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President: Mr. Carlos SOSA RODRIGUEZ
(Venezuela).

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. ODUBER (Costa Rica) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, your selection for the task of presiding over the eighteenth regular session of the General Assembly is a well-deserved tribute not only to your personal qualities as a diplomat, which have been amply demonstrated within these walls, but also to the great country which you represent. My Government and I myself are certain that, under your guidance, this session will live up to the requirements of the contemporary world; although unforeseeable and disquieting things may lie ahead of us, the prospects for mankind are unquestionably more hopeful today than they have been at the opening of past sessions. The honour and satisfaction thus conferred upon you will belong not only to our sister nation, Venezuela, but to all those Latin American peoples which are inspired by democratic ideals and governed in accordance with democratic principles.

2. I wish to pay a tribute to U Thant, the Secretary-General of our Organization. In the eyes of our peoples, his vigilance and skill have contributed decisively to the creation of the improved international atmosphere to which I have just referred. We wish, therefore, to declare our support of this man who has faithfully carried on the efforts begun by that other great figure who sacrificed his life in the cause of peace: Dag Hammarskjöld.

3. My delegation, my country and I personally wish to reaffirm our faith in the United Nations as an instrument for peaceful progress towards a better world as well as our intention of co-operating with this Organization in the effort to achieve as rapidly and as fully as possible the noble aims which it has set itself. The existence of the United Nations has not, of course, banished from the world the threats and

dangers which can at any moment spring from emotion, misunderstanding, and various group and national interests; peoples and individuals cannot yet develop in a permanent atmosphere of mutual understanding. On a number of important occasions, however, action by the United Nations has served to prevent crises of the kind which in other times, and indeed in very recent times, have plunged countries and whole regions into grave difficulties. The United Nations has brought the triumph of reason over confusion, thus preventing or greatly mitigating much misery and pain. It has proved to be the only organization capable of reducing to a minimum the suffering which, alternating with a sense of satisfaction in being alive and in fulfilling our obligations, characterizes human existence.

4. If it is to improve its structure and achieve its aims more rapidly, or at all events come closer to achieving them, the United Nations must undergo basic changes which can be accomplished only through certain amendments of its constitutional instrument. Revision of the United Nations Charter is essential if the Organization is to be made more effective. The new nations whose independence and whose presence among us we older Members of the United Nations have greeted with such sincere pleasure in recent years cannot enter into the full exercise of their sovereign rights until they are on a footing of complete equality with other Member States. If we have welcomed their representatives to this General Assembly, why should we deny or limit their access to organs in which questions are raised and issues discussed which so directly and vitally concern their peoples? The United Nations is and must continue to be a living organism which keeps pace with the times. If it does not adapt to the demands of a world which is in a state of constant vertiginous change, it will end by becoming a decrepit anachronism.

5. The world of today is not that of the fifty-one sovereign States which met at San Francisco in 1945, inspired by the lofty ideal of abolishing war as a means of settling international disputes and of promoting the welfare of individuals and nations. As a result of the application of the principles embodied in the Charter, our great world community now embraces 111 nations. As yet, however, neither the anatomy nor the physiology of the organs of the United Nations reflects this astonishing and salutary change. The act of justice which we have sought to perform by welcoming among us the nations which have with our aid thrown off the yoke of dependence and servitude has remained limited in scope and will ultimately be transformed into an act of flagrant injustice if we do not admit these nations to the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations organs. Accordingly, Costa Rica once again calls for amendment of the Charter and for the early convening of a general conference for the purpose of modernizing that document on an equitable basis, so that it reflects not only the needs of the present-day

world but also the fact that the world of the immediate future will be even more varied and complex than that in which we now live.

6. Even if a majority of Member States feel that circumstances are not propitious for the convening of a general conference, there are certain minimum reforms which are urgently needed. We should, however, avoid any action that might restrict the participation in the principal United Nations organs of the group which always acted in a spirit of fairness when it represented a majority. My country is certain that, far from permitting its role in the United Nations to be curtailed, Latin America will affirm its participation in the Organization's activities, adding new chapters to the history of the Latin American countries in the United Nations and of the battles which they have fought and will continue to fight in defence of their ideals and interests.

7. In view of the limited time available, I shall confine myself to a few brief remarks concerning those items on the agenda of the present session which are of vital importance to the nations possessing only limited means of advancement and progress. The nations in what until recently the experts were wont to describe coldly as an "under-developed state"—a term whose slighting tone the substitute expression, "developing countries", is intended to soften—are of the opinion that development and under-development are not solely a matter of technical and material progress. There are, to be sure, countries and regions which are under-developed in a technical and material sense. However, there are also small countries with limited resources, and even territories still denied the right of self-determination, which, in spite of their spiritual and cultural traditions, cannot advance peacefully along the road of progress because their way is blocked by the ambitions and lack of understanding displayed by communities which, though highly developed from the technical and scientific point of view, show little respect for the right of other communities to decide their own future. Nazi Germany provided us, less than two decades ago, with a tragic example of this strange combination of technical progress and ethical and political backwardness. Our sense of dignity as free peoples forbids us to permit others to lay down hard and fast rules to guide us on the road of progress. We ask only that our urgent demands should be heard and satisfied on the basis of international co-operation. This will not only advance the cause of progress but also lay a solid foundation for peace—the goal towards which all of us, strong and weak alike, must direct every effort.

8. It is in the light of these considerations that we can grasp the full meaning of the work accomplished by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which has done so much to promote decolonization, the Special Committee on the Policies of apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa, the Social Commission, the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning, the Commission on International Commodity Trade, the Commission on Human Rights, the Special Fund, the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and other bodies whose efforts and objectives have earned our delegation's full support.

9. I should emphasize at this point that a spirit of international solidarity must prevail over traditional

national and group interests at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to be held in the spring of 1964 and, generally speaking, in all efforts to secure a more equitable distribution of wealth and prosperity among nations. While social inequality within a given national community always gives rise to upheaval which threatens the nation's life and its economic and political stability, the division of our world into groups of rich and poor nations tends to retard progress and, by creating a constant threat of war, to prevent the establishment of genuine and lasting peace. Hence, while national Governments pursue domestic policies aimed at eliminating potential causes of national disintegration by formulating and carrying out programmes of social justice, the great Powers must henceforth, if they are to ensure lasting peace in the world, give greater attention to what might be referred to as international social justice, i.e., work for the gradual but steady disappearance of the gulf which today separates the rich and poor nations.

10. Increasingly close mutual understanding and co-operation, both inside and outside the United Nations, among the underprivileged countries, i.e., the countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa, can contribute to a solution of their common material, cultural and moral problems. In that way, too, we of the poor nations will also be making a useful contribution to peace. I have already said that we must all try to advance the cause of peace. When we remember the difficulties that had to be overcome in order to obtain the Treaty banning nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, in outer space, and under water,^{1/} it is easy to see what an effort will be required to bring about a treaty on general and complete disarmament, on which, in the final analysis, the future of all of us depends.

11. Costa Rica is determined to carry out those United Nations recommendations which are in keeping with the principles of the Organization. We are honoured to be represented in the Special Committee on apartheid and among its officers, and we have worked for the adoption of recommendations which will enable the United Nations to intensify its struggle against the policy of racial segregation pursued by the Government of South Africa. I should like to mention that the various measures taken by my country in support of the United Nations policy on apartheid have included the closing of our consular missions. We vigorously endorse and support the reports of the Special Committee, which serve to keep world public opinion informed about a cruel reality.

12. In conclusion, I should like to refer to an initiative taken by my delegation with a view to promoting agrarian reform programmes along democratic lines. For the developing countries, almost all of which are primarily agricultural, the rationalization of agriculture is essential to economic expansion and a balanced economy. A no less important aspect of agrarian reform is the social one, which has been not only recognized but strongly emphasized by the United Nations, by regional organizations and by so eminent a personage as Pope John XXIII, in his encyclical Mater et Magistra. In a memorandum which my delegation has submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations [A/5481 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1] in preparation for a draft resolution which we plan to introduce in the course of this session for

^{1/} Signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963.

consideration by the General Assembly, my delegation puts forward certain ideas and proposals which I shall not weary you by repeating here. I simply wish to reiterate my Government's desire to see the United Nations remedy a deficiency which is so obvious that it requires no lengthy comment. In the national and international programmes and studies aimed at bringing about an improvement in agricultural production through urgently needed economic and social reforms, one element is lacking which is essential to the success of agrarian reform programmes: provision for making funds available to Governments for the purpose of acquiring land so that it may be more equitably distributed and more effectively utilized. The special conditions and legal systems prevailing in many of the economically less developed countries require the Governments of those countries to pay compensation for land expropriated for those purposes. The draft resolution announced by the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations is aimed at finding a solution to these problems, which many countries with limited resources cannot solve by themselves. The various international and hemispheric agrarian reform programmes will prove ineffectual if land—the essential factor for their implementation—is lacking. I hope that our views on this matter will be understood and shared by a majority of Member States and that the initiative we have taken will lead to United Nations action on behalf of a programme of international assistance designed to meet this vital need.

13. My country feels that in its eighteen years of existence the United Nations has carried out its task of safeguarding peace and of securing justice for the peoples that wished to be free. We have been successful in gaining political independence for a great many States, although there are peoples still awaiting their liberation. In the atmosphere of peace in which this eighteenth session of the General Assembly is being held, however, let us take up the task of winning social justice for the great majority of the States assembled here. The prices of commodities on the world market are fixed in an inequitable manner by the wealthy countries that buy them, and the prices of manufactured goods are fixed, in just as inequitable a manner, by the wealthy countries that sell them. Until international justice exists, there will be no peace and no equality in the United Nations. Beginning with this Assembly, we, the poor countries of the world, must join, above and beyond all blocs, in a struggle for justice in international trade. While hunger exists, there can be no peace; while exploitation exists, there can be no harmony. We have already gained legal equality for 111 States; let us now seek to achieve social equality through an equitable system of world trade which will enable the workers of the poor countries to achieve a standard of living comparable to that prevailing in the wealthy countries.

14. Mr. HERRARTE (Guatemala) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, the Guatemalan delegation considers it an honour to congratulate you on your election as President of the General Assembly at its eighteenth session, an election which my country greets with joy, because, apart from your excellent qualifications as a jurist and diplomat, you are a citizen of our American continent, ever open to liberty and the great causes that benefit mankind. Speaking personally, I should like to offer you my sincere congratulations, for I am honoured by a friendship established during the time that I represented my country in this Organization.

15. It is with renewed confidence in the destiny of the United Nations that the Guatemalan delegation has come to this session. Strong in the knowledge that its policy adheres strictly to the lofty international standards of respect for other nations abroad and respect for man at home, it has come to reaffirm its devotion to the dignity and worth of the human person and to equal rights for men and women, without distinction on grounds of race or creed or between great and small nations. The sincerity with which the Guatemalan delegation expresses this feeling is a result of the recent events in Guatemala when the national army, responding to the appeals of the people, was obliged to depose a Government which was carrying the nation towards one of the greatest political, social, economic and moral crises in all its history and in which a fratricidal civil war, with all its bitter consequences, seemed inevitable. What was at issue was precisely the need to defend freedom, democracy and the right to a worthy, honest and secure life, principles on which the present Government of Guatemala bases its policy. Great evils require heroic remedies, and that was the path which the Government had to follow in order that the country should not sink into a situation similar to that which afflicts our brother nation of Cuba.

16. On behalf of the Government of Guatemala I wish to reaffirm on this occasion its belief in democracy, its respect for international commitments and its firm position of support for the Western democracies.

17. The faith and optimism of the Guatemalan delegation do not waver before the grave problems demanding the attention of this world forum, for at the same time it has confidence in the effectiveness of the United Nations and is convinced that the problems will be solved as respect, tolerance and understanding effectively make headway in the conscience and conduct of men and of the Governments that make up the United Nations. It is the Guatemalan delegation's fervent desire that this may come about and it hopes that this session will take place in such an atmosphere.

18. My delegation extends a cordial welcome to all those delegations representing peoples who have fought for their independence and who today, thanks to their courage and tenacity, have achieved the lofty status of Members of the United Nations. The awakening of the African continent is a lesson for mankind and a reaffirmation of its noble spiritual values.

19. I consider it my duty to refer briefly to one of the problems discussed here on many occasions, namely, colonialism and its new version of neo-colonialism. The American countries take a just pride in the fact that they have maintained a firm position in defence of the liberty of peoples. Indeed, several decades before the United Nations was established the peoples of America had already declared themselves opposed to colonialism, regarding it as a negation of the most elementary rights of peoples. Many times the statesmen of the new world, honouring the libertarian tradition of its most illustrious sons and conscious of the situation prevailing in non-self-governing territories, reiterated their categorical condemnation of this political anachronism. Various resolutions of this type have been approved by the regional organization of the Americas, all designed to free the hemisphere from the system of subjugation imposed on defenceless peoples by the colonialist Powers solely in their own interests. This

endeavour of the countries of the new world has not been in vain, since the revelation of the standard methods of colonialism touched the conscience of peoples. Nevertheless, this fine aim is far from being a reality. The colonial empires have hastily disguised the political dictatorship imposed on the dependent nations and presented the former colonies under the label—invented by them—of "independent within another system". In this way they conceal the survival of the old colonial system, making a mockery of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. With this new formula, coined for the purpose, the same system persists, new in form but not in content.

20. Guatemala views with great satisfaction the efforts being made within the United Nations to bring certain territories gradually to self-government, provided this does not impair the territorial integrity of other States Members of the United Nations.

21. Our country has a grievous experience in its history: we have seen our sovereignty over a large part of our territory usurped by a colonial Power—the United Kingdom. I refer to Belize—wrongly called British Honduras—an establishment on the shores of the Caribbean which was founded solely on the basis of timber concessions granted to British lumbermen by the Spanish Crown which were later extended beyond their original limits and beyond the intentions of those who had granted them. The only rights which the British had in Belize before independence were as holders of wood-cutting concessions, sovereignty being expressly reserved by Spain. Guatemala, which, as the State succeeding to the Spanish rights in the region, inherited the territory of Belize, and consequently the problem of usurpation by the United Kingdom, embarked on a struggle against a powerful State in an unequal contest which has continued to the present day.

22. In the last century Central America was weakened by internal dissension and by the paucity of its resources and lost its political unity with the formation of new States. Nevertheless it made efforts to put an end to British usurpation in the region and managed to eliminate British colonial occupation in various places. Guatemala, however, could not expel the intruders from Belize; on the contrary, it was obliged to sign a treaty with them in extraordinary circumstances. The United Kingdom Government, pressing for signature, went to the monstrous lengths of using its own abuses and illegal actions as a weapon to convince the weak. It was necessary to establish the borders, it said, in order to prevent further incursions into the uncultivated and almost empty interior, which, with time, would give those who occupied that region rights of ownership. Incredible! A highly developed and powerful nation protecting its own marauders and adventurers and inciting them to usurpation, robbery and plunder. In other words, the treaty, according to the United Kingdom Government, was simply a means of self-defence for Guatemala! But they added, with incredible cynicism and insolence, that the treaty would help to preserve and increase the United Kingdom's friendship for Guatemala.

23. The advance of the British lumbermen continued undisturbed with the support of Her Majesty's Government. What a wretched situation, with no international courts or other bodies, the only law being that of the strong, against all reason, justice and morality! But in the midst of so much baseness, con-

tempt and abuse on the part of the United Kingdom, one splendid detail stands out in contrast: the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala at that time expressed, in a written note, the desire of the Guatemalan Government that when the treaty with the United Kingdom was concluded provision should be made for the freeing of the slaves in Belize and for the abolition of slavery for ever, an action which Guatemala had taken immediately upon its independence more than thirty-five years before. Accordingly, here in the United Nations we must ask the real people of Belize in whom they have the greater trust: in the United Kingdom, which made them slaves, or in Guatemala, which asked the then colossus to free the slaves of Belize and to abolish slavery there for ever.

24. The Convention^{2/} signed on 30 April 1859 contained bilateral obligations. Guatemala carried out its part in good faith, but not so the United Kingdom, despite Guatemala's constant attempts to claim its rights. Because of this policy of non-compliance, Guatemala declared the Convention null and void, so that matters returned to the state they were in before the Convention was signed.

25. That, briefly, is the solid and incontrovertible legal basis for Guatemala's claim to the Territory of Belize. It is a claim that has been recognized by well-known international specialists and by the British themselves and which has also gained the official support of many friendly Governments. The British presence in Belize, an establishment which served in other days as a pirate lair, is maintained by force and against all law. This demonstration of what the colonial Powers achieved by rapacity and greed continues in mid-twentieth century. The backwardness of the Territory in every respect is obvious, its poverty notorious. But this must come to an end. Colonialism, as I said before, is doomed, it is dying every day, and we, as free countries respecting the law, shall never be able to relax our efforts until the last trace of this imposed, unjustified and unlawful domination disappears.

26. There are various means of achieving this. So far we have employed peaceful means based on law. For over a century we have tried to propose procedures, to find fair solutions to this old dispute, but unfortunately we have not been successful.

27. I had the honour to refer a moment ago to certain painful aspects of neo-colonialism. The unilateral reforms which the United Kingdom decreed in the Belize Constitution are a good illustration of the manoeuvres by means of which it seeks to deceive and dominate colonial peoples and, what is worse, international public opinion.

28. Under a pretence of giving the people of Belize a very small degree of responsibility for the conduct of their own affairs, the United Kingdom gave them a new Constitution, whose real purpose is to ensure the maintenance of British hegemony over this piece of Central American soil for ever.

29. Let us not be hoodwinked. The aim which the United Kingdom is pursuing in Belize, a poor territory with no chance of making its way in the turbulent world of today, is simply to perpetuate its presence, its dominion and its interests in a small corner of America. How else can one interpret the British manoeuvre of giving what they have persisted in call-

^{2/} Convention between Great Britain and Guatemala relating to the boundary of British Honduras, signed at Guatemala on 30 April 1859.

ing the "last step before independence" to a people who lack adequate means for subsistence and development? My Government repeatedly warned the United Kingdom that it would never accept the so-called constitutional reforms which it was proposing to force on the people of Belize, an integral part of the Guatemalan nation.

30. But our warnings went unheeded: the Government of the United Kingdom pressed on with its unilateral procedures and in the face of these outrages the Government of Guatemala was compelled, as a first step, to break off diplomatic relations with it. We cannot see what advantage could accrue from continuing to maintain relations with a Government which systematically disregards our efforts and refuses to settle a dispute of this kind in accordance with international law and with the standards governing relations between civilized countries. Nevertheless, we have continued our efforts to settle this dispute peaceably. Our faith in right and justice will be maintained and we shall go on endeavouring to find a speedy, peaceful and equitable solution to this problem.

31. I should like to take this occasion to state categorically that my Government respects the principle of the peaceful settlement of international conflicts, that basic principle which is the *raison d'être* of this Organization and the reason for our presence here, but I must add that all Guatemala is prepared for any sacrifice, at whatever cost, that our interests and the defence of our country demand. Here and now, on behalf of the people and Government of Guatemala, I decline any responsibility for whatever may happen as a result of the damaging and dilatory attitude so long maintained by the United Kingdom in justification of its usurpation of the Guatemalan territory of Belize.

32. The case of Belize is not unique on the American continent. The case of the Islas Malvinas, which concerns the Republic of Argentina, and the case of British Guiana, which concerns Venezuela, are similar instances which call for solidarity between the Americas and all countries fighting against colonialism with a view to eliminating the last vestiges of British usurpation from our continent. We cannot speak of peace in the world as long as these injustices remain.

33. I turn now to the question of Central America, that group of countries which once formed a single nation and which will, we hope, do so again in the near future.

34. Because of their geographical proximity, the similarity of their historical backgrounds and their community of aspirations, the Central American Republics constitute a clear example of a regional grouping; twelve years ago they decided to take the steps recognized in modern international law to solve their problems and defend their interests through fraternal and collective action. As a result of this decision, the Central American Republics set up the Organization of Central American States (OCAS) and put into effect the Programme of Central American Economic Integration.

35. In the light of present-day requirements, the Governments of these sister Republics agreed on the need to reconstruct the Organization of Central American States so that by means of a co-ordinated development of integration programmes in the various political, economic, social and cultural fields, they could secure an immediate return to their longed-

for unity. I am very glad to say that the instrument whereby OCAS was given a new structure with a view to its becoming an effective agent for bringing about the complete integration of Central America was recently ratified by the Governments of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador and it is hoped that the Republics of Nicaragua and Costa Rica will shortly follow suit.

36. The broad objectives set forth in the new Charter of OCAS have a solid foundation in the economic framework provided by the Central American Common Market, which is firmly buttressed by such agreements and agencies as the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration and the Central American Bank for Economic Integration.

37. In pursuance of this task, a meeting of the Ministers for Economic Affairs, Communications and Public Works of the Central American countries was held in Guatemala at the end of August and beginning of September of this year, for the purpose of studying and resolving problems relating to the regional highways programme and the specific projects comprising it; there was also a meeting of the Executive Committee of the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration with officials of the Government of Panama, for the purpose of examining the various matters relating to Panama's entry into our Common Market, which we regard with the greatest sympathy.

38. The Central American Republics, inspired by the deepest faith in the future of their indivisible destiny, are striving with steady determination for the progress and well-being of this region and are thus helping to fulfil the fundamental purposes of the United Nations.

39. Disarmament has been one of mankind's pre-occupations for centuries. Unfortunately, the advances that have been made in this direction are limited—perhaps too limited—and the thought of the catastrophe that a nuclear conflagration would mean, fills mankind with anguish.

40. There are various items relating to this problem on the agenda of this session of the General Assembly: "Question of general and complete disarmament" (item 26), "Question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons" (item 27), "Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests" (item 73), "Denuclearization of Latin America" (item 74), and others. This is still a burning question but unfortunately these items take up too much time on the General Assembly's agenda already and there is no prospect of a speedy solution. For the man in the street who is filled with horror at the thought of the possibility of a nuclear disaster, it is hard to understand how the United Nations, living in an age of incredible technical advances, does not succeed through courage, firmness and pertinacity in finding a definitive solution to this dangerous problem. Yet the man in the street sees one sign of hope in the distance, a hope embodied in the United Nations. It is true that very recently we have witnessed the signing of a treaty between the great Powers prohibiting nuclear tests, to which an impressive number of countries representing different ideologies have adhered. This is heartening but it is not enough. We regard it as the duty of all States, large and small, to unite their efforts to bring about new advances towards complete disarmament.

41. Before concluding, I should like to say how difficult it is for my delegation to understand some of

the things which are happening every day throughout the world, in connexion with situations which seem to have become permanent because apparently no just and appropriate solution can be found. I refer to such problems as those of divided countries where the citizens of one and the same country find themselves forced to live divided from each other by shameful and hateful walls and boundaries. I refer also to those brutal practices of discrimination whereby, because of the differences in the colour of their skins, some people, the people who are in power, persecute those who are not, although they too are human beings, with the right to live and to breathe the full air of equality, freedom and dignity.

42. Lastly, I should like to affirm once again the faith of the Guatemalan delegation in the high destiny of the United Nations, which is also the destiny of mankind, whose damnation or salvation depends to a large extent on us—upon the United Nations—upon our courage, our tolerance and our understanding.

43. Mr. MAYAKI (Niger) (translated from French): Allow me first of all, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your distinguished election. With your election the cup of the under-developed countries has now been filled to overflowing: after my friend and colleague Mongi Slim of Africa, after Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan of Asia, now, through you, Venezuela and the whole of Latin America are honoured. Your personal qualities, your clear-sightedness and your passionate concern with humanity, which have been displayed during your long career and your term as a member of the Security Council are, for my country, a further—but by no means the least—reason to rejoice at your election. The legendary virtues of your people—their moderation, their active perseverance, their keen sense of responsibility, and that courage and integrity which, as you yourself have told us here, your country has made its golden rule in its international policies—will undoubtedly set their seal on this eighteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly under your presidency.

44. May I also express to your predecessor, Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, my country's admiration for the moral tone and faith which he imparted to our Organization during his term of office.

45. For the first time in seventeen years the General Assembly is opening in the most auspicious circumstances. Two events of capital importance, though of course of different scope, have taken place since we took leave of one another last winter. The first was the pan-African Conference at Addis Ababa,^{3/} at which the Organization for African Unity, a clear symbol of relaxation of international tension, was born. The second was the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. These two events of great political significance have been welcomed in Niger, as everywhere else, indeed, in Africa, with satisfaction and hope. No people can have welcomed these signs of regional relaxation of tension and of international rapprochement with more enthusiasm and relief than my own people. By its history, its geographical position and its spiritual and cultural links, the country which I have the honour of representing here, placed as it is at the cross-roads of races and civilizations, has a natural vocation to conciliation and reconciliation with the aims of establishing a world of peace through negotiation.

46. Niger, conscious of its weakness as an under-developed and under-populated new nation, but conscious also of the strength of its faith—faith in mankind and its dominant qualities, faith in mankind's values of civilization and culture, and above all faith in the permanent rules of solidarity and fraternity that form the basis of the international co-operation of which our Organization remains the finest instrument—Niger, I say, is sworn to the passionate and unceasing defence of peace. Peace, which is not only the daily necessity of the small nations, but is also the essential condition for the survival of the great Powers, must not, for us, be static, like a mere state of non-war in an equilibrium of terror, but must be the expression of a reconciled and fraternal human race.

47. The recent Conference of Heads of African States and Governments at Addis Ababa comes at a particularly opportune moment in this perspective. After many efforts, a whole continent has come together to build up, in solidarity, fraternity and internal peace, a stirring future free of all suspicion and discord. This African achievement is not only a positive step towards the establishment of African unity, but is also a decisive contribution to peace in Africa and all over the world. Addis Ababa is the symbol not merely of a reconciled Africa which has found its true self again, but also, and above all, of a strong, well-organized Africa, receptive to the ideas of co-operation and human solidarity.

48. The same is true of the recent agreement signed at Moscow between the three principal nuclear Powers, which has met with the approval of almost every country of the world. Need I say here, from this rostrum, how greatly the Republic of Niger rejoices at this agreement, and with what faith and determination we intend to adhere to it? However limited it may be—for it is, alas, only a partial agreement—it nevertheless constitutes a decisive step towards greater confidence and tolerance, which are prerequisites for the successful outcome of future negotiations. Moreover, although signed in their absence, this agreement nevertheless represents a victory for all those who, in Africa, Asia and America, have tirelessly proclaimed the danger of nuclear fallout. That campaign was a positive contribution by the non-aligned countries to the cause of peace, and shows, if there were any need to do so, that the struggle for peace is indivisible and calls, more than ever, for vigilance and courage on everyone's part. Until the great Powers are convinced of the justice of these simple ideas which underlie all honest and sincere international co-operation, the non-aligned countries and the small countries of Europe must organize themselves to set up a buffer zone designed to curb the expansionist appetites of the great Powers, which are a source of rivalry and engender cold war.

49. To be sure, peace is not something that will fall into our lap. It must be deserved, fought for and built up day after day. Our generation will have the honour and the inspiring privilege of being able to lay its first foundations. There are, alas, still too many obstacles before us. But we will not be asking too much of our international community if we call on it to watch for and eliminate all sources of friction and all trouble spots—so many pockets of cold-war infection.

50. One such is divided Germany, where the Berlin wall still stands as a challenge to the spirit of reconciliation and unity of a people which, after paying

^{3/} Summit Conference of Independent African States, 22-25 May 1963.

for the mad adventures of its leaders in a war of which the world still bears the scars, suffers today because it is kept outside the international community. The German people wait in anguish and bitterness for the peace treaty which they have been promised so many times and denied on each occasion. Until that treaty is signed, nothing must be done to perpetuate the division of Germany, but on the contrary, every attempt must be made to pave the way for national reconciliation by democratic means of its own free choice.

51. There is likewise Korea, where there seems, alas, to be a growing feeling of resignation to division and separation in contravention of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly.

52. And now, today, we have the problem of South Viet-Nam, where fighting has been going on for more than twenty years and where a whole generation has grown up without knowing a single day of peace. While deploring the excesses which have led to bloodshed in this part of the world, it seems to us that it is the duty of our Organization, as of all friends of Viet-Nam, to strive tirelessly to promote moderation, tolerance and respect for humanity.

53. What is there to say about the Chinese problem? Seven hundred million inhabitants of this globe are excluded from the United Nations by the immoderate demands of some and the fanatical obstinacy of others. Certainly, this is a scandal! It is an even greater scandal, however, that no measures are envisaged to right this wrong, and that justice is only being done by denying justice. We can have no moral or legal grounds whatever for sacrificing the presence among us of Nationalist China, a full Member of our Organization, in order to achieve the desired entry of the People's Republic of China.

54. Lastly, how can we pass over the distressing affair of Palestine in silence, with more than a million Arabs wandering without shelter, resolutions flouted, hate building up all the time, frontiers harassed day and night, and insecurity reigning permanently in the heart of the Middle East? What more heart-rending tragedy could there be, what greater danger to peace? On the strength of the bonds which link us with one side and the other and making this tragedy which divides peoples whose virtues of hospitality and tolerance we know and admire our own, we appeal from this rostrum for harmony and reconciliation through negotiation, in an atmosphere of justice and peace.

55. But of all these pockets of cold-war infection, of all these obstacles to peace, the most explosive and most threatening are to be found in Africa.

56. I am referring, as you will have realized, to apartheid and to the mad adventure which Portugal is desperately trying to continue on our continent. If there is one fundamental and positive factor for peace, it is, without the slightest doubt, decolonization. The reason we in Africa have placed this problem in the forefront is that we consider that there will be no peace so long as there are these zones of silence in which certain Powers persist in openly violating the spirit of peace.

57. The African countries represented at Addis Ababa were unanimous in condemning colonialism, which is today an anachronism and a danger to the world. We all know the insane obstinacy and stubbornness of those who are defending the last strongholds of

colonialism in Africa. In the name of the universal morality which inspires our Charter, in the name of the honour and the defence of Africans, and in the name of justice and law, Africa will employ every means to bar the way to these paladins of a bygone world.

58. Apartheid, that form of colonization from within, is even more shameless than the other form, as it gives legal currency to racist theories which are the most retrograde and the most incompatible with the ideas of the Charter. Our desire to see South Africa expelled from our Organization, of which it has predicted the impending demise, is not a matter of passion, but is based on the elementary principle of respect for the Charter owed by every State which claims to be a Member of this Organization.

59. We are familiar, of course, with the acts of complicity, the secret encouragement and the irresponsible statements of this or that official of this or that great Power, which are all grist to the mill of the South African racists, enabling them to continue making our Organization a laughing stock by refusing to heed its decisions and by deriding the resolutions of its most responsible organs. To all those who, directly or indirectly, put their sentimental solidarity with South Africa and Portugal above the ideals of the Charter, we would say that, in spite of these attacks on our Organization, Africa will never compromise, because honour, the dignity of its sons and international ethics are involved.

60. As for the question of the situation in Southern Rhodesia, we consider this to be so important that we wish to reserve the right to revert to it at the appropriate time, as it would be a blatant injustice to transfer powers and attributes of sovereignty to the present Government of Southern Rhodesia, which is the result of an undemocratic and discriminatory Constitution imposed on the people of that country.

61. Besides this vital problem of peace, there are many other items on our agenda that have engaged the attention of my delegation. Allow me to speak, at this stage of our debate, only on the economic and social development of the developing countries and on the revision of our Charter.

62. It is a truism today that the gap separating the "haves" from the "have-nots" is increasing, but merely saying or writing this is not enough: we must act, while there is still time. We must see to it that the two-thirds of mankind possessing only 17 per cent of the world's resources feel a greater sense of community with the one third of "haves" enjoying 83 per cent of the common wealth. If we abandon the mad venture of the arms race, will there not be opportunities for more humanitarian endeavour for the immense scientific and technical resources of the great Powers? Could one dream of any competition more peaceful, more necessary or more positive to challenge the dynamism and creative genius of the élite of the developed world than an activity aimed at the welfare of man, its field of action a fairer distribution of the wealth in which our planet abounds? If human solidarity means anything, it must be measured by the effort which the great Powers voluntarily make to free the vast majority of the world's population from poverty, illiteracy and malnutrition.

63. By launching the United Nations Development Decade and by devoting attention to the application of science and technology in the development of the

under-developed countries, our Organization and its specialized agencies have acted wisely and well.

64. We cannot overlook, in this brief survey, the effort which such solidarity requires of the developing countries. Most of them, at the cost of prodigious efforts, are applying themselves to the task with courage and determination, and here and there the infrastructure is taking shape and is being perfected.

65. In a recent study on the expansion of international trade, the seventy-second session of the Executive Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce stated:

"...the income earned from exports by developing countries is not... expanding rapidly enough to meet their requirements for economic development".^{4/}

66. Therefore, before coming to the aid of the less developed countries, the developed countries must have the courage to reverse the commercial trends established in favour of the colonialist economy. Justice must first be done to the developing countries by restoring a balance between primary commodities and manufactured products. It is common knowledge that the prices of primary commodities, which constitute the bulk of the exports of the under-developed countries, are daily declining in a manner as dangerous as it is unpredictable, affecting the buying power of the masses, reducing the investment capacity of Government and hindering the financing of plans for the diversification of production.

67. All this demonstrates, beyond the transitory conflict of interests, that a basis of solidarity and co-operation is essential for harmonious, reciprocal development.

68. After seventeen years of existence and on the eve of a new start which the whole world looks upon as filled with hope and promise, the United Nations has reached the point where it must thoroughly examine its conscience. For greater effectiveness and justice, our Charter must be revised, the better to encompass present-day realities. The United Nations must take its present membership into account and provide itself with a structure better adapted and more flexible with regard to future situations. In doing so it will become more effective, for it will be more just and more in accord with reality.

69. Africa and Asia are calling for more seats on the Security Council. It is not the least of the paradoxes of our Organization that a whole continent, Africa, is absent from the Security Council where representation is supposed to be geographical; moreover, half of the Organization's membership (Africa and Asia together number fifty-six Members) is under-represented on such essential bodies as the International Court of Justice and the Economic and Social Council.

70. We are convinced that in making this necessary adjustment our Organization will not only be acting in accordance with a sense of justice consonant with its spirit, but will also be enhancing its prestige and its efficiency in the service of peace.

71. It was through an awareness of this need and a desire to strengthen the Organization that the African Ministers for Foreign Affairs at the Dakar Confer-

ence^{5/} unanimously adopted the resolution of which I shall quote a few extracts:

"Whereas, when the United Nations Charter was adopted in 1945 and the Gentlemen's agreement was concluded in London in 1946, only three Independent and Sovereign African States out of the fifty-one States were members of the Organization at the time, that is one seventeenth of the total membership;

"Whereas in 1963, Africa has thirty-two Member States, that is, almost one third of the total membership of the Organization, and that other African States will shortly increase this proportion;

"...

"Appeals with confidence to the Member States of the United Nations, and in the first place to the permanent Members of the Security Council, to facilitate the successful outcome of the just and pressing African claims by not opposing any longer the amendment and the revision of the Charter;

"Resolves finally to make all the necessary efforts to bring to a successful outcome, at all costs, the justified claims of African States so as to enable them, on the acquisition of their just representation, to participate effectively in the United Nations work for peace, and this during the eighteenth session of the General Assembly;

"Solemnly declares that any impediments placed on the path of the African States by any State Member of the United Nations in the effort of the African States to attain this objective shall be regarded as an unfriendly act by all Member States of the Organization of African Unity."

72. Those are the few reflections which I wished to voice on the salient points of our agenda. My country is ready to consider any constructive proposal which has been or may be made from this rostrum.

73. A land of friendly relations and coexistence, Niger unreservedly offers its support to the United Nations and the cause of conciliation. Rejecting the exclusive cult of materialism and money, we have chosen our own path and cast our vote for maximum development and maximum respect for individual freedom. For this reason, in the debates which now occupy the United Nations, Niger will stand fast, open-minded and willing, beside all those who are resolved to work with goodwill for peace and fraternity among men.

74. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I call upon the representative of the United Kingdom, who has asked to exercise his right of reply.

75. Mr. KING (United Kingdom): The distinguished Foreign Minister of Guatemala referred in his speech to his country's claim on British Honduras. In this connexion I wish to state that Her Majesty's Government and the United Kingdom have no doubt as to their sovereignty over the territory of British Honduras, and I wish formally to reserve their rights on this question.

76. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I call upon the representative of Mexico, who has asked to exercise his right of reply.

^{4/} See ICC News, vol. XXIX, No. 7, July-August 1963, Supplement, p. 1.

^{5/} Conference on the Organization of African Unity, 2-11 August 1963.

77. Mr. PADILLA NERVO (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Whenever, at previous sessions of the General Assembly, the delegation of our sister republic of Guatemala has stated its views in regard to Belize, the Mexican delegation, too, has stated its position on the matter. At the 771st plenary meeting, held on 6 October 1958, I reiterated our position, on behalf of my delegation, in the following words: "This explains why Mexico has been watching with growing and friendly interest the formation in Belize of a country, neighbouring ours, and endowed with definite characteristics and a distinctive personality. Our position on Belize is that if its present status is altered, Mexico will claim its rights in accordance with well-known historical and legal precedents and by the peaceful and friendly methods with which it conducts its international affairs." [771st plenary meeting, paragraph 110.] I should like to add now, using the words of Article 73 of the United Nations Charter, that we recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories are "paramount" and that in developing self-government account should be taken of their freely and authentically expressed political aspirations.

78. I believe, therefore—and I am sure that I am expressing the deepest feelings of the Mexican people—that Mexico would not fail to take into account, if the case arose, a solution of the Belize problem based upon the freedom and independence of the people of Belize.

79. Subsequently, in the fourth report made by the President of Mexico to the Congress of the Union, in connexion with the meeting held at San Juan in Puerto Rico between representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom and of Guatemala, in the presence of officials from Belize, the Foreign Ministry of Mexico made a statement, based on indisputable historical and legal precedents, to make it quite clear once again that any change in the status of Belize could not lawfully be made without Mexican participation and without taking into account, in the first place, the right of the people of Belize to obtain full independence, if they so desire, through the free expression of their sovereign will.

80. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I call upon the representative of Guatemala, who has asked to exercise his right of reply.

81. Mr. HERRARTE (Guatemala) (translated from Spanish): The Guatemalan delegation has heard with regret the remarks just made by the Mexican representative, in which he referred to certain alleged rights of his country over the Guatemalan territory of Belize. Mexico, even before its independence, never possessed any territory to the south of the River Hondo, and which today serves as the northern boundary of the British occupation of Belize. I repeat that, even before independence, Mexico never possessed this territory. This is shown by the maps used by the Spanish and British negotiators who signed the Treaty of Versailles in 1783,^{2/} in which certain usufructuary rights were granted to the British lumbermen in the region between the River Hondo and Belize, as well as innumerable other documents of the time which it would be wearisome to enumerate. It is also proved by the boundary agreement signed

by British and Mexican plenipotentiaries^{7/} in which Mexico simply recognized what had been the real state of affairs since colonial days: namely, that the province of Yucatan did not extend south of the River Hondo. In his defence of this Treaty, Ignacio Mariscal, the Mexican Secretary for Foreign Affairs, stated clearly that there was no title recognized in international law whereby Mexico could lay claim to Belize.

82. This just and worthy attitude was subsequently reflected in statements by important Mexican officials. On 17 March 1940, General Lázaro Cárdenas, the then President of Mexico, adhering to the high-principled attitude adopted by his country before that time and maintained for many years afterwards, said that Mexico was compelled to support the territorial claims of sister nations which, like Guatemala in Belize, were rightly seeking a settlement of ancient disputes and the restoration of territory cut off from them by force and contrary to the rules of international law. The year before that, General Eduardo Hay, the Mexican Secretary for Foreign Affairs, wrote to the Foreign Minister of Guatemala that Mexico viewed the position of Guatemala in this affair with great sympathy because it was a just one. He was referring to the case of Belize. There can be no doubt that the opinions of the distinguished Mexicans whom I have quoted are correct.

83. Mexico's present position, as reflected in the remarks to which I am replying, has no basis in history, law, geography or anything else, and is in marked contrast to the attitude adopted until recently by the Mexican Government, one of whose best features has always been its respect for the rights of neighbouring countries. It is painful to see that this position of Mexico, a country for which Guatemalans feel affection and sympathy, not only reflects an unlawful and unjustified attitude but gives the impression that this sister country is on the watch, almost as though Belize was a prize, against the day when Guatemalan rights are recognized and Guatemala has recovered this part of its territorial patrimony, at present occupied by the United Kingdom.

84. Mexico should assist us again, as, fortunately, other friendly nations are doing, in our just and openly anti-colonialist struggle to recover Belize. On the contrary, by its recent attitude Mexico is merely obstructing Guatemala's efforts to expel from American soil one of the last vestiges of colonialist obscurantism, which runs counter to the fundamental principles that inspire the life of the free countries of the American continent.

85. In conclusion, I can only express my country's hope that Mexico will abandon its present attitude in regard to Belize and will join the ever-growing numbers of those who support the well-founded and just cause which Guatemala has been arguing for more than a century, with a view to recovering Belize and freeing itself once and for all from the colonial yoke.

AGENDA ITEM 8

Adoption of the agenda (continued*)

SECOND REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (A/5553)

86. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): May I ask the Assembly to turn its attention to the second

^{2/}Definitive Treaty of Peace and Friendship between His Britannic Majesty and the King of Spain, signed on 3 September 1783.

^{7/}Treaty between Great Britain and Mexico, respecting the boundary between Mexico and British Honduras, signed at Mexico, 8 July 1893.

* Resumed from the 1210th meeting.

report of the General Committee on the approval of the agenda of the eighteenth session and the allocation of items (A/5553). The General Committee recommends the inclusion of an item entitled: "Measures in connexion with the earthquake at Skoplje, Yugoslavia". If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly concurs in the General Committee's recommendation.

It was so decided.

87. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): The General Committee has also recommended that the item in question should be allocated to the plenary meetings. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly accepts this recommendation.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.