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**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

FOURTEENTH SESSION
Official Records



**795th
PLENARY MEETING**

(Opening Meeting)

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at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 1:</i> <i>Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Lebanon</i>	1
<i>Agenda item 2:</i> <i>Minute of silent prayer or meditation</i>	1
<i>Address by Mr. Rachid Karamé, Temporary President, Prime Minister of Lebanon and Chairman of the delegation of Lebanon</i>	1
<i>Agenda item 3:</i> <i>Credentials of representatives to the fourteenth session of the General Assembly</i> <i>(a) Appointment of the Credentials Committee</i>	2
<i>Agenda item 4:</i> <i>Election of the President</i>	2
<i>Address by Mr. Víctor A. Belaúnde, President of the fourteenth session of the General Assembly</i>	2

President: Mr. Víctor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).
Temporary President: Mr. Rachid KARAME (Lebanon).

AGENDA ITEM 1

Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Lebanon

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (translated from French): I declare open the fourteenth regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

2. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (translated from French): In accordance with rule 64 of the rules of procedure, I invite the representatives to stand and to observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The representatives stood in silence.

Address by Mr. Rachid Karamé, Temporary President, Prime Minister of Lebanon and Chairman of the delegation of Lebanon

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (translated from French): Your rules of procedure give the Chairman of the Lebanese delegation the honour of presiding today at the inaugural meeting of this session.

4. In the face of the serious problems troubling and dividing the world, and at the great international meetings where, as we hope, efforts are being made to find equitable and lasting solutions to these problems, the smaller countries, aware of the urgent need for effective understanding, and mindful of their responsibilities, wish to make the greatest possible contribution to

the United Nations in its efforts to establish peace on a solid basis.

5. This is indeed our Organization's real mission, its essential task, at this critical period, and during the past year the United Nations has worked unremittingly to accomplish it.

6. Inspired by the principles which inspire the United Nations, peaceful solutions are constantly being found for thorny problems which constituted a serious threat to world peace.

7. In this connexion, I should like to recall the happy outcome of the Cyprus question. After years of bloody strife, the conflicting parties found a formula for a pacific settlement which has satisfied the legitimate aspirations of all sections of that island's population and will henceforth ensure them a calm and free life in the full exercise of their sovereignty.

8. This solution will surely strengthen peace in this area of the Near East, and at a subsequent stage we shall no doubt have the pleasure of seating among us the representatives of the independent republic of Cyprus.

9. I should also like to stress the progress made in another field, that of disarmament. I am thinking, above all, of the Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests; we hope most ardently that its work will have positive results.

10. I should particularly like to draw attention to work accomplished by the United Nations in the economic and social fields since the beginning of the Assembly's thirteenth session, and to recall briefly the technical assistance given in the economic field and in that of public administration. The salient achievement has been the establishment, at the instance of the smaller countries, of the Special Fund, an organization promising much for the future progress of under-developed areas.

11. Vast areas of the world and the majority of its population still live in the direst poverty, and the United Nations must make every effort to improve their standard of living.

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After the close of the session, collated sets of fascicles will be placed on sale for the general public.

12. The World Refugee Year also deserves our attention. Lebanon, which took in so many refugees that they now compose one-tenth of its population, quite naturally recognizes, as do the other Arab countries, the importance of sustained international action to provide for the needs of these human beings who have been deprived of their rights and brutally evicted from their homes. Lebanon can only urge that United Nations aid to them be maintained and even augmented.

13. In this field, as in others, our Organization cannot evade its responsibilities without failing in its fundamental mission.

14. I should also like to express the great pleasure we had some months ago in welcoming among us the young Republic of Guinea, the most recent among many African countries to achieve in turn their independence and sovereignty.

15. On behalf of us all, I cannot fail to pay a warm tribute to the devoted work of our Secretary-General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, and to wish him continued success in performing the high mission with which he has been entrusted.

16. I believe I shall be speaking for you all if I conclude these brief remarks by emphasizing the hope which today's meeting inspires in all nations of the world.

17. May good will, courage and realism help us to overcome all difficulties and open at last an era of just peace, the maintenance of which is the reason for the existence of the United Nations.

AGENDA ITEM 3

Credentials of representatives to the fourteenth session of the General Assembly

(a) Appointment of the Credentials Committee

18. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (translated from French): In accordance with rule 28 of the rules of procedure, the Assembly should, at the beginning of each session, appoint a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members proposed by the President.

19. Accordingly, I should like to suggest that the Credentials Committee for the fourteenth session should be composed of the following States: Afghanistan, Australia, Ecuador, France, Honduras, Italy, Pakistan, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.

20. If there is no objection to this proposal, I shall consider it as having been approved by the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 4

Election of the President

21. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (translated from French): I now invite the Assembly to proceed to the election of the President of the fourteenth regular session of the General Assembly. The election will be held by secret ballot in accordance with rules 31 and 94 of the rules of procedure.

At the invitation of the Temporary President, Mr. Auguste (Haiti) and Mr. Lapijan (Indonesia) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

<i>Number of ballot papers:</i>	82
<i>Invalid ballots:</i>	1
<i>Number of valid ballots:</i>	81
<i>Abstentions:</i>	0
<i>Number of members voting:</i>	81
<i>Required majority:</i>	41
<i>Number of votes obtained:</i>	
Mr. Víctor A. Belaúnde (Peru)	81

Having obtained the required majority, Mr. Víctor A. Belaúnde (Peru) was elected President of the fourteenth session of the General Assembly, and took the Chair.

Address by Mr. Víctor A. Belaúnde, President of the fourteenth session of the General Assembly

22. The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I should like first to express my deep and heartfelt gratitude to the Assembly for having elected me its President. I regard the high honour you have so kindly bestowed upon me as a tribute to my country, in recognition of its centuries-old tradition of law. In the Empire of the Incas, more than in any other empire of ancient times, human well-being was a matter of deep concern. In colonial times Peru shared with Mexico the cultural leadership of the vast Empire and it was in Peru that the monumental Laws of the Indies were compiled. After achieving independence, Peru took the initiative in convening the Congresses of Lima, which, with the Congress of Panama, were the precursors of continental solidarity.

23. I like also to think that my election is a recognition of my country's dedication to the cause of the United Nations and whole-hearted desire to serve it.

24. This year representatives of Peru and Mexico have been elected to two extremely important offices. We are proud that the United Nations entrusts such high responsibilities to the American nations. We are linked to Europe by our common culture and to the countries of Africa, Asia and Oceania by prehistoric ties of which little is known and, in modern times, by our common devotion to the cause of freedom. America is and will always remain the living link between the nations of the world. Simon Bolívar said on 6 August 1824, the day of the battle of Junín, "The freedom of the New World is the hope of the universe". And sixty years later a great Argentinian, Roque Sáenz Peña, coined the immortal phrase: "America for mankind". America's destiny is clearly world-wide. The Assembly may be sure that we shall do our utmost to be worthy of that destiny by working to achieve deeper international solidarity.

25. I am encouraged by the thought that I shall have the unfailing inspiration, support and co-operation of my colleagues. It fell to me to take part in our work during the historic meetings at San Francisco, the days of trial at Lake Success, the difficult days in Paris, and the hours of struggle and hope in New York. The friendships and personal contacts I have made have been the richest reward of my years in the United Nations and I am certain that in the face of future difficulties old ties will be strengthened to unite us ever more closely in our common task.

26. I shall also rely on the wisdom and co-operation of our excellent Secretary-General and his able colleagues. The Secretary-General, I most solemnly affirm, has played a decisive part in recent years in strengthening the United Nations.

27. I wish to take this opportunity to express once again my unshakeable faith in the United Nations. During the thirteen years I have been associated with it I have experienced at first hand its moments of anxiety, crisis, danger and—why not say this too?—of cautious optimism.

28. The United Nations has dealt with the gravest problems and day by day has been asserting its moral authority and prestige throughout the world. No one can deny that today the fundamental provisions of the Charter are being complied with. We have proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; we have established peace in Korea; sound solutions have been found for problems that seemed insoluble; an effective international emergency force has been brought into being which is respected, not for its material power, but because it embodies the authority of the United Nations. After many years of effort, thanks to a display of mutual understanding that does credit to all, we are achieving, in the spirit of the Charter, the universality which is essential if the Charter's purposes are to be fulfilled. The Assembly must speak in the name of all mankind.

29. The road ahead is, however, a long one. Justice and peace, like culture and freedom, are not merely values which tradition bequeaths to us. They are a prize that must be won anew by each generation through its own efforts. Our generation today is in a better position to carry out the mission which destiny has entrusted to it and to prepare the way for the new generation whose duty it will be to surpass us.

30. Our fathers lived in a world in which it was possible to choose between the advantages of peace and the dangers and privations of war. In our world, the world of the atomic age, the alternative is different: peace will ensure life and progress for all peoples, but war will bring death and universal destruction. That alternative dominates contemporary thought and is a spiritual weapon of incalculable strength in the hands of this Assembly. Considering the obstacles which the United Nations has been able to surmount, we may surely be confident that, under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Security Council and with the resolute co-operation of the great Powers, progress will be made towards a final solution of the great problem of disarmament.

31. Such a solution will be urged here by the anguished and solemn voice of the conscience of all mankind. We cannot resign ourselves to the prospect that the conquest of outer space may coincide with the annihilation of life on earth. After the catastrophe, our world, which was created that life might flourish, that work might be productive and that love might prevail, would revolve cold and dead in the eternal silence of infinite space.

32. I pray that Divine Providence may inspire our deliberations, unite our efforts and crown our labours with success.

33. In centuries gone by, the arrogant will to power prevailed. Today mankind not only yearns to, but must, live in a world ruled by justice.

34. May God will that this Assembly should go down in history as the Assembly of peace.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.

