

United Nations
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records



1764th
PLENARY MEETING

Wednesday, 24 September 1969,
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

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President: Miss Angie E. BROOKS (Liberia).

*Address by Sir Seretse Khama, President
of the Republic of Botswana*

1. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour of welcoming His Excellency Sir Seretse Khama, President of the Republic of Botswana, and I invite him to address the General Assembly.

2. Sir Seretse KHAMA: Madam President, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your election to this important office. I feel confident that with your long experience of the work of this Organization, you will steer this session through to a successful close.

3. I should also like to express my sorrow at the untimely death of the President of the twenty-third session of this Assembly, Mr. Emilio Arenales, whose short term of office will be long remembered for the courage he displayed.

4. I should like, on behalf of my people, to pay tribute to the Secretary-General's work for world peace and his untiring devotion to the service of humanity.

5. Botswana is within 2 week of celebrating the third anniversary of its independence. My country is thus a comparative newcomer to the United Nations, and this is my first opportunity of addressing this General Assembly. Botswana is a small country in terms of population if not in area. As a small and poor country, we set a particularly high value on our membership of the United Nations and those of its specialized agencies which our budgetary restrictions have permitted us to join. I should like to emphasize the particular importance of the United Nations for States like Botswana which, because of development priorities, are obliged to restrict their conventional bilateral contacts and keep their overseas missions to a bare minimum. Here in New York we can make contacts which would otherwise be difficult to achieve. The United Nations offers many advantages to a State like ours. The United Nations enables

us to keep in touch with international opinion and to put our views before the world.

6. The United Nations is also regarded by small States as an institution which protects their special interests. Together with its specialized agencies, it is of course also a major source of development finance and technical assistance from which Botswana benefits greatly. I am conscious of Botswana's indebtedness to the United Nations, and I am honoured to have the privilege of putting some of Botswana's problems before the world through the Members of this Assembly.

7. I am aware that there are many international problems which will come before this Assembly during its twenty-fourth session. Botswana shares the general alarm at the prolonged impasse in the Middle East and the dangerous military escalation that has marked the last months. We are looking, like most Member States, with anxious eyes towards Viet-Nam and praying that this tragic and long-drawn-out conflict will soon be resolved at the conference table.

8. We are watching the civil conflict in Nigeria with even greater anxiety, since our own continent is directly affected. Botswana sympathizes fully with those Member States both inside and outside Africa which want to see the fighting and the human suffering it involves brought to an end, and the work of reconstruction and reconciliation begun. Yet we believe the foundation for the effective resolution of this dispute in the best interests of all the peoples of Nigeria remains the work of the Organization of African Unity. Our efforts earlier this month at Addis Ababa may not have been crowned with immediate success. But there is no magic key that will unlock this complex problem in which so many conflicting interests, including interests outside Africa, are involved. If the United Nations has a contribution to make to the resolution of this conflict it lies in restraining the external Powers involved from taking actions and adopting policies which could further delay a negotiated settlement. Botswana favours any initiative acceptable to both principal parties involved which will lead to a peaceful and lasting settlement and which will not threaten the stability and unity of other African States.

9. Because Botswana is part of a region which faces the threat of violent conflict, I want on behalf of my people to lay particular emphasis on the necessity of finding peaceful solutions to our problems. Southern Africa lives with the danger of violent racial conflict. I want this afternoon to discuss the threat of racialism as it affects southern Africa, and in particular my own country, Botswana; and, within southern Africa, I should like in particular to draw this Assembly's attention to a problem which I fear some

powerful countries would prefer to forget. I refer to the problem of Rhodesia, which the people of Botswana are in no position to forget.

10. May I remind you of our geographical position and our historical circumstances? Botswana is almost entirely encircled by minority-ruled territories. We have a long and indefensible border with Rhodesia, and a long border with Namibia and with South Africa itself. The only railway running between Rhodesia and South Africa passes through Botswana. Not only is this railway operated by Rhodesia Railways, but it is vital to both Rhodesian and South African interests. It is also vital to Botswana because it provides our only outlet to the sea and to export markets overseas. Through this route must come the capital goods necessary for our development. Unlike some other States in southern and central Africa we have no practical alternative outlet.

11. We are for historical reasons part of a customs area dominated by the industrial might of the Republic of South Africa. We share the monetary system of the Republic of South Africa. Our trade and transport systems are inextricably interlocked with those of South Africa. So meagre are our own employment prospects that we have for many years been obliged to permit some of our young men to go and work in the mines of South Africa. In the immediately foreseeable future we can find no way of providing alternative employment for all these men, nor can we afford to dispense with their earnings.

12. Botswana thus faces unusual and onerous handicaps, but we also face an unusual and a challenging opportunity. I should like to describe our position because I believe it will give Member States a useful insight into the problem the world faces when considering the question of minority rule in southern Africa. I should like to explain how Botswana is responding, not only to the challenge of under-development, but also to the challenge posed by our powerful neighbours whose way of life is not our way of life and whose values in most respects are the reverse of our own.

13. When my Government took office in 1965 we were faced with a problem of under-development of classic proportions. Such development programmes as were initiated under colonialism no more than scratched the surface of our problems. Most important of all, in contrast to other British colonies, there had been practically no attempt to train Botswanans to run their own country. Not one single secondary school was completed by the colonial Government during the whole seventy years of British rule. There was little provision for vocational training even at the lowest levels. The roads, water supplies, power supplies on which industrial development is based were totally inadequate. We were in the humiliating position of not knowing many of the basic facts about Botswana on which development plans could be based. We are still learning about the resources of our own country.

14. But we are now tackling these problems, and if I appear to boast of the progress we have made, it is to praise the efforts of my people rather than to vaunt the achievements of my colleagues in Government and myself. We have received generous budgetary assistance and devel-

opment aid from the British, who have done much to make up for their earlier neglect. We have received aid from other Member States and from the agencies of the United Nations itself. What is more, all this aid has come without political strings. There has been no attempt to use aid to change our domestic or external policies. We will reject all donors who do not show the same forbearance.

15. Nevertheless, we depend on foreign aid for more than half our revenue. On what then is based our claim to be an independent State? Can we aspire to help in developing the prosperity, unity and freedom of our continent and hence play a constructive role in world affairs? I believe we can. Because, although we are for the moment dependent on foreign aid, we are also self-reliant. Because my people are mobilizing their own resources, human, physical and financial, we can accept overseas assistance without loss of pride. Furthermore, we believe that we have succeeded in attracting the major part of this aid because we are making great efforts ourselves, and because it is recognized that we have something to offer towards a solution of one of the world's most pressing problems, the future of minority-ruled southern Africa.

16. Botswana is now on the threshold of new and major development. Since independence it has been discovered that we are blessed with mineral resources, which, if exploited, offer us a prospect of financial self-sufficiency during the 1970s and in the long run the hope of healthy balanced development in all sectors. My Government is in the midst of negotiating international loan finance for those developments. It is a matter of the greatest concern for us that this money is raised from the right source on the right terms. For despite all the handicaps of geography, climate and the legacy of colonial neglect, the people of Botswana have now embarked on the struggle to reduce our dependence on neighbouring minority-ruled territories. Only in this way can the people of Botswana reap in full the benefits of independence. We feel that only in this way can the fruits of our labours be fully enjoyed. We did not win our independence from the British to lose it to a new form of colonialism from any source whatever.

17. We accept that we are part of southern Africa and that the harsh facts of history and geography cannot be obliterated overnight. We recognize that in our present circumstances we must continue to remain members of the South African customs union and the South African monetary area. We have noted South Africa's assurances of friendly intentions towards Botswana and other independent States. We have noted South Africa's offers to assist other African States in their development. Botswana together with Lesotho and Swaziland are in the process of concluding lengthy negotiations with South Africa on a new customs agreement. In these negotiations we have not been seeking aid. Our objective has been to secure an equitable distribution of the revenues of the customs area, and the opportunity of protecting our infant industries while retaining access to the South African market. We welcome private investment in Botswana from any source which seeks to build in partnership with our people and not to drain us of our resources with little or no return to the country. We are confident that we can coexist with the Republic of South Africa without sacrificing our national interest or our fundamental principles.

18. We have made no secret of our detestation of *apartheid*. Although for obvious reasons we are obliged to interpret strictly the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other States, we have not hidden our views. Our voice has been heard in this Assembly and in other international forums in favour of universal self-determination, in support of peace, ¹ solutions of international conflicts throughout the world, and in pleas for a realistic appraisal of what can be achieved by this Organization.

19. Living, as we do, face to face with the realities of *apartheid*, we have little sympathy for token demonstrations and empty gestures. Yet we have unequivocally condemned the theory and practice of *apartheid*, and we deplore its intensification and, particularly, the extension of the full apparatus of *apartheid* to the international trust territory of Namibia. Nevertheless, for obvious reasons, Botswana must maintain diplomatic contacts with South Africa. For equally obvious reasons, we decline to consider an exchange of diplomatic representatives until South Africa can fully guarantee that Botswana's representatives will, in all respects, at all times and in all places, be treated in the same way as diplomats from other countries.

20. We have expressed our opposition to Portugal's unyielding refusal to permit any progress towards self-determination in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau). We have declined to entertain diplomatic relations with the Portuguese in the absence of any commitment on the part of Portugal to allow the indigenous people of their so-called overseas provinces to proceed to independence. Our criticism of Portugal's policies is not based on an argument about the timing of a programme for progress towards self-determination but on the point-blank refusal of the Portuguese Government to concede that those Territories can ever choose to move towards independence.

21. I should like to draw attention at this point to the firmly-stated preference, endorsed by all independent African States in the Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa¹ for the achievement of self-determination through negotiation. It was thus that Botswana achieved majority rule, and eventually independence; and that has been the path which most African States have been fortunate enough to tread. It is the wish of the Government and people of Botswana that the indigenous populations of the neighbouring Territories should eventually share this experience.

22. One consequence of our geographical position is that Botswana has provided a refuge for many who, for one reason or another, have found themselves unable to continue to live in neighbouring minority-ruled Territories. Botswana recognizes a responsibility to those victims of political circumstance and we are trying to discharge that responsibility as well as our resources permit. Refugees come to Botswana from Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia, South West Africa and South Africa. At present there are more than 4,000 recognized refugees in Botswana. In January 1969 my Government acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and also to the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

23. Botswana grants asylum and assistance to genuine political refugees who seek our aid. The financial burden of

doing so would have been heavy were it not for the generous assistance we have received from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, the World Council of Churches, and other international bodies. On our part, we have granted refugees recognition of their status; we have allowed them to settle in various parts of our country and find jobs or open their own businesses; and, where possible, we educate them as well as our limited educational and training facilities permit. Equally important, we issue United Nations travel documents with a return clause to those refugees who wish to travel to other countries where suitable training establishments are able to accept them.

24. The majority of refugees in Botswana have come from Angola. Those people have been settled on a hundred-square-mile farming scheme. Through training in agriculture and fishing they will, we hope, like many other refugees, become integrated with the citizens of Botswana. We have welcomed them to our country; they can make their home with us until their own countries achieve Governments acceptable to them.

25. I have already referred to certain constraints which Botswana faces when considering its position on southern African issues. I have also mentioned certain principles which guide us. Our constant concern is to respect those constraints while not violating the principles.

26. The future of Rhodesia is of the utmost possible concern to Botswana. I have referred to our long and indefensible common frontier. My Government, from the outset, has condemned the unilateral declaration of independence. We are committed to support the principle of no independence before majority rule. For that reason we joined the majority of Commonwealth countries in rejecting the *Fearless* proposals.² We condemned, in no uncertain terms, the illegal régime's constitutional proposals which entrench discrimination and separate development and which definitively block the possibility of a peaceful transition to majority rule, for which the 1961 Constitution, at least in theory, provided. We recognize that these proposals, endorsed by an unrepresentative electorate, end the prospect of a peaceful transition to majority rule without some form of external intervention to secure it. These proposals are now being implemented by the Smith régime.

27. I warned the white minority in Rhodesia that by taking this course they were increasing the risk of violent conflict and endangering the stability of the region. Botswana is on record as favouring the reassertion of British rule in Rhodesia. That course is the only one which offers a hope, however faint, of a peaceful transition to majority rule. I recognize that the white minority in Rhodesia, conscious of the injustice it has inflicted, and fearing the justifiable bitterness of the oppressed African population, will feel the need for some guarantee that the transition to democratic non-racial government should be gradual and peaceful.

28. One way in which Britain could restore its authority is by the use of force. But I think that we must now accept,

¹ Adopted by the Fifth Summit Conference of East and Central African States held at Lusaka, Zambia, from 14 to 16 April 1969.

² See *Rhodesia: report on the discussions held on board H.M.S. Fearless*, October 1968 (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Cmnd. 3793).

whether we approve of that decision or not, that Britain is not, under present circumstances, prepared to resort to force. Botswana feels that it follows that alternatives to force must be considered. There comes a point when one policy, having been pushed to its limits, must be accepted as having failed, and must give way to another. It is essential that Britain be held to its legal and moral responsibility to the African majority in Rhodesia. There must be no absolution.

29. This, I have to admit, leaves us with a policy which, as many Member States have argued in past debates, has been far from successful. I refer to mandatory sanctions. Yet for all the frustrations and disappointments to which the tardy application of sanctions has given rise, it remains essential that they be in fact maintained and intensified. We feel that those sanctions serve an important purpose, even if they are not extended to include South Africa. Just as it is clear that neither Britain nor any other country will use military force against the Smith régime, it is clear that an effective boycott of South Africa, on this or any other issue, cannot be achieved. The existing sanctions are thus at the present time all that stand between the rebel régime's success and failure. That being the case, rather than dismissing the sanctions weapon as totally ineffective, it is surely wiser to try and make them as effective as possible.

30. While it is important not to over-estimate the impact of sanctions, it should not be too readily accepted that sanctions have had no effect at all on Rhodesia. From our position we can see some of the effects of sanctions and I can assure this Assembly that they are not negligible.

31. To permit them to be eroded at this point would be unnecessarily to concede defeat. Certain consequences would follow. The way would be opened to diplomatic recognition by Powers which are at the moment hanging back from this step. Rhodesia's links with Portugal and South Africa would be enormously strengthened and the whole minority position in southern Africa would be consolidated. There are, I am convinced, elements both in South Africa and Portugal, and in the world at large, which have serious doubts about the viability of Rhodesia as a white-ruled State, given its rapidly expanding African population and its handicapped economy. Lifting sanctions would liberate the fettered Rhodesia economy and serve to restore the confidence of such observers in the viability of continued white supremacy.

32. For this reason Botswana appeals to all Member States to make what contribution they can to rendering sanctions more effective; and here I should like to pay tribute to the work of the United Nations supervisory committee³ and of the Sanctions Committee. On their efforts and those of the Member States of this Organization are pinned the last hopes of preventing the illegal régime from imposing permanently its own version of *apartheid* on the people of Rhodesia, for whose welfare this Organization has assumed a certain degree of responsibility. The present international isolation of the illegal régime and those who support it must be maintained. Our own difficulties in the matter of sanctions are obvious but we are attempting to play our

part within the limitations imposed by our frail economy and our landlocked position. We have prevented Rhodesia from using its railway to import arms and military supplies. Botswana's airline has ceased to fly into Rhodesia. We are preparing to do more. Botswana has committed itself to diverting long-standing trade with Rhodesia, despite the very considerable economic and administrative problems which such a course presents. Contingency planning is well advanced.

33. Our contribution to this struggle can only be a small one for we are not a rich and powerful country. But we are hopeful that it will help to check the erosion of sanctions. There are other Powers which live less closely with this problem than ourselves but which can make a greater contribution towards solving it.

34. May I conclude on a more general point, but one which also relates to southern Africa? I have referred to Botswana's prospects of mineral development and to our hopes that this will permit us to dispense with budgetary aid and to develop a balanced and prosperous economy and a healthy non-racial democracy. We hope this for the sake of our people, but we also look forward to it with all the more eager anticipation because we recognize that it will permit us to make a greater contribution to solving the problems of our region. By this I do not mean that we will depart from our principle of non-interference in the affairs of neighbouring sovereign States. But Botswana as a thriving majority-ruled State on the borders of South Africa and Namibia will present an effective and serious challenge to the credibility of South Africa's racial policies and in particular its policy of developing so-called Bantu homelands and its stated goal of eventual independence for these Bantustans. It could force them to abandon the policy or attempt to make it a more immediate reality and even face the prospect of surrendering sovereignty to genuinely independent States. Either reaction would have important political consequences. A prosperous non-racial democracy in Botswana immediately adjacent to South Africa and Namibia will add to the problems which South Africa is already facing in reconciling its irrational racial policies with its desire for economic growth.

35. If Botswana is to sustain this role, which you will recognize is not an easy one, its independence must be preserved. This means that we must ensure that we are insulated from any instability which the policies of neighbouring white-ruled countries may provoke. It also means that Botswana needs the support and sympathy of friendly nations. We recognize that our independence ultimately depends on the durability of our political institutions and on our success in achieving economic development. But our independence is also buttressed by our external relations. We have friends in all continents. Our membership of the United Nations is in itself a source of strength. I should like to appeal to all Member States in their deliberations on the question of southern Africa to recall not only Botswana's particular problems but also our potential contribution to achieving change by peaceful means.

36. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank H.E. the President of the Republic of Botswana for the important address he has just made.

³ Committee established in pursuance of Security Council resolution 253 (1968).

AGENDA ITEM 9**General debate (continued)**

37. Mr. GRIMES (Liberia): I offer you, Madam President, the profound and sincere felicitations of the Liberian delegation and myself on your election to the eminent position of President of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Your continuous association with the Assembly, your active and appreciable participation in the affairs of the United Nations over a remarkably extended period of time, as well as your dedication to duty, provide us with the pleasure of having as our presiding officer one who is not only familiar with international affairs but also experienced in the operations of our esteemed Organization.

38. Many of us remember the astuteness, sagacity, understanding, sympathy and penetrating intellect which characterized the presidency of Mrs. Pandit of India, who led the eighth session of the General Assembly. Today, we are fortunate in having another woman, equally capable, whose warmth, perspicacity and prudence will be tested by the existing and pressing problems of a world fraught with misgivings, suspicions and apprehension.

39. You also have a special place among Africans as the first woman of this advancing continent to occupy this position. As an African, I salute you.

40. I am more particularly happy as the head of the Liberian delegation to share the pride of your fellow citizens on your election to this prominent position. Your successful election is a manifestation of the esteem in which the Members of this Assembly hold our continent in general, and our country, one of the founding Members of the United Nations, in particular. You have shown distinction in the Foreign Service of Liberia and we are confident that the capacity and ability you have so pleasingly and satisfactorily demonstrated in international affairs will enable you to handle with aplomb the complex matters that will come before you.

41. The discretion you exercise, the decisions you make, the footprints you leave during your term, will, we hope, influence our course towards international peace and security. In the words of Goethe, I say to you:

*Choose well, your choice is
Brief and yet endless;*

*...
Here eyes do regard you,
Work and despair not.*

42. I now take the opportunity of recording a well-deserved and justified tribute to your deceased and outstanding predecessor, H.E. Emilio Arenales of Guatemala, who so ably and soberly presided over the twenty-third session of the General Assembly, a performance which readily and easily won for him the praise and esteem so willingly accorded by all of us. His death is a loss not only to his great country but also to the Organization and to all of us who admired and respected him.

43. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, is as usual conscientious, imaginative and re-

sourceful. His constant search for solutions to world problems and his devotion to the cause of international peace and security are the greatest emblems of his efforts and contributions in a world of contradictions, inequalities, misunderstanding and strife. In wishing him success in his difficult tasks, I confirm to him the continuing support of the Government of Liberia and our best wishes that his relentless efforts will be crowned with abundant success.

44. The twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly convenes at a time when the world is still exhilarated at man's conquest in the realm of the celestial bodies—the lunar landing. The recent lunar expedition is incontestably one of man's greatest achievements. It opens up a new vista in the field of science and a broad avenue in the development of technology; but it also imposes upon us an awesome responsibility for the welfare and interest of mankind.

45. One of the hallmarks of such an outstanding achievement is the interest which it should generate in the new and challenging situations involving several political, social and economic programmes, approaches, disciplines and reactions. These situations occur in varying degrees in every nook and cranny of the earth. The individual local condition will, of course, determine the extent and magnitude of the predicament but the general trend will be the same. The movement is one in time and the effects cannot be breached by any conventional methods.

46. Already, the world has been advised to expect more lunar landings that are now planned and which may be launched by more than one country. We must prepare to meet the challenges which consequently must of necessity be presented outside the fields of science and technology.

47. Unfortunately, it does not appear to me that our efforts to secure and maintain international peace have matched our success in technological achievements. I share the view that the wide programmes for celestial conquests, together with the recent laudable achievement, further indicate the greater need for peace in this world and more concern for man's welfare. We cannot afford to shift aimlessly from one crisis to another, merely hoping that it will not result in some disaster. It is both uncomfortable and very dangerous because recurrences of a series of crises of an unbridled nature may eventually place us in the unfortunate position where we may find ourselves unable to prevent a final but disastrous plunge into an abyss which could bring us painful suffering, grim destruction and appalling calamity. The total commitment of the Liberian Government to universal peace, which involves the maintenance of peace both at home and abroad, was, as I stated in my address to the twenty-third session of the Assembly [1698th meeting], proclaimed by President Tubman himself in January 1968.

48. Experience has shown that the obligation to settle international disputes by peaceful means, as laid down in the Charter, is evidently not sufficiently effective to check the present belligerent tendency among States. What seems to be necessary is an open and positive commitment by the United Nations, condemning recourse to war and renouncing it as an instrument of national policy, as was done in

the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928;⁴ and when this is done, we need to adhere strictly to such outlawing of force since it could be one means by which a global war might be averted and mankind saved from annihilation.

49. Our difficulty in our present approach is inherent. It arises from selfish preoccupations and our apparent unwillingness to try to understand and deal with some of the basic problems that increasingly call for fair and just solutions in a world being made smaller and smaller by technological advances.

50. Our efforts should be concentrated on the development of effective measures to reduce present dangers and remove apprehensions. In other words, the world community has the responsibility of developing a new and meaningful approach during this new era in its attempts to ensure peace among men and nations.

51. Another difficulty seems to be based in time. It is one thing to obtain command over the undesirable forces which plague us and to acquire the mastery that command may give us in ordering our fate. It is another thing, however, to consider the question of appropriateness in time. Certainly, we do not have a lifetime in which to enable us to devise methods to accommodate private machinations. It seems to me that the chief obstacle to our success lies not in our capacity and power, but in the selfish positions and methods which have otherwise been assumed and which remain so little changed amid our new and recent accomplishments. It is our human wills that are at fault, not our energy. We shall succeed in matching achievements in the realm of peace and security with technological advancement only if we learn to afford ourselves the opportunity of bringing out the best that lies within us. Improvement and success in our endeavours for peace throughout the world will therefore depend largely upon our genuine willingness and sincere efforts not only to eliminate disorders but also to prevent them.

52. There are several problems in various parts of the world which are dangerous to the cause of world peace.

53. Day after day in the Middle East there are reports of incidents and tensions indicating that the cease-fire is no longer being observed by either side. On 22 November 1967 the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 242 (1967), which provides a reasonable basis for a settlement. It appears that the explosive situation has been complicated by a web of tangled interests, the adjustment of which calls for extraordinary selfless efforts. Great expectations and hopes have rested on the initiatives of the big-four meetings started earlier this year. If a catastrophe is to be avoided, keener attention should be focused on the dangers this problem engenders and we hope that the big four and the parties involved will discharge the heavy responsibility which a peaceful settlement binding on both sides involves. In any case all of us should use our best efforts to assist in bringing peace to that area.

54. Then too there is the problem of divided countries: Viet-Nam, Korea and Germany. In Viet-Nam, the Paris talks

have not yet brought the result for which the world had hoped. In Korea and Germany tension seems to fluctuate. I think we should accept the fact that a particular kind of government or ideology should not be imposed on a people, since that will not provide the security which seems to be the basis for peace. The will of the people should be allowed to be exercised in a situation free from the threat of force and when exercised it should be respected by all.

55. The tragic civil war in Nigeria continues, but the Organization of African Unity is making every effort to bring about a peaceful settlement through negotiations.

56. The General Assembly, during its fifteenth session, in resolution 1514 (XV) declared, *inter alia*, that all peoples under alien subjugation have a right to self-determination and that, in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories or all other Territories which have not attained independence, all powers must be transferred to the peoples of those Territories without any conditions or reservations or pretexts, in accordance with their freely expressed will and desire.

57. Unfortunately and regrettably, those aims have not been fully implemented. My delegation finds itself utterly bewildered by the continued dominance of colonial Powers in the dependent Territories in the face of such unambiguous principles universally accepted. The popular aspirations of peoples in some areas are being systematically denied. Some colonial Powers show no respect for the principles of the Charter and the principles enunciated by the Organization and ignore the expressed will of all its Members as embodied in the resolutions of the Assembly. When that happens, the image of the United Nations is impaired, its prestige drops, and support among the world's peoples dwindles. More importantly, since a people determined to enjoy the benefits of freedom cannot be prevented from doing so eventually even under the worst forms of oppression, violence is inevitably produced, resulting in conflicts which constitute threats to international peace—threats which might evaporate if positive action were taken to accord the peoples of dependent Territories the right to determine their own destiny.

58. Perhaps one of the oldest problems with which this Organization has had to grapple since its creation has been the problem in southern Africa. Coextensive with the problem itself has been the acerbity with which the Government of South Africa has deliberately and openly ignored the principles of the United Nations. Within its own borders, the attitude of South Africa is very disturbing. That Government, by its adherence to the invidious policy of *apartheid*, baseless in fact and morally monstrous, has violated the laws of humanity and the resolutions of this Organization. By its abominable racial policy designed systematically to deny the majority of the population basic and fundamental rights, the South African Government lays the snare for racial conflict.

59. The effects of this problem, one of the most difficult with which this Organization has had to contend, continue to cast an ominous shadow over the efforts of the United Nations; and it seems that the success or failure of these efforts may in the end turn upon whether the black African population in South Africa can survive its ordeal and upon

⁴ General Treaty for Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy signed in Paris on 27 August 1928 (League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV, 1929, No. 2137, p. 57).

whether we shall accept the ultimate power and value of the Organization to be measured by the whims of the South African Government.

60. However, as if this aberration were not enough, the South African Government is applying this obnoxious policy to Namibia, a Mandated Territory, which is now a United Nations responsibility as a result of the revocation of the Mandate. Yet the fate of Namibia hangs in the balance, the Namibians themselves being helpless against the political formula with which they are subjugated by South Africa. The repudiation by South Africa of the United Nations Commission for Namibia and the illegal condemnation of Namibian freedom fighters, at almost regular intervals, in order to establish sovereignty in Namibia amount to an obsession on the part of the South African Government. These pernicious practices, haphazard as they may be in origin, and even devoid of legality, undermine the United Nations, which the majority of the peoples of the world regard as the only hope for a new world order where man's inhumanity to man will cease and true brotherhood prevail. The persistent disregard by the South African Government for the principles and ideals of the United Nations is incongruous and in fact incompatible with its membership of the Organization. This fact, unpleasant though it may be to some, must be squarely faced by us.

61. A main objective of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security. While much of this responsibility rests with the collective and concerted determination of the membership of the Organization, individual Members are no less responsible for refraining from indulging in acts blatantly designed to challenge the United Nations. There are extensive records on the question of South Africa's questionable attitude in this respect. Admittedly, such records, considered within the framework of the Organization and its activities, are of partial importance when they relate to the disappointing attitude of only a single Member, but they are nevertheless fundamental.

62. Accordingly, it is indeed unfortunate that the Organization has been unable, in spite of the expressions of condemnation so frequently voiced here, to take actions required to reverse the trend established by South Africa in Namibia. We cannot expect to construct world order and peace in the face of such undesirable behaviour.

63. Recent radical developments in the Rhodesian situation emphasize contradictions that seem to complicate the situation and test the ability of this Organization to deal with such problems. It appears that the price the United Nations has had to pay in respect of the continued power of the illegal Ian Smith régime and its declaration of a lawless political partition is indeed a painful one. The Smith régime should not be allowed to enforce its rebellious will arbitrarily upon the innocent people of Zimbabwe.

64. In spite of General Assembly resolution 2379 (XXIII) of 25 October 1968, calling on the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland not to grant independence to Southern Rhodesia unless that independence was preceded by the establishment of a

government based on free elections by universal adult suffrage and majority rule, the Southern Rhodesian rebels have been permitted to set up an illegal republic. This mockery of law and justice is something concrete which calls for proper action by the United Kingdom. Its negligence or refusal to give effect to the decisions of this Assembly is indeed regrettable, to say the least. On the other hand, the so-called referendum staged by the illegal régime by which it claims majority support for declaring itself a republic, has probably interjected into the illegal process the fear of displeasure or the hope of favour in respect of those who could have made their will felt in an act which not only corrupted the event but also compounded the illegal acts of the rebels. It is difficult for the United Kingdom to excuse itself of responsibility for the consequences of the acts of the Smith régime. It indeed appears to be an anomaly to regard the one-time apparently pitilessly and consistently democratic Kingdom of Great Britain sitting by and permitting a flouting of its political system by a handful of rebels. The history of that major country is irreconcilable and curiously contrasted with its tentative and at times almost apologetic approaches to the Rhodesian problem.

65. Ian Smith seems successfully to have disregarded even the decisions of the Security Council. That has been made possible because of the acts of some big Powers designed to beguile this Organization and also because of South Africa and Portugal, which have not abided by the decisions of the Security Council concerning sanctions. If this Organization is to perpetuate itself effectively, there appears to be a desperate need for some of its Members to re-evaluate their attitudes and responsibilities regarding the United Nations, its purposes and its expectations.

66. The result of the perennial adjuration to the Portuguese Government to revise its attitude and observe the resolution calling for the granting to the inhabitants of its Territories the right to self-determination is frustration. Repression and oppression constitute the mark of that Government in its dependent Territories. Contempt alone has been its reaction to international public opinion and the commands of this Organization.

67. Let me recall a warning in my statement to the twenty-third session of the General Assembly:

"...it is in Portugal's own interest to formulate new policies which will enable the peoples in the territories under its domination to make a free choice of the future direction they desire to pursue. It will sooner or later be forced to do this, even if it refuses now, by historical events which it cannot control" [1698th meeting, para. 59].

68. In the Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa adopted by the Fifth Summit Conference of East and Central African States on 16 April 1969, it was asserted that the world has a responsibility to take action against South Africa in defence of humanity. That Manifesto was adopted at the sixth session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity.⁵ But expediency seems to be dictating the diffident, timid and

⁵ Held at Addis Ababa from 6 to 9 September 1969.

faint-hearted policy of the permanent members of the Security Council.

69. It is certainly not an exaggeration to say that the Organization has not been able to get hold of the whole problem of southern Africa. The world reserves of capacity to control the atrocious suppression of human rights in African Territories under Portuguese domination, Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa are considerable. The failure to exert appropriate pressures on the authorities there have resulted from the imbalance of often conflicting interests, confused aspirations and misdirected tendencies. Perhaps it is precisely in that direction that the Organization will have to turn in order to be able to ensure the effectiveness of its majority decisions. It is necessary that Members rededicate themselves to giving their complete and unqualified support to its work, to assuring unequivocal and earnest implementation of its decisions, and to evidencing a positive reaction that the Organization must concentrate if it is to meet the demands of the community of nations.

70. This growing need for general progress in the work of the Organization also applies to the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. Disarmament is one of the crucial issues in the world. Yet there has been no real progress towards disarmament and I wonder whether we are not backsliding. Armaments are increasing and chemical and bacteriological weapons are being added to the mounting stocks.

71. We must be aware that we must earnestly seek solutions to the many problems which create tensions, especially since they are causes for armament. We must remove apprehensions and suspicions and create conditions of mutual respect and mutual confidence so as to maintain international peace and security. Regrettably, expectations have been disappointed.

72. On the matter of disarmament my delegation desires to endorse the proposal of the Secretary-General in the introduction to his annual report for a Disarmament Decade in the 1970s [*A/7601/Add.1, paras. 40-43*].

73. The Committee organized on the initiative of the former Foreign Minister of the Republic of Ireland [*resolution 2006 (XIX)*]⁶ has not yet been successful in recommending an acceptable formula for the proper financing of peace-keeping operations. That is indeed regrettable because peace-keeping is an important function of our Organization and should not be dependent on *ad hoc* financing solutions.

74. A similar disappointment applies to the question of the sea-bed, the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Realizing the importance of securing peace in that unexplored area of the globe, the General Assembly appointed a special committee⁷ to study the elaboration of legal principles and norms which would promote co-operation in the area. A satisfactory result has not yet been reached in that field.

75. Scientific and technological advancements are well ahead of provisions to avoid and prevent in the area threats

to, or violations of, international peace and security. The hope had not been spared for positive recommendations to the Assembly by the special committee. During the meeting of the Committee, the Liberian representative stressed the urgent need to provide for a régime to regulate activities in the area in order to avoid possible conflicts, but he observed the over-cautious attitude assumed by some members.

76. While it would be a mistake to assume that technological changes, even when revolutionary, inevitably presuppose new legal adaptations, in the last century they created a wholly new social structure out of which new relations became imperative—just as in the realm of outer space today, technological progress has demanded the creation of new relations. Knowledge of the sea-bed, unlike knowledge of outer space, is more easily accessible on account of the sea-bed's proximity, and therefore the situation is more likely to produce friction if preventive measures are not urgently provided.

77. I submit that the solution of this problem is not as easy as it may seem, and I agree that at the moment the outlook is not promising. It is worth emphasizing that we shall not succeed by any attempt to put new wine in old barrels. The solution will have to be new and ingeniously devised to accommodate all the interests of mankind as a whole, relating to the entire marine environment.

78. The economic situation in the world is bleak and disheartening. The First United Nations Development Decade has been a failure. On the pronouncement by the Assembly of the Second United Nations Development Decade [*see resolution 2411 (XXIII)*], pursuant to a recommendation by the Trade and Development Board,⁸ common hopes and common aspirations were high. Accordingly, the Group of Seventy-Seven convened a meeting of the Inter-Governmental Group of UNCTAD early this year,⁹ but the results were frustrating on account of the new, noticeable trend of the developed countries to reduce aid to developing countries. Such an attitude creates an extremely delicate situation. We were flooded with concepts such as "normalization and expansion of trade", "overlapping activities" and "economic independence" as though they had some definite content in a vacuum. Such generalities, however well meant, will not serve. Here lies the substance of the failure, the disappointment and, of course, the fear of the developing nations.

79. In recent years the part played by the developed countries has been recognized as important, if not indispensable, in world economic reconstruction, and it must not be allowed to drift away. An important element in this exercise is that the flow of assistance is a two-way carriage system; it provides advantages not only at its destination but also at its source and, measured over a long period of time, suitable recommendations must be devised for its continuance and improvement.

80. I am convinced that general economic improvement and stability are necessary to ensure international peace and security. The basis of that conviction lies in the fact that

⁶ Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations.

⁷ Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction.

⁸ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 14, part II, annex I, resolution 47 (VII).*

⁹ Held at Geneva from 23 to 30 January 1969.

today the world of nations seems to be characterized by an unnatural and systematic economic disparity. I have always believed in the adage that no chain is stronger than its weakest link. The duty of the strong is, accordingly, clear and inevitable and, if performed, will be a basis for world stability.

81. The future of all endeavours in this field will depend in great measure upon the willingness of the economically strong to succour the weak, at least to a position of strength. If later generations of the developing nations are to acquire their deserved place among the developed nations of the world, an increasing number of States, both at the centre and at the periphery, must accept the challenge and the responsibility to struggle together to attain that goal.

82. In conclusion, our world needs peace in our time. Technology and science continue to influence rapid change and progress. Our task is formidable. Change and progress must be channelled in a manner to ensure that man's condition is bettered, his welfare protected and his general interest sought. At this session, the first after a major conquest in the celestial sphere, it is the hope of my delegation that our attention will be focused on this task and that some decisions will place us on the long but sure road to peace.

83. Mr. ROBINSON (Trinidad and Tobago): Madam President, our Permanent Representative to this Organization has already extended to you, on behalf of the Trinidad and Tobago delegation, our warmest congratulations on your election as President. I whole-heartedly endorse his remarks. Your attainment, by election, to this position has been a notable achievement and I feel sure that your term of office will be a significant one.

84. I wish, on behalf of the Trinidad and Tobago delegation, to pay a tribute to your predecessor, the late Emilio Arenales. My own short, personal acquaintance with him left me with the clear impression of a man of foresight and courage. He had an abiding interest in the unity of the peoples in and around the Caribbean. Together with our colleagues from the delegation of Guatemala we mourn his loss. May those of us who guide the destinies of the peoples of the area be inspired by his vision.

85. Under your guidance, Madam President, and that of our wise and devoted Secretary-General, we approach the twenty-fifth year of the United Nations. We know that the Organization has not lived up to the expectations of its founders. Though it has had some success in the peace-keeping field, old wars continue and new ones continually threaten to erupt. Might is still right and the meek have not inherited the earth. My country, however, does not despair. In spite of its severe limitations, the United Nations alone still offers the hope that sanity and justice can prevail on a world scale. Alone of all organizations, the United Nations offers the hope that the peoples of the world will one day speak with one voice on the important issues affecting them. The United Nations alone sustains the hope of greater collective effort in the next decade to undertake the crushing burdens of development. It is the United Nations that keeps before the eyes and the conscience of the world infringements of fundamental human rights, as well as

violations of human dignity and the equality of peoples. Trinidad and Tobago, therefore, continues to cherish the ideal that the norms of our Charter, as the only basis of an enduring order, will prevail.

86. Twenty-five years ago Members of this Organization undertook to promote international economic and social co-operation in the interest of international stability and harmonious relations between States. They pledged themselves to devote increasing attention to the achievement of higher standards of living and full employment, and generally to search for solutions to international economic and social problems.

87. The United Nations membership has now grown from 51 in 1945 to 126 in 1969. Of these, some 86 countries are recognized to be in varying stages of poverty and under-development.

88. The dramatic achievements in outer space by the United States and the Soviet Union have demonstrated beyond any doubt the unlimited capacity of science and technology to overcome obstacles to human progress. Yet the First United Nations Development Decade is now generally considered to have been a pitiable failure and little if any advance has been recorded in the battle against hunger and poverty.

89. We are now turning our attention to a Second United Nations Development Decade. We do so with the experience of the First Decade behind us and with a much more elaborate process of preparation in train. I emphasize that success in this decade will, nevertheless, depend upon a fully co-operative effort of the whole international community.

90. We hope that this time the commitment to success, particularly on the part of developed countries, will be forthcoming, and the necessary action taken. We apprehend that, with growing ease of travel and communication, the development effort of so many countries and peoples will not stand another decade of frustration without far-reaching effects.

91. Of considerable importance for the Second Development Decade will be the results of the general review of the various United Nations activities in the economic and social fields being undertaken by the Enlarged Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, which is now in the closing stages of its final session before submitting its report.

92. I cannot say, however, that we are as optimistic today as we were at the start of our undertaking. Progress has proceeded at a snail's pace. But the picture has its brighter side. Those of us who have participated in the review now have a much better understanding of the problem, and, in a few instances, even the outlines of possible solutions have begun to emerge. Knowledge of the system has been considerably increased through the excellent *Handbook on Criteria and Procedures for requesting Technical Assistance*¹⁰ and the information produced by the Secretariats on their activities.

93. We welcome the study by the group under Sir Robert Jackson on the capacity of the United Nations system to

¹⁰ United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.23.

deliver a doubled level of technical assistance; and we look forward to the report to the World Bank Group on the needs of the world economy in the long and medium term by Mr. Lester Pearson's team, which we are delighted to see has the services of the distinguished economist from the Caribbean, Sir Arthur Lewis.

94. Trinidad and Tobago places great emphasis on the economic and social activities of the United Nations. We feel that additional resources need to be allocated to this area of activity by the Organization.

95. We are aware of the growing chorus of dissatisfaction among the "major contributors" to the budget over the rise in the levels of United Nations expenditure. We accept without hesitation that waste must be eliminated, that programmes undertaken must be relevant to the needs of Member States, and that cost-effective methods should, as far as practicable, be employed in implementing programmes agreed upon. My delegation feels strongly, however, that once these programmes have been adequately scrutinized, then, if the entire effort is not to be wasted, the resources necessary to implement them should be supplied.

96. As a twin-island State, Trinidad and Tobago has grown increasingly dependent on the resources of the sea. At the twenty-third session of the General Assembly, we fully supported General Assembly resolution 2467 (XXIII), which dealt with the question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and ocean floor and the use of its resources in the interest of the world community. We hold firmly to the view that the area of the sea-bed and ocean floor that lies beyond national jurisdiction is the heritage of all mankind. The untold resources of this area must not be appropriated by a few and a share denied to the many. We adhere firmly to the principle that there should be equitable participation by all States in the administration of the area as well as in the benefits to be derived from the exploitation of its resources. We are convinced that the early establishment of adequate international machinery is the best way of ensuring these objectives. Trinidad and Tobago notes with concern the intransigent position of some States on this question. While we understand the seriousness of the economic and strategic interests involved, we cannot accept that those special interests can or should override the general interest of humanity.

97. Some seventy developing countries represented in this Organization border the oceans. It is not enough for data and the results of scientific research to be made available or accessible. It is not enough for samples taken from areas under our jurisdiction to be lodged in foreign museums and to be merely made accessible to us. Those samples should remain with the coastal State or under international control. Nothing short of full partnership in this enterprise will lead to a satisfactory outcome.

98. While Trinidad and Tobago places great emphasis on the social and economic programmes of the United Nations, we are increasingly concerned over the persistence of destructive attitudes which frustrate co-operative effort and bedevil relationships between peoples.

99. In the past twenty-five years, despite myriads of resolutions and decisions by various organs of the United Nations, the disease of *apartheid* in South Africa has assumed endemic proportions. Moreover, before our very eyes, the process of infestation is taking place in Southern Rhodesia. Time and again we have warned against the inadequacy of the measures proposed or adopted to deal with the growing menace to the peace of Africa and with this intolerable affront to humanity as a whole. Some Member States believe that, by maintaining diplomatic and other relationships with South Africa, they will be in a better position to influence that Government to reform. Let it be remembered that there were persons who entertained the same hopes about Adolf Hitler.

100. We commend the Government of Sweden for the action it has taken in respect of the fictitious trial of a group of Namibians under South Africa's monstrous Terrorism Act, and we feel that the General Assembly should call upon all States that maintain relations with South Africa to make a comprehensive report to the United Nations on the efforts they have made to influence that Government to reform.

101. The Trinidad and Tobago delegation welcomes the latest decision of the Special Committee on the Policies of *Apartheid* of the Government of the Republic of South Africa to undertake a study which would embrace the whole economic life of South Africa [A/7625, paras. 104 and 105]. The study will identify those obstacles which hinder the successful imposition of sanctions against that country. We have already stated, and we reiterate our view, that the illegal seizure of power by the racist minority in Rhodesia should be brought to an end by all necessary measures, including the use of force.

102. I have dwelt upon the subject of *apartheid* at some length because respect for human dignity is at the very basis of the existence of the United Nations. Without such respect, human progress and human life will forever be imperilled.

103. My delegation continues to hold firmly to the view that a purely quantitative evaluation of the statistics relating to decolonization will be misleading. Since the adoption of the Declaration of the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in 1960 [resolution 1514 (XV)], many States have achieved their independence. We cannot, however, delude ourselves into believing that the struggle is over. The structures of some imperialisms remain entrenched and continue to constitute an obstacle to the evolution of more progressive political and constitutional relationships among peoples. Many important areas of the world still remain under colonial domination and some newly independent States are waging fierce battles to maintain the sovereignty of their independent institutions. Imperialism must be dislodged from its fortresses in Namibia and in the territories that are under Portuguese administration in East Africa.

104. The freedom and development of colonial peoples demand decolonization not only in the political field but in the social and economic fields as well.

105. I spoke earlier of the primary obligation on developing countries to take the necessary measures to promote the

development process. In the Caribbean, despite the difficulties of competing economies and insular suspicions, which are the legacy of our colonial past, we have begun to take the first tentative steps towards closer economic co-operation. Sharp consciousness of the disadvantages of a fragmented and unco-ordinated existence has persuaded us to attempt a rationalization of our relationships.

106. Six years after the collapse of the West Indies Federation in 1962, a Caribbean Free Trade Association has now emerged. The CARIFTA Agreement¹¹ has taken into account the problems of its less developed members and has provided a number of mechanisms for ensuring that they benefit fully from the Association. With the assistance of the agencies of the United Nations and our own University of the West Indies, we now approach the problems of a common external tariff, the harmonization of fiscal incentives, the creation of regionally integrated industries, industrial development in the least developed countries of the area, as well as rationalization of our pattern of regional agriculture and development of a transport system for the needs of the area.

107. The creation of an effective regional development bank in the Caribbean with assistance from countries with an interest in the region will provide another significant step towards economic integration.

108. We are of the view—and that view, we are pleased to say, is now accepted in most quarters—that CARIFTA is an essential process in the economic integration of the whole of Latin America.

109. Like other areas of Latin America and the rest of the third world, Trinidad and Tobago and the other Caribbean countries continue to suffer from exclusion of our products from the markets of the more developed countries. With an unemployment rate in Trinidad and Tobago of approximately 15 per cent, my Government puts special emphasis on labour-intensive industries.

110. For us it is virtually catastrophic when developed countries take measures which have the effect of frustrating those initiatives. Already hundreds of jobs in Trinidad and Tobago's garment industry are threatened by this policy, which makes nonsense of much of our attempt to achieve economic transformation and development.

111. Once more, on behalf of all developing countries, we appeal to the developed countries to support our burdensome development efforts by removing the severe restrictions on access to their markets. We consider this to be a matter of considerably greater importance than financial aid.

112. Trinidad and Tobago is acutely aware of the political problems posed for the international community by the emergence of the so-called mini-States or micro-States in the Caribbean area and elsewhere in the world. The principal problem in the Caribbean is political fragmentation, which is largely a legacy of our colonial past.

113. The essence of the decolonized status is the ability of men freely to choose and determine their own destiny. This

¹¹ Agreement establishing the Caribbean Free Trade Association, signed in Antigua on 30 April 1968.

choice will, in most cases, lead to the coming together of units too small in isolation to face the rigours of the world. We believe that the choice in the Caribbean, if free from external interference, will naturally lead to such an association. But we are aware that there are instances outside the Caribbean area where geography and other causes may inhibit such a development.

114. We are also aware of the learned studies which have already been devoted to this subject. At the appropriate time we will be prepared to advance our own views on the several proposals which are now under formulation. Meanwhile, I propose to the General Assembly a set of principles on the basis of which we consider the problem of the micro-State can be approached. These principles are the following: first, the thrust of the United Nations effort must be in the direction of integration rather than fragmentation; secondly, solutions must not deny the fundamental right of peoples to self-determination; thirdly, integration must be on the basis of the equality of peoples; fourthly, systems of integration must reflect the special problems of particular regions; fifthly, there must be no interference with the rights and privileges of existing Members of the United Nations; sixthly, any new relationship to the United Nations must contemplate only those peoples who cannot be accommodated within the existing structure of the United Nations and seventhly, any new rules or systems of relationship must be based on freedom of choice for all concerned.

115. Against that background, and adopting what we consider to be the most fundamental approach to the problem as it affects the Caribbean peoples, Trinidad and Tobago calls for the complete decolonization of the Caribbean area.

116. We also call upon all the metropolitan Powers in the area and the United Nations, together with the emerging and independent States, to work towards a new integration based upon equality and respect for the interests of the peoples of the Caribbean.

117. We feel sure that such action as we have indicated and observance of the principles we have outlined constitute the soundest basis on which the mini-State problem can be resolved in the Caribbean area particularly, and generally in the world. We are ourselves a nation of peoples of many cultures and ethnic origins. We have achieved a substantial measure of success in breaking down the barriers of race and creed in our own country. Against the background of human history we know how superficial these issues are and yet how intractable they can be. Our task on earth in the latter half of the twentieth century as we reach out to the planets seems to be more a matter of reaching across to ourselves. To the success of that task, on which hangs the fate of the entire world community, Trinidad and Tobago pledges before the nations represented in this Assembly our physical, moral and spiritual co-operation.

118. The PRESIDENT: May I take this opportunity of thanking the Secretary of State of Liberia and the Minister for External Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago for the compliments they have paid the President.

AGENDA ITEM 8

Adoption of the agenda (*continued*)*

SECOND REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (A/7700/Add.1)

119. The PRESIDENT: We turn now to the second report of the General Committee [A/7700/Add.1]. In paragraph 1 the General Committee recommends the inclusion of the item entitled "The strengthening of international security" in the agenda [item 103]. It also recommends that the item should be allocated to the First Committee. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the General Assembly approves these recommendations.

It was so decided.

120. The PRESIDENT: We turn now to the recommendation in paragraph 2 of the report. This relates to the additional item entitled "Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons".

121. The General Committee recommends that the item should be included in the agenda and allocated to the First Committee. The Committee also recommends that it should become sub-item (c) of agenda item 29 under the title "Question of general and complete disarmament".

122. Mr. SEN (India): We have before us the recommendations of the General Committee [A/7700/Add.1]. That document contains two paragraphs. I do not wish to speak on paragraph 1 because I believe that has been approved without any difficulty by the General Committee. It is on the second paragraph that I should like to speak. I believe that in the General Committee, as in the Assembly, there is broad agreement that the subject of chemical and bacteriological weapons should be taken up and that it should be discussed in the First Committee. But when it actually came to including the item in the agenda there were certain differences of opinion about what elements should constitute this item.

123. During the short time available we had intensive discussions with various delegations, and as a result I am about to propose an amendment to the second paragraph which I hope will be acceptable to all delegations. We regret that it was not possible to consult every delegation, but we are confident none the less that the major Powers involved in discussing this subject have agreed to support our amendment. If it finds general acceptance in this Assembly, I am sure that we shall save time and labour in the First Committee when the subject comes up for subsequent discussion.

124. My delegation undertook this task because we were convinced that this is an important item and that it will have the greatest impact if, before we start discussing it, there is general agreement on all sides to attach to it the seriousness of purpose and the consideration it deserves.

125. Document A/L.566 sets forth the suggestion we have in mind: we propose that agenda item 29 as approved by

* Resumed from the 1758th meeting.

the General Committee in the last sentence of its second report [A/7700/Add.1] should be reformulated to read as follows: "Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament". There would then be a new item—which could be item 30—entitled "Question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons", which would have the following three sub-items:

"(a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament;

"(b) Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons;

"(c) Report of the Secretary-General."

126. I should make it clear that in submitting our proposal we do not attach any great importance to the order in which these matters should be taken up. It is our intention—and I believe it is the intention of all delegations present here—that all these aspects should be thoroughly discussed before a final report is made to the Assembly. We have put the items in a particular order merely for the sake of convenience and nothing more.

127. Since these items now form part of the general subject of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, under item 29 on the question of general and complete disarmament we shall discuss all aspects of disarmament except that which deals specifically with chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. When we come to item 30—or whatever number is assigned to it—we shall discuss the additional item contained in the Soviet proposal [sub-item (c)], the Committee's report from Geneva [sub-item (a)], and also the Secretary-General's technical report [sub-item (b)]. By separating the two ideas in that way, I think we shall overcome the difficulty which was created in the General Committee and we shall get off to a good start. I therefore recommend, if all delegations have had time to read the documents and if they agree that they give this proposal their unanimous support.

128. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The Soviet delegation would again like to draw the attention of all delegations at this twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly to a question of great international significance which has already been discussed in some detail by Mr. Gromyko, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, in his statement on 19 September this year [1756th meeting]. I refer to the joint proposal of the nine socialist States Members of the United Nations—the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—concerning the inclusion in the agenda of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, as a matter of importance and urgency, of an item entitled "Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons" [A/7655].

129. These countries have also jointly submitted a draft international convention on this important and urgent question. In bringing up this matter, the socialist countries' position is that chemical and bacteriological weapons are one of the most barbarous forms of weapons of mass destruction, the use of which could result in large numbers of human victims and bring indescribable sorrow and suffering to mankind. The liberation of mankind from the threat of chemical and bacteriological warfare would help to improve the international situation and increase confidence in relations between States. In proposing the draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons and on the destruction of such weapons, the socialist countries are taking account of the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925 for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare. This Protocol is considered by the majority of States to be an effective international instrument which is playing an important part in preventing chemical and bacteriological warfare.

130. The time has come when it is necessary to take the next important step in the right direction and to achieve the conclusion of an international agreement providing for the total exclusion of chemical and bacteriological weapons for the life of human society.

131. It is the firm conviction of the socialist countries that favourable conditions now exist for the solution of this problem. This is attested by the great interest shown throughout the world in the problem of the prohibition and destruction of chemical and bacteriological means of warfare.

132. At its previous sessions in 1966 and 1968 the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolutions containing an appeal to all States which had not already done so to accede to the Geneva Protocol of 1925.¹²

133. The highly useful and instructive report submitted by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to this twenty-fourth General Assembly concerning chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the consequences of their possible use, a report compiled by an authoritative international group of experts, thoroughly and convincingly demonstrates what mankind could expect in the event of the unleashing of chemical and bacteriological warfare. The report contains an appeal for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of weapons of this kind. It has received a wide response from Governments, missions to the United Nations and the public in many countries, and provides a good, scientifically sound basis for a thorough and comprehensive examination in the Assembly of the prohibition and elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons and for the adoption of appropriate measures by the United Nations.

134. The Soviet delegation, together with the delegations of the other Socialist countries, has proposed that this

question should be considered as a separate, independent item of the General Assembly's agenda. In this connexion the Soviet delegation wishes to explain that, in proposing the independent and separate consideration of their proposal, the socialist countries co-sponsoring the proposal have of course proceeded, and continue to proceed, from the assumption that the whole range of questions relating to the proposal, the above-mentioned report by the Secretary-General, and everything concerning the prohibition of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons contained in the report of the Committee on Disarmament, which has not yet been received, must be duly considered in the discussion on the convention proposed by the socialist countries. As we have suggested, it might be possible to find an appropriate form and procedure which would ensure a fruitful and comprehensive examination of this question taking due account of all those documents, materials, and the ideas and proposals they contain.

135. Mr. Sen, the representative of India, who has just spoken from this rostrum, has put forward some ideas on this point, which are essentially that, under the general heading of "The question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons", all the proposals relating to this problem should be grouped together as sub-items.

136. We consider the Indian representative's proposal to be constructive and to deserve serious consideration. It may open the way to a fruitful discussion in the First Committee of questions concerning chemical and bacteriological weapons as an independent important item, and to success in the campaign against the increasing threat of chemical and bacteriological warfare and in the campaign to outlaw this barbarous means of mass destruction and ensure that it shall never be used.

137. The delegation of the USSR has no objection to the adoption of the proposal made by the Indian delegation.

138. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly has before it the recommendations of the General Committee regarding the inclusion and allocation of the item [A/7700/Add.1] and the amendments submitted by the representative of India [A/L.566]. For orderly procedure, I should like to inform Members that if there is no objection I intend to proceed as follows: I shall first request the Assembly to take a decision on the recommendation of the General Committee that the question be included in the agenda and allocated to the First Committee. Then I shall request the Assembly to take a decision on the amendments.

139. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly approves the recommendations of the General Committee.

It was so decided.

140. The PRESIDENT: If I hear no objection, I shall consider the amendments submitted by India [A/L.566] adopted.

The amendments were adopted.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.

¹² Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925.