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President: Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand).

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. BITAR (Syria) (translated from French): I should like first of all to add the congratulations of the Syrian delegation to those which have been addressed to Sir Leslie Munro on his election as President of the twelfth session of the General Assembly.
2. May I also congratulate the Secretary-General on the unanimously approved and well-deserved renewal of his mandate?
3. Our present session is being held at the close of a turbulent period during which our Organization was subjected to one of the most serious ordeals in its existence.
4. It is neither my intention nor my desire to revert at the present time to the tragic events of the past. These events—and I am referring in particular to the tripartite aggression against Egypt—have given eloquent proof of the futility of military adventures. They have also emphasized the important and effective part which our Organization can play in maintaining international peace and security. The new responsibilities of the Organization and its widening spheres of activity are striking evidence of this fact.
5. It is a particular pleasure for me to stress the very important part played by our Secretary-General during the various international crises and especially during the aggression against Egypt.
6. The Assembly still has to discuss a number of questions which have been placed before it for consideration and solution under the terms of the Charter of the United Nations. Some of these questions are not new, but they require renewed effort or different methods.
7. For example, the disarmament problem, with which the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission has been dealing for several years, has not yet been solved. In this connexion, the concrete

proposals made in this Assembly that the public should be kept informed about the work being done on disarmament might constitute a new method which the United Nations would be well advised to adopt. These proposals are an unmistakable indication of the steadily increasing interest of peoples and Governments in this problem.

8. Other questions, such as that of Algeria, which we shall consider in due course, are particularly urgent in nature and therefore require rapid solutions.

9. Lastly, there are a number of favourable developments which deserve to be mentioned. One of these is the admission of new members, as a result of which the Organization is in a position to reflect more faithfully the realities of the world situation.

10. I should like to take this occasion to welcome the delegations of Ghana and the Federation of Malaya to our midst. Their admission to the United Nations as fully independent and sovereign States is for us Syrians a particularly heartening and significant event.

11. However, there are countries which occupy a highly important position in respect of population, size, wealth and civilization but which are still improperly and unjustly excluded from the Organization, in violation of its principle of universality.

12. Important steps which were taken last year—such as the establishment of the International Atomic Energy Agency—have resulted in a strengthening of organized international co-operation in the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

13. The problems which we have to consider are obviously varied in nature and interest some delegations more than others. Nevertheless, we believe that the solution of these problems could be promoted by a large number of factors which are favourable to a relaxation of world tensions. Among these factors, we should like to note particularly the rebirth of Asia and the reawakening of Africa. During the past decade, nearly 600 million human beings in Asia and Africa have been freed from a foreign yoke. Today, their delegations are sitting in this Assembly and playing a useful part in its activities.

14. Special importance should also be attached to the economic and social development of the under-developed areas of Asia and Africa. The object of this development, in the economic and political fields, is to enable the liberated countries of the two continents to co-operate on an equal footing with the other members of the international community. It also contributes to an increase of world wealth and to the improvement of the standard of living of the liberated peoples, to the benefit of peace and general welfare. The crowning event in this development was the Bandung Conference, which marked a turning point in the history of the peoples of Asia and Africa.

15. Since the effects of the liberation of peoples and of the improvement of conditions in the under-developed countries are so important to peace and progress in the world, the United Nations should devote increasing attention to consideration of the relevant problems.

16. For these reasons, I believe that it is necessary to consider in greater detail the movement of liberation and development in the Arab countries. The fundamental factor in Western Asia and North Africa is Arab nationalism. The nationalism of the Arab countries is a liberating and constructive nationalism, similar to that which has developed in other areas of Asia and Africa. It is based on the fundamental fact that the Arab nation is one and indivisible, that it has the same language and culture and the same historical past. The Arab nation is made up of countries having identical conditions of life and constituting a single people, imbued with the same ideals and aspirations. Moreover, the Arab homeland is geographically continuous and well-defined.

17. Arabism is based not on a racial concept but on a national concept. It is no novel idea that the Arabs of today are seeking to establish but a well-established reality that has always existed.

18. Although the Arab nation is one, it has nevertheless been dismembered—especially during the last century—by colonial powers which transformed it into a number of politico-economic entities. In this way, the frontiers which today separate the Arab States are often nothing more than lines drawn on the conference tables of colonial Powers, devoid of a real significance with respect to the nature of the countries which they divide and the areas which they carve up.

19. Some of these entities, for example Syria, have lately regained their freedom as sovereign Arab States. Syria, by the nature, the convictions and the will of its people, and by the provisions of its Constitution, is an integral part of the Arab homeland. The Syrian people are an inseparable part of the Arab nation. For us in Syria, there is no Syrian nation distinct from the Arab nation.

20. It is these fundamental facts of our life which form the basis of Syrian policy and make of it an Arab policy whose objectives are clear and common to all Arab countries. Chief among these objectives is the liberation of all the Arab countries from foreign domination. This effort to achieve liberation is in keeping with the right of peoples to self-determination, a right which is recognized by and embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. It is therefore obvious that we are strongly in favour of the liberation of Algeria, Oman, the British protectorates in the Arabian peninsula and of every other Arab territory which is now occupied and subject to foreign domination. We also support the efforts of all other dependent peoples to achieve freedom and independence.

21. This nationalism is also concerned with the reunification of the Arab countries. That is to say, it aims at making the Arab nation a collectivity which is capable of functioning and of fulfilling the needs and requirements of the Arab people while freely co-operating with the other nations of the world.

22. Fundamentally, the liberation of the Arab countries and their reunification are but two aspects of the

same process. The dismemberment of these countries was and continues to be the basis of colonial policy, which is a policy of divide and rule. It is this policy based on division which is the source of the basic conflicts which have aligned Arab nationalism against the imperialist policy of colonialism and Zionism. In struggling for their reunification, the Arabs are in reality struggling for their complete liberation.

23. A process of this kind is undoubtedly a process of evolution and peaceful development and one which is in keeping with the right of peoples to self-determination. This right entitles a divided people to unite in the way in which it chooses to do so and in conformity with the principles of international law.

24. At the present time other nations too are the victims of disunion in various forms, for example Germany, Korea, Ireland and Viet-Nam. It goes without saying that we Arabs are well qualified to understand the problem of reunification wherever it exists and to sympathize with peoples who are struggling to achieve their reunification.

25. It is astonishing to hear Arab nationalism described as imperialistic and expansionist. Is it reasonable to apply such descriptions to the efforts made by the Arabs, in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter, merely to establish a collectivity which will give practical form to the unity of the Arab nation?

26. Mr. Dulles, the United States Secretary of State, was apparently referring to all these facts when he spoke of extreme nationalistic ambitions in the Arab countries. His words merely betrayed his fear of Arab liberation and reunification.

27. We know that our road to national union is strewn with many external difficulties. Nevertheless, the Arab States have made definite progress in the right direction by establishing the Arab League and by concluding a number of reciprocal economic, cultural, security and other agreements.

28. One fact is already established and open to no doubt: the solidarity existing between the Arabs is such that it cannot be broken by foreign efforts like those recently undertaken with a view to isolating Syria. This fact is amply confirmed by the official statements which have been made lately by a number of Arab Governments.

29. Still another basic objective of Arab nationalism is to achieve a more advanced and progressive society through a policy of economic, social and cultural development.

30. We fully realize that such development requires international peace and co-operation. The efforts and resources now given over to armaments for defence or war could much more usefully be devoted to the satisfaction of development needs. The cold war with its alliances, with the international tension and the armaments race it entails, creates a situation which both endangers the security of nations and hampers their development. It is an evil which we must all try to cure.

31. We do not, however, think that the aid offered by a country should be utilized as a means to influence the policy of the receiving country. In its present particular situation Syria has chosen to accept no aid of the character described.

32. In this field we have always looked to the United Nations. Now as before, we fully endorse the plan for the establishment of a Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development and the policy which the Fund is intended to adopt.

33. The world situation certainly calls for economic co-operation, freely accepted and carried out by the countries concerned. The fact that the Middle East is an area rich in oil and other resources which find their markets in the West makes such co-operation even more necessary. Economic interests, however, such as the need to ensure oil supplies, cease to be legitimate or valid if they are used as pretexts for foreign interference, pressure, threats and direct or indirect aggression of the type that we undergo from time to time.

34. To achieve its national objectives, Syria's international policy is based on the concept of broad co-operation with all nations. This policy requires non-alignment with either of the two camps or Power blocs. Our neutrality is positive. It leads us to follow world events and developments closely, to examine and judge them objectively. We do not believe in a world consisting of spheres of influence or power orbits, in which small nations are destined to be satellites.

35. Seen in its true light, Arab nationalism is essentially democratic, because it expresses the hopes and embodies the creative efforts of the average Arab and of the masses to which he belongs.

36. Our national policy and our development, it is true, are bound to displease colonialists, Zionists and their associates. Our policy obviously runs counter to their unlawful purposes, which consist in dividing and exploiting the Arab people and in thwarting their aspirations. Arab nationalism is henceforth a fact of international life. Its friendship can scarcely be gained by threats. The reality being such, would it not be wiser to recognize the facts and to act on them? Arab nationalism is a reality of major importance and of the greatest urgency, which must be taken into consideration whenever the problems of the Arab world are discussed at international assemblies and meetings. There is no doubt in our minds as to the role which the realization of Arab aspirations may play in the Middle East as a factor of peace and stability.

37. I hope you will forgive me for having dwelt at some length on this question of Arab nationalism. I did so because the situation in the Arab world is largely governed by that national policy.

38. In the world of today, colonialism in its old form is on the decline. But it has not disappeared. It even takes on new forms. So far as the Arab countries are concerned, colonialism is still very active. In this part of the world it takes two main forms.

39. The first is that of colonial domination imposed by war and by foreign occupation pure and simple. That is what is happening in Algeria and in the southern part of the Arabian peninsula.

40. The second form consists of foreign interference, pressure, threats and acts of direct or indirect aggression committed by certain great Powers in order to impose a policy on Syria and other Arab States. It is in this context that the nature and aims of the aggression perpetrated last year against Egypt must be understood. It is also in this context that the campaign of

defamation, intimidation and threats to which Syria is being subjected must be understood.

41. This policy regards the Arab countries as a sphere of influence reserved for certain great Powers. With that aim in view, these Powers seek above all to ensure what they call "stability" in that area. Stability in that case means nothing but the stabilization of the situation such as existed, with all its negative and harmful elements, which militate against the Arab countries' complete liberation, their re-unification, their democratic evolution, their cultural, economic and social progress and the strengthening of their means of defence. This so-called stability, which is inimical to natural evolution, requires foreign intervention and explains the character of the means used for this purpose.

42. It is a fundamental element in this colonialist policy in the Middle East that it supports the world Zionist movement and is supported by it. Experience has shown that this is a permanent and constant factor of that policy, by no means a mere coincidence. In fact, Israel, as the embodiment of world Zionism, was established in Palestine under the British Mandate.

43. In addition, the association between colonialism and Zionism was revealed last year in the tripartite aggression against Egypt. Israel now serves the colonialist plans and is used as a jumping-off ground for a new venture of imperialist expansion in that part of the world.

44. What is more, Israel by its very nature pursues its own expansionist policy at the expense of the Arab countries. The maintenance of a steady flow of immigrants into Israel is one of the essential elements of that policy. The existence of a million Arab refugees expelled from their homes is one of the direct consequences of the creation of Israel and its expansionist policy.

45. Some Powers supporting Israel, it is true, contribute to the assistance which the Arab refugees receive under United Nations auspices. But we must not overlook the enormous and disproportionate aid lavished simultaneously on Israel, enabling it to defy United Nations resolutions, to maintain the flow of Zionist immigration and thus to perpetuate and to aggravate the Arab refugee problem. In this connexion it must be emphasized that the United States is now the chief centre of Zionist world activity and the most important source of the assistance furnished to Israel.

46. If the policy we are examining had confined itself to normal diplomatic activity, we should not have dealt with the matter at such length. Unfortunately it did not remain within the limits laid down in the Charter; its aims are opposed to the Charter; its purpose is to ignore the United Nations each time the originators of this policy consider that the Organization might not do as they wish. Instead of basing itself on the United Nations, which is pre-eminently the centre for harmonizing international action, this policy relies on its own concept in its conduct of world affairs. It is, in effect, a policy intended to serve above all the interests of certain Powers, while trying to create the impression that it serves the international community.

47. As regards my country in particular, the application of such a concept would be tantamount to subordinating our national policy to the will of the foreigner.

This, as we see it, is the true problem to which I consider it my duty to draw the Assembly's attention, a problem which has already been discussed by several other delegations.

48. A few days ago we heard Mr. Dulles, the Secretary of State of the United States, make a declaration to the General Assembly regarding the situation in the Middle East. That and earlier statements would lead us to believe that a serious situation has developed in the Middle East as a result of Soviet penetration. Mr. Dulles had accused my country of being in a certain sense the instrument of this penetration. He particularly stressed that the unusual concentration of Soviet arms in Syria constituted a growing military danger for neighbouring countries, both Arab and non-Arab, and also for the free world in general. These statements are consistent with the Press campaign which is directed against Syria and other more serious activities for which the United States is largely responsible.

49. Mr. Dulles did not speak to us of foreign interference in the internal affairs of Syria which went so far as to include activities of a subversive nature; certain of these activities were discovered and brought before the courts. Another case of the same kind has recently been uncovered and is now being tried. As a result, my Government has been obliged to request the recall of three United States diplomats who were directly involved. Mr. Dulles did not allude to economic, financial, political and military pressure brought to bear on my country in an attempt to induce it to adopt policies subordinated to the views of the United States. He also failed to allude to acts of provocation, military demonstrations, the concentration of troops on our frontiers and threats made against Syria. In addition, Mr. Dulles deliberately forgot to mention the joy with which Israel daily receives enormous quantities of arms from the Western bloc. These arms are more than a mere threat to Syria and the other Arab States for they have in fact been used by Israel in its repeated acts of aggression against the Arabs. It was for this reason that Syria was obliged to acquire arms wherever she could, to ensure her own defence. The arms acquired by Syria in no way constitute a danger for our neighbours and more particularly Turkey, as we harbour no thought of aggression.

50. We regret Mr. Dulles should have used this rostrum to repeat his unjust and unjustified attacks against Syria.

51. At the beginning of my address I drew the General Assembly's attention to certain aspects of the situation in the Middle East and to certain wrongs perpetrated in that part of the world.

52. Apart from the activities that I have just mentioned, we are accused of taking part in the cold war with the aim of confusing the issue. Until now we had been spared this additional accusation but it would seem that Syria has now become the object of special attention in this respect.

53. We believe that this attitude has been adopted in certain quarters as a result of a biased approach. It would seem that certain people have an unfortunate tendency to interpret everything in terms of the cold war. It would seem too that this is a result of insidious propaganda designed to hide from world

public opinion the real character of the conflict in the Middle East between the colonialist-Zionist camp and the Arab liberation movement.

54. The problem is simple and can be summarized as follows: should Syria, which has only recently become free and whose population and area are relatively small, be left to enjoy the full measure of its independence and carry through its development, or should it be content with fictitious independence and be made to submit to the will of certain great Powers and comply with the desires of world Zionism, colonialism and those who support those policies? For us the answer is clear. Unfortunately certain great Powers continue to try and make us enter into alliances, adopt doctrines and accept views which would make us depart from the policy of non-alignment to which we have resolutely subscribed.

55. The part played by the United States in this field deserves a special brief comment. This Power would seem to be becoming the chief actor on the Middle Eastern stage. With its strategic and economic interests it appears to be gradually replacing the European Powers which have traditionally dominated the area. The policy at present pursued by the United States in the Middle East consists not only of supporting indirectly the aims of colonialism and Zionism but also of filling the alleged vacuum left by the decline in the influence of the European Powers. In these circumstances the methods employed by the United States are coming to resemble more and more closely the methods of the past.

56. I should now like to examine a number of questions in the solution of which my country is particularly interested.

57. The first of these questions, Algeria, appears once more on the agenda of the General Assembly. The present conflict in Algeria has now grown into a veritable war. The atrocities daily committed by the French and the sacrifices of the Algerian people in human life and material wealth make it more than ever necessary to seek a swift and just solution to this problem under the auspices of the United Nations. The repercussions of the Algerian war in Tunisia and Morocco render necessary the participation of these countries in any settlement of this conflict. The massive influx of Algerian refugees into Tunisia and Morocco and the serious incidents which have occurred on the frontiers of the two countries turn the Algerian question into a North African problem. Furthermore, this question is having profound repercussions throughout the world.

58. The resolutions adopted by the United Nations regarding Palestine have remained a dead-letter because Israel has refused to take notice of them. A just solution to this problem must be found—a solution based on a re-examination of the Palestine question from its beginnings. I do not wish to dwell on this subject at any greater length as it has already been amply dealt with. I examined it at the beginning of my own speech and the representatives of Arab countries who spoke before me have also expounded their views on it.

59. We note that no equitable solution has so far been found to the Cyprus question, and this is of grave concern to Syria. Indeed the fate of Cyprus touches us very closely by reason both of its nearness to our

shores and of historical links which bind us to its people. The use of Cyprus as a military base against the Arab countries is a possible danger and indeed one which materialized at the time of the aggression against Egypt. We believe that the only solution to this problem is the application of the right of the Cypriot people to self-determination. A solution of this kind should also include the demilitarization of the island.

60. I should also like to mention the abnormal situation created at present in Yemen by repeated British acts of aggression against the territorial integrity of that country. These acts of aggression have been frequently brought to the attention of the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council. Yet such steps have not provided sufficient inducement so far to bring such acts of aggression, which seriously jeopardize peace in this area of the world, to an end.

61. Let us recall recent events in another part of the Arabian Peninsula resulting from the intervention of British armed forces in Oman. The Security Council has unfortunately not been able to investigate these events, although the people of Oman have the same right as any other people to freedom and peace.

62. I should not conclude this brief survey without drawing the Assembly's attention to the case of West Irian and to the need for reopening negotiations between Indonesia and the Netherlands so that this territory could be united with the rest of Indonesia.

63. These are the chief points to which my delegation thought it desirable to draw the Assembly's attention during this general debate. I have tried to make an impartial survey of the real situation in the Middle East and more particularly in Syria. I am particularly interested in clearing up doubts which have been artificially created regarding this situation. If I have spoken at such length, and I wish to apologize for having done so, it was because I wished to contribute to that spirit of good understanding which must reign between peoples. I believe that ambiguous situations may sometimes prove dangerous obstacles to the maintenance of good international relations and peace in general.

64. Syria is firmly attached to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and no less attached to its own independence. In conformity with the very principles of the Charter, Syria is resisting and will continue to resist by all means in its power foreign intervention in its internal affairs, in the same way that it is resolutely determined not to intervene in the internal affairs of other countries.

65. In accordance with this policy we are happy to welcome the fleet of any Power which may come to pay us a friendly visit. We do not however like to be threatened by a Sixth Fleet which patrols our coasts, nor do we appreciate troop concentrations on our northern or our southern frontiers in order to intimidate us. We are neither a threat nor a danger to anybody, and those who claim the contrary are trying to justify hostile and threatening actions which they are at present definitely taking against us.

66. I repeat that the Syrian people wish above all to live in peace and to be left in peace to continue their economic, social and cultural development. It is not long since we became free, but we have in that time

made much progress in the field of development. During the last decade we have doubled our industrial production, increased our agricultural output by about 60 per cent and augmented our national income by about 8 per cent per year. During this period our educational services have quadrupled while our social and health services have more than doubled.

67. All we seek is to be sure of conditions allowing of the free development of our country so that we may pursue both internally and internationally a policy which is truly our own and which is moreover consistent with the Charter and our international commitments.

68. Mr. ARENALES CATALAN (Guatemala) (translated from Spanish): It is a source of particular satisfaction to me to speak for the Guatemalan delegation in conveying to Sir Leslie Munro my Government's congratulations on his election as President of the twelfth session. Our knowledge of his personality assures us that his clarity of mind, his energy in action and his calm in the control of affairs will bring the work of this session of the General Assembly to a fruitful and satisfactory conclusion.

69. To Mr. Dag Hammarskjold, the Secretary-General, we pay a fresh tribute of gratitude, sincere congratulation and deep-rooted optimism, in the knowledge that his future activity will emulate his past and present efforts.

70. At this juncture I cannot but add, with some nostalgia, a word of gratitude to Prince Wan Waithayakon of Thailand, whose wisdom, tact and courtesy enabled him to carry on the business of one of the Assembly's most difficult sessions. His new humane mission of aiding the martyred people of Hungary could not have been placed in better hands.

71. I now wish to add Guatemala's voice to the welcome rightly extended to the new members of the international community which have entered the United Nations this year. Ghana and the Federation of Malaya are the latest symbols of two phenomena characteristic of this second half of the twentieth century: on the one hand the rise and integration of nations, and on the other the need to undertake a voluntary limitation of sovereignty, through organizations of States which demonstrate the interdependence of mankind, without loss of respect for the freedom and self-determination of peoples. Guatemala, which has always been devoted, heart and soul, to the liberation of subjected peoples, is particularly gratified at the rise of these new States and their advent in the United Nations, and reiterates its hope that this inevitable historical process will take effect speedily and peacefully for the 125 million inhabitants of an area several times the size of Europe who do not yet enjoy a full measure of self-government. We know Ghana and the Federation of Malaya will be valiant and helpful allies in the struggle which all Members of the United Nations have undertaken on behalf of the still dependent peoples.

72. I now turn to a brief explanation of the primary reason for my presence on this rostrum.

73. The delegation of Guatemala has felt it unnecessary to take part in the Assembly's general debates when there was no change in the broad terms of its foreign policy or when, in the absence of any major change in the international scene, the continuity of its

policy could be taken for granted. However, as all Members of the United Nations are aware, there has recently been a change of Government in Guatemala. This makes it necessary for us to reassure the international community, and, with particular earnestness the Members of the United Nations, that the foreign policy of Guatemala, under its present Government, remains unchanged and that the Guatemalan delegation to the twelfth regular session of our Assembly is instructed to continue working on the same lines as before, all of which reflects the continuity of the country's constitutional life and the political stability of its institutions. In assuring you of the continuity of our policy I do not, however, consider it necessary to redefine that policy, which has been adequately stated at previous sessions of the General Assembly and in principal organs and commissions of the United Nations.

74. The spirit which inspires our participation in the work of the United Nations was expressed from this very rostrum by the late President Castillo Armas, who has left such a deep imprint in the memory of his people. On 3 November 1955, addressing the General Assembly, he enunciated three basic principles of international goodwill, which remain valid. The President said:

"Fear and mistrust among the nations and their respective Governments represent a danger to peace. In view of these considerations, the new international atmosphere imposes certain inescapable obligations on all countries.

"In the first place, a renewed and continuous effort must be made to demonstrate by deeds our unshakable purpose to live at peace with other nations and to respect the domestic sovereignty of others, renouncing any policy of international subversion. Secondly, no manifestation of a change or improvement of policy or attitude in international affairs must be rejected out of prejudice, nor out of hand without careful study and mature consideration, no matter in what quarter the manifestation occurs. Lastly, the same attitude of constant vigilance must at all times be maintained so that we may be able to display our confidence when the deeds and attitudes of others deserve it" [539th meeting, paras. 11 and 12].

75. In addition to these guiding principles, on which our political participation in the United Nations is based, there is another important sector of the work of the United Nations to which the people of Guatemala and their Governments have traditionally and steadfastly devoted their attention and efforts: I refer to colonial problems. This policy, to which we adhere strictly but in a constructive spirit, is not, however, dictated to us solely by the feelings of the Guatemalan people. The General Assembly has also conferred on us a sacred trust by electing us to the Trusteeship Council and the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories.

76. The report of our stewardship which we have always considered it a moral obligation to furnish to our electors is confirmed by deeds, by votes and by statements of position in those organs of the United Nations, and by the tireless devotion and energy with which we have discharged our task. The General Assembly and its Member States may rest assured that our anti-colonial policy likewise remains immutable.

77. Before I end this part of my statement I wish to say a word about the problem which has grieved the Guatemalans for many decades: I refer to the recovery of that part of Guatemala which is named Belize and which, as British Honduras, the United Kingdom Government continues to occupy by right of force alone and in a manner which, while it no longer astounds the world, still affronts its sense of justice, and which prejudices the development of my country and infringes its sovereignty. No Guatemalan will ever abate his efforts to solve this problem, which likewise affects the people of Belize and their development.

78. While the main purpose of our participation in the general debate is to restate our policy with regard to the United Nations, I cannot do less than refer, however briefly, to some problems which are now casting dark shadows on the international political scene.

79. I shall first of all refer to disarmament, a problem with which the First Committee will shortly have to deal. We are convinced that this is the most serious problem on our agenda, and that there have been few occasions in the past when the patience and efforts of the parties mainly concerned have given greater hopes of obtaining a measure of agreement enabling us to take at least the first steps towards establishing peace on more secure foundations. Pending the discussion in the Committee we wish to make known that the Government of Guatemala is devoting due attention to the procedural suggestions made for expansion of the membership of the Disarmament Commission, and to the valuable idea advanced by another delegation that thought should be given to the desirability of appointing a United Nations commissioner for disarmament.

80. As regards the problem—unhappily a related problem—of atomic explosions, the Government of Guatemala shares the profound concern of friendly Governments at the threat these tests represent to mankind and to future generations. Guatemala knows and shares the views expressed by the head of the Roman Catholic community and by many scientific and humanitarian organizations. The sacred trust conferred on us by the Charter and by the Assembly, coupled with the imperishable ethics on which our policy rests, has already impelled us to express our concern in the Trusteeship Council. On the other hand, we are not unmindful of the arguments advanced by other friendly Governments which have been placed in the difficult and serious position of bearing primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We shall have to follow these principles and to use our calmest judgement in dealing with the specific problems to which this question may give rise at this session of the General Assembly.

81. The Secretary for External Relations of Mexico recently advanced from this rostrum an argument of extraordinary importance concerning the legal responsibility of States which carry out nuclear explosions harmful to the population or territory of other States. This is a highly interesting suggestion which my country intends to study with the closest attention and which will assuredly be examined in the same spirit by other Member States.

82. With regard to the peaceful uses of atomic energy, Guatemala has followed with interest the efforts being made in this direction nationally and internationally. It gave my Government great pleasure this year to

join in founding the International Atomic Energy Agency and to make Guatemala the first country to ratify its constituent Statute. My country's satisfaction at President Eisenhower's initiative and my Government's sustained efforts during the time it has taken to bring this initiative to fulfilment were rewarded this past week by the election of Guatemala to the Board of Governors of the new Agency in common with three other Latin American countries. Guatemala welcomed this appointment, and has pledged its active and devoted adherence to the noble international effort to ensure for the atom the only future worthy of civilized man.

83. There is another problem to which we wish to make particular reference because it remains a source of international tension: that of the Middle East. Perhaps at this juncture we should refrain from discussing those thorny aspects of it which appear to be on the way to a satisfactory settlement. The urgency of the present situation is such, however, that we find it essential to restate some concepts which are still valid and which have in the past shaped our attitude towards the many-faceted and disquieting combination of circumstances and political forces which make up the Middle East.

84. We are all aware that, in this continuous struggle to preserve world peace, however relative that peace may be, the greatest danger in an atmosphere charged with tensions is that we may contribute, by our acts or omissions, to the worsening of those tensions in the most sensitive areas of friction. There can be no question but that the Middle East, with its historical and passionate conflicts, is one such critical area.

85. Last year, when the more acute symptoms and unhappy facts of the Egyptian situation were slowly beginning to abate, we pointed out that any disturbance in the equilibrium of that part of the world produced an even greater disturbance, and warned that the price of independence or survival might be to compromise the very independence and freedom of nations. We were referring to the preparations which had already been started a year previously in a country in that area with the assistance of countries outside the area which were directly or indirectly concerned. We went on to remind friendly nations in the area that, in international situations of the kind which obtained then and which are still recurring today in a less serious degree, any step taken in the Middle East might produce actions and reactions which might endanger world peace, and thus also the peace of the area concerned, or, failing that, seriously endanger the freedom and independence of the very peoples that were trying to preserve peace, as well as the very interests which other nations were trying to protect. That, I said at the time, was the inevitable fate of those regions which found themselves at the crossroads of world politics. Hence it will not be out of order to address on this occasion a new appeal to all the parties concerned to refrain from any step which might help to set off or to prepare for an active conflict in the Middle East.

86. Apart from these aspects of the question, which relate to the most immediate and pressing problem in the Middle East, the region also presents a second basic problem; not only is it an area of friction between two or more major international political or economic forces, but there is also friction within the region, in the relations between Israel and the Arab countries.

87. Possibly this is not the time to touch on this problem; but, equally possibly, it is for us small countries to tell the Arab nations, our dear friends, that we still consider that they must recognize Israel's existence as an irrevocable historical fact and as an essential step towards the well-being and prosperity of the area, and to ask Israel, another friend of ours, to understand the feelings of the Arab nations and to realize that the interest of the Semitic peoples of the area override any outside interests.

88. We venture to restate these ideas with all due respect, and with the conviction that this reiteration of what we consider fair and right can do no harm, and that our reflections will always be received broadmindedly both by Israel, with whose birth my country's name is associated, and by the Arab nations with which we have always maintained the most cordial ties. It was not an accident that, a few days ago, Mr. Lequerica of Spain referred from this rostrum, in colourful and elegant language, to Spain's unshakable historical ties in the Mediterranean basin and North Africa. Spanish America has not been left out of this proud heritage.

89. I should now like to refer briefly to two questions relating to the economic and social activities of the United Nations. The first question, while of a social nature, has both legal and political aspects and is rooted in philosophical and humane considerations. I refer to the international jurisdiction over human rights, a thesis which the delegations of Uruguay and Costa Rica have propounded here.

90. We expressed last year, and have reiterated at this session, the deep sympathy with which the people and Government of Guatemala view this initiative. We have not yet reached any conclusion on the legal basis of the argument, which appears to be that compulsory international jurisdiction is implicit in the United Nations Charter. Moreover, we have pointed out that before some States could accept such an interpretation their national parliaments might have to take action. Nevertheless, the ethical and profoundly humane character of the argument cannot fail to appeal to the good will of Member States and impel them to give the proposal their most serious and attentive study.

91. In the economic field I wish to restate Guatemala's policy of giving firm support to every action or step intended to promote the economic development and raise the level of living of the under-development peoples in accordance with policy of genuine social justice and without prejudice to the sovereignty and the political and economic independence of nations. With these ideas in mind Guatemala cannot but view with sympathy the suggestion that the General Assembly might adopt a declaration of economic principles, even as the American nations at Chapultepec and Buenos Aires defined the rules which should govern their economic relations. Again consistently with this line of policy, we continue to be in favour of the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development, which we hope will at last become a reality.

92. Our delegation originally planned to include in its contribution to the general debate some reflections on the principles which govern Guatemala's participation in the United Nations. We proposed to recall that, whatever the motives of the great Powers might have been in establishing the United Nations, Guatemala's co-operation in that act, its signature and ratification

of the Charter, and its continued presence here have been guided solely by the purposes, principles and conditions set forth in that very Charter. But there is no further need to raise our voice to defend the United Nations from attacks the reason for which may have been that the majority of the people in the countries which compose the United Nations held an unfavourable opinion of the actions of some of its Members. There is no further need to add Guatemala's voice to those of such delegations as the Salvadorian, the Costa Rican and the Mexican, which have spoken of the proud dignity with which we small and medium-sized nations participate in the United Nations, and of the conditions for our participation. Suffice it to record our support of and agreement with those delegations and the views set forth in the introduction to the Secretary-General's report to this Assembly.

93. It is not idle, however, to recall that, apart from such ethical or philosophical considerations as may have contributed to the birth of the United Nations, those same political motives which made the association of nations large and small imperative after the Second World War still persist, and have perhaps become more urgent, amid the increasing awakening of the world's peoples and the crises and tensions which face us half-way through this century.

94. Guatemala reaffirms its faith in the United Nations Charter, but also reaffirms and claims on its people's behalf, as a basic condition of its participation, recognition and respect of the legal equality of States.

95. Mr. LADGHAM (Tunisia) (translated from French): May I first of all perform a most pleasant task, that of offering Sir Leslie Munro my congratulations, thus joining in the tribute which our Assembly could not fail to pay to the distinguished personage whom it has elected to the Presidency of its twelfth session. In selecting him to fill an international position of grave responsibility, the Assembly has given real proof of the confidence which he has won and which is commensurate with his outstanding qualifications.

96. I am particularly happy that our Assembly, by its re-election of Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, has recognized the effective part which the Secretary-General continues to play in the maintenance of peace with so much perspicacity and dedication.

97. I should like too, on behalf of my country, to welcome the delegations of Ghana and the Federation of Malaya, whose admission as States Members of our Organization gives cause for hope to all those who believe that the attainment of independence is the final stage in a natural and inevitable evolution from colonial status.

98. This general debate is a healthy discipline in the process of solving our problems by stages, in so far as it helps in the working out, from divergent positions and points of view, of a common approach in conformity with the spirit of the Charter. Hence, no effort must be spared in comparing even mutually antagonistic attitudes as fully and explicitly as possible, provided the guiding principles of the Charter are not infringed.

99. It is in this spirit that my Government is determined to work to strengthen our Organization and to secure the enforcement of its decisions and the

steady development of its activities in the maintenance of peace and good relations between nations.

100. No Member of the United Nations formally repudiates the obligation to comply with and strive for the universal application of the aims and principles of the Charter, but the will to carry out this obligation is not equally strong among all States.

101. Furthermore, although our Assembly has resolutely and correctly decided that all important issues should be debated, despite the opposition of certain Member States which adhere to a one-sided and, in the view of my delegation, erroneous interpretation of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter, it is sometimes reluctant to fulfil its obligations satisfactorily, and at other times its recommendations are set at naught by certain Members, when their interests or prestige are affected. Thus the number of violations of the United Nations Charter is unfortunately increasing, and conflicts sometimes degenerate into unequal and deadly wars.

102. Let us not underestimate the resentment felt by peoples and nations who have suffered in consequence of that attitude. As violations of the spirit and even of the letter of the Charter multiply, and as it proves impossible to stop the trend by appropriate measures, the confidence of peoples in the United Nations decreases and individual groups, or even whole nations, reluctantly turn away from the use of peaceful measures and, in order to defend their legitimate rights and their lives which are endangered, resort to the desperate measure of active resistance. This resistance in its turn is used by certain Powers as an excuse for engaging in military operations which inevitably fail, since although force can partially destroy a people, it certainly cannot induce them to renounce the right to live in freedom and dignity.

103. These remarks relate primarily to one of the main problems of our times, that of the fate of nations and peoples living under various forms of foreign rule, which has not changed in nature or effects. The lust for domination of certain Powers has been amply demonstrated and is universally deplored. But it is not as generally condemned, perhaps because of the monstrous notion of the "inequality of man", even where merit is equal. I shall not dwell on the serious danger to international peace and security constituted by the continuance of an international order based solely on disparity in strength.

104. This problem has now reached a critical stage. In its various aspects and manifestations, it tends to monopolize the time of most branches of our Organization. A serious and sustained effort will be required to remove its causes. It is our bounden duty to try to reach an early settlement of existing conflicts and to prevent them from spreading.

105. It is against this background that I should like to recall the increasingly serious developments in Algeria. Because of the proportions of this conflict—the scale of military operations, the considerable increase in loss of human life and destruction—and its duration, it cannot be dismissed as a temporary difficulty, or regarded as a domestic dispute in connexion with which the United Nations has no responsibilities. The ravages of the war in Algeria affect two peoples, unequal in power but equally proud of their past and their traditions, who throughout all

the vicissitudes of a colonial status based on the fortunes of war have nevertheless learned to know and respect one another. In a sense, the French attempt to assimilate Algeria was bound to result in the development of a national consciousness, strongly imbued with the liberal and democratic spirit which characterizes the radiant humanism of France.

106. The bloodshed which has now been going on in Algeria for three years is one of the most poignant tragedies of contemporary history, and certainly the gravest in its implications, after the wars in Korea and Indo-China. The horrors of a so-called war of "pacification", the unspeakable condition of the civilian population doomed to annihilation, the extensive losses which a Great Power is itself suffering in the lives of its young men and in its economic potential, without any corresponding gain either in political prestige or moral influence, and the fact that the war in Algeria appears to be an unending struggle which may well spread over a larger area, are all urgent considerations underlining the necessity of a settlement.

107. In my delegation's view, the idea of Algeria as an integral part of the French Republic comes from an extraordinary misunderstanding not only of the true state of affairs in Algeria but also of the long-term interests of France. It is impossible not to be bitterly disappointed at the sight of a great nation, which has already guided several Members of this Assembly to independence, persisting in this dangerous course and thus turning back the historical tide which has brought it the gratitude of liberated peoples and the esteem of other countries everywhere. How can we agree that a policy of integration is still conceivable, that at the very gates of Europe, situated between two similar countries both of which are independent, Algeria can be regarded as a French province? Any scheme for partition of the country would run counter to the interests of the European population themselves and would create a permanent state of friction and conflict. In certain circles in France, the existence of this European population is the chief argument in favour of continuing the war. But what are we to think of this argument, when we compare the frightful cost of the war with the total volume of French investment in Algeria over several generations? As to the difficulties which a free Algeria, left to work out its own destiny, would encounter, war is a very strange method of averting them.

108. I cannot refrain from mentioning the growing tension which is affecting the relations between my country and France because of the continuation of the war in Algeria and its gradual infiltration into Tunisian territory. All the problems pending between France and Tunisia are affected, including military questions. Tunisia, which is an independent and sovereign State, is partly occupied by French troops. The reductions which had been agreed upon are being carried out very slowly, and have too often been halted by frontier incidents caused by the almost permanent flow of Algerian refugees, among them a large number of women and children. The arrival in Tunisia of these refugees is made the pretext for continual incursions by French troops from Algeria and bombing of Tunisian territory by French aircraft. Not a day goes by without casualties. On the French side, much has been made of the "right of pursuit" and the "right of reply". The Tunisian Government has displayed and will continue to

display great self-control in order to prevent these constant violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Tunisia from degenerating into a general conflict, but the French military authorities persist in acting as though they wished to provoke us into some violent reaction which would justify their invading Tunisian territory in force.

109. Despite hostile diplomatic activities seeking to persuade certain allies of France to refuse to supply Tunisia with the armaments or the munitions which it needs for its new army, and despite the ever-worsening situation, my Government is determined to try every means of conciliation in order to settle its differences with France and to use force only in strict self-defence. Similarly, my Government will spare no effort to help to find a solution of the Algerian problem and will do its utmost to promote a favourable climate for a joint examination by the parties concerned of ways and means of reaching a satisfactory settlement.

110. We are more than ever convinced that the Algerian problem will not be solved by force or by the institution of reforms, and that negotiations, conducted in an atmosphere of freedom, justice and mutual respect, are absolutely essential.

111. After the idea of a North African conference was bruited, Mr. Bourguiba, President of the Tunisian Republic, said that, from the Tunisian point of view, it would constitute a new opportunity "of mastering fate and reaching peace by negotiation". He continued: "We must grasp this opportunity and do all that we can to ensure its success". Thus my Government is ready, in this context, to act and, if the various parties are agreed, to enter into the joint consideration of any scheme which is likely to improve and strengthen the bonds of friendship and free co-operation between France and the three countries of North Africa, whose potential wealth is only just beginning to be revealed. Such a realistic approach would have been inconceivable a year ago. Today, the idea is apparently being seriously considered by responsible statesmen and by a large body of public opinion in North Africa. By encouraging a constructive settlement along these lines, all States Members will be contributing to the solution of one of the thorniest problems of our time and will render great service to the cause of peace.

112. My Government's attitude in this matter is in accordance with the spirit of universality and the principles of the Charter. It was those same imperatives which inspired and will continue to inspire its stand in regard to similar problems, such as Hungary, Cyprus and others.

113. My Government is moved by the same spirit of co-operation and the same desire to promote peaceful settlements in all matters relating to world peace and security. Thus it shares the anxiety of all States Members in regard to the threat which hangs over mankind of the possible outbreak of atomic war. All nations, large and small, whether or not they produce nuclear substances, are now living in a state of uncertainty and apprehension.

114. In order to end this obsession, which is at once alarming and degrading to mankind, we shall associate ourselves with any plan to divert the destructive power of nuclear weapons to peaceful uses, to suspend tests of nuclear weapons and to control existing stocks.

115. The recent advances made in the disarmament discussions are an encouraging sign. However, in order to lead to a successful conclusion, the discussions should have been conducted and ought to be resumed on a basis of mutual trust, free from all suspicion.

116. My delegation believes that one of the essential conditions for the maintenance of peace and security is the improvement of the social and economic position of peoples.

117. My Government is also convinced that peace must be uncertain as long as nations have not attained the stage of economic development and the social level at which they will be free from want, one of the causes of subversion and turmoil. In our opinion the interdependence of economic and social matters, which was stressed in the report of the Economic and Social Council, makes the establishment of the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development a matter of indisputable urgency.

118. I cannot, in this general debate, go into all the important and complicated questions which the General Assembly will have to discuss at its twelfth session. Upon examination of each one separately, my delegation will have to make known the position of my Government, which will always be imbued with the principles of the Charter and its universality.

119. Nevertheless, I must say that in the patient search for appropriate solutions to all the most important problems of our time, the decisive role of the United Nations should, in my delegation's view, be regarded as a continuing creation. My Government accordingly noted with satisfaction the action of the eleventh session in connexion with the United Nations Emergency Force and the Special Committee on the Question of Hungary. It is greatly to be desired, in order to expand the international role and the salutary effectiveness of the United Nations, that action of this kind should develop to a point at which the Organization will increasingly be able, through respect for right and justice, to ensure the victory of that international morality of which it remains the best incarnation.

AGENDA ITEM 8

Adoption of the agenda (continued)

THIRD REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (A/3689)

120. The PRESIDENT: In its third report (A/3689), the General Committee informs the General Assembly of its decision, by 13 votes to none with 2 abstentions, to recommend the inclusion in the agenda of the twelfth session of an additional item entitled "Question of the establishment on an ad hoc basis of a ninth vice-presidency for the twelfth session of the General Assembly".

121. In accordance with the provisions of rule 23, speakers will be limited to three in favour of and three against the inclusion of the item recommended by the General Committee.

122. Mr. MALOLES (Philippines): We have before us a request for inclusion [A/3687 and Add.1] containing a draft resolution calling for the establishment of a ninth vice-presidency for this session. It is an ad hoc measure introduced with a view to giving the General Committee a representative character reflective of the increased membership of the United Nations. My delegation could not think of a more appropriate solution.

This draft resolution would partly correct the present imbalance in the membership of the General Committee. While a general revision for a more equitable and appropriate representation on a regional basis, with due consideration for the contributive potentialities of its members, would appear desirable, my delegation feels that any step in that direction would be a forward step that would satisfy the desires of the various groups in this Organization. It is our belief, however, that the present proposal may be effected at this time on a purely ad hoc basis. It is in this spirit that the present draft resolution has been introduced upon the initiative of and with the support of the groups that would least benefit therefrom.

123. The implications of this step are clear and unequivocal. The same spirit that animates the sponsors calls for a similar expression of goodwill and purpose on the part of the European and other groups to take the appropriate steps to make the membership in this Organization more truly representative and reflective of the true interests of its Members. My delegation feels that once this immediate question is solved, the General Assembly can proceed to take the appropriate steps to study and revise the composition of the General Committee on a broader and more representative basis. We have full faith and confidence in our Organization for pledges kept and promises fulfilled. We base our hope on the strength of this record and confidently hope that equitable representation of the various groups will be respected and given recognition.

124. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): The General Assembly has before it the General Committee's proposal that the Assembly should include in its agenda the question of the establishment of a ninth vice-presidency for the twelfth session.

125. It would seem that the item is being submitted as an urgent and special matter to be settled in respect of one geographical area only or, to be more specific, to satisfy the claims of a single country. No mention is made of the other geographical areas which, we understand, wish to enlarge their representation in the General Committee.

126. Such disregard for the interests of the majority of the States Members of the United Nations is undoubtedly detrimental to our Organization. Indeed, why must we now elect only one additional Vice-President? Why not two or more? If the sponsors of the proposal intended to provide for equitable representation of all geographical areas in the main organs of the Assembly what prompted them to seek the election of only a ninth Vice-President? In this connexion, it may be appropriate to recall that a similar situation prevailed at the eleventh session of the General Assembly. At that time the question of the election of an eighth Vice-President was settled hastily and unilaterally, without due regard for the principle of equitable representation of all areas.

127. In dealing with the question of an increase in the number of Vice-Presidents we must not again act improperly but should adopt measures in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations which requires that the interests of all States Members of the Organization should be taken into account.

128. In this connexion, it should be emphasized that the United Nations Charter and the rules of procedure

of the General Assembly provide that the main organs of the United Nations, and the General Assembly in particular, should be so constituted as to ensure their representative character and the equitable representation of all geographical areas. That is stated, in particular, in Article 23 of the Charter, rules 31 and 38 of the rules of procedure, and elsewhere. It is both important and essential that the above conditions should be met so that every Member of the United Nations may actively participate in its work. Only then will the main organs of the United Nations be fully representative and able to perform their functions effectively.

129. It is now proposed that the General Assembly should undertake a unilateral act not in accordance with the above-mentioned requirements of the Charter or with the demands of many delegations. The sponsors of the proposal are aware of its unilateral character. Thus, the five delegations state in their explanatory memorandum accompanying the request for the inclusion of the item that--and here I fully agree with them--the composition of the General Committee must have a representative character reflecting the membership of the Organization, the number of vice-presidencies should be considered in the light of the increase in that membership. It follows, then, that if the question of increasing the number of Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly is ripe for consideration--as would seem to be the case--it must be settled not in the interests of a single geographical area, much less of a single delegation, but in accordance with the requirements of the Charter and the interests of all Members of the United Nations, not just those of a particular delegation or group of delegations.

130. What approach to the question of altering the number of Vice-Presidents would be in keeping with the United Nations Charter and the interests of the Organization?

131. In our opinion, the question must be settled to the satisfaction of all geographical areas. From that point of view, it would be quite normal for, let us say, the Asian and African countries, whose membership in the United Nations has substantially increased during the past few years, to claim a greater share of the vice-presidencies of the General Assembly. We cannot ignore the considerations that might be advanced by the countries of Latin America or Western Europe in support of their claim to representation in that organ. The countries of Eastern Europe are also entitled to expect that the States Members of the United Nations will give sympathetic consideration to their claim to greater representation in the General Committee. The number of Eastern European countries in the United Nations has virtually doubled in the past two years.

132. In short, we feel that the views of delegations representing all geographical areas should be taken into account. Only such an approach to the question of the number of Vice-Presidents would correspond to the interests of all Members of the United Nations and promote business-like relations among delegations. Hence, to settle the question by electing a ninth Vice-President, without considering the legitimate claims of other delegations, would be further evidence that discrimination is being practised for the benefit of individual delegations or areas and that the foundations of our Organization are being undermined.

133. For these reasons the Soviet delegation abstained from voting in the General Committee on the five-Power proposal and will abstain from voting on the report of the General Committee at the present meeting. However, when it comes up for consideration we will support the Czechoslovak proposal [A/3692 and Corr.1], already distributed to the delegations, providing for the inclusion in the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly of the question of the composition of the General Committee. We feel that the composition of the Committee should be considered on the basis of the equitable representation of all geographical areas. Such a course would certainly promote orderly relations among Members of the United Nations and contribute to the representative character of the vice-presidencies and of the General Committee of the United Nations.

134. Mr. VITETTI (Italy): My delegation fully shares the views presented to the General Assembly by the representative of the Philippines. He expressed very clearly what is also our point of view on this question. We were gratified by the wide support that this request received in the General Committee and we are confident indeed that the General Assembly will approve the draft resolution by a large majority.

135. In proposing the establishment of a ninth vice-presidency as an ad hoc measure to be adopted for the current session of the Assembly, we have adopted what I might describe as a practical method. The increased membership of our Organization requires that measures should be taken in the direction of improving the representative character of the General Committee. As the representative of the United Kingdom stated in the General Committee, one proof of this is the fact that, while nine Member States received the required majority at the election of Vice-Presidents for the present session, only eight were elected. We have proposed the establishment of this ninth vice-presidency on an ad hoc basis because we are aware that more time and reflection are needed for the study of the question of a permanent increase in the composition of the General Committee, and because it is our desire to improve the representative character of this Committee.

136. Such a decision could not be taken in isolation and without reference, for instance, to the related problems of increasing the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council, the membership of the Economic and Social Council, and so on. In the meantime we will discuss these matters. We think that the adoption of the draft resolution now before the Assembly would allow us to improve the representative character of the General Committee without preventing any further useful discussion, as soon as possible, concerning the permanent size of this body as well as of the other organs of the Assembly.

137. Mr. CASEY (Australia): The Australian delegation strongly supports the item to establish on an ad hoc basis a ninth vice-presidency for the twelfth session of the General Assembly. The inclusion of this item has been recommended by the General Committee following the initiative of Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay and the Philippines.

138. I think that a great many of us were disappointed, at the outset of this session, that Spain, although receiving the necessary votes in the General Assembly to qualify for election as a Vice-President, could not

be declared elected because all vacancies were already filled. The Australian delegation would be very glad if the inscription of this item now before us led to a rectification of this situation, thus enabling Spain to take its place in the General Committee for the remainder of the present session.

139. Even a limited proposal such as that for the establishment of an ad hoc vice-presidency of short duration raises questions of wider concern. The Australian delegation would be opposed to any new suggestion that vice-presidencies in general or any new vice-presidency to be created in the future should be regarded as specifically reserved by convention for any particular area or group of countries. In our view, the vice-presidencies available should be used to balance the composition of the General Committee in the light of the various nationalities of the Chairmen elected for the Main Committees, whose selection, as we know, rests primarily on their personal abilities as suitable presiding officers. The proposal now before us is consistent with this practice as things stand at the present session, and I therefore support it.

140. The PRESIDENT: I have no further speakers on my list. Therefore we can now proceed to the vote on the inclusion in the agenda of the item entitled "Question of the establishment on an ad hoc basis of a ninth vice-presidency for the twelfth session of the General Assembly".

The item was included in the agenda by 67 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

141. Mr. DAVID (Czechoslovakia) (translated from Russian): The Czechoslovak delegation abstained from voting on the General Committee's recommendation that the question of the establishment of a ninth vice-presidency for the twelfth session of the General Assembly should be included in the agenda of the present session.

142. The question of increasing the number of Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly is not simply a procedural matter since it carries serious implications. It is closely related to an increase in the number of members of the General Committee. As we all know, the composition of the General Committee is determined primarily by political considerations.

143. It is stated in rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly that the Vice-Presidents shall be elected, after the election of the Chairman of the six Main Committees, on the basis of ensuring the representative character of the General Committee. The representative character of the General Committee implies, above all, a composition which to the greatest possible extent satisfies the requirement of equitable geographical representation. If the question of increasing the number of Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly is to be solved, it must be considered as a whole, due consideration being given to the principle of equitable representation of all geographical areas.

144. For these reasons, the Czechoslovak delegation has already submitted a proposal [A/3692 and Corr.1] to include the question of the composition of the General Committee of the General Assembly as a separate item in the agenda of the twelfth session.

145. Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand): The delegation of Thailand supported the General Commit-

tee's recommendation for the inclusion of the item, "Question of the establishment on an ad hoc basis of a ninth vice-presidency for the twelfth session of the General Assembly". We agree that the General Committee should have a representative character reflecting the membership of the United Nations, not only on an ad hoc basis, but also on a permanent one. We would therefore welcome a study of a permanent arrangement for the composition of the General Committee, and we would support a proposal to that end.

146. The PRESIDENT: In view of the course of our proceedings this afternoon, I assume that there will be no objection to proceeding with the election of a ninth Vice-President at the conclusion of tomorrow morning's meeting, at which our general debate will end. I want to make it clear that the ninth Vice-President will be elected with full powers on an ad hoc basis for the twelfth session. Since the election is only on an ad hoc basis, there seems to be no necessity to alter the rules. We have a recent precedent for this procedure in the annual creation of the Ad Hoc Political Committee without alteration of the rules.

147. If the Assembly agrees, I shall place this election at the end of the agenda for tomorrow morning's meeting.

148. Mr. ARENALES CATALAN (Guatemala) (translated from Spanish): If I understood correctly, the President asked whether there was any objection to the General Assembly proceeding with the election of a ninth Vice-President at tomorrow's meeting. As my delegation understands the position, the Assembly has just decided to include an item in its agenda but has not yet decided to establish a ninth vice-presidency. It must decide to establish a ninth vice-presidency before any election can take place.

149. Apart from this, I understood from a remark by the President that he was of the opinion that a revision of the rules of procedure did not appear to be required. I shall not take up that point now as I imagine that following the inclusion of the item there will be an opportunity to debate the question whether the Assembly should establish a ninth vice-presidency on a permanent or ad hoc basis, further vice-presidencies, or none at all. However, if I were asked to comment on my understanding of the President's interpretation, I should say at once that a revision of the rules of procedure is necessary. The composition of the General Committee of the Assembly is fully governed by the rules of procedure of the Assembly itself. We are faced with a constitutional question, and as it is all laid down in black and white, the Assembly could hardly disregard the rules of procedure and establish a ninth vice-presidency.

150. I do not wish to labour this point. All I wish to say is that as far as my delegation is concerned, it would object to the election of a ninth Vice-President before the Assembly has decided to establish one.

151. The PRESIDENT: I am in the hands of the Assembly in this matter. The Assembly is the master of its own procedure. As the procedure which I have proposed has been questioned, I shall put to the vote whether the Assembly proposes to hold tomorrow, after the conclusion of the general debate, the election of a ninth Vice-President on an ad hoc basis. Before putting this to the vote, I call on the representative of Guatemala on a point of order.

152. Mr. ARENALES CATALAN (Guatemala) (translated from Spanish): There is no doubt that, as the President says, the Assembly is master of its own procedure. However, the Assembly itself has imposed limitations on its exercise of that right by adopting rules of procedure which govern both our action and the action of the President in this forum.

153. I feel therefore that the question whether the Assembly can establish a ninth vice-presidency cannot be decided by a simple majority. The Assembly, in accordance with its rules of procedure, has already decided to include an item in its agenda and to this we did not object. However, the Assembly, acting on a decision not of the President of the Assembly but of the Assembly itself, must now decide whether or not to establish a ninth vice-presidency.

154. Hence it seems to me that it would not be quite consistent with the rules of procedure to decide at this point, without having previously established a ninth vice-presidency, to proceed with an election.

155. I respectfully request the President, in the interests of orderly procedure, to give us an opportunity to discuss the item either at tomorrow's meeting or at some later date. Moreover, while the item has been included in the agenda, there is not even a recommendation as to whether it should be discussed in plenary or in a committee. My delegation does not object to its discussion in plenary, but it does object to any election being made to a post that has not yet been established and whose establishment must be decided by the Assembly on the basis of a resolution submitted by one of its Members.

156. The PRESIDENT: I have listened with care to the representations made by the representative of Guatemala. As I have said, I am the servant of the Assembly; the Assembly is master of its own procedure.

157. The Assembly has done this before and there is ample precedent for it. The Assembly may decide to vote for a Vice-President on an ad hoc basis at tomorrow's meeting. It has the power to do so; it has done so before. I will therefore put the proposal to the vote.

The proposal was adopted by 43 votes to 6, with 20 abstentions.

158. The PRESIDENT: Therefore the Assembly will proceed, at the end of tomorrow's meeting, with the election of a ninth Vice-President on a ad hoc basis.

159. Mr. ARENALES CATALAN (Guatemala) (translated from Spanish): I have only a few words to say to explain my delegation's vote against holding an election tomorrow to a non-existent vice-presidency.

160. I am amazed at the decision that the Assembly has just taken on the President's proposal. I consider that, under the rules of procedure, the President was

not entitled to put a question to the vote in this way, and that the Assembly cannot act upon it, because no ninth vice-presidency has yet been established to which anyone can be elected.

161. In conclusion, I wish to state for the record that the delegations concerned, in submitting the item for consideration in the General Committee, included in this explanatory memorandum a draft resolution which was to be submitted to the Assembly in due course if the item was added to the agenda; and this draft resolution provided for the establishment of a ninth vice-presidency.

162. The ordinary, proper procedure would have been for the Assembly to vote upon the draft resolution, if the delegations concerned submitted it to the Assembly, and if it was adopted, to fix a date for the election.

163. My delegation therefore feels that, under the rules of procedure, the decision taken by the Assembly has no validity whatsoever.

164. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria): I should like to explain my delegation's vote against proceeding tomorrow to the election of a ninth Vice-President. Although we voted for the inclusion of this item in the agenda, the inclusion of an item does not represent the final decision of the Assembly in the matter. The inclusion of an item indicates the readiness of the Assembly to discuss and vote upon the substance of the item. For this reason, while we voted for the inclusion of the item, we saw fit not to vote for the election of a ninth Vice-President tomorrow.

165. Mr. STRATOS (Greece) (translated from French): The Greek delegation did not vote because it did not altogether understand what we were voting on.

166. As far as I know, the Assembly had decided, on the proposal of the General Committee, to include in the agenda of this session the question of appointing, on an ad hoc basis, a ninth Vice-President for the twelfth session.

167. In view of the fact that the agenda of this meeting did not include this item, the Greek delegation did not quite understand whether we were voting on this proposal which was not on the agenda, or on something else.

168. Obviously we were in favour of appointing a ninth Vice-President on an ad hoc basis and when the question comes before the Assembly the Greek delegation will vote to that effect.

169. For the time being, however, it does not understand how any vote can be taken on an item which is not on the agenda. It therefore did not vote either for or against, or even abstain; there was no such item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.