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AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. AKO-ADJEI (Ghana): On behalf of the delegation of Ghana, I bring to the General Assembly cordial greetings from the Government and people of Ghana.
2. I also wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the high office of President of this session of the General Assembly. We hope that, under your wise guidance, the deliberations of this Assembly will be conducted in a spirit of goodwill, mutual confidence and understanding, to the benefit of all the peoples of the world community.
3. Today, perhaps more than ever before, the nations of the world are confronted with many complex problems which threaten the very existence of mankind. A lasting solution of these problems will demand of us a complete change in our traditional attitudes and the reorganization of our thinking habits. It will also demand of us development of friendly relations and neighbourly feeling between the nations of the world. The Government of Ghana believes that the United Nations should become an effective medium for the promotion of such friendly relations and neighbourly feeling between all nations and all peoples.
4. As the Prime Minister of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, recently stated in Parliament, "the basis of our foreign policy must be seen against the background of the following considerations, namely: Ghana in her relation to the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the African continent, and the continued economic and social progress of our people".
5. Ghana will continue to co-operate fully with the United Nations and its specialized agencies and will work together with all other nations to make the United Nations a useful and effective instrument for the preservation of international peace and security. Ghana has a vested interest in peace. It is only when there is peace in Africa, and in the world as a whole, that we can have the opportunity to continue, without interruption, with the work of economic and social reconstruction of our country, and of providing high standards of living for our people.
6. Ghana values its association with the other nations of the Commonwealth because we believe that the Com-

monwealth is an instrument which can work for peace and international co-operation. It provides a common forum in which peoples with different backgrounds, different cultures, and different approaches in their outlook can meet together in friendship and on a basis of equality to discuss problems of economic and social well-being for the mutual benefit of all its members.

7. In his recent foreign policy speech in our Parliament, to which I have referred, the Prime Minister of Ghana made reference to the policy of Ghana in relation to the continent of Africa. There is a growing body of opinion in one part of Africa, and in some quarters outside Africa, that Ghana is becoming the centre of anti-colonial forces and political agitation for independence. The enemies of freedom and independence for the African people view this nationalistic development with alarm. Ghana has no apologies to render in this regard, nor have we any excuses to make. Ghana has made no secret of the fact that it rejects colonial status for any part of Africa, and that we desire to see all Africa free and independent.

8. The overwhelming majority of the population of Africa are indigenous Africans. Even in those countries with considerable European settlements, such as the Rhodesias and other parts of East Africa, over 90 per cent of the people are indigenous Africans. When we call for an end to colonialism, therefore, we are doing no more than stating our belief and our firm conviction that the fact of a vast African majority should be accepted as the only basis of government in Africa.

9. Minorities naturally fear majority rule, and we believe that safeguards and guarantees of minority rights are needed in Africa, just as they are needed in other parts of the world. The Africans are themselves conscious of the fact that denial of safeguards and guarantees of minority rights will bring about difficulties that may affect their own economic and social progress. However, this should not be used as an excuse for suppressing majority rights in Africa.

10. The continent of Africa is like a question mark amongst the continents. Its geographical formation demonstrates this fact. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, various European powers divided the African continent amongst themselves. The result of this arbitrary partitioning of Africa was that, at the end of the First World War, there were only three independent States on the continent, namely, the Kingdom of Ethiopia, the Republic of Liberia and, of course, the Union of South Africa.

11. Between the First and Second World Wars, Egypt, which is now part of the United Arab Republic, regained its independence from foreign rule.

12. From 1945 to 1957, five African States regained their independence and made their appearance on the international scene. These States are: the Republic

of Sudan, the Kingdom of Morocco, the United Kingdom of Libya, the Republic of Tunisia and Ghana.

13. In April of this year, the independent African States met at a conference in Accra. The conference was held in order to provide an opportunity for the African States to exchange views on all aspects of foreign policy, and to develop a common approach to a solution of their common problems with a view to safeguarding their "hard-won independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity".

14. In regard to the future of dependent territories in Africa, the Conference was convinced "that a definite date should be set for the attainment of independence by each of the colonial territories, in accordance with the will of the people of the territories and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations".

15. On the question of racialism, the Conference of Independent African States considered that the practice of racial discrimination and segregation was "evil and inhuman", and was a direct violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Conference condemned "the practice of racial discrimination and segregation in all its aspects all over the world, especially in the Union of South Africa, in the Central African Federation, in Kenya and in other parts of Africa".

16. Mr. President, with your permission, I should like to quote, *in extenso*, the Declaration made unanimously by the independent African States at the Accra Conference:

"We, the African States assembled here in Accra, in this our first Conference, conscious of our responsibilities to humanity and especially to the peoples of Africa, and desiring to assert our African personality on the side of peace, hereby proclaim and solemnly reaffirm our unswerving loyalty to the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration of the Asian-African Conference held at Bandung.

"We further assert and proclaim the unity among ourselves and our solidarity with the dependent peoples of Africa as well as our friendship with all nations. We resolve to preserve the unity of purpose and action in international affairs which we have forged among ourselves in this historic Conference, and to safeguard our hard-won independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to preserve among ourselves the fundamental unity of outlook on foreign policy so that a distinctive African personality will play its part in co-operation with other peace-loving nations to further the cause of peace.

"We pledge ourselves to apply all our endeavours to avoid being committed to any action which might entangle our countries to the detriment of our interests and freedom; to recognize the right of the African people to independence and self-determination and to take appropriate steps to hasten the realization of this right; and to affirm the right of the Algerian people to independence and self-determination and to exert all possible efforts to hasten the realization of their independence; to uproot forever the evil of racial discrimination in all its forms wherever it may be found; to persuade the great Powers to discontinue the production and testing of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons, and to reduce conventional weapons.

"Furthermore, mindful of the urgent need to raise the living standards of our peoples by developing to the fullest possible advantage the great and varied resources of our lands, we hereby pledge ourselves to co-ordinate our economic planning through a joint economic effort and to study the economic potentialities, the technical possibilities and related problems existing in our respective States; to promote co-ordinated industrial planning either through our own individual efforts or through co-operation with specialized agencies of the United Nations; to take measures to increase trade among our respective countries by improving communications between them; and to encourage the investment of foreign capital and skills provided they do not compromise the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of our respective States.

"Desirous of mobilizing the human resources of our respective countries in furtherance of our social and cultural aspirations, we will endeavour to promote and facilitate the exchange of teachers, professors, students, exhibitions, educational and cultural and scientific material which will improve cultural relations between the African States, and to inculcate greater knowledge amongst us through such efforts as joint youth festivals, sporting events, etc.; we will encourage and strengthen studies of African culture, history and geography in the institutions of learning in the African States; and we will take all measures in our respective countries to ensure that such studies are correctly orientated.

"We have charged our Permanent Representatives at the United Nations to be the permanent machinery for co-ordinating all matters of common concern to our countries for examining and making recommendations on concrete and practical steps for implementing our decisions; and for preparing the grounds for future Conferences.

"Faithful to the obligations and responsibilities which history has thrown upon us as the vanguard of the complete emancipation of Africa, we do hereby affirm our dedication to the cause which we have proclaimed."

17. The Government and people of Ghana stand by the resolutions adopted at the Accra Conference by the African States and uphold the principles enunciated in the Declaration I have just referred to. We trust that all people of goodwill will co-operate with the African States to ensure that these common ideals and objectives are implemented for the mutual benefit of all our peoples.

18. For several years the question of South West Africa as a Trust Territory has been discussed in the United Nations. It is unfortunate that the issue has not yet been resolved as a result of the attitude that the Government of the Union of South Africa had taken in the past.

19. The Government of Ghana is, therefore, happy that the General Assembly of the United Nations last year appointed a Good Offices Committee charged with responsibility "to discuss with the Government of the Union of South Africa a basis for an agreement which would continue to accord to the Territory of South West Africa an international status" [resolution 1143 (XII)]. The Committee has submitted a report to the General Assembly and the representatives may have

an opportunity to discuss the report at a later stage in our proceedings.

20. The Government of Ghana associates itself with any efforts that are being made to arrive at a peaceful settlement in this important matter and is prepared to support such efforts in every possible way.

21. However, I wish to say at this stage that my delegation will not associate itself with any proposition for the settlement of the question of South West Africa which aims at dividing the Territory, against the will of the inhabitants, with a view to incorporating part of it into the Union of South Africa.

22. It is encouraging to observe that the Government of the Union of South Africa has now accepted the fact that the status of the Trust Territory of South West Africa is an international one. We are happy in the knowledge that at least a basis of understanding can now be reached from which further negotiations can usefully proceed in the settlement of this important matter.

23. My delegation would wish to suggest that the time has come when the United Nations may approach a solution of this problem through the medium of a plebiscite or referendum under United Nations trusteeship. This is the only effective, practicable and unerring method known to democracy for ascertaining the wishes and aspirations of a people. The people of South West Africa should be given an opportunity to decide what their future shall be. This is a suggestion with which, we believe, all Members of the United Nations will agree.

24. The Government of Ghana is anxious that an early solution should be found to the Algerian question, and that the right of the Algerian people to independence and self-determination should be recognized. At the Conference of the Independent African States held in Accra in April this year, the independent African States unanimously adopted the following resolution on the question of Algeria:

"The Conference of Independent African States,

"Deeply concerned by the continuance of war in Algeria and the denial by France to the Algerian people of the right of independence and self-determination despite various United Nations resolutions and appeals urging a peaceful settlement, notably the offers of good offices made by the Moroccan and Tunisian Heads of State,

"Considering that the present situation in Algeria constitutes a serious threat to international peace and the security of Africa in particular,

"1. Recognizes the right of the Algerian people to independence and self-determination;

"2. Deplores the grave extent of hostilities and bloodshed resulting from the continuance of the war in Algeria;

"3. Urges France

"(a) To recognize the right of the people of Algeria to independence and self-determination;

"(b) To put an end to hostilities and withdraw the French troops from Algeria;

"(c) To enter into immediate peaceful negotiation with the Algerian National Liberation Front with a view to reaching a final and just settlement;

"4. Appeals to all peace-loving nations to exercise pressure on France to adopt a policy which is in conformity with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

"5. Appeals to the friends and allies of France to refrain from helping France, whether directly or indirectly, in her military operations in Algeria;

"6. Affirms its determination to make every possible effort to help the Algerian people towards the attainment of independence."

25. In furtherance of this resolution, Ghana is co-operating, and will continue to co-operate, with the other African States in finding ways and means to enlighten world opinion on the Algerian situation, including the appointment of missions to tour the capitals of the world and to enlist the support of Governments for a just and peaceful settlement of the Algerian question.

26. Representatives will recall the appropriate and significant advice given to France last year by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Ireland, at the twelfth session of the General Assembly, when he said: "France is often urged to liberate Algeria; it is even more important that France should liberate herself from Algeria" [682nd meeting, para. 35]. And may I be permitted to add further, that France should liberate itself not only from Algeria, but also from its self imposed responsibilities everywhere on the continent of Africa. My delegation strongly commends this friendly and neighbourly advice, not only to France, but also to all the colonial Powers on the continent of Africa.

27. The Government of Ghana is happy that the United Nations Commissioner appointed to supervise the recent elections in Togoland under French Administration has performed his work efficiently and impartially. The Commissioner has submitted a report to the General Assembly which will also be discussed by the representatives at a later stage in our proceedings.

28. In the view of my Government, and in conformity with the principles of independence and self-determination, the people of French Togoland should, at the appropriate opportunity, be given the chance to determine their future status through a plebiscite or referendum, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and, of course, under United Nations supervision. This approach is a suggestion with which, we believe, all Members of the United Nations will agree. We hope France will agree in its own interest. My delegation reserves its right to develop its views on this matter at the appropriate time.

29. The Government of Ghana is anxious that an early solution of the present situation in the Middle East should be found, within the framework of the United Nations, which is acceptable to all the peoples of the Middle East.

30. After a political settlement has been achieved, we believe that it will still be necessary to formulate plans for economic reconstruction and development in the Middle East, perhaps along the lines suggested at the third emergency special session by the Secretary-General of the United Nations [732nd meeting] and the President of the United States [733rd meeting], should the people of the Middle East themselves so desire.

31. My Government views with grave concern the present unsettled situation in the Far East.

32. In the view of my delegation, an important aspect of the matter, which perhaps may lead eventually to a lasting settlement in the Far East, is the admission of the People's Republic of China to membership of the United Nations. In our view, the admission of the People's Republic of China would conduce to the lessening of tension in contemporary international relations and would also contribute to ensuring the foundations of peace and security not only in the Far East but throughout the world.

33. Last year, the delegation of Ghana took part in the preliminary discussions which eventually resulted in the establishment by the General Assembly of a regional Economic Commission for Africa [resolution 1155 (XII)]. The Government of Ghana will co-operate with the other African States and with all other nations to make the work of the Commission a success to the mutual benefit of the African peoples.

34. We are aware of a section of opinion outside Africa which, even at this stage, is still not happy about the establishment of the regional Economic Commission for Africa by reason of certain particular economic interests which it may still wish to pursue on the continent of Africa. However, my delegation would like to say that, in our view, there is no cause for apprehension.

35. We hope that all Members of the United Nations that have interests in Africa and that have a trust to discharge on our continent will co-operate fully in the activities of the regional Economic Commission for Africa in order to ensure its success to the benefit of the African people.

36. In the view of my Government, it is a sad reflection on our time that vast sums of money are being spent by the great Powers on the manufacture of weapons of destruction, especially nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons. These vast sums of money could have been better spent on enterprises which would help to raise the standard of living of the peoples of the world and to eradicate poverty, illiteracy, disease, ignorance and squalor from human society.

37. We call upon the great Powers, especially the United States and the Soviet Union, to agree among themselves on the question of disarmament and to put a stop to nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests aimed at the destruction of human life. We must all learn to live together and work together to develop the arts of peace and not the arts of war.

38. In Africa today, we are alarmed by the report that France intends to conduct atomic tests in the Sahara desert. We vehemently protest against this idea and we invite the United Nations and the conscience of the world to dissuade France from carrying out such atomic tests in the Sahara desert or in any other part of Africa.

39. Last year I indicated the basic principles underlying the foreign policy of my Government in the conduct of our relations with other States. Ghana desires to pursue a policy of peace, friendship and neighbourliness with all nations. We desire to cultivate and maintain friendly relations with all nations, wherever possible, and to be enemy to none.

40. We believe that man is not the enemy of man and that the causes which impel man to destroy his fellow man can be eradicated when there is goodwill, neighbourly feeling and mutual respect for the dignity of the human person.

41. We believe that the real enemies of mankind are poverty, ignorance, disease, illiteracy and squalor. In this regard, the Prime Minister of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, has clearly stated that he would like the rest of the world to judge us in Ghana and assess our achievements on the basis of the extent to which we are able to provide high standards of living for our people. In a recent statement Dr. Nkrumah said:

"The first objective of my Government is to abolish from Ghana poverty, ignorance, disease and illiteracy. We shall measure our progress by the improvement in the health of our people; by the number of children in schools and by the quality of their education; by the availability of water and electricity in our towns and villages; and by the happiness which our people take in being able to manage their own affairs. The welfare of our people is our chief pride, and it is by this that my Government will ask to be judged."

42. The delegation of Ghana would wish to suggest that, in the course of our deliberations, all Members of the United Nations must concentrate their efforts on finding a medium whereby the discoveries of science, and the knowledge that we have acquired in our technological advancement, could be used for the betterment of human life throughout the world.

43. This, we believe, is the greatest challenge in our time. The Government of Ghana will continue to co-operate with the United Nations in our common effort to establish a world fellowship of peace.

44. Mr. LOUW (Union of South Africa): On behalf of my delegation, Sir, may I convey to you our sincere congratulations upon your election to the high post of President of this Assembly. Your long experience as the leader of your country's delegations to the United Nations, coupled with your considerable experience as Chairman of Assembly Committees, eminently fits you for the task of guiding the deliberations of this Assembly. My delegation knows that you will maintain the high standards of fairness and impartiality set by your distinguished predecessor, Sir Leslie Munro, and I am glad to be able also to pay that tribute to him.

45. When last I spoke from this rostrum in a general debate, it was my unpleasant duty to inform the Assembly that in future the Union of South Africa would maintain only a token or nominal representation in this Assembly and also at the Headquarters of the United Nations. That decision was not lightly taken. It was a decision which could be justified only by reasons of a compelling nature.

46. The records of the United Nations bear testimony to the nature and the validity of these considerations and to the manner in which our undoubted rights, solemnly inscribed in the Charter, have been denied us ever since the establishment of the Organization, despite the clear injunction contained in Article 2 (7) of the Charter that the United Nations shall not intervene in the domestic affairs of Member States.

47. At the same time, these records provide abundant proof of the patience with which for twelve years in

succession South African delegations have borne the attacks that have been made on our country. Repeatedly during the past twelve years we have demanded that our country's rights be respected—that the United Nations should adhere to the Charter, and honour the constitutional guarantees against the invasion of a Member State's sovereignty—guarantees which South Africa accepted in good faith when our Parliament ratified the Charter.

48. National honour is not the prerogative of the great and the powerful, and there comes a time when no country with any sense of pride and self-respect can continue to tolerate a flagrant invasion of its domestic and sovereign rights. Indeed, the records of the United Nations also testify to the number of occasions when other delegations have not hesitated to claim, and indeed to demand, the protection of Article 2 (7) for themselves, when their own domestic affairs were involved or when they felt that their sovereign rights were being impugned.

49. In 1956, at the eleventh session [577th meeting], I said that it would be the last occasion upon which a South African delegation would argue South Africa's case against intervention in our domestic affairs. I adhere to what I then said. It is not my intention to restate or to argue our case today. It stands on record, unanswered and valid.

50. Upon my return to South Africa after the 1956 session, I pointed out that the policy of "token representation" could not be maintained indefinitely, and that sooner or later the question as to whether South Africa should continue its membership of the United Nations would have to be considered.

51. Needless to say, the proceedings of the 1957 session of the General Assembly were followed with keen interest in my country. What happened during last year's Assembly? Once more South Africa's internal affairs were discussed, our sovereignty invaded, and our rights as a Member State denied us. Once more, certain delegations indulged in unwarranted attacks on my country in connexion with the conduct of our domestic affairs.

52. But, happily, there was another side to the picture. In contrast to what happened in past years, a number of delegates in the course of the debates went out of their way to show a greater measure of respect for our national susceptibilities and an appreciation of our legitimate sense of injustice. Moreover, many delegations, both inside and outside the Assembly, expressed a desire that South Africa should once again play its full part in the Organization. My Government was impressed by this more conciliatory attitude adopted towards South Africa in the debates, also by delegations which in past years had shown little sympathy for South Africa's point of view. Of particular importance in this connexion were the discussions in the Fourth Committee on the question of South West Africa, and more particularly the decision to set up a Good Offices Committee.

53. We noted the attitude of those delegations which conceived the idea of a "new approach"—designed to resolve an issue which in the past contributed to the growing estrangement between the Union of South Africa and the United Nations. I would today express my appreciation to those who developed the "new approach", and for their efforts to deal with this diffi-

cult problem in accordance with the spirit of the Charter and in a manner which is consistent with the real purpose of the United Nations. Whether their efforts will succeed, whether our efforts to co-operate with the Good Offices Committee will succeed, will of course depend upon the manner in which the matter is dealt with in the appropriate committee.

54. But, having said that, I wish to state that it was with surprise, also with a sense of shock, that we learned from a press report in the South African papers, only a few days after the Good Offices Committee had handed its report to the Secretary-General, and while this matter is still sub judice, that the United Nations standing Committee on South West Africa had granted an oral hearing to a private individual, representing himself to be the agent of a relatively small group of natives in South West Africa, who then proceeded to launch a violent, indeed a vicious, attack on my Government, and incidentally also attacked the Good Offices Committee. The press dispatch has since been confirmed by the report of the Committee's proceedings.

55. The standing Committee was aware of the fact that successive South African delegations have strongly protested against the granting of oral hearings—a procedure which was not permitted by the Mandates Commission of the defunct League of Nations, of which the United Nations professes to be the successor. The Committee must also have been aware of the fact that the report of the Good Offices Committee is still to be considered by the Fourth Committee and later by this Assembly, and is thus still sub judice.

56. This action of the standing Committee on South West Africa, I submit—and I submit this with full respect for that Committee, cannot but prejudice the consideration of the Good Offices Committee's report when it comes before the Fourth Committee and, afterwards, before this Assembly. It is clear that the oral evidence which was given to the standing Committee was an attempt to sabotage the work and the report and recommendations of the Good Offices Committee. That is clear from a statement which was made to the Committee that "This is not something on which a deal can be made in a spurious spirit of conciliation". I prefer not to comment on the spurious sense of morality which is demonstrated by that statement.

57. However, in spite of this somewhat surprising action of the standing Committee on South West Africa, the Union Government is fully prepared to proceed with the discussions. We are prepared to proceed with the investigations envisaged in the report of that Committee. But I do wish to make it perfectly clear that if the attitude of the standing Committee on South West Africa which led to the granting of the oral hearings should also prevail in the Fourth Committee when the matter is considered there then I see little hope of progress. I trust that wiser counsels will prevail. I shall deal with this matter further when it is considered by the Fourth Committee.

58. Now I return to a more pleasant matter, namely, the more friendly approach and more conciliatory attitude shown towards South Africa in the debates of the last session of the General Assembly. That more conciliatory approach was the determining factor in my Government's decision to return to the United

Nations resolved to play its part as an active Member of this Organization. But I think that it is only fair to the Assembly that I should add that if that more conciliatory attitude had not been shown at the last session the decision to return would decidedly not have been taken. I would add that the decision of 1956 to maintain only a token representation and the subsequent decision to return received the support of both the two main political parties in my country.

59. We are under no illusions as to what may still happen. We have no doubt that certain delegations will continue to attack South Africa and to drag South Africa's domestic affairs into this Assembly whilst, however, vehemently protesting whenever any attempt is made to discuss their own domestic affairs, or whenever their own national sovereignty is in danger of being impugned. We heard such protests not so long ago when the matter of the Middle East situation was being discussed by the Security Council. Once more attempts will be made, I have no doubt—indeed, this was done this afternoon by the previous speaker—to circumvent Article 2 (7) by appealing to Articles 55 and 56 relating to fundamental human rights and freedoms, despite the fact that, as we have pointed out at three previous sessions, the plenary session at San Francisco in 1945 decided unanimously that nothing contained in the articles dealing with fundamental human rights "can be construed as giving authority to the Organization to intervene in the domestic affairs of Member States".^{1/}

60. Then, once more, we can expect in connexion with the Indian issue the fairy tale, shall I say, of the so-called Cape Town Agreement, the so-called international agreement. On previous occasions my delegation has given the true facts, and it is not my intention to repeat them today. In connexion with these facts from South Africa, my delegation sincerely hopes that Members of the United Nations will come to realize that this Organization, beset as it is with serious problems which have to be resolved, cannot afford the luxury of this forum's being used for the prosecution of private vendettas. We are convinced that unless unconstitutional practices and the prosecution of ideological and other differences are discontinued then the ideals of those who established the United Nations and who drafted our Charter cannot be realized. What is more important is that if these practices are continued in the future the Organization will be in danger of ultimate collapse.

61. I come now to the question of what is going to be the attitude of the South African delegation if, during the course of the present session of the Assembly, either here or in the Committees, an attempt is made, as it will be made, to interfere in our domestic affairs. Like all nations, great or small, South Africa cannot countenance such an invasion of its sovereign rights or such a continued interference in its domestic affairs. We have always regarded as *ultra vires* the Charter the inscription or discussion of, or any resolution by the Assembly on, any matter which, in the opinion of the South African Government, is a matter which falls within the domestic jurisdiction of South Africa. I wish to repeat the statement I made on Monday when the debate on inscription took place [752nd meeting, para. 31], and I want to say that the South

African delegation, having on Monday recorded its objection to the placing of items 62 and 67 on the agenda, will ignore all discussions dealing with either of those items and will, equally, ignore any resolutions adopted by the United Nations concerning them. I would add that our attitude is without prejudice to our legal position and, furthermore, must not be regarded as in any way implying any measure of indifference on our part. We are acting on the principles by which South Africa has always stood.

62. If, of course, there are delegations which wish to continue acting in contravention of a fundamental principle of the Charter then they are free to do so. It is a matter between them and their consciences. But I would leave with those delegations two thoughts. First, it might be prudent for them to consider whether, in the terms of the well-known legal maxim, they have come to the court—the court being the United Nations—with "clean hands". I have no desire to embark upon any incursion into the domestic affairs of other Member States, but I do venture to suggest that practices and conditions prevailing in other countries expose the injustice and the hollowness of the attacks that have been made upon South Africa during the past twelve years.

63. I would leave a second thought with those who would deny to South Africa the protection of Article 2 (7). I suggest that it might be wise for them to consider to what extent their continued intervention in the domestic affairs of another State may compromise their own Governments and their own countries. If the United Nations is to play its part in world affairs it cannot afford what is generally known as a "double standard" policy. It cannot regard the actions of one State as being constitutional and at the same time condemn similar actions by another State as unconstitutional.

64. This concludes my remarks on South Africa's position in and its relations with the United Nations. I now propose to deal with the United Nations as an organization, and more particularly do I propose to deal with the deficiencies in the Charter and the defects in the United Nations procedures which have prevented the Organization from achieving the objectives or living up to the ideals of its founders.

65. If the United Nations is to be an effective instrument in the preservation of peace, it is essential that its activities be subjected to continued scrutiny and that its defects, whether organic or functional, be discussed frankly.

66. Prominent world statesmen, during past years, have directed attention to the distressing and disturbing fact that the United Nations gradually has been moving away from the ideals of those who drafted the Charter at San Francisco in 1945. I do not intend to take up the time of the Assembly in quoting their views. I wish to refer briefly to only three of them. I am sure that this Assembly will be prepared to listen to the view expressed by Mr. Paul-Henri Spaak, one of the founders of the United Nations and a former President of the General Assembly. Writing in the well-known journal *Foreign Affairs*, in January 1957,^{2/} he said:

^{1/} United Nations Conference on International Organization, II/18(1) and P/20.

^{2/} Paul-Henri Spaak, "The West in Disarray", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 35, No. 2.

"...from the start I had excessively great hopes for this Organization. Too often they have been dashed. Those who do not know the inner workings of the United Nations... its oft-demonstrated inefficiency—in short, those who are acquainted with it only from the outside and hark back to its generous principles and noble ideals—all these have held fast to their original confidence and faith.

"...I only wish that I could still number myself among the faithful. And yet I honestly cannot. On the contrary, it seems to me that never before has the insufficiency of the United Nations as at present constituted stood out so clearly. In spite of its apparent success, I believe that it has never come so near to the brink of failure."

67. Other authorities have expressed similar views. Speaking in London last year, the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Robert Menzies, said:

"...Great changes will have to be made in the procedures and attitude of the United Nations if the Charter is to be effective. The procedures of the Assembly are unsound and must be remodelled upon a basis of justice for all."

68. The Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, held in London in June of last year, gave special attention to the subject of the United Nations and, in the final communiqué issued by the Conference, there appeared the following significant pronouncement:

"The United Nations was designed to provide one of the main opportunities for the practical exercise of the principle of co-operation between nations. Experience has, however, revealed certain deficiencies and weaknesses in the functioning of the Organization. The Commonwealth Ministers agreed that constructive action is needed to strengthen and improve the United Nations as an instrument for preserving peace, justice and co-operation throughout the world in accordance with the principles of the Charter."

69. This statement by the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, couched as it is in careful and restrained language, coupled with the opinions expressed by Mr. Spaak, Mr. Menzies and other eminent persons, give powerful support to the views which are held by my Government regarding the state of affairs which has gradually developed within the United Nations. I say that these three quotations convey a clear message and merit serious consideration.

70. Admittedly great changes have taken place in the international sphere since the United Nations was founded in 1945. We are living in a different world today. The original conception of the United Nations as a "town meeting of the world", where international differences could be settled by peaceful means, has, I am afraid, proved to be an idle dream—one might say, a pipe dream. Since 1946, the world has passed through a succession of crises, each one more serious than the one before. I need but remind the Assembly of the growth of international tension since 1956, when last I participated in the general debate. Recent events in the Middle East are still fresh in our minds. There is the present serious situation in Formosa.

71. I am not suggesting that the United Nations has been without success. After all, the United Nations Emergency Force was sent to guard the Israeli-

Egyptian frontier, and it is now proposed that certain United Nations agencies will operate in the Middle East. I am obliged, however, to point out that experience has shown that the United Nations was powerless to act in the initial stages of these crises and that the Organization came into the picture only after the great Powers had taken the initiative. That fact must be recognized if we are to be objective in our approach, if we are not blindly to condemn, nor equally blindly to approve, the part played by the United Nations in these crises.

72. It is our view that the great changes which have taken place in world conditions since the establishment of the United Nations have had the effect of rendering certain provisions of the Charter unrealistic. Indeed, I would say that some of them have become dangerous.

73. If we are to seek what the Commonwealth Prime Ministers described as "certain deficiencies and weaknesses in the functioning of the Organization", then it would appear that sufficient account has not been taken of the human factor—human nature. It would appear that those who drafted the Charter did not sufficiently bear in mind that the average person is concerned primarily with safeguarding his own interests. This almost universal characteristic of human nature applies equally to groups of persons—the family, the community, the nation—with the result that those whose interests are similar seek to group together in order to safeguard, as well as to protect, their common interests.

74. In the international sphere there have been, from the earliest times, pacts and alliances, sometimes for defensive purposes, sometimes with less commendable intentions. After the First World War, the nations of the world got together and created the League of Nations for the purpose of promoting peace and international co-operation. This was followed by the creation of the United Nations after the Second World War. Unfortunately, in both those Organizations sufficient account was not taken of these characteristics of human nature: the tendency of the average person, of the community and of the nation, to protect their own interests. We have seen, both in the defunct League of Nations and also in the United Nations, delegations acting only too often in concert for the protection or promotion of what they conceive to be their common interests. This accounts for the formation of groups and blocs in the Assembly of the United Nations. The tendency to promote or safeguard national interests is responsible, I believe, in a very large measure for the ideological and propaganda war, for which this Organization provides a convenient battleground.

75. The deficiencies and weaknesses of the Organization are also in a large manner, we believe, due to the fashion and can be ascribed to the manner in which the provisions of the Charter are being interpreted and applied. These weaknesses, these deficiencies are functional rather than organic. But they can be remedied only by a firm resolve to apply the Charter as conceived, as drafted and as accepted by the respective Governments; or, alternatively, to revise the Charter, where necessary, in the light of experience and changed international conditions.

76. Admittedly the United Nations cannot remain static. It must develop in accordance with changes in

the international sphere. We cannot, however, agree with those who would have us believe that the United Nations General Assembly has developed into what they term a sort of world parliament. Apart from the impracticability of such an approach, there is also the juridical aspect. International contractual obligations cannot be increased without the consent of all the States concerned. The United Nations has no greater authority than what it derives from the Charter, and the Charter for its part is an international instrument which can legally be amended only by the processes provided for in the Charter. We in South Africa have noted with concern how in recent years there has been a tendency to amend the Charter by a process of interpretation. Such a process places the United Nations at the mercy of a chance majority. In any case, it is unconstitutional.

77. I repeat that we in South Africa can never agree to the conception of the United Nations or this Assembly as a world parliament clothed with authority to over-ride the will of sovereign parliaments.

78. I repeat that the source of many of the ills of the United Nations lies in the manner in which the provisions of the Charter are interpreted and applied in practice. What is required is to restore confidence in the United Nations, confidence which during recent years has been undermined by practices which have developed within the Organization.

79. I have said that the Charter suffers from certain defects. I have said that revision of the Charter seems to be indicated. Great-Power solidarity, which followed upon the Second World War, unfortunately no longer exists, and that has been held as a reason for continually postponing what should have already taken place after ten years, a probable revision of the Charter.

80. Meanwhile, in the words of Mr. Paul-Henri Spaak, "never before has the insufficiency of the United Nations as at present constituted stood out so clearly".

81. We in South Africa believe that the revision of the Charter has become an urgent necessity and, in the opinion of my Government, should receive early attention.

82. Among other things—and I am merely throwing this out as a suggestion—consideration might be given to the system of voting whereby a group of smaller States, acting in concert, is able to thwart or to impose its will on certain great Powers which, in the case of threatening aggression, have to step in and bear the responsibility for the maintenance of peace. I fully realize that that is a very thorny question, and it will require very careful examination. I am not expressing an opinion one way or the other. It is, however, a situation, a position which has hitherto militated against rapid and effective action by the United Nations.

83. I have mentioned that one aspect of the Charter which appears to call for revision. There are also others. But it seems to me that unless remedial action is taken, there is a real danger that the United Nations will resolve itself into what an eminent statesman once described as a condition of "organized chaos"; or, alternatively, that it will degenerate into a sort of international debating society—albeit a very dangerous one.

84. I announced earlier in my speech this afternoon the intention of the Union Government to participate fully in the work of the United Nations. It will be our endeavour, the endeavour of this and future South African delegations, to assist in making the Charter more effective in pursuing its main objective, which is to harmonize the actions of nations. It is for that reason that I have dealt with the Organization as such—with its organic weaknesses and its functional defects—and in doing so have suggested certain remedial action. It is the belief of my delegation that to close our eyes to the weaknesses and defects of the Organization and to pretend that they do not exist would be merely to deceive ourselves and to assist this Organization on a downward course which, in course of time, must lead to ultimate collapse.

85. The United Nations was intended to be a tremendous force for good. That was the ideal of its founders. The United Nations was never intended to be an end in itself, but a means to an end. That end is peace and harmony among nations. If the United Nations lives up to the ideals of San Francisco, its existence will be justified. If, on the other hand, the United Nations brings discord, if it serves as a source of estrangement, as a source of conflict, then it cannot and it will not survive.

86. I conclude my remarks with the words I used at San Francisco at the Commemorative Assembly three years ago in 1955. Those words were: "We must get back to the spirit of San Francisco."

87. U THANT (Burma): The thirteenth session of the General Assembly is convened under the dismal clouds of increased tensions and crises. One wonders if human ingenuity and human wisdom will be able to cope with the increasingly involved problems confronting all of us. The general debate in this world forum of course provides all of us with an opportunity to present our respective views on the nature of these problems and what seems to us the most sensible means of resolving them.

88. At the outset let me, on behalf of my delegation, deal with a peculiar phenomenon of the day which is generally known as a "balance of terror". The military bases which are supposed to protect certain countries may have a usefulness in maintaining this so-called "balance of terror", but apart from other considerations there are already unmistakable signs that the feeling of the people of those countries which the bases are meant to protect is rising to a point of opposition to the bases despite some small advantage to the economy of those countries by reason of their presence. The only conceivable value of the strenuous efforts for military superiority in the cold war is as a deterrent. It is a commonplace that both the United States of America and the Soviet Union already have weapons of complete annihilation. If ever they should turn the cold war into real shooting war, sooner or later, by design or by accident, some one will use the most dreadful weapons available. Such a war would mean the annihilation of all that the human race has built, besides the catastrophic end of millions of men, women and children. Such survivors as there might be would envy the dead.

89. A theory has been advanced that a balance of terror would be sufficient to keep nations from using the most terrible weapons of destruction. Leaders

in many countries hold the view that this sense of fear will at least prevent the big Powers from putting an end to human history on this little planet. But this so-called balance of terror can at best produce a very uneasy and precarious peace. Fear generates all undesirable states of mind: suspicion, hatred, anger and the impulse to destroy. In every war, cold or hot, the first casualty is truth. All organs of mass communication will inevitably engage in a battle of untruth, slander and distortion just to serve the interest of the countries operating those organs. Moreover, no balance of terror can last indefinitely, since all through history men always have ultimately got what they prepared for. It is characteristic of tensions that sooner or later they break or explode. Therefore, the indefinite continuation of this highly-strung state of tension is bound to end in disaster.

90. It is often argued that certain types of political and economic systems are so ruthless, so fanatical and so vicious that an ultimate resort to nuclear war may be necessary to obliterate them from the face of the earth. The proponents of this kind of thinking maintain that life is not worth living if fundamental freedoms are denied to human beings. In this connexion, let me present before this Assembly the attitude adopted by my country towards this problem. Burma is dedicated to parliamentary democracy and firmly believes in democratic ideals and the dignity of man. Burma is thoroughly averse to dictatorship in any shape or form. Burma looks upon free institutions as not only the most desirable of political systems but also as those most congenial to the flowering of the human genius. But this conviction in democracy and dedication to democratic ideals do not preclude Burma from the knowledge that there are millions of people in this world who are equally convinced of other types of political and economic systems and who are equally dedicated to their own ideals. Many countries have chosen systems of government very different from our own. It is, however, not our business to pass judgement on the internal affairs of other countries. The recognition of this basic fact enables us to subscribe to the principles of peaceful coexistence. We are convinced that no system of government can be crushed by a hydrogen war, and no political or economic system will just wither away by the massive accumulation of weapons of destruction by its opponents. This leads my delegation to the conclusion that an effective and drastic reduction of armaments is urgently called for, not only to ease tensions and restore an enduring peace, but also to divert the surplus resources to purely creative fields of human endeavour.

91. With these considerations in mind, the declarations by the representatives of both the United States of America and of the Soviet Union before this Assembly in relation to the economic development of under-developed countries deserve the warmest support of all of us. The Secretary of State of the United States, in effect, has proposed [749th meeting] that the United Nations undertake to mobilize the human and material resources of the United Nations in a world-wide war against the scourges of poverty and disease. He has proposed that the United Nations dedicate the year 1959 to this purpose. The proposal of the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union [750th meeting] to aid under-developed countries out of the savings from the proposed reduction of military budgets of the four great

Powers also deserves our warmest support. My delegation does not see any reason why this proposal, like the United States' proposal, should not receive universal acceptance. As I have stated earlier, a security system based on a massive balance of terror is not only precarious, but is also extremely wasteful of money, talent and energy. We cannot but deplore the vast expenditure of funds and effort for weapons that become outdated almost as soon as they are in production and that we hope will never be used. How much better it would be if we could utilize the resources for urgently needed schools, houses, hospitals, roads, libraries and economic aid to under-developed countries.

92. My delegation feels that no proposals deserve more enthusiastic support than the ones made by the United States and the Soviet Union. There are millions of people in the world who do not have enough to eat and enough to cover themselves with, and whose children cannot go even to the primary schools. It seems comic to talk to them about the virtues of democratic ideals and the dignity of man. Both proposals, therefore, deal with the crux of the present-day world problem.

93. My delegation has no doubt that the Members of the United Nations could, by co-operative endeavour, achieve very substantial results in the sphere of public welfare. The means to do it exist. The knowledge exists. The techniques exist. All that is required is a decision on our part to dedicate our energies to this most constructive and exciting venture of all time. It lies within our power within the coming decades to stamp out diseases which unnecessarily kill millions of humans each year. It lies within our power to open up the avenues to knowledge for hundreds of millions of people by making illiteracy a thing of the past. It lies within our power to harness our rivers, to improve our agriculture, to develop our industries, to house our peoples decently, and to raise the physical and social well-being of the almost subhuman two thirds of the human race.

94. Such a co-operative effort by the United Nations could capture the imagination of the whole world. It could provide an outlet for the fulfilment of man's longing to engage in creative works of peace and progress. And it may not be too much to hope that in co-operative, constructive work above the clamour of political conflict, beyond the reach of clashing ideologies, the tensions which plague us today might recede and be forgotten in the joyous task of working together for the good of humanity.

95. The common stand taken by the United States of America and the Soviet Union in regard to the imperative need to help the under-developed countries is certainly a matter for universal gratification. My delegation considers that the most important problem facing the world today is how the rich and the poor nations are going to live together. This is a division of the world more lasting and potentially more explosive even than that between Communists and non-Communists. Yet the issue was hardly ever discussed until now. In giving aid to underdeveloped countries it is important to bear in mind that the purpose is not for the fulfilment of cold war objectives, but just to give the less fortunate people a more abundant life. On behalf of my delegation, let me say that more than two-thirds of the world's population are far more concerned with their attempt, by a twentieth century

industrial revolution, to raise their extremely low standards of life. Unless the rich nations become involved in that great revolution, they are going to miss the real point of the second half of the twentieth century. The problem does not end with the drastic reduction of armaments and the offering of aid to less fortunate countries. The more essential factor is the question of relationship between the donors and the recipients. In this gigantic human endeavour, how to become partners instead of patrons is the key question for the donors.

96. Let me now deal with the most critical situation faced by the United Nations since the Korean War. I am referring to the extremely serious development in the Far East. Incredible though it seems, the world is on the brink of a major war over a couple of islands off China that can mean nothing to any country other than China.

97. On behalf of my delegation, I have dealt briefly, during the discussion on the adoption of the report of the General Committee [754th meeting], with the imperative need for the United States to re-examine and reappraise its Far Eastern policy, and therefore, I shall not attempt to reiterate the arguments I had presented on that occasion. We know that the Government of the United States would regard an attack on the off-shore islands as an attack on Formosa, and we also know that Moscow would regard an attack on the People's Republic of China as an attack on Soviet Russia. It is true that the diplomatic talks between the United States and the People's Republic of China are now going on in Warsaw, but there is very little indication that the talks will remove the roots of the antagonism. We are witnessing once again one of the turbulent confusions which have surrounded one crisis after another since the Korean War.

98. All the published statements and speeches emanating from several interested sources appear to have ignored all the factors which have brought about the present crisis and which make any real solution so difficult. The facts are plain. The Central Government of the People's Republic of China controls the mainland of China more firmly than any other Chinese government has for the past hundreds of years. Many countries have consistently refused to recognize this Government and some of them are closely allied with the refugee Government in Formosa which has never concealed its ambition to reverse the result of the revolution and re-establish itself on the mainland.

It is as plain as daylight that this policy, if not revised, would inevitably lead to an open clash. Yet, it is a matter for regret that the United States allowed Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek not only to cling to the off-shore islands, which have no value for the defence of Formosa, but also to fortify them and to reinforce them until one-third of the Nationalist troops are now stationed there. Of course my delegation is distressed at the employment of force by the People's Republic of China to get rid of this menace close to the mainland, but for the sake of objectivity it must be admitted that the provocation is there.

99. I do not propose to deal at length with this very serious crisis facing the world, but I should like to crave the indulgence of this Assembly to go a little deeper into the roots of tensions in the Far East.

100. The function of the United Nations should clearly be to give judgement on a dispute. But to give judgement requires that the evidence of both parties be heard. It is certainly not the function of the judge to make any decision until the defendant as well as the plaintiff has been allowed to state his case.

101. My delegation will not support any measures whereby the United Nations assumes the functions of a co-belligerent on one side, in any armed conflict, without hearing both sides.

102. This principle should be applied with greater force to the present crisis in the Far East. The United States, for which we have the highest regard, for its valiant history, its noble traditions and its dedication to the principles of freedom, tolerance and democracy, has all along urged the virtues of negotiation while it is at the same time refusing to recognize the People's Republic of China. The great country of the United States has been praising the United Nations as the only hope for mankind and as the most effective instrument of international conciliation, while at the same time it is keeping China out of the United Nations, and refuses to hear China's case in this world Organization. Without recognition, negotiations are impossible, and without negotiations the United Nations will stumble from crisis to crisis until we all stumble into war.

103. It shall be the constant endeavour of my delegation to help in averting such a catastrophe.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.