, and has much that can serve as an example for the solution of the problems of the world today.

25. This in its turn places Spain, by reason of the internal moral reactions which determine its public behaviour with regard to these problems, in a special position, which is different from what it might have been if its people had remained confined within the Iberian borders for centuries instead of scattering throughout a world in which their creative activity has been so fruitful. It makes Spain a spiritual part, but free, living and articulate, of an undefined European, American and Asian whole which has the same language,

culture, religion and aesthetic sense and from whose devotion to the finest principles so much may be expected.

26. More than this, there exists a Euro-American cultural community, with strong offshoots in Asia, which, by wise and timely political action, may be transformed into a decisive and practical unity of action. There is not a single principle of European civilization which does not exist in its own right on the American continent, which has as much claim to them, by inheritance, as the old world. This Euro-American community would be failing in its mission if it did not approach the other peoples of the world in a spirit of simple humanity. We Euro-Americans cannot speak to the nations of Asia or Africa in the language of superiority. Nor can we approach these peoples, so rich in tradition and in moral background, with the picturesque curiosity of a Marco Polo or the catalogued benevolence of a health delegation. We must approach these peoples like brothers, either because our religious convictions teach us the essential equality of man, or out of habit or enlightened pragmatism.

27. Consider, for example, what is happening in the Middle East. The action recently undertaken there, which was repugnant to the conscience of modern man, was halted during our last session by the able intervention of the United Nations and, let us say so frankly, the quick and intelligent comprehension of two European nations. There we have those peoples of great moral standing, endowed with great military virtues, of infinite distinction and refinement, which we may speak of in general terms as the Middle East. To approach them with suspicion would be a serious mistake.

28. Yesterday [697th meeting] I listened to a splendid speech by the representative of Saudi Arabia. It is not necessary to endorse all his judgements and conclusions. He was speaking, with magnificent understanding, about close and urgent problems in establishing his country's relations with other nations. The rest of us see those problems from a distance and not all his views are ours. Yet it is precisely in the spirit of which I have been speaking that we sincerely hail the sense of the unity of the Arab countries which the eloquent speaker expressed and commented on in this instance—perhaps to the surprise of some people.

29. Far from encouraging the resentments and differences of these peoples, let us continue to seek universal concord in this strong and healthy spirit, and rejoice in their unity of spirit and unity of action.

30. Spain, a country for whose policy friendship with the Mediterranean countries is indispensable and for whose activities co-operative and active contact with the chief Moslem peoples is an important condition, may—and I say this with a certain lack of modesty—serve as a good example. It is because of this that we appreciate the wisdom of others. There is a significant difference between, on the one hand, violence and aggression, and, on the other, the sending of friendly ambassadors to the countries of the East to find out their needs, to seek remedies and to keep them united in friendship. Spain is hopefully observing that United States policy of contract with the Eastern peoples and wishes that it were the policy of all the Euro-American countries.

31. We Spaniards are linked to lands and peoples of

the Near East by ties which have been sanctified by centuries of history and are growing stronger day by day. Between that world and the coasts of Spain there lies a common sea, and that sea suggests and even dictates principles and feelings of strong solidarity.

32. We cannot but listen gladly to certain illustrious voices from the Moslem world which are suggesting a Mediterranean confederation or community towards whose realization there would advance, *pari passu*, from one side the peoples of southern and south-western Europe, or, to put it more precisely, the European peoples with a Mediterranean sea-board, and from the other side the nations of North Africa, which from the remotest periods of classical antiquity have co-operated fruitfully—as the names of Carthage, Tunis, Tripoli, Oran and Fez bear witness—in the creation and development of a well-defined culture. It is certainly not easy to explain the characteristics of Spain or of other parts of Graeco-Latin Europe without frequent allusions to Damascus, Baghdad and all the peoples of the Mediterranean coast from the Bosphorus to glorious Alexandria.

33. You can well imagine, therefore, how eager we Spaniards are that the nations of the Middle East and North Africa should have their desire for justice satisfied. They are well aware of this, and we know that they do not doubt the fraternal sympathy of Spain, which at this moment has the honour, under a friendly agreement, to provide diplomatic representation in most of the republics of Central and South America for one of our most eminent countries which has returned to normal life - Morocco.

34. Yet if all our hopes and desires are to become a fruitful reality it would be well for the Moslem nations to prepare to co-operate in the common task and to do so in the spirit of their traditions. They took their place in history under the guidance of a religious code which they zealously maintain and which keeps them aloof from the sinister subversive forces that threaten civilized society. They are called upon to share many troubles and many noble tasks with the Christian West. We should therefore be overjoyed to see them tackling and solving their problems, without rancour or spirit of revenge, always ready to discuss and negotiate, to forget the mistakes of others and to rise above the memories of that injustice may have left in their hearts. The Near East must play a vital part in the policy of peace. And if it is to do so, we, the Western world as a whole, must do all that is in our power to promote its progress and its welfare.

35. The West claims to be the fountain-head of the ideas which have enabled all peoples to achieve full international authority, ideas that cannot be divorced from the body of our spiritual heritage without losing their meaning. It is only by exchanging views with others as equals—which is the essence of international life—and co-operating thoughtfully in the search for just solutions to the grave problems that beset us, that the new nations, which through all their political vicissitudes have managed to preserve a love of their own traditions and faith in their own destinies, can reach full stature.

36. The roots of Spain's community of feeling with the great civilizations of Asia and Africa reach far back into history. At the height of the Middle Ages a Spanish king was called "Sovereign of the men of the two re-

ligions". Moslems and Jews worked side by side with the Christian sovereign, and this co-operation went on for a long time. His example can now serve as a model to us all, without our sacrificing to this ideal of concord the realities that have come into being over the centuries or encouraging hasty solutions running counter to justice and to the United Nations Charter.

37. If such a policy is to be put into practice rapidly and effectively by means of conciliation, the European countries should first overcome the difficulties that still exist among themselves. I am not referring to those arising out of the violence unleashed by the communist invasion. The most flagrant case of all, and one which cannot be forgotten whenever the subject of foreign policy is raised, is the division of Germany—the scandal of Europe and the disgrace of the international life of today, compared to which all other problems are insignificant, and at the same time an indication of the intentions of those who today threaten the peace of the world. Nor can we ignore the political crime committed in Hungary, on which our attention is still concentrated. What I am now referring to are the other serious disputes between the European peoples themselves, united in a common cause; these problems must first be solved.

38. If we fail to put an end to the violations of international law that still persist in the old world, and if we maintain the injustice among us that breed resentment, how are we to inspire respect in others? The most noble words uttered by Europeans will sound hollow so long as flagrant injustice exists in Europe itself.

39. One last thing that is required of the peoples united in the common cause of defending civilization is mutual respect for the customs of each one. Mr. Sapena Pastor, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, put the matter clearly and soberly when he said [681st meeting]: "Each State has its own problems which it must solve in its own way".

40. Side by side with the dogmatism of international communism, there still exist powerful pressure groups, determined to tell the world how it should govern itself, insolently trying to impose principles designed to regulate the lives of others in accordance with their own tastes, paying no attention to the requirements and historical experience of individual peoples or to the different political philosophies to which the widely different nations of the world have adjusted their political systems over the centuries. These spiritual dictatorships, with their constant insolence, poison relations between peoples and are particularly untimely at present. We must be on our guard against these too. We are not obliged to accept as dogmatic revelations announced from a burning bush what are merely the domestic political preferences of influential countries.

41. What we desire is a world in which armaments can be reduced, but in which effective vigilance is maintained against any possible Trojan horse; a world of mutual understanding and agreement; a world in which Germany is no longer divided, in which Jerusalem can be international and the Arab countries come to a lasting agreement with their neighbours, righting the wrongs of recent eventful years; a world in which ideological propaganda directed at other countries is brought to an end and in which the identity of the great moral and religious principles of all peoples becomes more apparent.



42. A world of this kind could resist the temptation to destroy itself by using means which are as yet limited to the great Powers but which, as I pointed out before, will later be available to small countries as well. After all, for men of our faith, human nature, although bearing the stigma of original sin, can count on sufficient means of grace, determination and expiation to redeem itself. Crime is not man's temptation. On the contrary, it is repugnant to our nature and it would indeed be a crime to unleash unlimited violence that could destroy the world.

43. Some might regard this as a mere dream and vague idealism. I cannot really speak with authority on the subject of fissionable materials. Yet perhaps these moral thoughts and aims are more practical than dry pragmatism. Only the exaltation of principles and their general acceptance can bring better days to our poor world.

44. This does not mean that the task of improving economic conditions should be abandoned. On the contrary, unless the peoples' levels of living are raised, ill-will and disputes will continue to cause unrest. Hence the need for generous and sound measures, which will bear fruit in the long run, to develop the under-developed countries. This matter has been eloquently discussed by many representatives of the Latin American countries, which shows that our race is both idealistic and practical and encourages me to continue along these lines.

45. Spain is not really an under-developed country in the strict sense of the term. There are, however, certain weak spots and defects in its agricultural and industrial development, which my Government is taking energetic steps to remedy in order to bring about a general improvement. A great deal of progress has been made along these lines, and Spain is developing a sense of solidarity concerning the country's interests, as a result of which sacrifice is evenly distributed and those who are well off are asked to co-operate in efforts to improve the lot of the others. Social reforms which only a few years ago would have been no more than dreams have already been put into effect, as in the more developed countries of the world, and are heartening achievements. The efforts of the entire nation have been concentrated on raising the levels of living of whole provinces to that of the more advanced provinces as a matter of national importance and based on a new conception of our economy. At the same time, great efforts are being made to promote industrialization, and United States assistance, which Spain received later and in much smaller quantities than the other European countries, is playing its part in increasing our national wealth. Our country is sincerely grateful for this assistance.

46. The principles of free enterprise and individual initiative have been scrupulously observed. Spain remains faithful to these two principles, and as its national life is an open book and people from all countries come to Spain and exploit its resources, there is no need for me to enlarge upon the subject here in the General Assembly.

47. Our political philosophy does not accept the elimination of individual initiative; it endorses the idea of saving and the desire to pass on savings as a heritage; all these things lie at the basis of its economic structure. Only where individual initiative has failed does the

State intervene, often in association with individuals, to fill the gap, but in every case it does so with the declared intention of handing over to private enterprise, as soon as possible, the noble national task of increasing the nation's wealth and turning it to good use.

48. Spain rejects the old and discredited dilemma of unlimited freedom or socialism. The path followed by Spain at the present stage of its development is the middle course, based on well-known Christian teachings.

49. Spain is of course following with keen interest the encouraging efforts made to achieve greater integration and co-ordination between the old national European economies. It is doing so not only for economic but also for political reasons, since it will tighten the bonds that link the members of the European community. Certain problems inevitably arise therefrom, and the complete integration of Spain into this economic structure will present difficulties in the way of adapting our economy to the proposed system, which may already be regarded as in operation. It is clear that a new spirit is alive in Europe and that we too feel its call.

50. The same reasons, which are even more compelling in the case of the Iberian peninsula, have prompted our country to examine, in co-operation with Portugal, a country to which we feel so closely linked by bonds of friendship, policy and common objectives, the co-ordination of our respective production and consumption systems. We hope that what is now a natural thing for us and the result of earlier contacts will one day form the basis for relations between our country and other countries, inspired by the same principles of rationalizing production and consumption with a view to promoting welfare and raising levels of living.

51. It is implicit in what I have said, and before concluding it will be well for me to make it quite explicit, that we are firmly resolved to co-operate whole-heartedly in the work of the United Nations and in the concerted efforts it is making to achieve these objectives. We are already doing so by participating in all the projects that have been approved so far, and the Secretariat files contain information submitted by Spain that may be useful in pursuing this important and noble task.

52. Throughout my statement I have referred to the political means of overcoming the dangers we face. I have left until last one of the most important of these means: the United Nations. Certain changes may be needed in our Organization and, as has been pointed out by Mr. Trujillo, of Ecuador, and Mr. Cañas, of Costa Rica, Spain associated itself with the countries of Central and South America in requesting that these changes should be made at a suitable time.

53. These proposals should be examined carefully as a means of promoting a broader measure of agreement between the peoples represented here by making effective amendments and not as a means of provoking further disputes. Yet even in its present form, the United Nations is an instrument of peace which may, without exaggeration, be described as marvellous. There must be very few who, even when their words are printed and circulated, still harbour a nostalgic yearning for the old diplomatic methods, for after all, with all their claims to wisdom, prudence and selection, they have produced nothing but heartbreaking

catastrophes during the last fifty years. What some people sarcastically term market-place diplomacy today represents mankind's greatest hope for peace.

54. It is not necessary for every problem to be completely solved—although the United Nations is doing much in this respect—in order to achieve this goal of understanding, enlightenment and human contact which is the essence of true diplomacy. Simply by bringing together in one hall, for the first time in history, men from all parts of the world, speaking with equal dignity and independence, the United Nations has realized the dream of the greatest minds which sought to improve the condition of mankind. Without even referring to a future when the United Nations will have physical strength at its disposal—an idea which Spain greatly favours—we need only consider its great vitality, its moral influence and its power to arrest evil.

55. It is said of a late and almost forgotten statesman that when the influence of His Holiness the Pope was mentioned, he asked how many divisions the Pope had at his disposal. Yet even without divisions history is made, crimes are prevented and justice is done. The moral influence of the Pope—on another, transcendental, level—is a good example by which to appraise the possibilities of the United Nations and encourage its work. Who knows but that this same peaceful and objective voice of the Head of the Roman Church may one day be heard in our midst, at the request not only of Christians but of other noble and impartial representatives of the world's conscience acting in accordance with the law of God.

56. Our delegation, convinced of the paramount importance of our work, will follow with redoubled attention the discussions of the Assembly, and, with an open mind and in accordance with its historical traditions and present conditions, will participate in these exchanges of views, which could and should bring about so much alleviation of human suffering.

57. Mr. FAWZI (Egypt): May I be permitted to join our colleagues who preceded me in congratulating Sir Leslie Munro and wishing him success in presiding over our deliberations during the present session of the General Assembly.

58. I would like at the same time to recall with grateful admiration the masterly and conscientious way in which His Royal Highness, Prince Wan Waithayakon, guided our deliberations during the previous session, which was admittedly the most difficult ever held by the Assembly since the inception of the United Nations. Prince Wan always succeeded in accomplishing the feat of showing how docile, how resilient and yet how unbreakable firmness could be, and all the way through he gave us the distinct feeling that here was one who had acquired the wisdom and attained the bliss of detached attachment and who was at real peace with himself and with the rest of God's great creation.

59. It is at the same time a privilege and a pleasure for me to join in congratulating the Secretary-General, with whom we occasionally differ, but whose re-election by unanimous vote has been one of the most uncontroversial matters ever considered by the United Nations, and a well-deserved recognition of his devotion and his brilliant and sterling qualities. Now he is committed to five more years during which he will have to share our endless worries and put up with our frequent indiscretions.

60. We have all watched him for years, at close range and from far away, plan, toil and dare, in behalf of the great things which this Organization stands for. We have all seen how, deep to the marrow of his bones, he has vividly and truly vibrated with his sacred message, and the shrewd suspicion grew all around into a firm conviction that no one could personify a smiling prospect for peace better than does this determined Swede, this shining citizen of the world, Dag Hammarskjöld.

61. Congratulations are equally due to the sister country, the Federation of Malaya, whose admission to the United Nations will no doubt richly contribute to the work and add to the wisdom of this Organization.

62. The skies seem clearer today than they were at the time the General Assembly met last year, when, as all will recall, there was nasty weather indeed. In this connexion I shall not proceed any further with my present submission without renewing the expression of Egypt's gratitude for and admiration of the noble and determined stand taken by virtually the unanimity of the United Nations against the tripartite attack on Egypt and in behalf of the principles of the Charter and the dictates of world peace. At the same time, it is my pleasant duty to register here the deep gratitude of my country for the unstinted efforts of the United Nations and its Secretariat for the clearance of the Suez Canal, which greatly helped in making it possible to proceed with the other steps necessary for restoring the Canal to normal service.

63. In contrast to what took place last year, this time I bring good news from Egypt, some of which I ask leave to put before the Assembly, in as far as it relates to questions to be dealt with by it, or is or should be of particular interest to it.

64. Egypt has gone—at great sacrifice, I must admit—a long way in reconstructing Port Said and repairing other damage caused by the tripartite attack. Its efforts in this direction have included the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Gaza Strip and the restoration of normal navigation through the Suez Canal. In all this, Egypt has had, especially in the initial stages, the extremely valuable help of the United Nations and its Secretariat.

65. A similar effort has been made by Egypt in bolstering its economy and adapting it to new requirements and new circumstances. A good measure of success has been already achieved in this field, in spite of the economic war—or shall I stamp it with the right hallmark and call it "brink of war"?—with which several powerful Members of this Organization are facing Egypt.

66. The General Assembly will recall the declaration of the Government of Egypt on 24 April 1957 [A/3577], relating to the Suez Canal and the arrangements for its operation. This declaration, among other things, reaffirms the unaltered policy and firm purpose of the Government of Egypt to respect the terms and the spirit of the Constantinople Convention of 1888 and the rights and obligations arising therefrom; provides for a stable policy regarding Canal tolls; provides for adequate resources to meet the needs of development of the Canal; states that the Government of Egypt would welcome and encourage co-operation between the Suez Canal Authority and representatives of shipping and trade; provides for means of recourse in



relation to complaints; provides for acceptance by Egypt of the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice regarding differences arising between the parties to the Constantinople Convention of 1888 in respect of the interpretation or the applicability of its provisions; provides for compensation of the shareholders of the nationalized Suez Canal Company.

67. The declaration, which is an internationally binding instrument, as solemnly stated in it, was registered as such with the Secretariat of the United Nations. Since this declaration was issued, the Government of Egypt has amply and repeatedly shown its resolve to honour it and to implement it fully.

68. Among the steps inspired by this resolve has been the communication of 18 July 1957 from the Foreign Minister of Egypt to the Secretary-General of the United Nations [A/3576 and Add.1] enclosing a declaration accepting, on behalf of the Government of Egypt, the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

69. Another step taken for the same purpose of fully implementing the declaration has been the active and great care which the Suez Canal Authority has dedicated to the improvement of the Canal. A most thorough and continuous study has been made with this in view, with the help of all the qualified and experienced technical knowledge required. The sum of £ 3,285,000 has already been set aside for the development of the Canal, with more funds to follow for the same purpose.

70. Furthermore, and as a result of the completion of the clearance of the Canal and the actual carrying out of the first stages of the development programme, it is expected that ships with a draught of up to 35 feet will soon be able to pass through the Canal, as was the case before the tripartite aggression. It will be recalled, in this connexion, that the Canal, in spite of sabotage by some big Powers, had functioned perfectly until aggression blocked it; and when the aggression ended, an end was rapidly put to the blocking of the Canal. And the Canal is once more a link of good will and of mutual benefit to the nations of the world.

71. Parallel to this, and as all are admitting, co-operation between the Suez Canal Authority and the representatives of shipping and trade dealing with it has been at its best, and I wish, in this connexion, to state that the head of the Suez Canal Authority and some of his aides are about to visit various countries in order to get in still closer touch with these representatives.

72. The question of compensation to the shareholders of the nationalized Suez Canal Company has, of course, been constantly on the mind of the Government of Egypt and has received and is still receiving its utmost care. My Government, therefore, among other things, during the last few months has been consulting with several other Governments, as well as with the Secretary-General, on ways and means of ensuring proper representation of the shareholders, so that the matter of compensation to them can be promptly discussed and finally settled.

73. Meanwhile, the Suez Canal is rapidly emerging from the results of last year's tripartite devastation and showing a serviceability and dynamism under its present administration consonant with modern times

and the requirements of an ever expanding international navigation.

74. Egypt, with the other nations of the world, shares the growing, nay, the full, awareness of the sheer folly of war, and parallel to this of the immense and previously undreamt of possibilities through sane thinking and modern science for the welfare, happiness and honour of the human race.

75. Still another source of gratification to Egypt, as it is or should be to all other countries, is the awakening of the peoples of the world to a sound and active realization that the relationship between the nations of the world should be marked by real comradeship and invested with the dignity of humanity and freedom.

76. In this year of grace 1957, one feels, however, even more than in 1955 when at San Francisco we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the inception of the United Nations, the need to take stock of what has been happening in the world during the last few years, and to make some comparisons between the hopes of yesterday and the realities of today.

77. Our reaffirmation, as in the very preamble of the Charter, of our faith in human rights, in the dignity and the worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, is still far short of being matched by what is happening in many parts of the world.

78. In disregard of religion, of humanity and of the Charter, racial discrimination in several countries continues to be a most shameful and most disturbing fact of life. Moreover, many of the peoples of the world are still denied their natural right and right under the Charter to freedom and to self-determination.

79. Furthermore, partition and the morselling of countries has shattered the unity and dimmed the hopes of many a nation. Especially after the Second World War, the world has been plagued by an epidemic of partition, of which the most conspicuous victims are Palestine, Germany, Korea, Viet-Nam, not to speak of certain other present or prospective cases.

80. Economic and technical co-operation, which was meant by the Charter to be a means of hastening the development of the countries of the world and enhancing the purposes of goodwill and peace, has been distorted and deviated from by some big Powers to become an instrument for tempting or bringing pressure to bear on other countries, in order to impose upon them certain policies and certain commitments. Economic assistance has, in other words, been thrown out as a bait for some countries to bite at; and if they do not bite, then an attempt is made to spear them and get hold of them by force. If this in turn fails, then the planners go into a rage and level all sorts of accusations and recriminations against what they look upon as the poor fish. Reference is not made here particularly to the High Dam in Egypt. I am at this moment and in the present context referring essentially to the high principles and ideals enunciated in the Charter.

81. Similarly to what has been taking place in the field of economic and technical assistance, the supplying or the withholding of arms has been used as a means of pressure of temptation by some big Powers which are recklessly and mischievously making of many other countries of the world a miserable dump-

ing ground for their policies and for their inevitably obsolete arms. This tragedy of arms and of arms supply is in fact much too tragic for words. The big producers of arms are engaging in a feverish competition lest they be overtaken in strength and in the ability to destroy by those whom they look upon as their likely enemies. While doing this, they strain the nerves of all concerned, including their own people, and overburden the economy of all concerned, including their own people.

82. A tremendous surplus of arms is inevitably heaped and stored by these big producers, and is used mostly to influence and to rope in as many as can be secured of the non-arms-producing countries. If country "X" takes the arms and swallows the policies of the big Power proffering them, good and well, of course from the big Power's point of view. If, on the other hand, country "X" is as impolite and as careless as to fail to accept those arms and to refuse to swallow those policies, then another scheme is unleashed; and the arms-supplying country switches its offer to the rivals or the enemies of country "X", and opens a front of propaganda and of economic war against it.

83. Another phase of this fathomless tragedy is that it undermines in a most drastic way the economy and the prospects of social advancement of a great number of the countries of the world, especially those which are direly and most urgently in need of dedicating themselves and their resources to the improvement of the lot of their peoples.

84. I cannot think of any acts short of war which could be more mischievous than the mischief and more tragic than the tragedy of this sombre nightmare of arms and arms supply. A way out of this mess has to be found; a road, other than this road of all-round suicide has to be trodden.

85. Another extremely disturbing feature of present-day international relationships is the appalling imbalance and the crushing effects of the tremendous difference in strength between some Powers as compared to other Powers. This difference is creating a most ominous situation which basically affects the future, the freedom and the very existence of many of the nations of the world.

86. This alarming lack of equilibrium between the various Powers is the more accentuated and the more dangerous in view of the absence until today in international relations of the guarantees and sanctions which in national life assure respect for the law. Our law in the United Nations is, of course, mainly the Charter. But we all know too well how little the Charter is actually made effective by the guarantees and the sanctions stipulated in it.

87. This state of affairs shows with great emphasis the importance of a well-informed, wide-awake and most resolute public opinion throughout the world. This has been so clearly shown in connexion with the attack on Egypt last year, which would have rolled the history of human progress thousands of years backwards had it not been for the awakening and the rising of world public opinion and its ready rallying around the principles of the United Nations. We all vitally needed that yesterday, and we all as vitally do need it today and in the future for such and similar contingencies.

88. And these are by no means the only matters of great moment which make a robust, a conscious and a responsible public opinion of the world so infinitely essential.

89. To give only two illustrations of this: right here and now, and throughout this universe in which we live, such world opinion is vitally needed to help and to convince all the Governments concerned to stop this insane and suicidal race of arms and its corollary of nuclear and thermonuclear experiments which are playing havoc with the health and the sense of security of the world's inhabitants, and with whatever vestiges there remain of the rule of law in international relations.

90. Indeed, the question has been repeatedly asked, and it is quite a valid question, as to whether, even mischievously supposing that a State has the right to destroy its own nationals, it has the right to release forces which it cannot control and which it cannot stop from harming seriously or, for that matter, harming at all, the nationals of other countries. This is definitely among the questions we all have to answer, and no amount of escapism can enable anyone to hide it or light-heartedly to explain it away.

91. An additional instance showing the tremendous importance of a solid and active mass of world opinion is our obvious need, all of us, for putting an end to another destructive feature of international life, namely, the scramble by some big Powers, in various ways and under various guises, for the control of countries and areas in the world which ought to be allowed scope for developing their freedoms, their economy and their social life.

92. But the promotion of an enlightened, robust, effective and sound public opinion throughout the world is clearly not the responsibility of Governments alone. The role of the various media which can serve this purpose, the home, the school, the Press, the radio, television, the cinema, the theatre, is vast and deep and vital.

93. As you will have noted, everybody is busily speaking these days about the Middle East, as he is entitled to, and as indeed he should, in view of the current stirring events, problems and the manoeuvrings in, and in relation to, this area. Some outsiders are even considering and busily speaking about the Middle East as if it were their own enclosure, their own exclusive business; and they have, on occasion, by their attitudes and by their acts, made a most fantastic innovation in and a most unbridled departure from political and diplomatic practice by going around the Middle East, or what was once called the general area of the Middle East, peddling their policies, and trying to take a kind of poll or referendum, as if the Middle East were their country club or their electoral constituency.

94. This, apparently, is but one of the many symptoms of the main trouble, the main disease—power hunger—which afflicts some big Powers whose attempts to secure their positions in the Middle East have succeeded—if this is success—in making of it, from Algeria to Palestine, to Syria, to Yemen, to Oman, and to other parts of it, the most worried, the most distraught and the most tortured area in the world at present.



95. Being a Middle-Easterner and an Arab, I might also be allowed, in my turn, to say a few words about the Middle East, and about what some call the Near East, in the hope that my voice and others from among the people of the area will be heard above the clamour and the shouting of some busybodies from outside.

96. Many actions in the area, or in relation to it, by outside Powers have been at complete variance with the standards of international behaviour which we have all agreed to and set together in the Charter.

97. The whole area is so covetously wanted by some Powers and some groupings of Powers from outside, as a ball and a pawn in the game of international politics. Gone are the days when people believed the statement of one big leader of our times that the establishment of spheres of influence and the domination of one country by another were to be no more. Gone are the days when people could believe the statement of another leader of our times that the world was about to witness the real establishment of the rule of law in international relations. The rule of law? Just come and see, if only a little of what is happening in the Middle East as well as the Near East.

98. Our first step could be Algeria, this Algeria whose people are doomed to more suffering and to more humiliation, while the French Parliament indulges in its endless and barren debate, while it topples one ministry after another, and while we are made for the millionth time to hear the crazy notion that, because some French lawyers in Paris have written an article into their country's laws saying that Algeria is part of France, the people of Algeria must be treated as things and as serfs.

99. In this connexion, I wish to say that, though I am an Arab and a blood relation of the Algerian people, I cannot better or in clearer outline define the question of Algeria than have done several of our colleagues. Just to mention one of the statements made: how well and how rightly the Foreign Minister of Ireland spoke, on 20 September last [682nd meeting], when he pointed out that the case of Algeria deeply disturbed the friends and admirers of the French nation; that the nature of the conflict was one that left a country with Ireland's tradition no choice; that Ireland could not do otherwise than support self-determination for Algeria and urged the French Government, in the interest of the French people, in the interest of the French settlers, in the interest of the peace of mind of France's friends, in the interest of world peace and for the glory of France, to declare its readiness to concede absolutely and unequivocally the right of self-determination to Algeria.

100. Then there is the tragedy of Palestine. No question, to my knowledge, has aroused so many and such deep emotions as has the question of that unfortunate land and its noble yet ill-fated Arab people. About no other question has as much been written or spoken. Yet it turns incessantly in a dizzy whirlpool; and no real progress has been made to rescue it from under the heap of fallacies and of lies in which it has shamelessly been thrown.

101. Israel, which has called itself the child of the United Nations, barely recognizes the existence of the United Nations except, as we have seen much too often, to use the halls and the rostrums of this Or-

ganization to try to confuse the issues of the Palestine question which cannot be confused and to obscure the rights of the Arab people of Palestine which cannot be obscured, and, in and around these halls, to scheme and manoeuvre, with its cohorts, to do away with the whole issue.

102. When we look at the armistice agreements concluded by Israel, the glaring fact appears that Israel signed them but has refused persistently to honour its own signature. And, taking the load from this refusal, and particularly—logic or no logic—from Israel's aggression last year against Egypt, the Prime Minister of Israel says that the Armistice Agreement with Egypt is dead.

103. In the same spirit of defiance, Israel has refused until now to implement the resolution adopted on 2 February 1957 [1125 (XI)] by virtually the unanimity of the General Assembly, which stipulated that the United Nations Emergency Force should be stationed on both sides of the armistice demarcation line.

104. Furthermore, while the lawful Arab inhabitants of Palestine have been driven away from their land and their homes and are living miserably as expellees from their own country, and as if this were not sufficient to disrupt the peace of the Middle East, the Prime Minister of Israel, not for the first time, stated only a few days ago that "the survival and peace of Israel will be safeguarded by one thing and one thing alone—large-scale immigration. For this security, Israel requires an addition of at least 2 million Jews in the coming period".

105. How valid and how prophetic was the comment of the late Count Bernadotte on this question. The Assembly might recall the following passage from the report submitted to the Security Council by the late Mediator on 12 July 1948, in which he stated:

"It could not be ignored that unrestricted immigration into the Jewish area of Palestine might, over a period of years, give rise to a population pressure and to economic and political disturbances which would justify present Arab fears of ultimate Jewish expansion in the Near East. It can scarcely be ignored that Jewish immigration into the Jewish area of Palestine concerns not only the Jewish people and territory but also the neighbouring Arab world." [S/888, para. 26.]

106. Syria is still another harassed sister country in our area. Have you heard the shouts and the cries and seen the fireworks round and about the State of Syria? Continually, through the years which have followed the Second World War, arms in huge quantities have been and continue to be poured, with shameless persistence and frequency, into all countries and areas surrounding Syria, particularly into Israel which, for good measure and as a bonus and a token of appreciation of its aggressions, has been receiving gaudy gifts of goods and money amounting to more than its budget. But Syria, which had been denied even a semblance of adequate provision for its defence, and which had been rebuffed every time it wanted to acquire the necessary arms from certain countries, has been insulted, threatened, molested and looked upon by some as anybody's whipping boy. Yet, of all this, of all the arms supplied to other countries during the last year, no noise, not a word, not a whisper. All the arm-twisting, all the commotion and all the hullabaloo

obviously have been reserved for such an occasion as Syria's taking a modest step or two to provide for its own defence.

107. And here I feel impelled to state and to remind the General Assembly that Syria is Egypt's ally, as well as Egypt's blood relation, and it is fully entitled to Egypt's help, as well as to help by the United Nations for the repelling of any aggression which might be launched against it. And I wish, in no equivocal terms, to leave no scope whatsoever for doubt that Egypt, for its part, will not tolerate that even a fingertip of Syria be hurt, that a hair of the head of Syria be ruffled, by any aggressor, but will immediately rise to a man and stand four-square with its sister State of Syria.

108. Syria, in preparing and providing for its own defence, has not done anything which it is not fully entitled to do; and it is not accountable to anyone for any of its actions in the exercise of any of its indisputable rights.

109. The huge clamour made about danger to the peace in the Middle East has by now rumbled down and screeched into nothing at all. That clamour began in perfect conformity to the usual pattern which bears the unmistakable mark of its own artificiality. Suddenly, and out of a clear sky, one false accusation after another was levelled at Syria; in quick succession one threat followed another, from various capitals, on the road to Damascus; and Syria was depicted as the irrepressible and irresponsible knight-errant of the Middle East, as the great danger to world peace. What a balloon full of emptiness! But we do not see it any more; it has already exploded and disintegrated into nothingness. Syria is there, peaceful and quiet, behaving as always as a good, loyal and devoted Member of the United Nations. And if anyone should say that the Syrians wish to throw away in any direction, or to the four winds, the independence which they have earned with their sweat and their blood, then that one is a foolish man's fool, as he fools nobody but himself.

110. How about using some restraint and a minimum of alarms? How about cooling off and thinking and talking of Syria, as well as of other countries and other matters, like reasonable people endowed with a real sense of responsibility? Perhaps it is high time that everyone did exactly this.

111. We ardently hope that the question of Cyprus and the people of Cyprus will soon be blessed with better luck and a better fate than they have had so far. We entertain this fervent hope for the sake of the people of Cyprus and for the sake of freedom and world peace.

112. As an Egyptian, I feel the urge and have the right to say that, in nobody's wildest imagination could a free Cyprus be fancied as an arsenal and as a base for launching last year's murderous attack against Egypt. As confirmed by its Commander-in-Chief, that attack, I must register here, was planned and irrevocably decided upon while the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom and France were feigning to negotiate here in New York with the Foreign Minister of Egypt a peaceful solution of the Suez Canal question. With this in our thought in Egypt, we felt sincere sympathy and sorrow for the people of Cyprus who, we were perfectly sure, were deeply hurt

and saddened by that intolerable episode of recent history.

113. A most important and particularly welcome development which has been taking shape and receiving the plaudits of one and all is the steady and sure-footed growth in stature and the increase in positiveness of the United Nations Secretariat, especially since the crisis of last year. It has been incisively and vividly demonstrated that the Secretariat has indeed come of age and that it has boldly assumed in full and in real fact its responsibilities according to the Charter, as one of the organs of the United Nations; and we are happy to see beside us and with us in our daily toils and cares a solid, dynamic and daring Secretariat which is thoroughly permeated with the tireless energy and inexhaustible resourcefulness of its wise and far-sighted pilot, the Secretary-General.

114. When, in parts of my submission today, I made reference to failings and shortcomings in our tackling of the problems of the world and in our endeavour to serve the purposes of the United Nations, I did not, for a moment, forget the difficulty, the intricacy and the stubbornness of many of these problems. Nor did I underrate the immensity of the obstacles which often beset our road, or the great efforts made to overcome them. Indeed, never before has the world been harrowed and haunted by such problems as these. Never was it, more distinctly than it is now, in need of redoubled effort and of God's guidance and grace.

115. Mr. PADILLA NERVO (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Year after year we have gathered here to represent an ever-increasing number of Governments and peoples of the earth. We have become better acquainted with the moral and political geography of the world. To know one another is to begin to understand the other person's point of view, and understanding is the basis of friendship.

116. Each delegation, both in the official meetings as well as outside them, is the spokesman and the constant expression of the realities of its country. Year after year we have learned a great deal from one another, and our personal contacts have been and will continue to be a valuable element in the relations between the countries that we represent. Differences of language, creed, race and nationality have not prevented the interchange of ideas and feelings in an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy.

117. Every year, for several months, we all live here together peacefully and we work together towards a common goal. We begin our work by a minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation, we are subject to a legal order, we respect the authorities that we elect freely and democratically, we obey the laws and rules that we have established. We are in fact a model of what we should like international coexistence to be.

118. The periodic meeting together of the representatives of almost all the States of the world is in itself a reason, and not the least important one, for the existence of the United Nations.

119. Once again the Headquarters of our Organization becomes the focus of world attention. For the three months that the present session of the General Assembly is expected to last, all the peoples of the world will be anxiously following our deliberations in



the hope that they will yield results that will help to diminish fear and pave the way for prosperity.

120. The "man in the street", as we sometimes call those who constitute the immense majority in all countries, has learned by instinct that the General Assembly of the United Nations is the forum in which the conscience of mankind can raise its voice. The appeal of conscience may technically lack the binding force of legal instruments subject to ratification, but they nevertheless possess a moral force that in the long run cannot be resisted.

121. This intuitive confidence of the "man in the street" in our Organization, and primarily in its most representative organ, is in itself a lesson, for the "man in the street" does not know or knows only vaguely what the statesman and the diplomat is supposed to know thoroughly and in detail—namely that, while the United Nations is not and cannot be a super-State, nevertheless, despite the limitations imposed by the fact that it can act only through the decision of the Member States, it is able to present an impressive record of achievement.

122. How can we ignore the fact that in its twelve years of existence—which on the scale of international evolution represent perhaps but a few minutes in the life of a man—the United Nations, which originally had fifty-one Members and today has eighty-two, has taken an unprecedented step towards universality?

123. How can we overlook the immense work that has been carried out or is being carried out in respect of technical assistance, the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and certain aspects of international economic and social co-operation?

124. How can we fail to take account of the successes achieved in the progressive development of the Trust Territories towards self-government and independence?

125. The importance of this task becomes fully apparent when we realize that the existence of considerable groups of human beings deprived of the fundamental right of peoples to political self-determination has an important influence on the destinies of all States, destinies which are daily more closely interwoven, and is a cause of great concern. It would be difficult, on grounds of history or political necessity, to persuade people who consider themselves capable of exercising the right to sovereignty that they should desist from their aspirations, subject them to certain conditions, or postpone them until a later date.

126. To refer more specifically to the political activities of the Organization that are most frequently the object of criticism, how can we forget, for example the results of United Nations intervention in the questions of Indonesia and the former Italian colonies; the pacification of the frontiers of Greece; the Berlin dispute; the withdrawal of foreign forces from Syria, Lebanon and Iran in 1946 and from Burma in 1953 and following years; the question of Trieste and the Treaty of Peace with Austria; the independence of Morocco and Tunisia, and finally the very grave crisis which it had to face less than a year ago in the so-called Suez Canal question?

127. A number of these questions, as we all know, seemed at one time to involve the risk, and sometimes

the imminent risk, not only of local conflict, but also of generalized armed conflagration. Nevertheless, all of them as the direct or the indirect result of United Nations intervention, were satisfactorily solved and have disappeared from the map of world problems.

128. Admittedly in some cases, such as Korea, Palestine and Kashmir, the United Nations has not been able fully to achieve its objectives. But it would be absurd not to acknowledge the very important work that has already been accomplished, the dangers to world peace that have been eliminated, and the results that we can with good reason hope to expect from the continuation of its persevering efforts.

129. To these positive contributions that can easily be appreciated, must be added another contribution that is invisible but no less real. I am referring to all the attempts at abuse of power that the very existence of United Nations has discouraged; all the international conflicts that were still-born.

130. The balance sheet of these accomplishments should lead us to be moderately optimistic as to the ability of the General Assembly to find, at its twelfth session, solutions, or at least the beginnings of solutions, to the numerous problems included in its agenda.

131. I do not intend at this juncture to state the Mexican delegation's opinion on these problems, as our position will be dictated by the guiding principles of my country's international policy, and which correspond essentially to the principles of the United Nations.

132. As is well known, Mexico believes that peace should be based on a régime of liberty and justice, and it stands for the legal equality of States and scrupulous respect for their sovereignty. It considers fundamental the principle that, to use the words of the protocol signed by the American Republics in 1936, any intervention of a State "directly or indirectly, and for whatever reason, in the internal or external affairs" of any other State is inadmissible. It repudiates unreservedly recourse to the threat or use of force in international relations, recognizes the obligation to settle disputes between States exclusively by peaceful means, and considers respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as essential. It fully supports the right of all peoples freely to determine their own destiny, and it is convinced that prosperity, like peace, is indivisible, so that the economic development of all countries and the raising of the standard of living of their peoples constitutes an inescapable duty of the international community.

133. In short, as the President of Mexico said in his report to the Congress on 1 September:

"Our international policy is based on the Mexican tradition of the highest moral integrity... Its enormous moral value lies in the fact that it is a synthesis of the profound convictions of the Mexican people: faith in liberty, passion for independence, devotion to justice, an innate feeling for democracy, respect for the rights of other peoples, and sincere understanding and mutual assistance in international relations."

134. These, I repeat, are the principles by which the Mexican delegation will be guided in expressing its point of view on each and every one of the items on the agenda of the present session. I therefore believe



that I need not refer specifically to each of them. I should prefer to formulate certain observations of a general nature, on certain definite constitutional and structural aspects of the United Nations that have recently been the subject of discussion, as well as on two items of the agenda whose importance it would, in our opinion, be difficult to exaggerate: I refer to disarmament and the economic development of underdeveloped countries.

135. In the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General very rightly states:

"I believe that the criticism of the system of one vote for one nation, irrespective of size or strength, as constituting an obstacle to arriving at just and representative solutions tends to exaggerate the problem. The General Assembly is not a parliament of elected individual members; it is a diplomatic meeting in which the delegates of Member States represent governmental policies, and these policies are subject to all the influences that would prevail in international life in any case. Smaller nations are not in the habit of banding together against the larger nations whose power to affect international security and well-being is so much greater than their own. Nor do I see justification for talk about the responsible and the irresponsible among the nations."  
[A/3594/Add.1, p. 3]

136. The Mexican delegation whole-heartedly endorses these carefully considered concepts expressed by our Secretary-General, which go to the heart of the matter. We believe that a correct approach to the problems that have been the object of censure should start from a premise totally distinct from that adopted in the criticisms to which Mr. Hammarskjöld refers.

137. It is an obvious fact that in our Organization the great Powers have a special position that implies their enjoyment of powers and prerogatives far greater than those of the other Member States. This special situation can be legally justified only by their discharge of greater responsibilities in realizing the purposes of the United Nations, and especially in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security.

138. My country explained this clearly at the San Francisco Conference when it made the following statement which appears in the record of the meeting of Commission III held on 22 June 1945:

"The Mexican delegation, in voting for the text of the article relating to the composition of the Security Council"—the article which is now Article 23 of the Charter—"wishes to point out that it does so because it considers this text to be an implicit application... of the juridical principle of correlation between powers and duties which safeguards the basic principle of equal rights of all States.

"The Mexican delegation interprets this article as the granting of broader rights to those States therein named to hold permanent seats on the Security Council, principally for the reason that these are the States whose responsibility for the maintenance of peace, owing to circumstances which it is not pertinent to analyse, 'is greater in the international community'." <sup>1/</sup>

<sup>1/</sup> United Nations Conference on International Organization, vol. XI, p. 107.

139. To support this interpretation, the statement contained various quotations from declarations by statesmen of the Powers destined to hold the permanent seats on the Security Council. I shall limit myself here to reading one of them, from the annual message addressed to the United States Congress by President Roosevelt on 6 January 1945:

"We cannot deny that power is a factor in world politics any more than we can deny its existence as a factor in national politics. But in a democratic world, as in a democratic nation, power must be linked responsibility, and obliged to defend and justify itself within the framework of the general good."

140. The privileged position enjoyed by the great Powers in the Security Council, where five permanent seats are reserved to them and where they also have the right of veto because of the unanimity rule, is expressly sanctioned by the Charter, which also provides for the permanent membership of these States on the Trusteeship Council.

141. An analogous situation of special prerogatives also obtains in all the other principal organs of the United Nations, and the absence of pertinent provisions in the Charter and in the rules of procedure has not been an obstacle to the faithful observation of the custom by all the Members of the Organization. Thus, each of the great Powers has always held a vice-presidency and therefore a seat on the Assembly's General Committee, just as each has always been allotted a seat on the Economic and Social Council. In the International Court of Justice itself, whose judges are elected, in accordance with Article 2 of its Statute, "regardless of their nationality", there has always been a national of each of these same Powers. As for the Secretariat of the United Nations, the report of the Secretary-General on the geographical distribution of the staff [A/C.5/718/Rev.1] is in itself sufficiently eloquent proof of the number and importance of the posts occupied by nationals of the permanent members of the Security Council.

142. The situation in the United Nations that I have just described is repeated, as we all know, in each of its specialized agencies.

143. The so-called small and medium-sized countries have therefore followed a line of conduct that has been not only irreproachable but even generous. Recognizing that the principle of legal equality, the cornerstone of the law of nations, does not imply the disavowal of the necessary correlation between duties and rights, responsibilities and powers, they have co-operated loyally with the great Powers, and have, without boasting or haggling, ensured them a special position in which their prerogatives are commensurate with the responsibilities vested in them by the Charter and the facts of international life.

144. And what shall we say of the moderating influence of the small and medium-sized countries in the frequent controversies that have divided the permanent members of the Security Council; of their good offices-friendly, disinterested and persistent—that have frequently permitted the great Powers, without loss of face, to get out of the difficult or untenable positions in which their rigidity or intransigence had placed them?

145. In truth, it can be said that the small and medium-sized countries have given more than they

have received. We do not believe, therefore, that we should speak of "responsible" and "irresponsible" nations, but that we should rather try to clarify, constructively and not in a spirit of sterile criticism, the shortcomings that have existed and can exist in the discharge by the great Powers of the special duties implicit in their greater international responsibility for the realization of the purposes of the United Nations.

146. Finally, I should like to venture another remark concerning the assistance that the small and medium-sized countries can render to the great Powers in this Assembly.

147. We all know that a large number of the Governments represented here have concluded multilateral agreements with one another for the realization of the common goals of the group to which they belong. Their attitude and conduct outside the United Nations is governed by the pertinent provisions of those agreements. But in spite of this political and legal reality, we can all meet together in the General Assembly without distinction of groups to implement the Purposes and Principles of the Charter.

148. This Assembly cannot be a centre for harmonizing the actions of all in the attainment of these ends, if, in the consideration of every problem and in every vote, we continue to group ourselves beforehand in hostile blocs and if we come to this world forum in combat formations that may be a reflection of international reality at this moment, but that do not help us to reconcile our differences. We must help to build a different reality in harmony with the profound aspirations of the peoples of the world.

149. If the realities of the past had been a justification for their permanence, humanity would have been frozen in a state of ignorance and error. During the course of history, the roads to freedom, justice and peace have been opened by overcoming anachronistic vested interests determined to maintain unchanged practices and concepts that could not be revitalized.

150. In our day, too, and at this very session of the Assembly, the representatives of a world which is not ours alone but also belongs to the future, must with untiring faith seek out new roads to understanding that will one day lead us to the objectives of the United Nations.

151. With regard to disarmament, there can be no doubt that the efforts deployed within the last five years by the Disarmament Commission, and especially by its Sub-Committee, have not been at all in vain. There has been progress, though certainly not as much as we should all like. It is therefore important that these efforts should be continued without interruption.

152. Precisely because I am convinced that there is now more chance of agreement, and because I consider that the parties have come closer together on some points and that the moment is favourable, I wish to make a procedural suggestion that might facilitate this work.

153. Everyone will recall that the forerunner of the present Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission was a sub-committee of the First Committee of the General Assembly composed of France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the United States, over which, by the decision of the First Committee itself, I

had the honour to preside in my capacity of President of the sixth session of the General Assembly. The results of the meetings of that sub-committee, which were private and which lasted only about a week, were on balance fairly satisfactory considering the circumstances prevailing at the time. The memorandum that I prepared at the request of the members of the sub-committee and which was submitted to the First Committee as the sub-committee's report [A/C.1/677], included, in addition to the points of possible agreement and disagreement, actual agreement on some important aspects of the question. All the members of the sub-committee believed that their discussions had helped to bring the parties closer together.

154. Probably the fact that the sub-committee met simultaneously with the General Assembly, and reported to the First Committee, helped to give its work that feeling of great urgency that world public opinion sometimes seems to think we lose sight of in our work on disarmament. I wonder, therefore, whether we should not try an approach at this session similar to that put into practice in Paris in the first days of December 1951. The Assembly could establish a sub-committee similar to the one set up then. In my opinion, such a sub-committee should automatically include the five members of the present Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission, but it might also include a chairman who would be responsible for directing the debates and guiding them into constructive channels. He would have the moral authority that the Assembly's mandate would inevitably give him.

155. Perhaps it would not be utopian to hope that such a procedure might bring to fruition the wish expressed here [683rd meeting] by the Prime Minister of Canada—which I am sure we all share—that the twelfth assembly should be known in future as the "Disarmament Assembly". I believe that this wish would materialize even if we only took the first effective step at this session and made the first decision, however modest it might be, that could be translated into action. I do not see why it should be impossible to reach this goal.

156. I fully understand that no one is ready to sacrifice principles that he considers sacred and inviolable. But between this inadmissible extreme and the other extreme, which is equally difficult to accept, of intransigence, there is ample room for fruitful work in the true spirit of negotiation and for the mutual concessions that such a spirit implies. There is not and should not be any plan or proposal that is absolutely indispensable or untouchable. From this same rostrum, four years ago, I expressed our point of view in the matter:

"We are certain that it is possible, without detriment to principles, justice and honour, to relax the opposing attitudes originally adopted on each particular problem. In many matters, the opposing positions are neither completely true nor completely false on either side. With sincerity of effort and purity of motive we can reach a common ground where understanding would be possible. The periodic restatement of irreconcilable positions will never shorten the distance between them." [447th meeting, para. 89.]

157. I should also like to repeat now what I said at the commemorative meetings at San Francisco, in June 1955:



"The birth of the atomic age, far from reducing the contribution which the smaller countries can make in contemporary international society, has increased it; for today, more than ever before, they are in a position to exert a moderating influence with a view to preventing the abuse of power. In that connexion, the part which the smaller countries should play in the present division of responsibilities in the United Nations is that which is played in national societies by an alert public opinion conscious of its rights and obligations. The stronger the great Powers, the greater the moral responsibility of the smaller countries.

"My country has often demonstrated its understanding and application of that moral responsibility, and has consistently urged a return to the spirit which prevailed at the birth of the United Nations. In 1948, at the third session of the General Assembly, it proposed that the great Powers should be urged to liquidate the heritage of the war and to hasten the conclusion of peace treaties. The Mexican draft resolution as approved [resolution 190 (III)] upon the great Powers to renew their efforts to compose their differences and establish a lasting peace."

158. I still hold the same view. Furthermore, I think that it would now be in order for the Assembly to consider making another such appeal to the great Powers, this time underlining the need for redoubled efforts to achieve positive results as soon as possible in the disarmament negotiations. I believe that such an appeal would be of great value on the national as well as on the international level, for reasons similar to those that led the Belgian delegation to make its well-founded proposal on collective action with regard to information [A/3630/Corr.1], since both these steps would tend to strengthen the salutary influence of public opinion.

159. Another idea that the Assembly might consider worthy of attention is whether it would be appropriate and timely to create a new international post, that of United Nations Commissioner for Disarmament. To fill such a post we should of course have to find a statesman of recognized impartiality and high moral authority who would enjoy the confidence of all the States members of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission. He could be nominated by the Assembly on the recommendation of those States, and his chief duties would include a careful examination of the possibilities contained in the proposals that have already been made or that might be put forward in the future, assistance to the parties in their negotiations, and the submission to them privately for their consideration of any proposals that might help to reconcile their divergencies and smooth the path to agreement.

160. There have been cases, for example those of Palestine and Kashmir, where it was thought appropriate to appoint a mediator or a special representative of the United Nations; the value of this method was proved by the results and, in the case of Palestine, it was completely successful. I see no reason why such a grave problem as disarmament could not be approached in the same way; it is no exaggeration to say that the fate of mankind depends on its solution and such an approach might hasten the conclusion of the agreements for which the whole world longs.

161. I wish to add a few words on one aspect of the disarmament negotiations. I refer to the cessation or suspension of the testing of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, a subject on which a number of draft resolutions have already been submitted to this Assembly.

162. The existing stocks of atomic and hydrogen weapons are enough not only to wipe out both sides in a war but to annihilate the whole human race. What object can there be, therefore, in trying to increase further the destructive power of these weapons? It is a deadly illusion to think that minor wars with small nuclear weapons can be confined to a given region. Nations which engage in an arms race are like a man galloping at night along the edge of a cliff, between the tempest and the abyss; the only balance is that of fear, delicate and precarious. The cessation or suspension of tests, whether within the framework of disarmament or outside, would undoubtedly free mankind of the burden of one of its most oppressive fears.

163. Lastly, I should like to refer to the related question of the international responsibility of the State for injuries caused by test explosions. This question is at present being examined by the International Law Commission of the United Nations.

164. Since this is not the occasion to go into the matter in detail, I shall confine myself to stating that, in my view, a case can be made out for the international responsibility of any State that sets off such explosions, whether on the high seas or within its own territory, and even though there is no international ruling expressly applying to such cases, when the explosions result in injuries to the people or territory of other States.

165. At the last meeting of the International Law Commission, I gave my provisional views on this subject. I said, among other things, that perhaps the present conceptions of fault and negligence, injury and international liability were no longer adequate to the conditions of the atomic age. The picture was complicated by what was perhaps an entirely new factor in the evolution of the human race. Man had learnt how to unleash forces that, once set in motion, were beyond his control. I added that I had in mind not so much the size of the explosions and the physical devastation they caused as the resultant atomic radiation with its unforeseeable consequences for mankind and all living creatures, and even for future generations. From that point of view, which was the most important, the effects of nuclear explosions were entirely outside man's control.

166. I went on to say that that new factor might serve as a basis for a new category sui generis of fault, which might be formulated as follows: "Whoever knowingly unleashes forces that he cannot control and whose ultimate effects he cannot foresee commits a fault and is responsible for any damage caused." Countries that set off such explosions, even for the most legitimate motives, wittingly ran the risk of causing incalculable damage to other peoples, in a word, international damage. I concluded that the fact of wittingly and voluntarily running that risk might perhaps be regarded as a source of international responsibility.<sup>2/</sup>

<sup>2/</sup> A/CN.4/SR.413, p. 17.



167. What I have said on this subject explains why I was particularly struck by the comparison of the positions of the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union which was made from this rostrum last week by the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, Mr. Lloyd [685th meeting]. From this comparison it would appear that the two parties were in agreement both on the suspension of tests and on a system of control. Perhaps, therefore, this is one of the aspects of disarmament on which we might hope, at this session of the Assembly, to find a formula acceptable to the three Powers that bear on their shoulders the fearful responsibility of having a monopoly of atomic and hydrogen weapons.

168. I shall now refer briefly to the question of the economic development of the underdeveloped countries, which in our view should be directed to the essential goal of raising the standard of living of the rural masses and other large population groups.

169. I should like to begin by recalling what I said in 1954 at the Tenth Inter-American Conference:

"We are firmly convinced that it is possible, given the help that should be forthcoming from the wealthy countries that have the greatest share of international trade, to show the world that war and the preparation for war are not necessary to maintain the economic stability on which social welfare and tranquillity are founded, and that in the modern world prosperity need not necessarily go hand in hand with anguish and fear. On more than one occasion Mexico, like many other countries, has upheld the doctrine that before the common aim of living in peace and security can be achieved, steps must be taken to bring about the speedy disappearance of the gulf now existing between the standard of living of the under-developed countries and that enjoyed by the peoples of highly industrialized countries."

170. The standard of living of the peoples of the underdeveloped countries can be raised only if the economic development of these countries is accelerated. The World Economic Survey for 1956, prepared by the United Nations, shows, like that for 1955, per capita income in the under-developed countries still for below that reached in the industrial countries before the last war. Unless we are prepared to see, instead of the disappearance of, a continual increase in the great disparity that already exists between the two groups of countries, we shall have to ensure that economic expansion proceeds more rapidly in the under-developed countries than in the industrialized countries. Especially in Latin America, with its rapid population increase, economic development must outstrip demographic growth if the ever increasing population is to enjoy full and productive employment and if we are to avoid the loss of production implicit in the unemployment or under-employment which still weigh heavily on most of our economies.

171. Since these problems arise to a great extent from external factors, their solution requires international co-operation, and cannot be effected solely through the efforts of the individual countries concerned. The Government of Mexico is convinced that the prosperity of any nation must depend first and foremost on the hard work of its people, and it therefore considers international economic co-operation not as a device for the distribution of charity but as a

means of countering or limiting the effects of an economic imbalance brought about by external factors, and of enlarging the sphere within which peoples can pursue their efforts to promote their own economic and social development.

172. In this connexion, I should like to remind the Assembly that all Members of the United Nations have solemnly undertaken in the Charter to promote "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development".

173. I believe that there are three main fields in which this undertaking can most fruitfully be carried out by the wealthier and more highly industrialized countries.

174. In the first place, measures should be adopted, and permanent machinery set up, to combat sudden and violent fluctuations in commodity prices, fluctuations that are sometimes aggravated by restrictive customs practices or the uncontrolled dumping of accumulated surpluses. It should be remembered that, while the results of such price fluctuations are usually negligible in relation to the total revenues of industrialized countries, they can have a disastrous effect on the short-term and even on the long-term plans of the under-developed countries, which all depend to a considerable extent on their commodities as a means of obtaining the foreign currency they need to import the capital goods necessary for their economic development.

175. The possibility of accelerating the economic development of the under-developed countries by increasing their own resources will be greatly enhanced if we succeed in abolishing, or at least reducing considerably, the gap between the prices they receive for their commodities and the prices they have to pay for manufactured goods.

176. In order to supplement national resources, particularly for the purpose of strengthening and developing a country's economic infrastructure, it is often advisable and sometimes indispensable to be able to count on the help of international development agencies, particularly for long-term or medium-term loans. This is a third instance of the way in which international co-operation can be fruitful. May the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development, which Mexico hopes will at last become a reality at this session of the Assembly, be able, among other things, to encourage the existing international financial organizations to increase the volume of their operations and to liberalize their credit policies, which so far, we must admit, leave much to be desired.

177. It is most discouraging, for example, to compare vast sum of \$85,000 million, which, according to reliable calculations, the world is spending annually on war material and the mobilization of troops, with the small amount of \$400 million which is the sum total of all the loans made during the last fiscal year by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. If even a part of the tremendous economic force represented by the first of these figures could be devoted to the fight against poverty, sickness and ignorance, we should have embarked on the true road to peace and security.

178. In addition to the three main tasks that I have outlined, and closely connected with them, is the need

to encourage a technical assistance programme that can be integrated with national development programmes, and to support the efforts of under-developed countries to diversify their economies and reduce their dependence on the export of commodities.

179. In this connexion, it should not be forgotten that any international economic development programme must fully respect the economic and political independence of the countries receiving aid, thus avoiding the danger that the under-developed countries may be forced to accept, as the price of their progress, economic subordination, the weakening of the democratic basis of their system of government, or threats to their full sovereignty. In this connexion we should remember and abide by resolution 626 (VII), in which the General Assembly recommended that all Member States "refrain from acts, direct or indirect, designed to impede the exercise of the sovereignty of any State over its natural resources".

180. Before concluding my remarks on this point, I should like to mention an idea which I have been considering for some time, that is, the possible adoption by the General Assembly of a declaration of economic principles.

181. Our Organization has on various occasions drawn up instruments which in a sense carry into effect and express in greater detail provisions of the Charter, and which may be likened to the laws of a country in relation to its constitution. We already have, for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of the Rights and Duties of States. I see no reason why we should not draw up a declaration of economic principles, such as that produced in 1945 in the inter-American sphere by the Chapultepec Conference when it adopted the Economic Charter of the Americas, and such as the Economic Declaration of Buenos Aires recently approved by another Inter-American Conference. If this idea finds acceptance as a constructive proposal, the Assembly might take action on it, either at this session or the next, and thus fill what seems to me to be a real need.

182. I should also like to take this opportunity of explaining briefly our view on declarations of principle in general, and especially declarations of principle of a juridico-political nature. We consider that such declarations should be something that unites rather than divides us, something that helps the United Nations to discharge one of its main functions, namely the reconciling and rapprochement of divergent points

of view. Hence, we do not consider desirable the procedure followed at some previous sessions of the Assembly, and which I greatly fear may be repeated at this session, whereby one or more States submit a draft declaration embodying principles to which no one can object, since they correspond in essence to the fundamental principles of the Charter, but put in such a way and in such a context that the proposed declaration appears to other States tendentious and unacceptable. These States in turn propose a new draft declaration that for similar reasons is found unacceptable by the authors of the first draft.

183. Perhaps we should conclude that the surest way of reaching agreement would be to entrust the task of formulating the draft declarations not to the great Powers, but to the small and medium-sized States, which could once again exert their moderating and conciliatory influence. Such declarations would be of value, if adopted unanimously, because the reiteration of fundamental principles always tends to enhance their power and influence.

184. As I have said before, prosperity as well as peace is indivisible; the two are so intimately linked that it is not too much to say that the one depends on the other. There can be no real peace without a minimum level of general prosperity, and it is humanly impossible to conceive of prosperity if there is no peace.

185. A few years ago I told the Assembly that, in the opinion of scientists and technical experts, atomic and hydrogen weapons had destroyed for ever the old idea of victors and vanquished, and that potential enemies were now inescapably bound by a common destiny, and must live or die together. Let me express the hope that the work of this Assembly will show the peoples of the world that their Governments have already chosen between these alternatives, and that they have resolved not only to live together, but to "live together in peace with one another as good neighbours", working side by side so that the weapons of destruction may speedily be changed into the tools of prosperity.

186. A few weeks ago the President of Mexico, speaking to the people of my country, said: "What needs to be done must be made possible". The world needs peace. Let us make it possible.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.