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AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. MASHOLOGU (Lesotho): Madam President, it is with great pleasure that the Lesotho delegation joins the delegations which have taken the floor before it in expressing its congratulations upon your election as President of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

2. We also wish to take this opportunity of paying tribute to your predecessor, the late Mr. Arenales, whose untimely death has deprived not only his country but also this Organization of his outstanding statesmanship.

3. The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. Therefore, in assessing the past achievements and failures of the United Nations, we can justifiably ask how far the world body has contributed towards the attainment of those noble objectives, and how far the individual Member States follow the fundamental principles of the Charter in their dealings with one another.

4. We, in Lesotho, are as eager as any genuinely peace-loving nation to promote co-operation and peace in the world in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, particularly because we believe that the attainment of human rights and of economic and social development cannot take place in an atmosphere devoid of peace. This is a primary consideration in the formulation and implementation of our domestic and foreign policies. It is disturbing, however, to note that in our deliberations in this highest Assembly of Governments and statesmen it is often too easily forgotten that the end purpose of all our efforts must be the well-being of individual men and women. We, in the smaller developing communities, are primarily concerned not with abstract global concepts or generalizations, but rather with people and the basic problems of

human existence. It is in this spirit that we join in providing a reminder of the human realities underlying discussions in this Assembly.

5. A subject of great concern to us in Lesotho is that of racialism. We, like all others in this Organization, will yield to no one in our rejection of discrimination based on race, colour or religion. We are, therefore, disturbed to note that in this day and age discriminatory practices have not yet been completely eradicated in the world. While there are encouraging signs of genuine efforts on the part of some countries to come to grips with this problem, it is disheartening to observe the lack of will and even resistance in others. We are convinced that the best and, indeed, the only feasible way of eradicating racialism and discrimination, and reversing the immense tide of human suffering which goes with those policies, is by contact and peaceful negotiation. It is our considered opinion that a negative attitude of non-co-operation does nobody any good.

6. Our experience has shown that, with determination, independent States allowing full involvement and harmonious participation by all men, irrespective of race, can thrive in Africa. This fact alone makes all the more ridiculous and dangerous the course of action chosen by the illegal Smith régime and its followers in Rhodesia of stubbornly denying the right of African people and their leaders to participate in a fair and significant way in the government of their country. It is our sincere hope that the Member States of this Organization will continue to adhere to the principle of no-independence-before-majority-rule in Rhodesia by denying the illegal régime the comfort of any recognition while it pursues its reckless and dangerous policies. We realize that the mandatory sanctions, which we have supported, have not had the desired effect on the illegal régime, and so we urge the strengthening of measures already imposed and are willing to support any further means to avoid the illegal situation. However, we would view with serious reservations any escalation of the sanctions to our region as this would automatically pose a serious threat to our fledgling economy and, indeed, our very survival.

7. In spite of the efforts of this Organization to eradicate colonialism from the face of the earth, Portugal still clings to the territories of Angola and Mozambique. The assertion that Portugal's outmoded colonialist policies in the territories constitute a threat to international peace and security has often been viewed with scepticism, but the recent censure resolution by the Security Council on Portugal for the latter's illegal adventures in the territory of a Member State of this Organization, demonstrates that a real threat to international peace is inherent in Portugal's colonial policies. Moreover, as we have already indicated, we cannot help but condemn in the strongest terms any form of government based on racial myths and paternalism.

8. Much as all nations and peoples desire peace, it is inevitable that differences should arise from time to time in the conduct of relations between one nation and another or between groups of nations. Lesotho is firmly committed to the peaceful settlement of disputes and is convinced of the importance of the renunciation of war or threats of war when differences arise. It is, therefore, disturbing to note how nations, large and small, are drifting into the practice of settling differences by the deployment and actual use of weapons of destruction in utter disregard of the traditional means of negotiation, mediation or arbitration which this Organization has always sought to promote. A concomitant development is the tendency to lose respect for human life and to ignore the suffering of the victims of war and violence. Without seeking to apportion blame, it is easy to note that the casualties of the Viet-Nam war are no longer regarded as anything more than mere statistics released with every report on this tragic conflict. Lesotho believes that the parties to the conflict should intensify their search for a negotiated settlement in order to prevent further loss of innocent lives.

9. The importance of the need for negotiated settlement, either within or outside the framework of the United Nations, is further stressed by the situation in the Middle East. The continuation of fighting across the cease-fire lines, which the Secretary-General has also referred to as confrontation lines, is ample evidence that the tensions in the area cannot be permanently solved through a military victory by one side over the other. We reiterate our conviction that lasting peace can only come as a product of negotiations based on the honest recognition of political realities. That Israel is a political fact cannot be contested. That it has the right to transform occupation, based on force, into legal annexation must be denied. Israel must, however, have the assurance that it can continue to exist without fear of attack. It must also be assured of secure and recognized boundaries. Lesotho hopes that Israel and its Arab neighbours will bear in mind the serious plight of their populations who must live under the cloud of war until a permanent settlement is found. It should, however, be pointed out that the reaching of a permanent settlement has not been allowed to lie entirely within the discretion of the parties to the conflict. Interference by the big Powers has delayed the realization of this goal. It is to be hoped that these Powers will realize the futility of their intervention and will co-operate with this Organization in urging the parties to the conflict to reach a negotiated settlement based on mutual trust.

10. The Nigerian crisis is not only a blot on Africa's image, but a challenge to man's conscience. We urge Members of this Organization to view with sympathy and concern the losses which this great African nation has already suffered and to desist from actions which may aggravate the situation. Since we believe in the territorial integrity of Member States, we condemn tribalism, secession and persecution of minorities, all of which are disturbing forces. A united and peaceful Nigeria can contribute no end to Africa's progress.

11. We reaffirm our belief in complete disarmament. We note with alarm and concern the development of new and more sophisticated weapons of war, especially bigger nuclear devices and items of gas and germ warfare which,

by their very nature, pose a threat to the entire human race. We hope, therefore, that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, as it continues its efforts to draft a treaty on general and complete disarmament under effective international control, will meet with some success.

12. The close relationship between disarmament and economic development has long been acknowledged. Our interest in disarmament is therefore also due to the belief that a substantial part of the resources derived from a reduction in military expenditure could be channelled to projects of social and economic development in all countries.

13. Lesotho's stand on the question of the admission of the People's Republic of China into this Organization has not changed. Whatever solution is ultimately found, it should not be at the cost of the membership of the Republic of China. Our unequivocal stand is that any decision which would bar the participation of the representatives of the Republic of China in this, or any other organ of the United Nations, would be unjust and totally unworthy of this Organization in its dealing with Member States. The Republic of China has fully demonstrated its right not only to exist as a sovereign independent State, but also to participate constructively in world affairs.

14. On the question of a divided Korea, the delegation of Lesotho reaffirms its support for the efforts of all parties to find a solution for that situation within the framework of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea. The Government of Lesotho, therefore, urges all parties to recognize the legitimate role of the United Nations in this peace-keeping and arbitration effort in order that the door towards a solution to this long-standing problem may be opened. We are amazed that the Government of North Korea, which claims popular support, should be so reluctant to co-operate with the appropriate United Nations organ. This seems to be an example of politicians putting their own interests above those of the people they claim to serve.

15. Before leaving the subject of political strife, I wish to allude to certain disturbing situations which are a challenge to this Organization. Uppermost among these is the question of a divided Germany. The dismembering of nations for purely ideological reasons does not contribute to permanent peace. The military occupation of Czechoslovakia and subsequent interference in its internal affairs by the Warsaw Pact countries is still very fresh in our memories and evokes unhappy memories of what happened to Hungary in 1956. The situation in Northern Ireland, where incidentally the British Government seems to have departed from its declared stand against the use or show of force, is a clear demonstration of the dangers inherent in any form of discrimination and intolerance. Finally, a new phenomenon which, if allowed to go unchecked, would usher in a new era of terror in our already troubled world. Here I am referring to the hijacking of aircraft by irresponsible individuals and groups which have shown criminal disregard for international law and order. We think it is time the international community took action to protect itself.

16. There is a great deal the United Nations can do to assist in the advancement of developing countries but,

needless to say, success or failure depends largely on the will and the determination of the advanced Members of the Organization, which are able to make substantial contributions in cash or kind. The Lesotho Government is aware of the serious lack of trained manpower in technical skills and development which adversely affects the economic growth of many countries, including those richly endowed with natural resources. Hence our appreciation of the valuable professional and technical assistance given by the United Nations Development Programme and the numerous specialized agencies of the United Nations. In our own small way, we shall continue to contribute regularly to the resources of the United Nations and its agencies.

17. During the First United Nations Development Decade, we have noted with disappointment the slow progress made in the promotion of world trade. Experience has shown that the goals set and the problems encountered called for far more determination and closer co-operation than most Members of this Organization were prepared to give. It is not charity that the developing countries are asking for, but rather a readjustment of the terms of trade and aid in such a way as to bring prosperity to all. Here again, the advanced countries have it in their power to redress or aggravate the situation. This is a matter for action and not merely good intentions and pious resolutions.

18. My Government is conscious of the major responsibility of the United Nations in the development of international law in our contemporary world. We feel that all the major changes which have taken place in the world during the past two decades should be accommodated within the framework of legal relations. That task is rendered more urgent by the tendency of some States to take unilateral decisions for purely domestic reasons without regard to commitments previously entered into, and without regard to the significance of the relevant provisions of the Charter to which we all subscribe. If there is to be international justice, it can only be within the framework of international law. That is why we attach so much importance to the outcome of the recent United Nations Conference on the Law of Treaties, in which we participated. As a land-locked country completely surrounded by South Africa, our nearest neighbour, we are deeply interested in the development of international law with respect to land-locked States. We hope that the efforts to minimize and finally eliminate the problems of land-locked States will continue. For us this is not a matter of politics only but rather of facing the realities of our geographical situation, which is unique, and which we ask our friends to try to understand.

19. As a small nation, we continue to put our hopes in the United Nations and wish to reaffirm our belief in the goals set forth in its Charter. We believe that this Organization has it in its power, as the most comprehensive forum of world opinion, to arrest the dangerous course of events to which we have already referred. Unless we make a concerted effort to eradicate, once and for all, the evils of sectionalism, intolerance and selfishness, our world is doomed to extinction. It is well to remember a hackneyed expression, "Those whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad".

20. Mr. HAMBRO (Norway): Madam President, nothing said from this rostrum can add to your honour and prestige,

but my Government wishes to add its voice to the impressive choir of congratulations and good wishes. We also wish to express our deep-felt respect for the memory of the late Mr. Arenales, the President of the last Assembly. Before I start, I should also like to convey greetings to our Secretary-General and warm expressions of understanding and confidence from my Government.

21. We meet today, as often before, under the shadow of armed conflicts in many parts of the world. The tragic events in Viet-Nam, the Middle East and Nigeria, as well as the stalemate situation in the southern part of Africa, have a direct bearing on the political climate in general, and influence our ability to deal with other urgent problems of the day. The Secretary-General has underlined these dangers in the introduction to his annual report [A/7601/Add.1]. With stark realism he points out that time is running short when it comes to maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, and achieving international co-operation. Speakers in this debate have reflected the same sentiment.

22. The optimism of the immediate post-war era has long been replaced by a more subdued mood. The commitment to international co-operation, so essential to our survival, is often giving way to a policy of more narrow and limited considerations. This trend must be reversed before it is too late. International collaboration must be strengthened, and our Organization must be used more effectively. This, however, does not necessarily mean that all problems must come to this Assembly to be debated and settled. There are many questions which can be better and more efficiently dealt with on a direct nation-to-nation basis or in the context of a regional organization. Even so, the problems must be seen in a wider perspective so that the legitimate interests of the world community are never lost sight of.

23. My Government attempts to pursue a foreign policy based on a strong feeling of international solidarity and a realization of the interdependence of all nations. That also explains our strong support of the United Nations. I should like to underline that this support of the United Nations in my country is deeply anchored in public opinion in all segments of our population.

24. Our policy must be pragmatic but realism must not degenerate into sterile pessimism. We must not forget the progress which has been made in international co-operation in the post-war era, above all in the fields of economic and social affairs. The United Nations has also, on many occasions and in many contexts, played a significant role in settling or contributing towards the settlement of political disputes. It is now necessary to look forward and to devise new methods and new programmes. We have to look at the world as it is, but we must not submerge ourselves in an obsession with the present predicament to such an extent that we lose our perspectives. We must never forget—never—that our common interests are immeasurably stronger and more lasting than what divides us.

25. We must learn from past mistakes, but leave the burden of defeat behind us. We carry the present problems with us and are challenged by problems to come. The rising new generations demand of us a new spirit of willingness and co-operation in finding solutions to common problems

and in undertaking new endeavours on a global basis. If that will be lacking, the programmes we devise and the machinery we establish will be of no avail.

26. There is a tendency today, whenever we face a serious problem, to leave it to the big Powers to deal with. At the same time there is a current of criticism against the great Powers for arrogating to themselves too much power and deciding the fate of all, big and small. The roles of the big Powers, the middle-sized States and the small nations have rather to be adjusted to it, and fitted together in the common endeavours of finding solutions to the problems facing us all. Their roles are, or at least ought to be, complementary. There are certain questions where we feel the great Powers must take the lead, such as the limiting of strategic armaments. So is the situation in the Middle East. However, that does not free the rest of us from responsibility.

27. As far as disarmament is concerned, the smaller nations should let their voices be heard and express their anxiety to the big Powers, which seem to be doing far less than the situation requires. It is the fervent hope of my Government that the United States and the Soviet Union will soon start talks on the limitation of strategic armaments. We are dismayed at every new delay and we are deeply concerned about the lack of progress.

28. It is also of the utmost importance that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation on Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII)*] should be ratified by as many nations as possible. It is particularly important that the great Powers should do so, and we applaud the step taken by the United Kingdom in this respect. The beginning of talks on the limitation of strategic armaments and the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are not only very important in themselves, but they will also help to create the atmosphere of confidence which is essential for progress in other fields as well.

29. Another such element is the proposed all-European security conference. My Government has responded favourably to the invitation from the Government of Finland to take part in such a conference. It must be well and thoroughly prepared and must count the United States and Canada as participants. Such a conference might improve the political climate of the world; but at the same time, the success of such a conference depends on the political climate. I would be less than frank if I did not say that developments in Czechoslovakia might have an important bearing on the political climate in our world.

30. Another situation which fills us all with concern and anxiety is the Middle East, where we do not seem to have made any progress in the last year. A solution to the conflict must be found within the framework of the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967 [*242 (1967)*], which constitutes the basis for Ambassador Jarring's mission. We appreciate his efforts in carrying out the Security Council resolution and welcome the increased involvement of the big Powers in finding a solution. As we see it, it is not a question of imposing a solution, but rather of defining the elements that go into a solution and broadening the common grounds for its acceptance, and thus strengthen the position of Ambassador Jarring.

31. While encouraging the big Powers to assume their responsibilities for the maintenance of peace and international security we should all, even the smaller States, do our utmost to search for and point out solutions. Above all, we should pledge our readiness to assume our share of the burdens and responsibilities in connexion with a settlement of the conflict. The Norwegian Government has already declared its willingness to contribute to an economic development plan for the whole Middle East region if that should be agreed upon.

32. One of the key elements in the whole Middle East situation is the refugee problem. This is not only, primarily, a humanitarian problem but, as recent developments in the area have shown, it is above all a political question which must be solved if a lasting settlement is to be found of the Middle East conflict.

33. The suffering of the civilian population in Nigeria has caused deep concern. The Norwegian Government has, on strictly humanitarian grounds, contributed to the international relief work for the benefit of the civilian population. The many appeals by the Nordic Governments have been solely motivated by a desire to make the relief work more effective and to offer their support for any measures which may contribute to a solution of the conflict. We strongly regret that it has not yet been possible to reach an agreement for the resumption of flights bringing relief and supplies.

34. The Norwegian Government is cognizant of the ardent efforts undertaken by the Organization of African Unity to solve the conflict and is of the opinion that this Organization is especially well qualified for finding a basis for a negotiated solution. The Foreign Ministers of the Nordic countries discussed this problem at their recent meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland. The Nordic countries will continue to give their full support to mediation efforts through the Organization of African Unity and other channels particularly well suited for bringing about contact and negotiations between the parties.

35. It is the intention of my Government, one of the larger contributors to relief work during the civil war, to view, positively, requests for assistance for the reconstruction of the war-devastated areas when the hostilities are brought to an end. The Norwegian Government is also prepared to comply with requests for observers and personnel for control units in connexion with relief work or a cease-fire.

36. The sea and what is in it has always played a large role in the life of man. This importance has been reflected in the sustained and positive contributions by the United Nations towards a modern law of the sea. However, the great and mysterious depths of the oceans have only recently been drawn into international co-operation. Our Organization embarked upon a vast and complex task when it took up the question of the sea-bed and the ocean floor two years ago. Perhaps the Assembly did not then quite realize the size of the problem or the great potentialities for the benefit of mankind. It has, however, begun to be understood that great political, economic, scientific and technical problems will have to be solved before we can harvest the riches on or beneath the ocean floor. The sea-bed Com-

mittee¹ has done a constructive job and focused attention on the problems before us. But time is of the essence. Rapid progress must be made. Otherwise we risk creating vested interests which will make our task desperately difficult.

37. During this session of the Assembly we must adopt at least a set of principles as guidelines for the Committee in its future work. The technical skill of the Member States to exploit the sea-bed is rapidly expanding. The United Nations has no time to lose if we wish to avoid a disastrous race among nations in the exploitation of this area. The result of such a race would deepen still more the chasm between the rich and the poor nations. In the opinion of the Norwegian Government, the exploitation of the sea-bed and the ocean floor for peaceful purposes should be guided by an international régime as soon as possible. The extent of the area should be defined before it is too late. If this session of the General Assembly could take a decision on nothing else with regard to its long agenda than to establish a set of principles for the sea-bed, it would nevertheless be regarded as a successful session. An understanding amongst us on this issue would require, however, that we raise our eyes above national horizons. Only through genuine international co-operation and goodwill can we reach a solution for the benefit of us all. While we strive to develop new resources we must also protect all parts of our natural heritage. We have not husbanded our resources with prudence and foresight. In humanity's march to a continually increasing mastery of nature we have paid a terrible price.

38. Most of the problems connected with human environment cannot be solved individually by nations. The situation calls for constructive efforts on the international level. It is particularly important that the United Nations take the lead in this work so as to give the necessary global framework for the discussions. We are looking forward with great expectations to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment which will take place in Sweden in 1972.

39. This of course is only one example of the fact that the political situation in the world is greatly influenced by the serious economic and social problems which our Member countries have to deal with. Much attention has been paid to these problems in the past both by national Governments and by international organizations, particularly by the United Nations family, but the impact of these problems is still not fully realized. We have not yet quite understood the importance of finding satisfactory answers which will enable future generations to improve their conditions of life.

40. It is against this background that my Government views the work now under way in the various United Nations organs in the preparation of the Second United Nations Development Decade. We cannot, of course, in this preparation find solutions for all the problems of the developing countries. However, we should at least try to learn to understand the problems and must try to find better means of co-ordinating the national and international efforts in this field. If we do that, the next General

Assembly may adopt the strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, which will be a useful starting point. No strategy or even the most complete analysis of the development problems can serve any purpose unless the Governments back them up, and unless the political will freely expressed by the people, rich and poor, developed and developing nations alike, work on them.

41. The problem of economic and social development is a very complex one. It changes from country to country and may vary from region to region in the same country. The responsibility for development policies must, obviously, rest with the Government and the people of each individual country. Most of the economic resources needed for development must come from the developing countries themselves. This does not at all mean that the efforts of the industrialized nations can only have a marginal effect. It is, first and foremost, their responsibility to ensure a steadily expanding world economy and world trade. This is an essential condition for economic and social progress in the developing countries. They are, to a large extent, dependent upon stable world markets for their products in order to secure the necessary resources for their development.

42. Great efforts must be made to ensure a continually increasing participation of the developing countries in world trade. My Government strongly supports the efforts made by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in this field. The contribution which UNCTAD is making to the strategy of the Second United Nations Development Decade will be extremely valuable. Past experience has proved conclusively that more is to be gained by quiet consultations and negotiations than by direct confrontation in this as in many other fields.

43. In recent years science and technology have advanced at a breath-taking pace unmatched during any previous period. Even so, we have not solved the problem of mobilizing unused resources in the developed countries. There are still enormous resources in the sea which could be used directly for feeding the hungry. There are also large unused production facilities in agriculture which could be used for the same purpose.

44. The United Nations can take pride in the steady expansion of its work in the field of economic and social affairs. There has been an increasing realization that these matters are of common concern and have to be discussed and handled on a global basis. At the same time there has been an increasing awareness and acceptance of responsibility, on the part of the international community, with regard to alleviating human suffering and safeguarding human rights in disaster situations. Various forms of humanitarian relief are now being provided through several international agencies, governmental as well as private. Experience has shown many weaknesses in the methods which are at the disposal of the international community when it is a question of providing humanitarian relief to the civilian population in natural, as well as disaster situations. Further steps of an international character are therefore needed to ensure prompt and effective relief in such situations.

45. My Government, together with the Canadian Government, sponsored a declaration at the recent International

¹ Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction.

Red Cross Conference in Istanbul, setting forth a set of principles for international humanitarian relief to civilian populations in disaster situations. This declaration provides that disaster relief for the benefit of civilian populations is to be given without discrimination. It also states that the offer of such relief by an impartial international humanitarian organization ought not to be regarded as an unfriendly act. It is further laid down that all States are requested to exercise their sovereign and other legal rights so as to facilitate the transit, admission and distribution of relief supplies provided by impartial international organizations for the benefit of civilian populations in disaster areas when such situations imperil the life and welfare of the population.

46. We hope that this declaration will give the needed impetus to an increased acceptance on the part of the international community and the individual Governments for participation in relief work which has the humanitarian needs of the affected population exclusively in mind.

47. Next year we shall celebrate the twenty-fifth birthday of our Organization. This event affords a unique occasion for taking stock of our achievements and for fixing our aims for the future.

48. Several proposals have already been put forward to change our Charter and other rules, and my Government will, in due time, examine them with great care. But it is quite clear that no changes will be of any deep significance if we do not bring a new and positive spirit to our Organization. We must meet our responsibilities in such a way that we will give new confidence to men and women all over the world and so inspire youth with a greater hope in the future of the United Nations. This hope and this confidence will be the touchstone of the future.

49. Mr. RABEMANANJARA (Madagascar) (*translated from French*): The year 1969 will undoubtedly be considered by future historians as a turning point in history. As was so well put this morning [1773rd meeting] in the remarkable statement by Mr. Luns, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, the fact that men, overcoming the earth's gravity, have succeeded in setting foot on the moon, in surviving there in spite of a particularly hostile environment, and above all in returning to earth cannot fail to have unimaginable consequences. This exploit means the end of the closed world; it opens up unlimited horizons to mankind. It marks the beginning of a new era. This is undoubtedly so because, by creating new objectives, it gives a new meaning to human endeavour, while at the same time it is not unreasonable to hope that it may lead to the discovery of unknown resources capable of being mobilized for the service of mankind.

50. But what I wish to emphasize above all today is that this achievement is to be credited entirely to human intelligence. Reason succeeded in discovering the laws which govern matter. Mathematics and physics measured it. An advanced technology forged the instruments conceived by imagination and by mathematical calculation. Organizational skill, together with the power of computers, made it possible to master and control a vast quantity of diverse data. Since man has also succeeded in taming nuclear energy and has, like Prometheus of antiquity, stolen fire

from the skies, it is neither outrageous nor blasphemous to say that he has triumphed over nature and that nothing can henceforth resist the boldness of his ventures. I therefore salute this exploit. I pay tribute to the astronauts, to the scientists, to the technicians, to the statesmen and to the countries that have been its architects and promoters. Their names deserve to be inscribed in the golden book of humanity. In this regard, I should like this Assembly also to pay them the tribute they deserve, because it seems to me important that this grand design, the conquest of space, should be seen to belong to all nations and to all human beings endowed with reason and feeling.

51. The fact that you, Madam President, a daughter of Africa, should have been elected to preside over the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly at such a decisive moment in the history of mankind makes us, as Africans, all the more moved and adds still greater warmth to our congratulations. The delegation of Madagascar fully appreciates the magnitude and scope of your task and the significance of such a choice by this Assembly. Your experience of international life and your great talents will undoubtedly help to bring about in this forum the atmosphere of serenity with which we should like all our work to be imbued. We are also glad to welcome you as the worthy representative of a sister country, Liberia, with which Madagascar maintains the friendliest of relations. The delegation of Madagascar believes that, under your guidance, the problems of the developing countries will be considered with particular attention.

52. Your lamented predecessor as President, Mr. Arenales, whose loss we keenly feel, took a very special interest in those problems. We should like to pay him a deeply felt tribute and to say that we shall always remember with gratitude his impartial approach, his outstanding ability and the skill with which he guided our debates.

53. It is a pleasant duty for me also to express the satisfaction of my Government at the efforts exerted by our Secretary-General, U Thant, to solve the complex problems he has had to face.

54. However, the thunder of rockets surging from the earth and the splendour of artificial suns cannot make me forget that I am a man and, furthermore, a black man. I can, of course, become enthusiastic about the moon, Venus, Mars and Saturn, but I cannot decently refrain from thinking of the towns and the villages in my country and elsewhere on our planet where poverty, ignorance and violence still weigh heavily on lives which are rich only in their brevity and in the resignation with which they are borne. It will not be one of the least of the paradoxes of our time that man, before embarking on the conquest of space, did not think to secure his rearguard by first creating order in his affairs on earth. We may well wonder whether this leap forward is not really an escape from what lies behind.

55. Last year about this same time and from this same rostrum [1703rd meeting], I, like all the other leaders of delegations, analysed the world situation and tried to suggest some solutions for the more troublesome and serious problems that mankind has to face. On rereading my speech, I realized that I could almost repeat it word for

word, so true is it that our problems have not fundamentally changed and that the behaviour of nations has remained the same.

56. In Viet-Nam, unfortunately, the war continues to rage, while negotiations in Paris are apparently making no headway and are still being held up by an insistence on prior conditions which continually delays the establishment of the just peace that is so much desired.

57. In the Middle East a war of attrition has followed the truce and tomorrow, if we are not careful, all-out war will again set the region ablaze, with all the risks that that entails for world peace.

58. In Nigeria no progress has been made in the quest for a cessation of the fighting. Worse still, there has been a failure of the efforts undertaken by the world's highest spiritual authority and an inability on the part of men of goodwill to save from death thousands upon thousands of starving people. In the middle of the twentieth century, the terrors of the Middle Ages are engulfing old people, women and innocent children. The scandal is that the great capitals of the world are not profoundly shocked, and that the very decision-making centres seem to be struck with an intolerable paralysis.

59. Even in Central America, for reasons which are not clear to distant observers such as ourselves, two States belonging to the same economic organization have found it necessary to cross swords.

60. Furthermore, throughout the world, human freedom and the right of peoples to self-determination continue to be shamelessly flouted. Totalitarian communism, even though divided and ready to embark on mutual self-destruction on the borders of Asia, has in no way relaxed its hold over nations which aspire to unity and the establishment of a true democracy. The "Prague spring" will soon be no more than the memory of a beautiful rose-bud, withered before it could open out in the sunshine.

61. Racism still continues to flourish in South Africa where, under cover of ideology, ten million black men are confined to subordinate tasks and—let us say it openly—are exploited by a few million white people. A similar situation is now developing in Rhodesia, without any genuine reaction being registered in the rest of the world.

62. For its part, Portugal maintains with impunity the fiction of its African provinces, while preventing the peoples of those provinces from expressing their opinion freely.

63. Finally, as though to crown the edifice and despite all the international conferences and the many meetings of the committees, sub-committees and other organs of UNCTAD, no concrete measures have yet been taken towards making the necessary changes in the iniquitous economic laws which now govern the world. Yet without such changes the developing nations—and all the experts are convinced of this—cannot get their economies moving. Their populations are on the verge of destitution, and their political independence amounts in fact to little more than a game of see-saw between the various suppliers of aid, the conditions of

which, furthermore, are tending to become more burdensome from day to day.

64. All this is senseless. It is in flagrant contradiction with the innumerable declarations of responsible politicians, declarations made from this very rostrum. Never have we observed such a divorce between word and deed. Never has so much selfishness been masked by a rhetoric that is as profuse as it is hypocritical.

65. In my endeavour to be objective, I have given much thought to the question of what can be placed to the credit of our Organization and of the various international bodies in the course of the year which has just elapsed. It may be that I am not well informed. But as regards my own country at any rate, I must confess that the results are tragically scanty.

66. In the economic field, I can mention only the International Sugar Agreement 1968—an Agreement in which, however, two of the largest producers and consumers, the European Economic Community and the United States, are not participants—and the renewal of the Yaoundé Convention.²

67. Last year I believed it to be my duty to mention certain reactions provoked by the association of the eighteen African and Malagasy States with the European Economic Community and the accusation that we were setting up an obstacle to the liberalization and stabilization of world trade. At that time I defined the position of the Government of the Republic of Madagascar and pointed out that my country was prepared to accept its share of sacrifice so that measures could be taken to alter the economic laws which I condemned just now. I wish to say that we still have the same attitude, but I should at once like to add that the Republic of Madagascar has now, without any feelings of guilt whatsoever, affixed its signature to the new Convention of Association. It believes that this Convention is an indispensable instrument for the development of its economy and that it also constitutes, at the multilateral level, one of the rare examples of international co-operation that has produced the effects that were anticipated.

68. The results obtained through the United Nations do not come up to expectations. This is undoubtedly because the principles enshrined in our Charter have, unfortunately, not been respected, and we have forgotten the solemn obligation that we inherited from those who died in the last world war to bring a little more justice, a little more stability, to human relations. In this respect, I cannot but regret that our Organization plays but a limited—a too limited—role, to my mind, in the search for solutions to our current problems. I shall explain my reasons for taking this view.

69. Despite the indefatigable activity, the authority and, I should like to emphasize, the moral force of our Secretary-General, it is difficult to avoid the impression that the various organs of our institution, the General Assembly and

² Convention of Association adopted on 28 March 1961 by the Conference of the twelve French-speaking African and Malagasy States, held at Yaoundé from 27 to 30 March 1961, and renewed on 6 July 1969.

the Security Council in particular, are not really concerned with the important issues. Indifference? I do not think so. A confession of powerlessness? I cannot resign myself to this. Be that as it may, this is a matter for serious concern, and it is the most ardent wish of the Government of the Republic of Madagascar that the authority and prestige of this Organization should be reinforced to enable it to achieve the objectives assigned to it by its founders. I appeal more particularly to small nations such as mine. It is essential, indeed vital, that they should not allow this Organization to decline, since it represents their only opportunity to be heard, and is for all nations the only means of elaborating and promoting international law.

70. I am well aware that my speech has taken a somewhat disenchanted and pessimistic turn. But at a time when mankind is preparing to undergo a major transformation, I cannot prevent myself from thinking of that other transformation that occurred at the end of the sixteenth century.

71. The great scientific discoveries made possible the exploration, the exploitation and the transformation of the world. These developments could have been to the benefit of all men and of all nations, but in fact they resulted in the domination and subjection of coloured men, of which slavery and colonialism were the most obvious and regrettable manifestations. I am not recalling this, I wish to reassure the Assembly, in order to embark on some great historical trial, which would be quite out of place in this forum and, furthermore, quite futile, because we cannot remake history and the future should be our sole concern. I am recalling it simply as a way of expressing my anxiety concerning the present situation. The ever-widening gap between rich and poor and the accumulation of technical advances in certain industrialized nations lead me to fear the eternal problem of dominator and dominated is not only far from a solution, but will, on the contrary, rapidly become more acute and assume a more subtle form.

72. Of course, it is quite likely, and indeed probable, that the less-privileged will see an improvement in their material condition and that they will attain a certain degree of industrialization. But it seems to me that this is not the objective that should be sought. What is needed is to establish as quickly as possible equality among men in every field, particularly in those of welfare, security and education. Otherwise, serious tension must inevitably arise between the over- and the under-developed countries, and such tension will, in turn, generate conflicts among the industrialized Powers.

73. Because of the vastness of the means of destruction that can be set in motion, I do not think there is any need to dwell at length on the risks that such a situation could entail for mankind. Man may, perhaps, have conquered space, but in the event of such destruction he will surely lose the earth, that is to say, his very existence.

74. Thus, on the one hand, there are the means to bring practically within man's reach all the objectives that imagination can suggest to him, while on the other hand, there is a basically selfish and irrational behaviour in human relationships.

75. Yet it seems to me that this contradiction can be abolished. On the one hand, forecasts of future develop-

ments should finally convince responsible leaders in the industrial States of what reason alone has already told them, namely that the interests of all lie in the necessary harmonization of the interests of each. On the other hand—and I hope I will be forgiven for making such a fundamentally optimistic assertion—we have reached a point where it should be possible to overcome selfishness through abundance.

76. But although it is true that in civilizations that are not very far advanced the happiness of some can be assured only by the exploitation of the majority, it is obvious that the progress of science, of technology and of management—since “management” is the fashionable word—now puts happiness within the reach of all. The gulf separating rich and poor could be rapidly bridged. It would be sufficient, in our view, to devote to that great design a very small part of the sums allocated to the production of armaments and the conquest of space.

77. At times I catch myself dreaming of the work that could be undertaken in Madagascar if only my country had at its disposal an initial allocation of, say, some \$500 million. How many roads could be built, how many regions could be opened up, how many agricultural improvements could be carried out, what resources could be set free! The process of development would be resolutely begun; the foundations for a sound and competitive economy could at last be laid, if only our efforts were accompanied by a re-establishment of order in international trade.

78. In order to make this possible, could not the great industrial Powers stop striving to maintain their lead with the bomb and with conventional armaments, especially since existing stockpiles are already sufficient to wipe out every trace of life from the surface of our planet? Could not the two super-Powers put a curb on their concealed, but real competition in the conquest of space? That competition compels them to effect huge expenditures at an ever-increasing rate. Those expenditures, if spread out over a longer period, would in no way jeopardize future progress, but could be used immediately to help the cause of the disinherited. Is this simply the vision of a poet? I am sure it is.

79. Doubtless some will object, quoting the old proverb that “God helps those who help themselves”, that the developed countries cannot help the under-developed countries unless the latter, for their part, resolve to mobilize their own resources and manage their own affairs to better purpose. I am perfectly aware of the validity of that objection, for it is true that we, the poor, are still far from having overcome certain sociological problems, that we sometimes—at a time when others have already reached the moon—exhaust our energies in quarrels of a by-gone age, and that our administration, unfortunately, is often lacking in strictness. I acknowledge this in all humility.

80. But if this is so, it is because, in the present situation, our peoples have defensive reactions which cause them to fall back on routine and respect for outdated traditions, since they are convinced of the futility and uselessness of their efforts. I, for my part, am convinced that if, through the combined efforts of the rest of the world, it were possible to establish tomorrow the objective conditions for

progress, it would not be difficult to arouse the enthusiasm of our peoples and to secure their co-operation: all the disinherited of the earth could be mobilized in the cause of progress.

81. I have a suspicion that I may have somewhat surprised and even disappointed this Assembly by taking what is perhaps too lofty a stand and by making a speech that some will probably not hesitate to describe as vague and philosophical.

82. I should like first of all to point out in this regard that, having come to this turning-point in history, it is essential that mankind should pause for reflexion. It is essential, too, that two thirds of mankind should not approach the future in a state of servitude. And lastly, it is essential that man's noble ambitions should not be destroyed by an ever-threatening nuclear conflict.

83. Next, I would like to say that the policy pursued by my country seems to me appropriate to the needs of the day. This policy has been defined by the head of State, President Philibert Tsiranna; it is well known, because it has remained practically unchanged since the restoration of national sovereignty. It can be summed up in a few phrases which explain the position adopted by the Malagasy Republic at major international meetings: self-determination of peoples, respect for human freedom, love of peace, arbitration, negotiation, loyalty to alliances, the struggle against under-development and international co-operation.

84. Perhaps because it is fortunate in being an island and because it has no enemies at its frontiers, Madagascar has never yet departed from these principles. I can affirm without hesitation that it will always be ready to co-operate in any undertaking which may contribute to the betterment of man's lot.

85. At a more practical and immediate level, I should now like briefly to recall the position of the Government of the Malagasy Republic on some particular problems which are to be considered during the present session or which are a serious source of concern to us at the present time.

86. Madagascar believes that the United Nations has a vital role to play in lessening the tension and divisions which trouble the world. I will cite only a few examples: differing beliefs or political ideologies, the gap which we have emphasized between the developed and the developing countries, the stresses born of racial discrimination and *apartheid*—final manifestations of colonialism and of man's exploitation by man—and religious conflicts.

87. My country affirms its adherence to the principles drawn up in exceptional circumstances which have now become historic, but at the same time it is looking resolutely to the future and to an ever-widening framework embodying the new concept of relations between nations and peoples, a concept corresponding to existing needs and to the very nature of man, free from narrow nationalism, ideological extremism and power politics.

88. My delegation is ready to offer its complete co-operation to achieve those ideals and objectives and enable the

United Nations to become an effective instrument for the establishment of conditions favourable to peace, the prevention of war and the promotion of the economic and social well being of mankind.

89. Where disarmament is concerned, Madagascar is firmly in favour of general disarmament, for a mere reduction in armaments would be no solution. To this end, we must completely exclude the risk of total destruction, the rapid expansion of facilities for arms production. We must also ensure that each measure of disarmament is accompanied by a measure of effective control, application of the two measures being absolutely simultaneous.

90. We would also mention the need for priority measures concerning nuclear weapon carriers. Most representatives seem to share the Malagasy delegation's belief that the ideal solution would be a treaty prohibiting the use or the threatened use of nuclear weapons. Madagascar is in favour of extending the ban on nuclear tests.

91. In our opinion, the development of defensive and offensive armament systems inevitably leads to a massive increase in military expenditure and the perfecting of nuclear weapons. Thus, for example, in 1962 military expenditure amounted to some \$120,000 million, and in 1968, if the figures are accurate, such expenditure was estimated at over \$180,000 million.

92. We would like to see bilateral negotiations opened on the limitation of strategic arms and systems of defence against ballistic missiles. The present world would be wise to eliminate the dangers of a nuclear arms race. We recognize the complexity of the problem but we believe that the necessary efforts must be continued and every avenue explored with a view to reaching general agreement. It is, however, encouraging that an agreement of principle has been reached on the non-use of the sea-bed for military purposes. It is also reassuring to note that certain Powers take the view that it is the duty of every State to pursue negotiations for general and complete disarmament.

93. Regarding Viet-Nam, the Malagasy Government welcomes the recent declarations by the parties concerned that they are ready to end the war. As I have had occasion to say from this rostrum, the solution to the problem lies, in our view, in a generally acceptable settlement which would leave the people of Viet-Nam free to choose their own destiny in accordance with their sovereign right.

94. I now turn to the problem of decolonization. It is time, indeed high time, that resolution 1514 (XV) with its historic declaration was universally accepted, regardless of differences of ideology and method. The right of peoples to self-determination must be exercised without question. This is a matter of vital importance to the third world. Our position is inspired not solely by sentiment, but also by political, legal, even philosophical consideration. The United Nations has a fundamental role to play; this is evident when we consider, first, that the oppressed peoples are seeking to cast off the yoke of colonization at the price of long, bitter and exhausting struggles to achieve their independence, and secondly, that if all the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on colonial questions had been accepted without reservation and

applied without qualification, the last vestiges of colonialism would already have been liquidated without unnecessary upheaval.

95. Our position on *apartheid* is clear: in our eyes, it is another form of man's exploitation by man. We therefore condemn it relentlessly, resolutely and categorically; we cannot acquiesce in the survival of this preposterous notion, still less in its extension to other parts of Africa, as we fear may happen.

96. With regard to the Middle East problem, Madagascar still favours the continuance of Mr. Jarring's mission and appreciates his tact, patience, balance and wisdom. We also consider that the great Powers which, whether they like it or not, have a special responsibility under the Charter, should support this mission in the search for a just and lasting solution leading to negotiations between the parties.

97. This brings me to the end of my statement. May I, in conclusion, express my hope that the coming year will see the realization of our aspirations and will give our Organization the renewed authority and prestige which the Charter enjoins and the future of the human race demands.

98. If this should not be so, we should all of us bear a heavy burden of guilt towards future generations and history would be entitled to call us to account. Personally, I refuse to believe that so large a gathering of men, endowed with so much intelligence, knowledge, experience and sensibility, will not be equal to the mission of trust with which the peoples have charged them and will not in due course succeed in finding the shining paths of peace, justice, equality and brotherhood.

99. Mr. MALIK (Indonesia): Madam President, on behalf of my delegation, I wish to extend my heartiest congratulations to you on your election to the high office of President of this Assembly. Your election is not only a recognition of your personal qualities and accomplishments, of your outstanding professional qualifications, but also a tribute to your country, Liberia, as well as to the whole continent of Africa which is playing an increasingly prominent role in our common pursuit of freedom, peace and progress. I am confident that under your enlightened Presidency, our deliberations will be guided to a successful conclusion.

100. Permit me also to express my delegation's profound regret at the passing away of your eminent predecessor, Mr. Emilio Arenales, whose dedication to the cause of world peace is well known. We wish to convey to the delegation of Guatemala our deep sense of sorrow at the loss of one of Latin America's most articulate advocates of the lofty principles of the United Nations.

101. I should like furthermore to pay tribute to the Secretary-General and assure him of the continued support of my country in all his endeavours for the cause of world peace and for his untiring devotion to the service of humanity.

102. Today is the first of October. On this day, the Indonesian people commemorate the Pantjasila, the five principles of our state philosophy. It is a day of rededication to those five principles, the source of our political and

social thinking from which emanates our independent and active foreign policy, now known as non-alignment. Non-alignment is inherent to the Indonesian nation and its desire to be friends with all nations that reciprocate its sentiments for friendship and co-operation, for progress and world peace. It was on this basis that Indonesia participated in the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade in 1961 and in Cairo in 1964. We participated in the Consultative Meeting of the Representatives of the Governments of Non-Aligned Countries held in Belgrade in July 1969 and in the meeting of foreign ministers and heads of delegations of non-aligned States here at the United Nations last Saturday. We will continue to join forces with other non-aligned nations in the search for peace and a better world to live in.

103. In reviewing some areas and events which have occupied our attention since the last session, I will first refer to the prolonged war in Viet-Nam which has caused great concern to the Government and people of Indonesia. The continuation of the talks in Paris, the de-escalation of the fighting and the announced withdrawal of American troops from Viet-Nam have given us grounds for hope of a settlement. But progress has been painfully slow and is all but overshadowed by the spectre of the battlefield.

104. Nevertheless, we continue to cherish the hope that new initiatives will brighten the prospect for peace in that area. Indonesia is willing to assist in whatever way it can, if requested by the parties involved, to turn this hope into reality and will support all practical measures—particularly through the United Nations—which may bring real peace to the region. We must not forget that for nearly thirty years the people of Viet-Nam have suffered unceasingly the terror and scourge of war. The people of Viet-Nam highly deserve the peace that will enable them to decide for themselves what their future will be without outside interference.

105. During the last year the Government and people of Indonesia have also been greatly concerned over the discouraging course of events in the Middle East and in southern Africa. Both questions have been the focus of United Nations attention since the early years of its existence. Both areas are still the source of conflict involving Members of the United Nations itself. The annual discussions by the General Assembly have left the ultimate responsibility for both questions up to the Security Council, and thus have challenged the very heart of the United Nations. When developments in each case reached a stage of extreme crisis, the Indonesian people felt strongly about the situation. My Government deemed it therefore necessary to participate actively in the search for a solution in the Security Council although we are not a member of that body.

106. With regard to the Middle East, my country is alarmed and deeply concerned with the deteriorating situation, especially of the last few months. Explosive as the situation has become, we are afraid that it may lead to a larger war, endangering the peace and security of the world.

107. The behaviour and designs of Israel since the last session have given us little cause for encouragement or grounds to entertain hope for an improvement in the situation. The arson committed against Al Aqsa Mosque, so

sacred and dear to Indonesian Moslems as well as to the entire Moslem world, under the responsibility of the illegal military occupation by Israel, has made the situation even worse and demands immediate action before it develops beyond all hopes for a negotiated settlement.

108. Our position on the central issue remains unchanged and I can only repeat what I said last year to the General Assembly [1680th meeting]. We cannot condone acquisition of other people's territory by military force. We believe that a just solution can be reached on the basis of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967. The withdrawal of Israeli forces to the lines they occupied before the war of June 1967 constitutes an essential element for a negotiated settlement.

109. As the country with the largest Muslim majority in South-East Asia, we feel that our vital interests are involved with the outcome of the struggle of our Arab brothers in the Middle East.

110. We also regret that the unarmed members of the United Nations group of observers now find themselves in the grip of virtual war. My Government fully agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment of the seriousness of the situation, and hopes that adequate safeguards will be provided for the lives of those men of peace.

111. That virtual state of war in the Middle East is a grave setback for the United Nations and a continued threat to international peace and security. Both the Security Council and the General Assembly have adopted resolutions in clear language regarding the situation. Only firm action now to implement those decisions can save the situation from getting out of hand.

112. On the questions of Namibia, and *apartheid* in South Africa and Zimbabwe, we have frequently expressed our abhorrence for the policies and tactics of the racist Government of South Africa and the illegal white minority régime in Zimbabwe, which are rapidly tightening their harsh grip on the majority of the native population in the whole area.

113. The Government of Indonesia feels very strongly that ways and means should be found to enforce United Nations decisions demanding South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia and granting independence to that Territory as early as possible. As a member of the Council for Namibia, we shall continue to exert every effort to reach that goal.

114. As for the situation in Zimbabwe, almost four years have elapsed since the unilateral declaration of independence of 11 November 1965. No progress has been made in our search for a solution. The illegal minority régime of Ian Smith is still in power. The question has become more complex in view of the already condemned collaboration of States Members of the United Nations with that illegal régime, in open defiance of United Nations resolutions.

115. We fully endorse the spirit and ideals of the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, which was reiterated in the Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa³ adopted by the Fifth Summit Conference of East and Central African

³ The Manifesto was subsequently issued as document A/7754.

States held from 14 to 16 April 1969, particularly in its assertion that without a commitment to the principles of human equality and freedom there can be no basis for peace and justice in the world.

116. Facing the danger of a racial war, my delegation believes that the time has come for the United Nations to take strong action against the illegal régime of Ian Smith, including all possible measures under Articles 41 and 42 of the Charter, and to impose effective sanctions on South Africa and Portugal.

117. We are equally concerned about the situation in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea (Bissau) and other Territories still under colonial domination. We continue to support the struggle for freedom and independence of the peoples of those Territories.

118. The continued defiance of both South Africa and Israel of Security Council decisions has brought the United Nations to a crisis which must be faced squarely and firmly. If we miss the opportunity to demonstrate our determination to uphold our principles, we will undermine our Organization.

119. In South-East Asia a dissonant element remains in the strained relations between the People's Republic of China and most of its South-East Asian neighbours, including Indonesia. We have followed with great interest the developments within the People's Republic of China. We have not, however, noted a constructive change in its attitude, at least towards my country. Apart from this problem, the question of the representation of China as the only Asian country to serve as a permanent member of the Security Council is, beyond any doubt, important. As a matter of principle, Indonesia maintains its view that the People's Republic of China should be represented in the United Nations.

120. As far as our bilateral relations with China are concerned, we are not in a position to reconsider our attitude vis-à-vis that country as long as it continues to pursue a policy of extreme and active enmity towards Indonesia. Normalization of our relations with China can be considered only if China shows a non-belligere attitude and ceases to assist and encourage subversive and rebellious activities in our country.

121. Let me now turn to the highly complex and sensitive issue of disarmament. I shall not review the results achieved thus far. In 1960 my Government welcomed the establishment of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee as a result of the two-Power agreement in Geneva, and now welcomes the increase of membership in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament from eighteen to twenty-six members. Although the General Assembly has not yet been concerned with the election of the members of the Committee, it is our hope that the increased membership will be of help in achieving more positive results.

122. We are happy to note the substantial increase of non-aligned nations represented in this Committee. We hope that, as suggested, the membership—of its Committee will rotate on an elective basis in accordance with the representative character of all major United Nations organs.

123. We welcome the discussions during this session on chemical and bacteriological weapons and their possible use. We share the hope of the Secretary-General that discussions on this important matter will lead to specific decisions facilitating political and legal action to eliminate those inhuman and barbarous weapons of war.

124. On the question of the preservation for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and ocean floor beyond present national jurisdiction, Indonesia adheres to the principle of the common heritage to be used for the common benefit of mankind. Therefore, the establishment of an international régime to govern the exploration and exploitation of the sea-bed and ocean floor beyond national jurisdiction is a basic step to prevent the use of that area for purposes of other than humanitarian nature.

125. In this connexion, my delegation would like to stress the importance of the demilitarization of that area. My delegation welcomes the idea put forward by the Soviet Union and the United States before the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. We hope that an agreement can be reached on the demilitarization of the sea-bed and ocean floor beyond national jurisdiction.

126. As we are approaching the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, I believe it is very fitting indeed to reflect on some of its achievements so that we may be able to adjust the Charter, as well as our activities, in accordance with the changed circumstances and conditions in the world today. It is for this reason that my Government attaches great importance to efforts to relate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations with the question of a general conference to review the Charter which, in accordance with Article 109, has been on the agenda since 1955.

127. Although we can congratulate ourselves on some of the achievements of our Organization in the past twenty-four years, there is little room for complacency. The world has changed. Science and technology have created new horizons in man's life; man has reached the moon. Membership of the United Nations has more than doubled and political systems and attitudes of Member States have changed. New approaches and platforms have been created to solve world problems and accelerate the economic and social development of the world. It is with these changes in mind that a stock-taking should be made, so that the achievements of our twenty-five years of labour can be fully reflected in our Charter. My delegation has in mind particularly the principles and institutional bodies pertaining to the three Ds: development, decolonization and disarmament.

128. I shall now turn to questions relating to economic development. The political tensions and conflicts which frequently preoccupy our attention have come from unresolved social and economic inequities. Recognizing this fact, the Members of the United Nations, in an effort to remove the roots of poverty and under-development, launched the First United Nations Development Decade. Today, as we are approaching the end of this Decade, it is a matter for serious concern that we have been unable to achieve even the modest objectives set in 1960.

129. It has been widely accepted that one of the major factors responsible for the slow rate of development has

been the inadequate contribution of external financing to assist the developing countries in the mobilization of their own domestic resources. As a result, these countries have had to meet their essential requirements for capital equipment and raw materials by depending, almost entirely, upon their export trade earnings. Yet it is precisely in the field of trade that these countries have been on the losing end vis-à-vis the developed countries. Not only do they face grave obstacles in entering the export market, but they have also been plagued by a continuing decline in the price of many major primary export commodities including rubber, coffee, sugar, vegetable oil, cocoa, and so on.

130. In the light of this situation, it is essential that we should not delay the re-examination of current international economic practices designed to meet adequately the future needs of the developing countries. The developing countries themselves realize that they bear the primary responsibility for the achievement of national development. They also recognize, however, that they can succeed in mobilizing and utilizing their domestic resources more effectively if they are assisted by increased and accelerated international action. Once again my delegation urges the international community to intensify its efforts to reach agreement on policy measures in the main areas of trade and finance.

131. As regards international co-operation, I wish to state that the Indonesian delegation is of the opinion that international action can be better approached through multilateral co-operation at the regional and sub-regional levels. Such co-ordination offers greater possibilities for concrete action through joint undertakings within the wider scope of an international development strategy. In its efforts to accelerate progress in this vital area, my Government has joined with the neighbouring countries of Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines to form ASEAN, the Association of South-East Asian Nations. Although still in its infancy, we are hopeful that with the aid and co-operation of other countries and general international support, the objectives of the initial sponsoring members will be realized.

132. No one can deny that the benefits to be derived from solving the problems of social and economic development will be shared by all countries of the world and will contribute greatly to the creation of world prosperity and international peace and security. We are now on the threshold of the Second United Nations Development Decade. This new United Nations Development Decade differs from the First in that we embark upon it better prepared. It is my delegation's fervent hope that the industrialized nations will join with us in accepting the challenges of development so that we may enter the new era, armed with a sense of common purpose and an agreed plan of action. In this manner the frustrations of the First United Nations Development Decade may be turned into the successes of the next.

133. Such international co-operation is particularly important to us in Indonesia as we are concentrating our efforts on the achievement of internal economic and social development. Three years ago, all of our energy and resources were being directed towards curtailing the excessively high rate of spiralling inflation which plagued our

economy. Such action was necessary before we could embark on the rehabilitation and further development of our economy. Having succeeded in this painstaking effort, last April we launched a five-year development plan which is the first in a projected series.

134. At this time, our limited domestic resources require that we take a selective approach. Consequently, we have placed major emphasis on the development of the agricultural sector and on the achievement of self-sufficiency in the production of food for our population of about 115 million. In view of our limited domestic savings, however, we are dependent on our export earnings and on external financial resources, both public and private, bilateral as well as multilateral. In this connexion, permit me to express Indonesia's appreciation of the financial and economic assistance that has been extended to us by the developed countries—particularly by the countries which constitute the Inter-Governmental Group for Indonesia—and by the United Nations and other multilateral agencies.

135. You may recall that this year my Government completed the implementation of the last phase of the Agreement between the Republic of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands concerning West New Guinea (West Irian), the most eastern part of my country, signed in New York seven years ago on 15 August 1962. This last phase of the Agreement was completed with the exercise of the act of free choice by the people of West Irian and was conducted in accordance with its provisions by the Indonesian Government, with the advice, assistance and co-operation of the United Nations Secretary-General and his special representative, Ambassador Ortiz Sanz.

136. In Indonesia there has been strong and widespread opposition, including West Irian itself, against the implementation of the act of free choice, since people considered its implementation contrary to the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Indonesia. Despite this political opposition and the technical difficulties inherent in an area known to be one of the most primitive and undeveloped areas of the world, the act of free choice was completed between 14 July and 2 August last, in a democratic and orderly way. The people of West Irian, through their elected members of the consultative assemblies, have reaffirmed their decision to remain within the Republic of Indonesia, thus upholding the national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the Republic. This positive result has been reported briefly by the Secretary-General in his introduction to the annual report on the work of the Organization [A/7601/Add.1]. A complete report by the Secretary-General on this question will be submitted to the Assembly during this twenty-fourth session.

137. As rightly stated by President Suharto, more than a month ago on the eve of 17 August, in his address to the nation at the commemoration of the anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence, this result of the act of free choice in West Irian is, in accordance with Article XXI, paragraph 2, of the New York Agreement, legally final and irrevocable and cannot be made void by whomsoever or whatever pretext.

138. I should like to take this opportunity of conveying the sincere gratitude of the Indonesian Government and its

people for the invaluable assistance and co-operation of the Secretary-General and his special representative, Ambassador Ortiz Sanz, in completing the implementation of the New York Agreement. It peacefully terminated a long-standing political dispute between two countries, Indonesia and the Netherlands. We also appreciate the fact that in the implementation of this important task, my Government has always had the co-operation and understanding of the Netherlands Government.

139. The Indonesian Government is now seriously engaged in the further development of West Irian, not only as a national duty for the progress of its own people, but as a task of paramount importance for humanity.

140. In this respect Indonesia is happy to have the full co-operation of the Netherlands Government which is prepared to render special financial assistance to a fund, now under discussion with the Asian Development Bank in Manila, for the accelerated development in West Irian within the framework of Indonesia's five-year development plan. Needless to say, my Government is ready to welcome the assistance of all other interested nations, both in and outside the United Nations.

141. I have now arrived at my concluding remarks. The year of 1969 will be remembered in that it has offered an example of precisely how much man can achieve when he is imbued with a deep sense of dedication towards the attainment of a desired goal. I refer to the successful achievement made by science and technology in unveiling the secrets surrounding outer space and distant celestial bodies, and especially to the magnificent and daring exploit which enabled man to set foot on the surface of the moon. How much greater would be the triumph, however, if such single-minded and tenacious dedication could be applied to the solution of the massive problems of peace and security, of poverty and development, and of the freedom and dignity of man on earth.

142. Nearly twenty-five years ago, when the world was still suffering from the devastation of war, mankind began a collective and commendable effort to start a new life. This effort was reflected in the United Nations Charter. During this period we have had successes and failures. Even amid success, there is continued preoccupation with the United Nations weaknesses and yet, amid failure, there is continued confidence in the United Nations strength.

143. All of us remain dedicated to the common pursuit of peace, progress and prosperity. The section of the world population most interested in a true and real peace is youth, whose very destiny is at stake. We have noted the restlessness among the young in all parts of the world. It is they who will inherit the world of tomorrow, and we believe that appropriate steps should be taken in order to fulfil their aspirations and to help them adjust to a progressive world outlook that will benefit from our accumulated experience and knowledge. In so doing, a gap between generations can be bridged and the future generation can be imbued with a truly constructive spirit. In this context my delegation supports the idea agreed upon in principle by the Preparatory Committee for the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations for supplementing the forthcoming commemorative session next year with an

assembly of the youth of the world, dedicated to the world of the United Nations of tomorrow.

144. In conclusion, let me assure the Assembly that Indonesia will continue to uphold the high principles of the Charter, and support every endeavour to strengthen the Organization in its efforts to maintain international peace and security and to obtain the well-being of people throughout the world.

145. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of South Africa to speak in exercise of his right of reply.

146. Mr. MULLER (South Africa): During the general debate there have been a number of critical references to the South West African issue. I regret that once again the criticism is in complete disregard of the situation as it exists both in law and in fact.

147. I reject with the greatest possible emphasis the charges levelled at my Government. They are unwarranted in any objective view and they do an injustice to a Member country which is making an honest and effective contribu-

tion to the welfare of a large region of the African continent. Indeed, in a world less given to ideological conflict, South Africa's record in South West Africa would be commended, not condemned.

148. But I do not now intend to deal with the substance of the charges made by a number of speakers in this debate, or with the misconceptions which have characterized their remarks. Instead, I have decided to address a letter to the Secretary-General in which I have set out in detail my Government's reaction to charges of this nature. This letter, which also serves as our reply to Security Council resolution 269 (1969) of 12 August 1969, I shall shortly hand to the Secretary-General.

149. The PRESIDENT: I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the permanent representatives of Lesotho and Norway and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Madagascar and Indonesia for the compliments which they have paid to me.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.