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President: Mr. Alex QUAISON-SACKY (Ghana).

Tributes to the memory of Mr. Pierre Ngendandumwe, Prime Minister of Burundi, and Mr. Thor Thors, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations

1. The PRESIDENT: Since our last meeting we have learned with deep sorrow of the tragic death of the Prime Minister of Burundi. On behalf of the General Assembly, I extend to the members of his family and to the Government and people of Burundi the sincere condolences of all Members.

2. We have also learned with great regret and sorrow of the sudden death of Ambassador Thor Thors of Iceland, for many years the Permanent Representative of his country to the United Nations and one of the strongest supporters of the Organization since its inception. I am sure I speak for all Members in extending to the family of Thor Thors, and to the Government and people of Iceland, the sincere condolences of the General Assembly.

3. I invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in memory of the late Prime Minister of Burundi and Ambassador Thor Thors.

The representatives stood in silence.

4. Mr. KJARTANSSON (Iceland): When His Excellency, Ambassador Thor Thors, unexpectedly passed away at his home in Washington exactly one week ago today, it was indeed a heavy and tragic blow to his family and an indescribable loss to his many friends, as well as to his country which he had served so faithfully and excellently for twenty-five years. His many positions will be difficult to fill and his memory will stay with us for a long time to come.

5. Mr. President, permit me on behalf of the delegation of Iceland, to thank you as well as the many other representatives who have expressed their condolences in connexion with the untimely death of His Excellency, Ambassador Thor Thors.

6. Mr. NYANGOMA (Burundi) (translated from French): Mr. President, I should like to say on behalf of the delegation of Burundi and myself how deeply we have been moved by your expression of sympathy on the death of our Prime Minister, Mr. Pierre Ngendandumwe. Our Prime Minister was, I believe, a personal friend of many former representatives to this Assembly; he was also a friend of the United Nations. To Burundi, he was a man who not only had displayed realism in the past but had given promise of many achievements in the future. He knew that Burundi was a small, land-locked country in the heart of Africa, but he believed that because of its human potential the country was capable of many, and indeed of marvellous achievements. He was one of those who believed that the outside world—whether the closer world of our neighbours or the world far beyond—could give Burundi valuable help, but that such help must be deserved. If I may say so, he was dynamic without arrogance, and he could be very modest without affectation.

7. After hearing your kind words, Mr. President, I wish to say that the delegation of Burundi will convey your condolences to His Majesty the King of Burundi and to the members of the Government which the Prime Minister, Mr. Ngendandumwe, had only recently formed. Once again, Mr. President, I thank you.

Statement by the Secretary-General

8. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. President, in view of various reports and speculations concerning the financial position of the United Nations, I feel it is incumbent upon me to try to set out the factual position. In doing so, I am conscious of the fact that the issues confronting this Assembly cannot be viewed—still less resolved—solely in their monetary context. At the same time, it has to be recognized that political accommodations and compromise formulae, necessary though they are, are not of themselves a substitute for the financial stability of this Organization.

9. It is true that the record shows that, despite repeated threats of crisis, the United Nations has somehow managed until now to meet its financial obligations and to survive. In the face of this record, unduly alarmist prophecies are certainly not warranted. But those who profess to believe that the Organization's present financial position and prospects are not so serious must believe me when I say that the problem is serious and merits the urgent attention and concern of its membership. What, then, are the essential facts in the light of which action must urgently be taken? I submit they are as follows:

10. First, as of today, the Organization's total net cash resources, in respect of the regular budget, the

United Nations bond account, and the UNEF and ONUC special accounts, amount to the equivalent of \$14.6 million. Of this amount, \$9.3 million represents collections of contributions from Members during the past two weeks. A cash reserve of some \$14.5 million, moreover, is little more than the amount required to maintain minimum bank balances throughout the world for the purpose of meeting day-to-day expenditures at the levels currently authorized.

11. Second, although as of today the accounts show \$136 million as the total amount of assessed contributions outstanding, past experience provides no grounds for anticipating payment of more than \$6 or \$7 million of this amount within the next several weeks. In the meantime, the Organization's current payrolls and other normal expenses on all accounts may be estimated as requiring average monthly cash disbursements of not less than \$9 million. Nor do these requirements take account of any growth in 1965 in the Organization's responsibilities, notably in connexion with trade and industrial development, responsibilities to which so many delegations have rightfully attached considerable importance.

12. Third, as of today, the Working Capital Fund, to which recourse would otherwise be had pending receipt of assessed contributions, has been virtually depleted. Of the Fund's paid-up advances of almost \$40 million, \$20.7 million have been expended to finance past budgetary appropriations. It is imperative, if normal operations and services are not to be seriously disrupted, that the Working Capital Fund be quickly and adequately replenished.

13. Fourth, as of today, the United Nations owes, mainly to Governments for goods and services previously supplied, an estimated total of approximately \$45 million. This, of course, is exclusive of indebtedness to Governments in respect of the unamortized principal of outstanding United Nations bonds amounting to \$154.8 million. The existence of this long-term debt and the consequences, in terms of the United Nations regular budget, of its annual servicing cost, must, I believe, be taken duly into account in the formulation of longer-range proposals for placing the finances of the Organization on a more secure and satisfactory footing.

14. The more immediate problem, however, is to ensure that in the weeks and months ahead, the United Nations is in a position to keep faith with those who have kept faith with it. No one, surely, can responsibly maintain, in the face of the facts I have presented, that the Organization is now in that position.

15. It is not my purpose, in making this statement at this time, to seek to persuade any Member State to change, still less to abandon, any position of principle to which it feels itself committed under the provisions of the Charter. It is my firm conviction, nevertheless, as I have said before, that it is not beyond the capacity of reasonable men to reach reasonable accommodations, if there is a will to reach them. By one expedient

or another, the Organization has so far managed to meet its obligations and thus to maintain its financial integrity. But experience has shown all too clearly that what I have previously described as a policy of improvisation, of ad hoc solutions, of reliance on the generosity of a few rather than the collective responsibility of all—that such a policy cannot much longer endure if the United Nations itself is to endure as a dynamic and effective instrument of international action. That, too, is my firm conviction.

16. I feel I have done my duty in placing the true facts before the Assembly. I appeal to all delegations, as a matter of urgency, to co-operate in devising ways and means of remedying the situation.

Statement by the President

17. The PRESIDENT: I am sure that all delegations have listened carefully to the statement by the Secretary-General and have taken note of the serious financial difficulty that the Organization faces today. The facts have now been presented. During the last six weeks I have been in close consultation with almost every delegation, through the various groupings of the Assembly, and it seems to me that there is a consensus on three main points.

18. Firstly, the United Nations should be strengthened both financially and morally. For this purpose it is essential that voluntary contributions be made by the Member Governments, with the highly developed countries making substantial contributions. This will have the effect not only of strengthening the Organization financially but of restoring its moral authority.

19. Secondly, the work of the General Assembly should be conducted under normal procedures as soon as possible.

20. Thirdly, every effort should be made to avoid a confrontation on the issue of Article 19. I believe that no Member of this Assembly wants a situation to arise where the question of the applicability of Article 19 will have to be raised.

21. If I am right in my assessment that a consensus exists on those three points, I urge that initiatives be taken to enable the Assembly to adopt that consensus as a decision. This is International Co-Operation Year, when the role of the United Nations as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations should be vigorous and effective. For this purpose, I appeal to all Member States to co-operate in making the United Nations morally strong, financially stable and politically effective.

22. It is my intention to proceed with the general debate until the end of the week. I hope that those delegations that have not inscribed their names already will do so as soon as possible. It is my present intention also that by Monday, 25 January 1965, we should proceed to elect the Chairman of committees and the Vice-Presidents and constitute the General Committee.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.