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**President: Mr. Emilio ARENALES (Guatemala).**

*Special meeting in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

1. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): I call to order the special meeting of the General Assembly in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This commemoration is of particular importance in view of the fact that the General Assembly has designated 1968 as International Year for Human Rights.

2. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the first international document to set forth the principles underlying the essential dignity of man and the conditions for achieving such dignity by men and women everywhere.

3. There can be no doubt that we have made important advances along the road to human freedom and that there is now a greater international awareness of human rights than ever before. But we must always remain on the alert because, in spite of our declarations and intentions, human rights continue to be violated, in one way or another, in almost every part of the world. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that 1968 has witnessed a series of most flagrant and reprehensible violations of both individual and collective human rights.

4. These infringements of the principles of the Universal Declaration must cease and these violations of human dignity must be brought to an end; otherwise, our combined efforts will have been in vain and peace, which in the last instance depends on the scrupulous observance of human rights, will be more than ever endangered, at both the national and international levels.

5. On this solemn occasion special messages have been received from His Holiness the Pope, His Excellency the President of the Philippines, Her Excellency the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Indonesia, His Imperial Majesty the Shah of Iran, His Excellency the Prime Minister of Japan, His Excellency the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Somalia and His Excellency the President of the Republic of Turkey. These messages will be circulated as press releases.

6. As President of the General Assembly, I have invited the President of the International Conference on Human Rights<sup>1</sup> and the presiding officers of the United Nations bodies particularly concerned with human rights who are attending this session of the General Assembly, three of the persons who participated in the drafting of the Declaration, three recipients of the United Nations Human Rights Prize and a representative of each of the other recipients, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to address the General Assembly.

7. I now invite Her Imperial Highness Princess Ashraf Pahlavi of Iran, President of the International Conference on Human Rights, to address the General Assembly.

8. Her Imperial Highness Princess Ashraf PAHLAVI (Iran), President of the International Conference on Human Rights (*translated from French*): There are some privileged occasions in life which should be invested with particular solemnity. The special meeting of the General Assembly at which we are gathered today is one of them.

9. Not only are we commemorating at this time the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but this ceremony also marks the culmination of many activities initiated during the International Year for Human Rights. It is also a valuable landmark on the long road leading to the full realization of these rights.

10. While this is, of course, a commemorative ceremony, it is also a moment for collective reflexion and general resolve.

11. Twenty years ago, almost to the day, the General Assembly adopted the text of the Declaration [*resolution 217 (III)*] "as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations". The torch was lit shortly before midnight on 10 December 1948, lighting the way ahead.

12. And today, as we look back on its illustrious past, we see that the Declaration is still the lodestar of the international community. We see that many men set their course by it and that it is central to many laws, conventions and declarations. We see that it has acquired practical value in international law.

13. It is reassuring to note that the authors of the Declaration foresaw that the moral obligation attached to the Declaration would, in time, become a true imperative of international life. We are therefore in duty bound to associate them with this commemorative ceremony, to pay our respects to those of them who are present here and those who were unable to join us, and to honour the

<sup>1</sup> Held in Teheran from 22 April to 13 May 1968.

memory of the pioneers too soon lost to us. I cannot give a full list of names, but I can say that they are always present in our thoughts and that the Proclamation unanimously adopted last spring at the Teheran Conference is, in a way, a solemn tribute to their efforts, because it affirms unequivocally that the Declaration “constitutes an obligation for the members of the international community”.<sup>2</sup>

14. The International Conference on Human Rights took up the work of the pioneers of 1948 and, as it is generally regarded as one of the most significant events of the International Year for Human Rights, it is only proper to refer here to its proceedings. Having had the honour and privilege of presiding over its work, I can say that it fulfilled its role of catalyst admirably. Of course, this is neither the time nor the place to give a summary of its resolutions, but I should like, with your permission, to dwell on the significance of the Proclamation.

15. It is a solemn instrument which takes a decisive step towards the consolidation of a world concept of human rights. It is the first document of its kind which is not limited to the “traditional freedoms” but covers the whole range of economic, social and cultural rights. It also has the force of a pledge, since it reflects the unanimous will of the international community to pursue to the end the full and general realization of human rights, in other words, to remove the scourges of illiteracy, racism, violence, hunger and sickness from the face of the earth. Whatever its weaknesses—and I do not wish to conceal them—twenty years after the Declaration a solemn proclamation equal to the problems of our time had to be drawn up. The world had to be shown that, above and beyond differences in outlook, the concept of human rights remains one and indivisible. By its broad scope, covering problems ranging from *apartheid* to general disarmament, from illiteracy to the growing gap between rich and poor nations, the Proclamation takes account of present-day needs. I fervently hope that it will serve as a rallying point for all the active forces seeking to promote and protect human rights throughout the world.

16. But the success and the usefulness of the Teheran Conference and the International Year for Human Rights must not lead us to close our eyes to the dangers threatening human rights throughout the world and the difficulties in the way of their full and complete realization.

17. While each step forward taken by mankind in the past 400 million years may, as has been said, have been a step towards man, it is none the less true that the concept of human rights itself has many different and complex aspects. Many would describe human rights as natural and self-evident. However, after concerning myself with them for many years, I have come to understand that, on the contrary, they are far from simple.

18. If this were not so, how would it have been possible for them to be interpreted differently by the various political and cultural groups which co-exist on our planet? Differences of opinion appear at each step, even where there seems to be agreement at the practical level. We must

not hide the truth from ourselves. Moreover, instead of encouraging and sharpening our differences, we must redouble our efforts so that one day, as soon as possible, rights everywhere are based on the same understandings. Then, and only then, will we have truly laboured on man's behalf.

19. This quite naturally leads me to point to another difficulty in the realization of human rights: the different degrees of development among members of the international community.

20. The promotion of human rights is directly linked with economic and social progress. In two thirds of the world there is no possibility of ensuring full enjoyment of these rights unless, at the same time, the conditions are created for respect of the most elementary rights, that is, the right to adequate food, the right to health and the right to education. And from this standpoint the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor nations gives rise to natural anxiety.

21. We live in the same universe, and yet we are not contemporaries. More than half of mankind is deprived of the most elementary necessities of existence. Vast areas of the world are still ravaged by hunger and disease. Hundreds of millions of illiterates are sunk in ignorance. War, with its attendant miseries, rages in several corners of the world; racism continues, alas, to be mankind's running sore, and here and there colonialism manages to maintain its hold. In these circumstances, the provisions of the Declaration remain mere promises for vast numbers of human beings.

22. These few remarks are enough to show how long is the road before us. It would be an illusion to think that modern technology will enable us to travel that road in the space of a few days. We must be patient. Ensuring respect for human rights is indeed a never-ending task.

23. Progress is the inevitable lot of mankind today and, in the long run, this can only facilitate the full realization of human rights. But this does not mean that we can just sit back and fold our arms. Precisely because the evolution towards world unity is determined by the growth of technology, it is becoming more and more necessary, if this evolution is to remain human, to ensure that the whole range of human rights is made a tangible reality. The monstrous nature of the indignities suffered by mankind, the awakening of prejudices which we are witnessing in several places, and the general and fearful expansion of means of destruction all enjoin continued vigilance and a redoubling of our efforts. Each and every one of us must do his best both at home and at the international level, to convert the principles of the Declaration into reality.

24. When the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948, the representatives meeting in the Palais de Chaillot were perhaps not fully aware that mankind had already embarked on its greatest adventure since the birth of the first civilizations. The scientific revolution of our age could be discerned only dimly at that time through the pall of smoke created by one of the most murderous conflicts in history. But now, as we meet again, twenty years later, we know that a change of era is taking place before our eyes. We can

<sup>2</sup> *Final Act of the International Conference on Human Rights* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.XIV.2), Proclamation of Teheran, para. 2.

feel new forces overturning in us mankind's entire past and we are aware of vast changes taking place around us with disconcerting rapidity.

25. All of us, whatever our degree of advancement, are entering a new phase of technological civilization. And this civilization has developed so far by itself, so to speak, without any control; it has created its own internal structure, its own mechanisms and its own priorities. Indifferent to moral imperatives and using scientific progress as its spring-board, all it seems to look for in man is his efficiency as a producer and his submissiveness as a consumer. That is a dangerous situation for which the only remedy is precisely parallel and effective progress in human rights.

26. On this twentieth anniversary of the Declaration, we must make a solemn undertaking to strengthen our activities with a view to speedy realization of all human rights. We must redouble our efforts to eliminate the gap between the texts and the real situation. We must destroy the curtain that has fallen between the mind and the heart.

27. A contemporary poet has said that man falls a prey to the miracles of his mind. Let us see to it that those miracles direct his destiny towards the beneficial use of new scientific skills and new technological power, and not towards destruction. More than ever we must proclaim loud and clear that man is not only the agent but also the supreme and sole objective of progress and development.

28. Mr. PEREZ GUERRERO (Venezuela), President of the Economic and Social Council (*translated from Spanish*): Twenty years ago, at the session of the General Assembly held in Paris, the aspirations of all the peoples of the world were embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this way, certain important principles of the United Nations Charter were specifically and explicitly put into effect. This epoch-making document gave expression to the fundamental concept that international law is concerned not only with the rights and obligations of States but also with the rights—and consequent duties—of individuals. It could not have been otherwise. In the atomic era we could not have limited ourselves to establishing rules governing the state of war and the state of peace. We had to try to achieve permanent peace and to institutionalize it—although its full achievement has so far eluded us—and no goal could have been more appropriate, or indeed more natural, than the full realization of human rights, which in the words of the General Assembly is a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations.

29. In thus establishing the goal of endeavours and our preoccupations, we implicitly traced the arduous road we would have to travel to move gradually towards it, a road full of ups and downs and vicissitudes, as we have found during the twenty years that have elapsed since that historic Declaration. We have, it is true, suffered set-backs and frustrations in this noble struggle. Yet the Declaration gave strength and shape to the universal conscience, which is today active and watchful in this field and no longer fragmented. The sufferings of one are the sufferings of all, just as the achievements of one are the achievements of all, irrespective of the community concerned.

30. The Universal Declaration showed that mankind had reached the age of reason, and that it was capable of distinguishing between what would further and what would impede progress in human rights. Since much remained to be done, it was all the more necessary to act diligently and with foresight. No State or people can claim to have fully attained the objectives set by the Declaration, which have today been incorporated and developed in other international instruments relating to human rights so long as dark, or even grey, areas exist in any part of the world, and so long as these are not eliminated with all due speed, the progress achieved elsewhere may be jeopardized.

31. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in itself is no guarantee that the purposes will be achieved. The efforts of many thousands of men and women are required, men and women identified with the principles set forth in the Declaration and dedicated to promoting them. Fortunately, such men and women exist; some have done outstanding work and deserve our gratitude, including the authors of the Universal Declaration, some of whom are present with us today. But what is needed above all—and these men and women are helping to create it—is a favourable attitude in the States making up the international community and in their political and economic relations. Armed conflicts have constituted a tremendous and tragic obstacle to human rights. Let us hope that these conflicts will be satisfactorily settled, and that full and immediate advantage will be taken of the opportunities for so doing that appear in an otherwise gloomy picture. It is time that the social injustice affecting the majority of peoples gave way to a better world where the barriers dividing the poor from the rich can begin to be dismantled.

32. The peoples of the world are today seeking a way of life that comes closer to satisfying their deepest aspirations. This state of affairs provides us with a good opportunity to advance the universal cause of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The progress already achieved should act as an encouragement to spare no efforts to take advantage of this opportunity. The Universal Declaration remains a beacon of hope for mankind. The peoples of the world owe it to themselves to make individual and collective use of all the intellectual and material means within their reach so that in the next twenty years the young and those yet to be born may enjoy a life which today, for most of mankind, does not satisfy all the conditions set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this endeavour the United Nations still has a tremendous task to perform and, together with the other competent organs, the Economic and Social Council will, I am sure, carry out its duties to the full.

33. Mr. BOYE (Senegal), Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights (*translated from French*): First of all, I should like to convey my sincere congratulations to the prize-winners who will shortly receive the plaque commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in recognition of their outstanding achievements in the field of human rights.

34. All of you who will shortly be coming up to the podium to receive this token of the United Nations esteem have contributed, since 1948, with courage and lucidity to

the defence of the sacred rights and fundamental freedoms of man.

35. Of course, the task of the Special Committee,<sup>3</sup> of which I am a member was not easy, since many names were submitted to us and, I must say, all of them had some claim to a reward. But, as you know, the number of prizes was limited and we had to choose six names only.

36. Does this mean that the other candidates were not deserving? Of course not. For our part, we should have liked to pay a tribute to all those who contributed to the drafting not only of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but also of the Charter of the United Nations, the foundation-stone of our Organization.

37. We should also have liked to pay a tribute to all those who have died or are languishing in prison solely because they proclaimed the equality of all men in this world and their faith in fraternal co-operation between all strata of world society.

38. Those prize-winners who are still living will have the pleasure of receiving their reward. There are, alas, those who are dead: Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who fought for the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and was the first Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights; and Chief Albert Luthuli, winner of the Nobel Prize and freedom fighter who, after being subjected to inhuman treatment in South African prisons as a result of which he lost his sight, died while under house arrest, knocked down by a train, we are told, while crossing a railway line.

39. May I also associate with them, in one and the same tribute, the names of two outstanding persons who succumbed to the bullets of men who did not want history to continue its march: I refer to the Reverend Martin Luther King and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, who were not honoured this year, but who, I am sure, will next time receive posthumous awards for the sacrifices they made so that all mankind might know that violence, hatred and racism must be banished from our planet if it is not to disappear for ever.

40. Twenty years have passed since men of goodwill met to immortalize their ideas of freedom, peace and justice in a solemn Declaration. What had happened? What has happened since the Declaration? What will happen tomorrow?

41. One man, hiding behind the hypocritical shield of what he called "non-intervention in the domestic affairs of his State", had succeeded in violating, grossly and with impunity, the most elementary freedoms, first of certain groups within his own country, and then of peoples of sovereign States. Then, inevitably, these barbarous acts had revolted the conscience of mankind and a terrible war had plunged the world into appalling suffering.

42. The League of Nations had been unable to define how far a man or a State could invoke the admittedly sacred principle of "non-intervention in the domestic affairs of a sovereign country". The League of Nations, it must be admitted, had failed miserably.

43. Then, after the dreadful war of 1939-1945, representatives of the free nations swore to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind". The United Nations was born at San Francisco on 26 June 1945.

44. Immediately afterwards, men set to work to prepare and define universal principles for the protection of human rights, the honest and rigorous observance of which by States would, we believed, save mankind from further suffering.

45. Peoples of Asia and Africa had spontaneously and naturally come to the aid of their brother peoples in the west to fight racism and oppression so that human dignity might flourish in freedom. These peoples, through their legal representatives if they were independent, or through their official spokesmen to the Governments then responsible for their foreign affairs, had enthusiastically supported all the international instruments aimed at the effective implementation of the solemn principles contained in the Declaration.

46. But on their return from the battle fields of Europe, these peoples discovered, to their great disappointment and bitterness, that despite all the solemn declarations, despite all the lofty principles of the Charter, despite all the other important international instruments—such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [*resolution 2200 (XXI)*], the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination [*resolution 1904 (XVIII)*], the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination [*resolution 2106 (XX)*], the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide [*resolution 260 (III)*] and the Slavery Convention of 25 September 1926—the ignoble policy based on the domination of one race over another had begun to spread on their continents.

47. Elementary freedoms and fundamental rights are being brutally denied, sometimes with unprecedented violence, to millions of human beings who ask only to be treated in the same way as those at whose side they fought twenty-five years ago in defence of their human dignity.

48. These African and Asian peoples know that millions of human beings whose only crime was to belong to a particular race and who died in Hitler's gas ovens, that the countless victims of Oradour-sur-Glane in France, for example, or of Stalingrad in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proclaim their support—silent and cold, yet how moving and eloquent!

49. Yet there are still some States in the United Nations, as there were in the former League of Nations, which close their eyes to the terrible sufferings of millions of human beings and bow their heads in guilty abstention, murmuring shamefacedly "non-intervention in domestic affairs".

50. It so happens that in this historic year commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights a son of Africa has

<sup>3</sup> Special Committee to Select the Winners of the United Nations Human Rights Prize.



been elected Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights, the main United Nations body dealing with all questions relating to fundamental freedoms and human rights.

51. It so happens that in this historic year sons of Africa are presiding over the important committees of our Organization dealing with decolonization or *apartheid*.

52. It so happens, finally, that in this month of December 1968, when we are celebrating this historic Human Rights Day, a son of Africa is President of the Security Council, the United Nations organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

53. May we perhaps discern in these happy coincidences a desire on the part of our Organization to carry out its tasks more effectively and more realistically, and a desire on the part of the Governments of Member States to free from their sufferings the millions of human beings who in this nuclear age are reduced to the level of beasts of burden?

54. Nothing is gained by paying lip-service to important international instruments for the protection of human rights if, in practice, an odious policy of discrimination and repression is allowed to take hold in large areas of the world, inevitably leading one day first to a localized, and then to a generalized, conflict.

55. I have deliberately not embarked on an analysis of the various international instruments which have emerged since 1948, the texts of which are in any case familiar. All these instruments are effective only in so far as they are implemented honestly and without restrictions.

56. What is important is to go beyond the negative concept of "peaceful coexistence" and to work sincerely towards the effective solidarity of all peoples, regardless of race, colour, religion or political belief. This solidarity should take the specific form, in our Organization, of pressure by all States on the colonial Powers to accord full and complete freedom to the peoples still under their domination, with enjoyment not only of all their civil and political rights but also of their economic, social and cultural rights.

57. The shameful policy of *apartheid* must be outlawed and all States must solemnly undertake, in this historic human rights year, to join together resolutely to eliminate or destroy it.

58. Territories militarily occupied following armed aggression must be liberated so that their citizens can live in dignity in lasting peace.

59. All refugees, wherever they may be, must be able to return to their own countries and live a decent life there, safe from the evils and hardships of homelessness.

60. I cannot end without addressing myself to the so-called "rich" countries which, through their selfish policies, maintain the countries of the third world in an ignoble state of economic dependence. Every day, the prices of raw materials produced by the developing countries fall on the world market, while the prices of manufactures from the

industrialized countries rise at a dizzy pace. The result is a gap between the two groups, which takes the form of an increasingly disturbing impoverishment of the countries of the third world. How can we ignore the fact that two thirds of the world's population lives in countries whose *per capita* output is less than \$100? In our view, an honest and effective implementation of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should induce the "rich" countries to bridge this gap as soon as possible—which would, after all, be in their own interests in the long run.

61. How can a poor people, physically, morally and intellectually ill, enjoy civil and political rights whose true meaning it cannot understand? An ignorant man, a poor man, or a sick man cannot grasp the concept of civil and political rights; he does not have the material, intellectual or physical means to do so. That is why I attach as much importance to the economic aspect of my statement as I do to its political aspect.

62. I fervently hope with all my heart that the memory of the dead of the two world wars, the sacrifices of the "freedom fighters" and the desperate struggle of the poor will make us fully aware of the extent of the task ahead of us in the Organization in order to ensure that all men on this earth may at last live in peace, dignity and social justice.

63. Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland), Past Chairman of the Commission on the Status of Women: Since the foundation of the United Nations serious consideration has been devoted to the questions of equality and non-discrimination. The unanimity on the fact that lack of equality based on sex and, moreover, discrimination against women was a universal problem that would hamper the realization of the common standards solemnly set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, found expression in the early formation of the Commission on the Status of Women, to study the prevailing situation and to make recommendations for remedy.

64. It was jokingly said that "If the Commission on the Status of Women still exists twenty years after its foundation, then a commission on the status of men will be needed". Over twenty years have gone by and the Commission still exists. It has, however, never devoted its time to the consideration of the status of women alone. If we try to achieve equality and eliminate discrimination, comparisons are necessary and measures have to be taken keeping in mind the rights and the responsibilities of the other sex as well. The members of the present thirty-two delegations represent their Governments, and not only women, and they are often composed of men and women.

65. When we read the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the unique Magna Carta of mankind, we may do so keeping in mind various facets of human life. Reading it in view of the required equality between the sexes, we find the equality mentioned *expressis verbis* in the fifth preambular paragraph, which reaffirms the "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women . . ." We find it again in article 2, which states that everyone, without distinction of any kind, such as sex, is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the

Declaration. Article 16, which deals with the family, still confirms the "equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution". Every other article deals with "everyone" and "no one", which cannot exclude any human being, wherever rights or responsibilities are concerned.

66. If we were asked, as women today, women in the entire world, what have been the achievements since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and what remains to be done, we should agree that the balance sheet shows a great deal of really positive results. The international legislation in this particular field consists of six Conventions, partly or entirely dealing with equal rights between the sexes in the field of political rights, nationality, marriage, education, employment, occupation and equal pay. The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, adopted last year [*resolution 2263 (XXII)*] singles out in clear terms the standards of equality and non-discrimination based on sex.

67. The International Covenants of Human Rights [*resolution 2200 (XXI)*] and the Optional Protocol [*ibid., annex*] elaborate the principles of the Declaration of Human Rights and offer a possibility for setting up international implementation machinery. The constitutions of newly independent States reflect the principles of these documents, and a great deal of national legislation has been adopted everywhere in order to meet the requirements of the international standards. Much progress has been made in the practical implementation of the adopted principles as well.

68. Where do we stand now? What should be done in the future? In spite of all the progress that has been made, we must agree that equality has not yet been achieved and that discrimination, open and hidden, continues. There is not a single country in which women take part in the Government of their country equally with men, and if we want to regard this session of the General Assembly, for instance, as a mirror of this participation at the international level, we can ask whether 94 per cent and 6 per cent—which is the rate between the male and female representatives at this twenty-third session of the General Assembly—really reflects equality. When recently in a country which was one of the very first in the world to grant women suffrage and where the rate of women in the Parliament is 17 per cent, a study was made concerning women in leading positions in public office and in the country's economy as a whole, the rate was discovered to be about 4 per cent only. A great deal of inequality between the sexes still exists at every level in the field of education, in working life, and especially in private law, in almost every country.

69. But Rome was not built in a day. There is serious reason for hope of great improvement as it is more and more understood that human resources are equally valuable and that they have to be integrated into the life of the community to create equal opportunities and conditions so as to make the equal rights and the equal responsibilities become a reality.

70. We still need a great deal of education of public opinion and a great many changes in the attitudes of both men and women before full equality can be achieved,

keeping in mind, though, that by these efforts we do not even try to achieve similarity. Tributes have always been paid to women as mothers. The time has come when we have to pay a tribute to the fathers and mothers in the world who want to see in their children human beings, not only human beings and their future wives, and who give their children equal opportunities to enjoy their fundamental human rights and freedoms. May the years to come be those of real understanding of the concept of equal dignity of all human beings irrespective of sex. Everything else will follow as an interpretation.

71. Mr. JUVIGNY (France), Chairman of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (*translated from French*):

"There are too many factors of change; movements of population; immigrations; revolutions in technical processes; constant changes in the balance between the various kinds of agricultural and industrial production, and in the respective roles of machinery and manual work; in the organization of labour; in the possession and utilization of raw materials; in financial and commercial relations; in transport, aviation, wireless. Are the adjustments to be determined by force only, or will it be recognized that they must, if we are to avoid periodic disaster, inevitably be brought within a framework of voluntary co-operation . . . ?"<sup>4</sup>

These views were put forward by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations in New York on 2 May 1939.

72. At a time when the world was on the edge of the abyss, this distant predecessor of yours, Mr. Secretary-General, who was aware of the growing dangers, was already listing the problems which our Organization deals with daily and, at the same time, presaging what a few years later—but after what great upheavals!—was to be specifically stated in the Charter.

73. It is the Charter that established the obligation of international co-operation, particularly in the field of human rights: it is the Charter that led to the "flowering"—to use Dag Hammarskjöld's term—of specialized agencies intended to realize, each in its own field but often also through joint action, achievements as fruitful as those of the International Labour Organisation since 1919 in the promotion and protection of worker's rights.

74. It is the Charter that, unlike the Covenant of the League of Nations—which was focused basically on States—gave human rights international sanction.

75. The entry of human rights into the sphere of international jurisdiction was at that time a real revolution, which perhaps surprised jurists even more than it did politicians; it was an especially far-reaching revolution because in addition to the traditional rights and freedoms—those of Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of 1789, and the Western constitutions of the nineteenth century—the Charter, and subsequently, in more specific terms, the Universal Declaration, characterized social and cultural aspirations as genuine rights.

<sup>4</sup> League of Nations, *Official Journal*, 20th Year, Nos. 5-6 (May-June 1939), p. 294.

76. It might have been supposed at that time that the protection, supervision and promotion of human rights would, from the outset be the responsibility of the international Organizations. Some hoped so, and even tried immediately to give the United Nations that competence or, at all events, that function. But it was soon realized that the United Nations in fact would have to steer a difficult course between the international obligation of co-operation and the rule of non-intervention in domestic affairs.

77. Since then, we have seen ever-patient but ill-rewarded endeavours, bold moves quickly crushed and periods of stagnation which, nevertheless, have fortunately paved the way for new leaps forward. It is the balance-sheet of these twenty years that we are drawing up today. And the balance-sheet shows that we have been able to overcome apparent or real contradictions—a process which, as we have known since Hegel, is the motive force of history.

78. The structure that has been built up over these two last decades is dominated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Others have told and will tell of what it has done and will do for mankind. For us, its basic nature and historic significance lie, as is indicated in the Proclamation of Teheran, in the fact that it “states a common understanding of the peoples of the world concerning the inalienable and inviolable rights of all members of the human family”.<sup>5</sup>

79. Transcending different political systems, philosophies and religions, and despite strife, tensions, conflicts of interest or ideology and differences in levels of development, unity is recognized and accepted in diversity.

80. The Declaration draws its moral and legal force from its adoption by the organized international community, but it is also grounded—as is shown by the admirable work just published by UNESCO<sup>6</sup>—in the moral principles enshrined in the writings of philosophers, the tragedies of antiquity, the sacred books as well as the ancient codes, the praetorian edicts and the systems of common law; and this is not historically confined to the Mediterranean area.

81. The ideal proclaimed in the Declaration—a synthesis of permanent values and modern aspirations—today assumes a particular importance, which its authors probably did not foresee, but of which they perhaps had a presentiment.

82. At the present time, the promotion of human rights is taking place in a world in a state of complete flux; many discoveries are being made, some of them of a radically new character. Scientific and technological advances are providing those who are responsible for organizing the life of the community with considerable, even immeasurable, means compared to those available only a few decades ago. And for some, there is a great temptation to use these means to further efficiency—which is, after all, justifiable, since efficiency is essential for the effective implementation

of economic, social and cultural rights—but in so doing there is a tendency to neglect the human element.

83. Henceforth, the exploitation of certain discoveries will raise moral, legal and social problems at almost every step. It is in the light, and on the basis, of the definitions contained in the Universal Declaration and the Covenants that solutions must be sought and found in national legislation and—who knows, perhaps tomorrow—in international rules, so that science and technology can be harnessed to the service of mankind, mankind being regarded as an end and not as a means or an object.

84. The same may be true of development policies. The State's obligation to be the active agent of economic, social and cultural development means that everywhere—though, of course, by different methods—planning and programming are becoming essential tools. But here, too, there is always a risk that the rights and freedoms of the majority may, even with their unwitting consent, pass into the hands of an uncontrolled technocracy, whose power may be all the greater for often being wielded behind the shield of an occult terminology and yet, at the outset at least, serves the common good. It is a fact that the implementation of the right of everyone—and this is only an example—“to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives”, as defined in the Declaration [article 21], is approached in less conventional terms today than at the time of the adoption of the Declaration.

85. In that respect, and especially with regard to the two subjects I have just mentioned, the Teheran Conference, and even some United Nations seminars, have had the very great merit of bringing these problems to the fore and opening the way for reflexion and action.

86. Since I have referred to the Teheran Conference, I should like to pay a warm tribute to Her Imperial Highness Princess Ashraf Pahlavi for the masterly way in which she presided over its work.

87. Today, human rights are not merely proclaimed at the international level. Almost all of them are also laid down in the international covenants and in the individual conventions with which Members of the United Nations are very familiar. As Chairman of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, I may perhaps be forgiven for stating, at this historic meeting, that this small group of experts has played some part in the success of the undertaking. In a few weeks time, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination will enter into force. The original text of that Convention was drafted by the Sub-Committee, just as it was under the auspices—and sometimes on the initiative—of the Sub-Commission that such instruments came into being as the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education of 14 December 1960, and the ILO Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation of 25 June 1958.

88. The international instruments adopted in the last twenty years often vary in their scope, the extent of control over their implementation and the authority for that control. Nevertheless, they are not far from constituting a genuine code. Even if there are some gaps in this code, we have come a long way in twenty years.

<sup>5</sup> *Final Act of the International Conference on Human Rights* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.XIV.2), Proclamation of Teheran, para. 2.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, a selection of texts prepared under the direction of Jeanne Hersch, Paris, 1969.

89. Now that the legislative work has been done, we have to move on, in the near future, to effective implementation. Be that as it may, it will be a long time before the Community of States bound together by the various conventions and covenants includes all Member States. This means that the various parts of the programme whose implementation the United Nations and the specialized agencies have been pursuing in the last twenty years continue to be of great importance. It also means that there is perhaps room for supplementary machinery involving techniques of persuasion and generalized moral pressure much more than legal or quasi-judicial procedures.

90. The projected creation of a post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights undoubtedly comes within this framework. However, legal procedures, international machinery for study, confrontation or technical co-operation, can be fully effective only to the extent that they are part of a certain climate. In the final analysis, surely, must not such a climate owe its emergence in part to the efforts, activities and programmes of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the regional organizations? But, above all, is it not the result of the activities not only of Governments but also of "every organ of society", to use the words of the Declaration, of social groups, including non-governmental organizations, and of the actions of each citizen in his daily life?

91. International action, backed by national efforts and supported by public opinion, must be expanded. This means, of course, efforts in education, teaching about human rights, understanding and tolerance of different cultures and traditions, but it also means the establishment of conditions under which the gap can be bridged, in the economic, social and financial spheres, for if it were to persist, it might encourage the development of closed, if not hostile, societies which are highly developed, unduly proud of their technical and material superiority, co-existing with societies progressively withdrawing into the gloomy dignity of their poverty.

92. However great the achievements of the last few years have been, let us have the wisdom to recognize that, as Dag Hammarskjöld put it, "working at the edge of the development of human society is to work on the brink of the unknown".<sup>7</sup> Let that not be an excuse for not acting to the best of our understanding, while aware of the limitations of that understanding but trusting in the final result of the creative revolution in which we have the great honour to be sharing.

93. Mr. NETTEL (Austria), Chairman of the Third Committee: Mr. President, permit me, first of all, to tell you what an honour it is for me to have been invited to speak on this formal occasion. It is an outstanding moment in my life indeed to be called upon to address the General Assembly of the United Nations at a meeting which is devoted to commemorating the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to honour those distinguished personalities who have been awarded the first Human Rights prizes the United Nations has ever given. I

can only consider this honour as being bestowed on the Third Committee of the General Assembly, whose Chairman I happen to be this year. I therefore find it fitting to speak for a few minutes not about human rights in general—for there are so many among us today who are pioneers in that field and know so much more about it than I do—but about the work of the Third Committee, which—and I am sorry to have to say this—is so often and so widely underrated.

94. In the field of human rights the general public is, for the most part, aware of the work of the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and various other bodies, but hardly anything is known of the work of the Third Committee. Yet it is exactly that Committee which, over a period of more than twenty years, has done much of the preparatory work necessary to produce the many international instruments in the field of human rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

95. The Third Committee's historical and best known achievement was, of course, the final drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, done in Paris in 1948. This was a task begun on 30 September 1948 and not completed until 7 December of that same year. But the entire work was accomplished in one single session, and the Declaration was proclaimed by the General Assembly [*resolution 217 (III)*] as we all know on 10 December.

96. A second outstanding event, which also showed the development of human-rights work in general, was the final drafting of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1965. Like the Universal Declaration, the Convention was completed after only two years of preliminary work in the United Nations, and the bulk of the final drafting fell upon the Third Committee. As the Secretary-General stated when the General Assembly adopted the Convention [*resolution 2106 (XX)*], "It was the great initiative and drive displayed by the Third Committee which gave the Convention its full form and substance".

97. The third milestone in the Committee's work was the conclusion, in 1966, of three major international instruments: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which concerns complaints from individuals.

98. Work on the Covenants was begun in 1947, and several sessions of the Third Committee were devoted largely to preparing general policy directives to guide the pertinent activities of the Commission on Human Rights and various subsidiary bodies. It was in the Committee, for example, that it was decided that there should be not one but two Covenants, that each of those Covenants should contain an article on the rights of peoples and nations to self-determination, that different measures of implementation should be provided in each Covenant, and that the two Covenants should be opened for signature and ratification simultaneously. These are but some of the extraordinary accomplishments of the Third Committee. There are many

<sup>7</sup> *The Servant of Peace - A Selection of the Speeches and Statements of Dag Hammarskjöld*, London, The Bodley Head, 1962, edited by Wilder Foote, p. 260.



others, however, which are not so well known or which have been almost forgotten, and some of these may well be recalled on this occasion.

99. In 1950, for example, the Committee prepared the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, which was approved by the General Assembly that same year [*resolution 428 (V)*]. That Statute gave the High Commissioner the function of providing international protection, under the auspices of the United Nations, to refugees falling within its scope, and of seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees. It has proved to be an invaluable instrument for all those concerned with it and those with whom it concerns itself. In 1952, the Committee drafted, and presented to the General Assembly for adoption, two conventions: one on the International Right of Correction [*resolution 630 (VII)*] and the second on the Political Rights of Women [*resolution 640 (VII)*]. The Convention on the Political Rights of Women has since been recognized as a major factor in advancing the status of women all over the world.

100. In 1955, the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights was born in the Third Committee, which proceeded to consolidate a number of technical-assistance programmes which had been approved earlier by the General Assembly—programmes relating to the promotion and safeguarding of the rights of women, the eradication of discrimination and the protection of minorities and the promotion of freedom of information—into a single broad programme. That programme is now one of the main operational activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights.

101. In 1957, another convention advancing the status of women was adopted by the General Assembly on recommendation of the Third Committee; it was the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women [*resolution 1040 (XI)*]. That Convention, designed to prevent the loss of nationality through conflicts in national law and practice, had originally been prepared by the Commission on the Status of Women.

102. In 1959, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child occupied much of the time and attention of the Third Committee. Ten principles are set out in that Declaration, designed to guarantee to every young person a happy childhood to enjoy for his own good and for the good of society. The Declaration was adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 [*resolution 1386 (XIV)*].

103. In June of the same year, on the Committee's recommendation after its having considered the report of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the observance of World Refugee Year began. That special commemoration was designed to focus the world's attention on the refugee problem, to encourage additional contributions to help in solving it, and to encourage additional opportunities for permanent solutions of refugee problems on a purely humanitarian basis and in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the refugees themselves.

104. The problems of youth were again a matter for consideration by the Committee in 1960, when, on its

initiative, the General Assembly recommended that Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals should take effective action to promote among youth the ideals of peace, mutual respect and understanding among peoples [*resolution 1572 (XV)*].

105. In 1962, the Committee reviewed and forwarded to the General Assembly for adoption the draft convention [*resolution 1763 (XVII)*] on consent to marriage, minimum age for marriage, and registration of marriages, which had been prepared by the Commission on the Status of Women. A recommendation on the same subject [*resolution 2018 (XX)*] was adopted by the General Assembly in 1965, again after preparation by the Commission on the Status of Women and review by the Third Committee.

106. In 1963, the Committee spent much of its time in the preparation of the final text of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, affirming the necessity of speedily eliminating racial discrimination throughout the world, in all its forms and manifestations, and of securing understanding of, and respect for, the dignity of the human person. The General Assembly adopted the Declaration on 20 November 1963 [*resolution 1906 (XVIII)*], and at the same time called for the preparation of a draft international convention on the same subject, as well as for the preparation of a draft declaration on the elimination of discrimination against women.

107. As I mentioned before, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was completed by the Third Committee and adopted by the General Assembly in 1965. That Convention, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, included a comprehensive system of implementation establishing the international machinery necessary to give life to the written words of the pledges contained in an instrument of this nature. Those measures of implementation were drafted in the Committee itself and represent one of its unique contributions to the protection of human rights. The necessary number of instruments of ratification of the Convention have already been received by the Secretary-General, thus ensuring that the Convention will come into effect in the very near future.

108. The year 1966 saw the final stages of the drafting, in the Third Committee, of the international covenants on human rights, another landmark in the programme of the United Nations to establish the international machinery necessary to promote and to protect human rights. The drafting of the covenants completed, in a sense, the preparation of the International Bill of Human Rights, and it was truly remarkable that agreement could be reached on a common code acceptable to all the diverse peoples, religions, cultures and ideologies represented in the Committee and in the General Assembly itself.

109. Last year the Committee, profiting from the extensive preparatory work undertaken by the Commission on the Status of Women, was able to prepare and recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women [*resolution 2263 (XXII)*], designed to ensure the universal recognition in law and in fact of the principle of equality of men and women.

110. I do not feel entitled to comment on the work of the Committee at its present session. This, I am sure, will be evaluated by someone else, in the future. Thus the Third Committee, which is known officially as the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Questions Committee, during the past two decades has devoted much of its time to human rights matters, and has played a leading role in trying to promote and to protect those rights. It can look back at a great number of international instruments which it has helped to create in this most important field, and of its major part in the preparation of what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights refers to as “progressive measures” to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance.

111. Yes, all the instruments I have mentioned, and all the resolutions, declarations and conventions adopted through the years by the Third Committee make a very impressive picture indeed and they have, I am sure, helped to a certain extent to better and to protect the status of the individual in the world. But I often wonder if there is a balance between all the written words and promises and the effects that are given to them by the authorities concerned. When I do that, I invariably come to one conclusion which has become a fixed idea of mine and which for once I want to express in public. This conclusion, put into four words, is “Less resolutions, more implementation”.

112. As long as we draft and adopt instruments which we proclaim are for the good of all mankind, but when it comes to implementing them in our own house we hide behind the bushes of our sovereignty and our oh-so-perfect national legislation, as long as we profess that infringements on human rights and fundamental freedoms can only occur somewhere else but never at home so long will we be lacking in our duty to live up to the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

113. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): I shall now call upon some of the eminent persons who participated in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and who are with us today.

114. Mr. ROMULO (Philippines): In 1947, in Geneva, the Commission on Human Rights, with the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt presiding, began and completed work on the draft text of an International Bill of Rights. The following year, 1948, in Paris, the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights based on the text proposed by the Commission [*resolution 217(III)*]. The pace may seem very rapid. Yet if the work on this document had been delayed by even one year, it might never have seen the light of day. By 1948 the honeymoon season in the United Nations was coming to an end and the freezing winds of the cold war had begun to blow.

115. In Geneva, it was the personal dedication and the universal prestige of Mrs. Roosevelt that won the day. Widow of a great leader of the Grand Alliance, but in her own right truly the First Lady of the United Nations, Eleanor Roosevelt provided the inspiration which enabled the Commission to accomplish its historic task. That task was to rectify a serious omission in the Charter of the United Nations. For while the Charter sets forth the

protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as one of the purposes of the United Nations, and while it enjoins the observance of those rights and freedoms in no fewer than six different articles, nowhere does it enumerate and define the rights and freedoms themselves. In an important sense, therefore, the Charter of San Francisco was a truncated text which had to be completed and made whole by the Commission on Human Rights and by the General Assembly. This was done within three years after San Francisco by a series of decisions that was the miraculous result of sustained co-operation and high resolve.

116. The Charter contains two revolutionary elements that set it apart from any previous instruments of international organization. The first of these is the obligation accepted by the colonial Powers as a “sacred trust” to promote to the utmost the well-being of the inhabitants of dependent territories and to set them on the road to self-government and independence. The second is the affirmation that one of the purposes of the United Nations is “to achieve international co-operation . . . in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion”.

117. The United Nations was thus specifically designed to put an end to three great evils, namely, the oppression of one nation by another, known as imperialism; the oppression of one man by another, known as slavery; and the oppression of man by the State, known as despotism or tyranny.

118. This last stated purpose of the United Nations appears the more revolutionary when it is recalled that in all recorded history the rights of man had never been recognized outside the context or beyond the confines of the society or the State of which he is a part. Now, by the terms of Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter, all Member States pledged themselves “. . . to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization” in order to promote “universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.”

119. In other words, human rights had become the object of international concern and the individual the subject of international law. Never again could any State validly declare that whatever it may choose to do with its own citizens is its own private affair and that the world community, however outraged it may be, has no right to intervene. From that time onward, no State could with impunity violate or deny the rights of its own citizens without arousing the conscience of mankind and inviting condemnation and possible sanctions by the international community.

120. By giving the United Nations a clear mandate to promote human rights by the joint and separate action of its Members, the Charter in effect ordained the internationalization of human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in turn, by specifying and defining the rights to be promoted and observed, provided an authoritative interpretation of the Charter and strengthened the obligations of Member States by making them more precise.

121. But the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments in this field is only one of the acts necessary to ensure the full, free exercise of these rights and freedoms. Human nature being what it is and human institutions being what they are, an enormous gap exists between the paper guarantees of these rights and their actual observance in the daily life of man. For example, one of the most basic denials of human rights is imperialism, or the subjection of one nation or people by another. It is true that the United Nations had 51 Members in 1946, while it has 126 Members today, including about 50 countries that have achieved independence in the interval. Yet, colonialism persists in many territories today, imposed by intransigent colonial Powers or minority régimes that brazenly deny to the inhabitants of these territories the exercise of their right of self-determination as well as the cardinal principle of majority rule. Further, in many countries that have been granted political independence, there is abundant evidence that such independence is being negated by the perpetuation of imperialist practices, overt or hidden, in the social, cultural, economic and military fields. Moreover, today, twenty-three years after the end of a war that was fought to extirpate the racist heresy of Adolf Hitler, the evils of racial discrimination continue to afflict humanity, and policies of *apartheid* are pursued with impunity by one Member State in callous defiance of the international community.

122. It has been necessary to wage a constant struggle in order to maintain the pace of the United Nations effort on behalf of human rights. The difficulties have been formidable and the frustrations frequently heart-breaking. Happily, we have now reached a narrow plateau where we can catch our breath, replenish our energies, and examine the distance and direction of the road we have yet to travel.

123. During the first twenty years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the emphasis has been on the definition of rights and freedoms, the study of problems and obstacles, the clarification of obligations and responsibilities, in short, on the promotion of human rights by persuasion and education, and by declaration and convention. In recent years, there has been a slow but steady evolution of United Nations activities towards more positive action through implementation and enforcement. There has taken place a steady erosion of the dogma of domestic jurisdiction based on Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. This development has been reflected in the implementation provisions of the Human Rights Covenants and of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Only recently, the General Assembly empowered the Commission on Human Rights [*resolution 2144 A (XVI)*] to assume new responsibilities in accordance with an entirely new doctrine, namely, that it is the right and duty of the United Nations to consider specific violations of human rights and to recommend appropriate measures to halt such violations wherever they may occur.

124. As the United Nations girds itself for this new and challenging task, it would be useful to consider a few basic rules of action. The first is that we must safeguard the advances already made. Secondly, we must not retreat from positions already won. Thirdly, we must seize every opportunity to move forward, step by difficult step. Fourthly, we must make certain that, with each successful

step, we shall resist the temptation to move too fast. Otherwise, we may learn too late that haste makes waste.

125. In line with these principles, four basic measures might be considered as constituting the core of a future programme for the promotion of human rights. First, a vigorous campaign should be organized to focus world public opinion on the need for the early ratification by Governments and the coming into force of international legal instruments in the human rights field drafted under the auspices of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Secondly, the advisory services in the field of human rights should, if possible, be expanded for the benefit mainly of young people from the non-self-governing territories and the developing nations, particularly the newly independent States. Thirdly, the United Nations should set up a co-ordinated long-term programme for the advancement of women to promote their rights as equal partners in the progress of humanity in the modern world. And fourthly, there should be a bold and innovative search for effective means of implementing and enforcing human rights, including the setting up of regional human rights commissions, the creation of an office of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and of an International Court of Human Rights.

126. Are these proposals too far out, and therefore too far ahead of our times? I think not. It may be true that we are fated to endure the persistence of evil and the eternal sameness of things, that tomorrow, as yesterday, we shall witness the same injustices and oppressions, the same tyrannies and despotisms that we know today. But life would indeed be without purpose or meaning if, knowing that evil exists and persists in the world, and that brutal invasions upon the dignity of the human person will continue to be perpetrated, the international community were not more alert and determined to devise newer and more effective methods, procedures and strategies to achieve better standards of life in larger freedom and to bring about the final liberation of the human spirit.

127. We are constantly reminded that unless we abolish nuclear weapons, they will abolish us. Yet, the climate of fear and violence which pervades our times is produced not really by the omnipresent threat of nuclear catastrophe but rather by the turbulence of the alienated multitudes, the dispossessed and the downtrodden, the poor and the humble, the rebellious young in search of a cause, or lost souls in search of an identity. Experience thus confirms all over again that peace and human rights are but the two sides of the same coin. For, even when you have abolished war, there will be no peace on earth until you have replaced in the heart of man cruelty with compassion and selfishness with brotherhood.

128. As one who had a part in the elaboration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, until recently, was intimately involved in the education of the youth of my country, I should like to conclude with a reference to a situation of vast import to the future of freedom in the world. I refer to the clamour and agitation of dissatisfied youth everywhere. It has dramatized the basic democratic right of dissent. By challenging the traditional values, it has compelled society and the State to accept, albeit with reluctance, the principle of the inevitable transformation of

society. By invoking violence as a necessary tool or weapon in given situations, it seeks to speed up the pace of change through the adventurous spirit of innovation. The phenomenon of youth in rebellion is universal, respecting neither national nor ideological frontiers. Aggressive and defiant, fired by a raging discontent with things as they are, this young, brash and impatient generation is our best ally in the effort to fulfil the great promise of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But we must try to discover the real sources of its discontent, for only then can society hope to harness its militant idealism to the goals of the common good. Youth is deeply sensitive and aware of values that have long been ignored or forgotten, and its vibrant if sometimes incoherent dream of universal peace and brotherhood may be the true wave of the future.

129. Mr. MALIK (Lebanon): How time flies. Twenty years ago this evening—I could almost say yesterday evening—in the Palais de Chaillot in Paris I had the honour, as Chairman of the Third Committee of the General Assembly, of presenting the draft Universal Declaration of Human Rights—on which we had worked in that Committee day and night for two and a half months—to a plenary meeting [*180th meeting*] of the Assembly for its final consideration and decision, with Mr. Herbert Evatt of Australia presiding and Mr. Trygve Lie, the Secretary-General, sitting to his right, and Mr. Andrew Cordier, Assistant to the Secretary-General, sitting to his left. Ten years ago tomorrow morning—I could almost say this morning—right here in this Assembly Hall, I had the honour, this time as President of the General Assembly, with Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld sitting to my right, and the same unfading Andrew Cordier sitting to my left, of opening the special meeting of the General Assembly in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the proclamation of the Declaration. And today, representing Lebanon for this special meeting, I have the honour once again of taking part in these commemorative proceedings.

130. The representative of Austria, who is the Chairman of the Third Committee this year, has just told you that in Paris twenty years ago we worked on this document from 30 September to about 7 December. He forgot to tell you something that he probably knows, but possibly does not—that we devoted eighty-five meetings of that Committee to working on this document. And I doubt that there is any other subject in the history of the United Nations to which so much time has been devoted by any Committee of the United Nations. He also forgot to tell you something that again he probably knows but possibly does not—that we had voted 1,400 times in that Committee: the entire Committee cast 1,400 votes on every comma, semicolon, word, phrase, clause, paragraph of that particular document—with the result that what you have before you is the product of the most careful work done in Paris that fall.

131. Loaded in every phrase with ethical content, especially in its universality, in its banging affirmation of inherent human dignity, in its condoning even of rebellion “as a last resort” unless human rights are protected by the rule of law, in its proclamation of liberty and equality as values to which all men are entitled by nature, in its uncompromising attack on all forms of arbitrary discrimination, in the high regard in which it holds the human

person, in its emphasis on education, in the clarity with which it lights up economic and social rights, and in the unambiguity with which it determines the natural right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, expression and association, the Declaration, as befits every great ethical pronouncement, is a call to man from the depths to know, respect and realize himself.

132. The United Nations cannot force man to realize his rights: it can only put them clearly before him and urge him to bestir himself and seek them freely himself. To compel man to realize his rights and freedoms is a contradiction in terms, for you cannot impose freedom on any man. Man can freely elect to remain a slave, and whoever refuses, for whatever reason, to be moved by the thundering call of the Universal Declaration must count on dying in his chains. The most fundamental spirit of the Declaration is total respect for man's freedom. It tells him in effect: “I respect you so much that I must stop at simply telling you, ‘Be free!’”. From here on it is all your work, all your individual effort, and it is fully within your power, by intelligent suffering and sacrifice, to wrest and assert your rights. You ask me, ‘What are my rights and freedoms?’ I answer, ‘Here they are!’”.

133. If, then, this unprecedented call, so powerfully and so authoritatively proclaimed, does not arouse man everywhere to seek to realize what belongs to him, not as a gift from some benevolent Power, nor as a favour from some external authority, nor as a privilege from some well-meaning Government, but by his very nature as man, then nothing else can.

134. But it has aroused man mightily. The story of how the Declaration has energized during the last two decades has been told and retold. I stress only three points. All subsequent international action in this field has been grounded in it. Its educational and moral influence throughout the world has been incalculable: indeed, the present world-wide ferment in the field of human rights owes a great deal of its positive impetus to the slow workings of this document. Nor, finally, is it a simple matter that the Declaration has been incorporated, in whole or in part, into the positive law of a score or more of nations, as well as into the text of the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950. In this respect, what those of us who had something to do with its elaboration meant by the phrase “a common standard of achievement” can be said to have been already realized—realized, indeed, far beyond our original expectations.

135. This is a very sad year concerning human rights. I am deeply distressed by the shabby state in which human rights find themselves in many places in the world today. I would always stand up for man wherever he is reduced, and for his fundamental freedoms wherever they are unknown or smothered or neglected. If there is anything I can do to help the Negro of America, or the unhappy intellectual of Eastern Europe, or the refugee expelled from his home and land in the Middle East or in Europe, or the exploited and downtrodden in Africa and Latin America, or the hungry and starving in Asia, or the mind shut out from light and truth and being anywhere in the world, I will certainly do it. At least I will say a sincere prayer—and please, please, do not scoff at those who pray.



136. I wish to respect to the utmost the solemnity of the occasion. Therefore I shall not advert to any political controversy. We are celebrating the twentieth anniversary of a document against which not a single adverse vote was cast at the time of its adoption. Nor has there been any controversy about it since. But purely within the spirit and context of human rights I may be permitted to point out that the most elementary, the most essential, the most human of human rights are in question in the Middle East today. The Arab refugees and displaced persons are entitled to their rights—I mean rights to their homes, to their property, to their liberties, to their land. I appeal to the great Powers, in whose hands so much lies, to agree on the basis of right and justice. I appeal to the peoples and countries directly concerned to place love for man and regard for his dignity and freedom above every other consideration. The United Nations has done much in this field; it should and it can do much more. It takes perhaps the wisdom of Solomon—nay, perhaps, even more—to adjudicate the situation. The deepest suffering and misery, sometimes silent, sometimes muted, sometimes clumsily expressed, but all the same real and compelling, is crying to God today—yes, to God, in the land in which God chose first to speak to men. And if we as celebrators of the Declaration stop only to think how much man and his dignity and freedom owe to what was first seen and uttered and enacted in that land, so holy to all mankind, we will doubtless consider it our primary duty, from sheer gratitude, to do what we can to bring justice and peace to its peoples—so tortured and tormented today, so tragically estranged.

137. The ferment for human right which has been maturing and unfolding itself for a quarter of a century now has had as its principal cause the fact that these rights were so brutally violated before and during the Second World War. The moment has come, in our opinion, now when we should also stress human duties.

138. If there is turmoil and spiritual unsettlement in many quarters today, especially in the ranks of youth, it is not because what these pure souls are clamoring for is wrong; on the contrary, what the sincere and unsubverted among them are troubled about is practically all genuine and true. But one cause for the profound disturbance is the fact that people fix only on their rights and appear to forget their duties. There is therefore looming before us, before the United Nations, before responsible leaders, before thinkers all over the world, a most urgent task—to humble and chasten men with respect to their rights, to sensitize them regarding their personal obligations and responsibilities, to induce manhood and maturity, to bring about soberness, contentment, reason, balance, self-control, gratitude to life; to foster respect, reverence, awe. It is the decay of respect for being which is the principal malady of this age. Therefore the deepest challenge facing us in the future is not so much how to excite people more and more about their rights, but how to instill in all of us the sense of solidarity, the sense of obligation, the sense of belonging together, the sense of common human destiny.

139. While we should constantly maintain the standard of the Declaration before the consciences of men, challenging and disturbing them, making them uncomfortable, we should realize that man is simply corrupt and that there will

always be lapses and relapses in the realm of human rights. Hence the necessity of our being always on the alert, not as judges, not as condemners, not as accusers, not as casters of stones, but as understanders, lovers, reconcilers. Reconciliation is the greatest need of the age. Those who are banking on the unaided powers of man to correct himself will always be disappointed. There is no escape from man's inalienable dependence upon something beyond himself. And by man here I mean everything human—not only you and me individually, but our societies, our cultures, our Governments, everything human. Man points essentially to something beyond himself altogether—man must be transcended.

140. Human rights flower naturally in the soil of love. We serve the cause of human rights not only by defining them, as we did in the Declaration, not only by proclaiming them, as we did twenty years ago today, not only by codifying them into law, as was done in the Covenants, not even only by balancing them with the proper sense of duty, but by fostering and being ourselves part of a whole human and moral and spiritual climate within which they blossom as natural fruits of the spirit. All human rights as well as duties are comprised in the old, old dictum—"love thy neighbour as thyself".

141. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia): Whilst we are celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it is timely to pause and ask a few questions lest this solemn occasion end up by becoming merely a ceremonial eulogy for what no doubt was a significant United Nations achievement. However, at this stage I must state that those of us who participated in elaborating the Universal Declaration did not invent the memorable human rights which we are commemorating this afternoon. What we did was to codify human rights which had evolved throughout man's history and proclaim the finalized Universal Declaration as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.

142. The Second World War had played such havoc with the dignity and worth of the human person that we considered freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want as constituting the highest aspirations of the common people, who throughout the ages have been the innocent victims of greedy and ambitious men—some of them world figures—who quite often trampled upon fundamental human rights in shaping the destiny of their generation.

143. At the time we proclaimed the Universal Declaration we were no less inspired by the lofty principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter than by the fervent hope that surged in our hearts for building a better world where freedom, justice and peace would prevail. We laboured seriously and sincerely at our task, as our friend Mr. Malik has just said, and scrutinized almost every word before adopting a single paragraph. In that manner we meticulously ran the gamut of all the economic, social and political rights, producing as we did a literary and moral masterpiece which we had hoped would lay the foundation of utopia on earth.

144. The sceptics amongs us pointed out that most of us were so elated that we ignored the fact that the present

world situation was such that it would be decades before the fundamental rights we had spelt out in the Declaration would be observed on a universal scale. And the pessimists asserted that throughout the ages there was no dearth of prophets, sages and reformers who time and again had founded great religions and formulated edifying moral codes which so far had failed to curb man's inhumanity to man. And the cynics snickered at what we regarded as our noble efforts at the Palais de Chaillot. Their thesis was that the first thing every man sought, even before he could articulate, was recognition, after which he consistently clamoured for equal rights. He was invariably told that the equality promised to him was equality before the law or equal access to the various amenities of life. If the person was docile or submissive—as most people actually are—he was content with that interpretation.

145. But the cynic went on to say that there were always enough rapacious men who succeeded in circumventing the law through its loop-holes, and that on the other hand there were enough men who were opportunists and who managed to get ahead by hook or by crook, thereby taking advantage of their fellow men. Hence these categories of persons, namely, the rapacious and the opportunists, did not merely strive for equal rights but in fact fought tooth and nail for privileges.

146. The number of such persons is legion and unfortunately they set the pattern of human conduct—or misconduct as it should really be called: the persons who accumulate much more wealth than they can ever use or more than is essential for their well-being and that of the community. Then there are those who exercise so much power that they get drunk with it and end up by developing a sense of self-righteousness. These power-mongers quite often become intentionally or unwittingly sadistic and enlist pseudo-intellectual associates to rationalize their arbitrary actions. Woe to him who does not yield to their wanton will.

147. Then there are those persons who seek the adulation of their fellow men by all the means available to them so that they may be praised and extolled rhetorically in public, visually or oratorically by the media of mechanical transmission, or silently in print. Glory is their goal although their greatness and fame may be as thin as tin-foil. Most frequently do the wallowers in excessive wealth yearn for power, and they are aided to the unequal access to high office by the funds they freely disperse among politicians whose sham loyalty is for sale in the market place.

148. And how often, the cynic goes on to say, we have witnessed those persons who wield power tempted to enrich themselves, if not by resorting to overt corruption, at least by using public office as a means of amassing great fortunes. Excessive wealth, absolute power and vainglory: those unfortunately have been the common standards for which people have toiled and for which sometimes they have sacrificed themselves.

149. Throughout the ages an aura surrounded the rich, the mighty and the famous, and in every epoch of history they constituted a privileged class which mesmerized the masses to the point of wonder and adulation. "Equal rights" are empty words. It is privilege which most people seek in life".

Thus concludes the cynic. But the optimists amongst us at the Palais de Chaillot retorted that man can no longer afford to drift aimlessly like a spar of wood on the turbulent sea with the hope that by random trial and error he would reach the promised land. This is why it became incumbent upon us to establish unmistakable directives which would regulate man's behaviour, more so because two world wars in our lifetime have jolted people into the consciousness of what they considered their inalienable rights. Continued violations of fundamental human rights would, we thought, ultimately lead to a global conflict which might well end up in the suicide of mankind. We realize that in spite of its moral impact the Universal Declaration was not binding, and therefore we forthwith resolved that it should be the precursor of various covenants and conventions which once ratified would revolutionize international law. But this was not all. Optimistic as we have been, we pinned our hope on the generation succeeding our own in that, following the historic act of adopting the Universal Declaration, we called upon the Member countries to publicize its text and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded, principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries and territories". A good number of States, including those that emerged after the Declaration was proclaimed, have incorporated many of its provisions in their respective constitutions.

150. Never before in the history of mankind have so many young people become aware of their fundamental human rights, and this was due in no small measure to the impact the Declaration has had on the searching minds of today's youth. Young people have awakened everywhere and are rebelling against those leaders who could no more beguile them with such antiquated slogans as "waging war to save the world for democracy" or "fighting for self-defence"—a defence which cannot be legitimized by any stretch of the imagination when battles are fought thousands of miles away against people who should be left alone to shape their own destiny. The Declaration has no doubt deeply influenced the minds of today's youth, thousands upon thousands of whom are refusing to be driven like sheep to the slaughterhouse. Youth is in great ferment, gaining momentum in exercising its indomitable collective will, refusing to be used as pawns in the game of power politics or as wooden pieces on the checkerboard of the balance of power or spheres of influence.

151. No matter how potent propaganda can be in influencing the subliminal mind it has dawned upon the youth of today that war not only violates but often negates article 3 of the Declaration, which may rightly be considered an umbrella of all primordial human rights. Article 3 states: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

152. The youth of today is convinced, to say the least, that fundamental human rights cannot exist with war, continuous strife or perpetual conflict due to insatiable greed and unbridled ambition. But there are other factors than those already mentioned that seem to vitiate the respect for, and enjoyment of, human rights. A remedy may yet be found to cure the endemic covetousness and disastrous lust for power in modern society. In spite of such

a remedy the role of the individual is being submerged in the sea of conformity on account of regimentation and the production of mass consumer goods without which man may not be considered by his peers as having attained a status of respectability. An ever-increasing abundance in the highly developed countries has pushed man into a rat race for acquiring many things which are not essential for his well-being. Regretfully, people everywhere, endeavouring to catch up with the constantly rising standard of living, are subjugated to severe stress and strain. The producers and purveyors of this modern cornucopia have indeed become the victims of an affluent and gluttonous society they helped to create. Few are those who do not suffer from intense nervous tensions which are being temporarily relieved by injurious drugs or alcoholic beverages. Many are those who have become neurotic, seeking the aid of psychiatrists whilst the psychiatrists are getting so sick and confused as to need urgent treatment themselves.

153. In making a fetish of affluence man is fettering himself with the chains of insatiability for what he deems luxurious living. In his mad efforts to keep up with the Joneses, he finds that he still must catch up with many Toms, Dicks and Harrys. The trouble is that this type of modern man is setting an example to millions of people living in developing countries, people who are ignorant of the fact that the object of their envy is a pathetic, self-alienated creature unable to extricate himself from his dire predicament. Hence in this technological age we find ourselves at the cross-roads—either we submit to becoming a cog in a machine with practically no will or mind of our own, depending on complex computers to do our thinking for us, or we may yet be able to retain or resuscitate those time-honoured moral values which harmoniously correlate us to our fellow men.

154. It would be futile to talk of implementing fundamental human rights even if in peace time we allow ourselves to be homogenized members of the manipulated masses. Therefore, fundamental human rights are not necessarily concomitant with economic development and social progress in a highly technological society which tends to dehumanize the individual and to make him worship, in association with others, newly-created idols such as intoxicating success, demoralizing affluence and insidious vain-glory.

155. We should seek to love and be loved, and not merely to be fed and sheltered. We should not mistake pleasure and excitement for real happiness and purposeful self-fulfilment. Two world wars and the various crises and long periods of emergency that followed in their wake have attenuated man's sympathy for the suffering of others, and quite often made him callous amidst catastrophes and calamities.

156. Man thought that he could protect himself by withdrawing into himself, only to find that he was beset with fear and a sense of guilt for having inflicted harm, real or imagined, on his fellow men. How often has man demonstrated that he can make himself miserable by isolating or alienating himself from others, forgetting that he is by nature a gregarious creature?

157. No self-alienating man is indeed fit either to observe or to enjoy fundamental human rights. Did we labour in

vain in 1948 at the Palais de Chaillot, and have we been labouring in vain for twenty years since then, in having sedulously addressed ourselves to sincere endeavours for safeguarding human rights? Is man incorrigible in irresistibly repeating past mistakes? Is man doomed to failure and ultimate self-annihilation either by the lethal weapons he has devised or by an uncontrollable explosion of world population? Shall the increase in knowledge be a boon or a curse? The answer to those and a thousand similar questions is "Yes" or "No", depending on our collective choice of ways and means to solve our problem.

158. The dinosaur, with a big hulk and a very small brain, survived, we are told for about 200 million years. It was not until the swamps, his safe habitat, dried up that the sabre-toothed tiger preyed on him and made him extinct. In comparison it seems only yesterday that the Sumerians, 6,000 years ago, invented the wheel. Today man is probing the unknown by rocketing into space, but he has not fully succeeded in gaining mastery over his inner self.

159. The key to our survival is to discipline ourselves, to inculcate our children with tenderness, love and compassion for others, and to convince mothers everywhere—where is my colleague from Finland?—mothers everywhere, not to abandon their offspring during the offspring's formative years, by working outside the home. Only a mother's constant care, her warmth, her sheltering arms, can contribute towards the creation of a sane society in the future. We have so many misfits because they were abandoned by their mothers in their formative years.

160. Two world wars have produced a generation which was bewildered because violence was permitted to serve allegedly international interests. No wonder the young continue to rebel. No wonder the cynics try to sneer at our efforts. However, we shall triumph because the young amongst us have awakened. They are the pillars of the future. It is they who will finally see to it that human rights shall be enjoyed by all peoples in the world. We salute modern youth for raising its voice. We know that harmonious brotherhood will prevail and love will ultimately reign in the hearts of men and usher in a new era of freedom, peace and justice in the world.

161. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): We now come to the award of the United Nations Human Rights Prize.

162. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 2217 (XXI) of 19 December 1966 and by decision of the Assembly at its 1731st plenary meeting, six prizes are to be awarded this year to persons who have made outstanding contributions to the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in other instruments of the United Nations relating to human rights since the proclamation of the Declaration on 10 December 1948.

163. The six persons selected by the Special Committee for the award of the United Nations Human Rights Prizes are: Mr. Manuel Bianchi, Mr. René Cassin, Mr. Albert Luthuli, Mrs. Mehranguiz Manoutchehrian, Mr. P. E. Ned-bailo and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt.

164. Mr. Manuel Bianchi of Chile was born in 1895. After studying at the University of Chile Law School, he entered his country's diplomatic service, serving as Minister Plenipotentiary in Panama, Venezuela, Cuba and Bolivia, and later as Ambassador to Mexico and Ambassador to the United Kingdom and as Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile. He has represented his Government at a number of international conferences concerned with human rights, and for the past six years has served as Chairman of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. As a journalist, he was one of the founders of *La Nación* of Santiago. He is now professor of journalism at the University of Chile.

165. Mr. René Cassin of France was born in 1887. He was professor in the Faculties of Law of the Universities of Lille and Paris, at the Hague Academy of International Law and at the Graduate Institute of International Studies of the University of Geneva. He was Vice-President of the *Conseil d'Etat* of France from 1944 to 1960, and has been its Honorary President since 1960. After representing France in the Assembly of the League of Nations and later in the United Nations and UNESCO, he became a member of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1946 and participated in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He served as Chairman of that Commission — of which he is still a member — from 1955 to 1956. In 1959 he became a member of the European Court of Human Rights, and in 1965 was elected its President, a high office he held until only a few weeks ago. He is the author of a number of books and articles on Human Rights. Earlier this year, he was also awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

166. Mr. Albert Luthuli of South Africa, was born in 1899 and died in 1967. He was elected chieftain of his tribe when he was thirty years old. In 1935 he was appointed chieftain at Groutville by the South African Government, but was deposed in 1952. In the same year he was elected President of the African National Congress, of which he had been a member since 1946. He was a teacher, a leader of the African people for more than forty years, and used non-violent means to fight for the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms in his country. In 1956, Chief Luthuli was arrested on a charge of treason and detained until 1958. When released, he was confined to a small area of rural Natal. In 1961 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and was allowed to go to Sweden to receive it. He died in 1967, knocked down by a train. His autobiography *Let my people go* was published in 1962.

167. Mrs. Mehranguiz Manoutchehrian, of Iran, took a degree in law at Teheran University and then pursued post-graduate studies in Europe and the United States of America. She has been an attorney since 1947 and a senator since 1963. From 1962 to 1966 she was a legal adviser and criminologist with the National Association for the Protection of Children. She is President of the International Federation of Women Lawyers and a member of the Iranian Jurists' Association, the Iranian Bar Association, the World Peace through Law Centre and the Organization of Volunteers for the Protection of Families. She has participated in many national and international conferences and seminars concerned with human rights, has published a number of articles and pamphlets on this subject, and has translated into Persian and distributed widely, both to students and others, many United Nations instruments relating to human

rights. She has drafted legislation dealing with human rights, including a bill on marriage and its dissolution, and a bill on the elimination of discrimination against illegitimate children.

168. Mr. P. E. Nedbailo of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was born in 1907 and is a graduate of the Kharkov Institute of Law. He has held the Chair of the Theory of the State and the Law at the T. G. Shevchenko State University of Kiev since 1959. He has represented the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights since 1958, and in 1967 was unanimously elected Chairman of that Commission. Earlier this year, he was head of the Ukrainian delegation to the International Conference on Human Rights in Teheran. He has taken part in numerous international conferences and seminars on human rights, has lectured on human rights, in many countries, and has published many monographs and articles on this subject.

169. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, of the United States of America, was born in 1884 and died in 1962. She devoted much of her life to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. She was elected Chairman of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights at its first session in 1947 and represented the United States of America in the Third Committee at the third session of the General Assembly, when the final version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drawn up. She continued to represent her country in the Commission on Human Rights and in the General Assembly until 1952 and took an active part in the preparation of a number of United Nations instruments in the field of human rights designed to achieve the aims of the Declaration.

170. We are fortunate to have with us Mr. Bianchi, Mrs. Manoutchehrian and Mr. Nedbailo. Mrs. Anna Roosevelt Halstead, the daughter of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, is also with us. Mr. René Cassin took the opportunity of addressing the General Assembly on 6 December. He requested me to present his apologies to the General Assembly for not being able to be present at today's meeting because of a previous engagement, the nature of which we all know. His prize will be forwarded to him by the Secretary-General. I shall also request the Secretary-General to send to Mrs. Luthuli the plaque constituting the prize awarded to Albert Luthuli.

171. I now invite the members of the Special Committee who selected the prize-winners and who are here today, namely, His Excellency Mr. Manuel Pérez Guerrero, President of the Economic and Social Council; His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boye, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights; and Mr. Pierre Juvigny, Chairman of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, to come to the rostrum and join the Secretary-General and myself for the award of prizes.

*The prize-winners were escorted to the podium by the Chief of Protocol to receive their prizes.*

172. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I congratulate most warmly all those who have been awarded the United Nations Human Rights Prize for their distinguished work in the field of human rights.



173. Mr. Manuel Bianchi has expressed a wish to address the General Assembly and I therefore most cordially invite him to do so.

174. Mr. BIANCHI (*translated from Spanish*): Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen, you will readily appreciate what my feelings must be in addressing the General Assembly to express my deep gratitude at receiving a prize—one of those awarded for the first time by the United Nations—for my efforts in defending human rights throughout the world.

175. In these days, few tasks are more essential or more urgent than that of promoting an awareness of the significance of human rights as a fundamental condition for peace within each of our countries and, of course, for that shining vision of world peace towards which all nations must strive.

176. The conventions on human rights adopted by the 124 Members of this Assembly, whether ratified or not, and conventions of the regional type, which have been so successful in the Council of Europe and which, I hope, will soon unite the countries of the Americas in the effective defence of human rights, constitute the most suitable, effective and progressive means of developing mutual trust in international relations.

177. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed in Paris on 10 December 1948, the twentieth anniversary of which we are now celebrating, and the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, which was adopted at Bogotá in April 1948,<sup>8</sup> have much in common. The American Declaration states in its preamble:

“All men are born free and equal, in dignity and in rights, and being endowed by nature with reason and conscience, they should conduct themselves as brothers one to another.

“The fulfilment of duty by each individual is a prerequisite to the rights of all. Rights and duties are interrelated in every social and political activity of man. While rights exalt individual liberty, duties express the dignity of that liberty.”

178. Work in the service of these principles is, I must admit, more than just absorbing; the slightest success is so uplifting that constant and unremitting dedication to the defence of human rights becomes as essential to us as the air we breathe.

179. I am grateful to this great Assembly not only for the prize awarded to me today but also for numbering me among the outstanding personalities whom it has so rightly honoured today by the award of the same prize.

180. They are well-known figures throughout the world, who stand out among the greatest fighters for peace. I am referring to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Chief Albert Luthuli, Mr. René Cassin, Mrs. Mehranguiz Manoutchehrian and Mr. P. E. Nedbailo. I should like, however, to single out two

of them, with whom I happen to have worked personally in the field of human rights.

181. The first is Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who for eight years was Chairman of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. I had the good fortune to meet her in Paris during the 1948 session of the General Assembly, at which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted. At that session I acted as my country's plenipotentiary. I was able to see, therefore, the indefatigable efforts made by that dignified and great American lady in beginning the work which this Assembly commemorates today with the proclamation of the International Year for Human Rights.

182. Nor can I forget Mr. René Cassin, one of the men who, during the Second World War, accompanied General de Gaulle to London, where I was the Ambassador of Chile. I met Mr. Cassin again in Paris in 1948, and all of you are well aware of the important part that he played in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Finally, in April of this year, we met again at the International Conference on Human Rights in Teheran. His valuable work in defending human rights as a university Professor and in his official posts, has led, quite rightly, to his being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

183. I shall close by reiterating my deep gratitude to you, Mr. President, and to the Members of the Assembly at this special meeting, for an award which will inspire me to continue with ever-increasing enthusiasm and faith to work purposefully for the defence of human rights within the confines of the New World, to which I belong, and to co-operate in all activities of this world-wide crusade in which our efforts and our hopes are needed. Thank you, Mr. President and Members of the Assembly.

184. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): Mrs. Mehranguiz Manoutchehrian has also expressed a wish to address the General Assembly. I now call upon her to speak.

185. Mrs. MEHRANGUIZ MANOUTCHEHRIAN (*translated from French*): It is a great honour for me to have the opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks to this august Assembly for awarding me a Human Rights Prize. In giving me this prize, the United Nations has once again shown that the humanitarian efforts of peoples are not in vain. Fortunately, there exists on our planet a shrine where every nation and even every individual may draw its highest inspiration. And this shrine, under whose roof we are brought together, is here. The fact that this prize is being awarded even to persons who have departed this world is further proof that the United Nations values all that has been done to establish and maintain peace and prosperity among peoples, whether or not the person who has earned this prize lives to see the fruits of his labours. With all my heart I hope that the United Nations will succeed fully in the humanitarian task on which it has embarked, and I accept this prize with deep gratitude.

186. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): Mr. P. E. Nedbailo has also expressed a wish to address the General Assembly. I now call upon him to speak.

187. Mr. NEDBAILO (*translated from Russian*): I am greatly honoured by the Assembly's award of the United

<sup>8</sup> American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, adopted at the Ninth International Conference of American States, held at Bogotá, Colombia, from 30 March to 2 May 1948.

Nations Human Rights Prize, which is a high distinction. But it is above all an honour to my people, to all the Soviet peoples and to the peoples of the socialist countries. It is in appreciation of their efforts in the noble cause of promoting the development of the individual, his dignity and worth.

188. I wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to the General Assembly and the Special Committee to Select the Winners of the United Nations Human Rights Prize for so high an assessment of my modest work in promoting respect for and the growth of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

189. I have great pleasure in congratulating my distinguished fellow-winners, Mrs. Mahranguiz Manoutchehrian, Mr. René Cassin and Mr. Manuel Bianchi, who have been awarded United Nations prizes for their services in the field of human rights. The General Assembly has rightly awarded prizes posthumously to Mr. Albert Luthuli, an outstanding fighter for the Liberation of the African peoples, and to the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, an eminent progressive United States leader.

190. The question of the dignity and worth of the human individual has assumed exceptional importance and is attracting universal attention in the modern world.

191. The lessons of the Second World War, which led to the birth of the United Nations, the victory over German fascism, which trampled on and destroyed the individual, the great social changes in the modern world resulting from the revolutionary struggle of peoples for social and national liberation, the technological revolution—all these have increased the individual's activity and role in social life and have made the problem of the human person, his rights, freedoms and obligations, a matter of particularly urgent concern to all mankind.

192. The recognition and protection of the dignity and worth of the human person is of great importance for the whole world. This is stressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I recall the words of the Secretary-General, U Thant, who has said that peace and human welfare can never be achieved and maintained unless the inalienable dignity and worth of the human person are recognized, respected and guaranteed.

193. This is indeed true. Everyone has the right to life, and the right to life is the right to peace. And at the same time, peace—and the right to peace—is the decisive condition for the flowering of the individual and of his rights and freedoms.

194. Man is the creator of material and spiritual benefits and has the right to a decent way of life. In the final analysis, the essence of his rights and freedoms consists in the opportunity to enjoy the material and spiritual benefits of social life. In practice, this depends on the social and economic structure of society, which is based on particular forms of the ownership of production. Every people is free to choose its social and political system. My own country is a socialist country and, as its experience of more than fifty years and the experience of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries show, and as the philosophy which I

represent convinces us, if labour is freed from exploitation through national and co-operative ownership of the instruments and means of production new opportunities are created for genuine personal freedom. Freedom from exploitation is the basis of all freedoms and represents a new and higher historical category in the development of human rights, for which mankind has fought for centuries, in social and national groups, against the forces of reaction.

195. The emancipation of labour enables man to make fuller uses of political and other democratic freedoms. In practice, these questions are decided from the point of view of both society and the individual, whose interests in the socialist State coincide but are not identical and do not merge. The concern of society and the State for the individual and that of the individual for society and the State are mutual.

196. In our country, everything possible is done to enhance human dignity irrespective of racial or national origin. Any direct or indirect limitation of rights or granting of privileges on account of racial or national origin, or advocacy of racial or national discrimination is not only punishable by law but also arouses moral condemnation.

197. But we are concerned here with the international protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, which is based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the peaceful co-existence of States with different social and political systems. The history of the United Nations has confirmed that international co-operation in the sphere of human rights and fundamental freedoms is not only possible but necessary. So far, such co-operation has taken the form of the drafting of legal standards governing rights and freedoms. In this connexion, in addition to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, attention should be drawn to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This Declaration is important because it states the principle that a man cannot be free unless his people are free. Its practical implementation has given rise to two other extremely important instruments: the Declaration and Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. The international covenants that have been adopted on economic, social and cultural rights and on political and civil rights are now basic instruments in the field of human rights.

198. A collection of instruments has now been built up as a result of the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. The present task is to ensure that they are implemented and that all the efforts of States are concentrated on this objective.

199. One of the tasks of the United Nations and one of the forms of the international protection of human rights is the struggle against flagrant, systematic and massive violations of human rights such as imperialist aggression, colonialism and neo-colonialism, political terrorism against progressive leaders and organizations, racism, *apartheid* and the policy and practice of nazism and neo-nazism—in other words, violations which represent a threat to peace and are crimes against humanity.

200. There is a category of human rights and freedoms that is taking on new aspects as a result of modern social

developments. The importance of social and economic rights in human life is growing appreciably. The relative position and interrelationship of these rights and the traditional political and civil rights are changing. The State's concern and responsibility are increasing for the protection and safeguarding not only of economic, social and cultural rights, where the State's role is in fact crucial, but also of other rights: for example, it requires State action, including legislative action, to ensure equality before the law in questions of relations between races and nationalities. No supra-national institution, as sometimes proposed, can replace the State in these matters.

201. The Commission on Human Rights plays an important part in achieving the purposes of the United Nations. Its membership has now been enlarged, it has become more representative, and the developing countries of Africa and Asia are taking an active part in its work. These countries are making a major contribution to the cause of enhancing the dignity and worth of the human person. Mention should be made in this connexion of their efforts to eliminate the policy of *apartheid* and all forms of racial discrimination, which constitute flagrant and repellant forms of human oppression.

202. The International Year for Human Rights marks an important stage in general international and national measures in the field of human rights.

203. It has been celebrated widely in the Ukrainian SSR. Legislation has been improved in many sectors and a number of measures have been adopted on the further strengthening of socialist legality and on guarantees of civic rights and freedoms. Lectures have been given, compendiums, leaflets and articles have been published, and an atmosphere of public interest has been created for this International Year of Human Rights. The promotion of human rights is one of the most important principles of our society and it has guided us in all the steps we have taken.

204. The socialist system, the fraternal friendship of peoples, and mutual aid and co-operation among all the peoples of the Soviet Union have led to a rapid growth of the Ukraine's economic and cultural potential, and established the necessary conditions for a further enhancement of the dignity and worth of the human person and for his greater happiness in life.

205. In conclusion, I should like to say that I shall devote all my efforts and knowledge to the welfare of mankind and shall do my utmost to justify the award of this mark of distinction, the United Nations Human Rights Prize.

206. Thank you once again for the high honour you have done to me and to my people.

207. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): I now call upon Mrs. Anna Roosevelt Halstead, who received the prize awarded to her mother, the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, to address the General Assembly.

208. Mrs. Anna Roosevelt HALSTEAD: Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished representatives to the United Nations, which stands for all of man's basic hopes in this world, the simplest words say the most in any time of

deep emotion. For all five of my mother's and father's children I can only offer my heartfelt thanks to this important gathering for the honour you have bestowed on my mother for her many years of fruitful work in the vast field of human rights. During her years with the United Nations my mother was carrying forward ideas and ideals for which she and my father, President Roosevelt, had worked for a great many years. For Mother, human rights, when implemented, formed the keystone for a world at peace. Human rights speak for men, women and children in every part of this planet, and for the kind of lives they lead. It was these people who were her life's blood, whom she loved and who loved her. Today's recognition of her, from you, serves most importantly to spur us all onward in our never-ending task of implementing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the application of its broad tenets to the specific needs of the individual human being wherever he lives. If she were here today she would smile and say, very simply: "Thank you. Now let's get on with the work."

209. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): A message has been received from Mrs. Luthuli, widow of Chief Albert Luthuli, which I shall now read to the Assembly:

*[The speaker continued in English.]*

"My family and I are proud that the United Nations has decided to award a plaque in honour of my late husband and their father, Albert John Luthuli, to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"My late husband was a great defender of human freedom, and did not believe in the all-mighty State. This freedom he would have accorded to every man, woman and child in South Africa, no matter what their colour, race or creed. This belief in freedom was deep and sincere, as deep and sincere as he was.

"This is his third international honour from abroad. My family and I sincerely hope that one day the country of his own birth, South Africa, will accept and honour his service to it."

*[The speaker resumed in Spanish.]*

210. I now call upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency U Thant.

211. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: At this special meeting, close to the end of the International Year for Human Rights, the General Assembly has once again demonstrated, on behalf of the international community, the importance which it attaches to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the principles and standards which the Declaration proclaims, the observance of which is essential for the world to progress on the path of freedom, peace and harmony among nations and within nations.

212. Well-deserved tributes have been paid to the authors of that historic document, and we are happy to see a number of them joining us in this commemorative meeting. Prizes for outstanding achievements have been awarded to individuals whose past and current efforts in the cause of human rights have served to stimulate the action of many others.

213. An impressive number of activities have been undertaken during the International Year for Human Rights in all regions of the world. They will be remembered with satisfaction and as constituting a significant response to the proposals formulated by the Commission on Human Rights and approved by the General Assembly. I do not doubt that these activities have contributed to planting the seeds of United Nations principles on human rights in every corner of the world and to bringing hope to many for greater respect of human dignity and for the fulfilment of their basic needs.

214. The year 1968 has also seen regrettable set-backs that have blotted the records of a year in which Governments and individuals were particularly called upon to show the utmost respect for the fundamental rights of persons and of nations. Neither the International Year for Human Rights nor this special meeting should, therefore, be considered as a final step, but rather as another milestone in the long struggle for the achievement of some of the worthiest purposes of the United Nations Charter. I whole-heartedly join with those who have called for a renewed determination that the coming years should see not only a firm acceptance of the principles set out in the Declaration as a "common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations", but also genuine progress in securing the universal and effective enjoyment of those rights and freedoms. For

the signs are unmistakable and no Government can afford to ignore them: people everywhere, and in particular the young, are determined to see human rights translated from declarations into actions and to have these rights implemented both at the national and international levels, as the essential prerequisite for peace at home and in the world.

215. The PRESIDENT (*translated from Spanish*): I should like to inform the General Assembly that on this solemn occasion we have also received a special message from the Very Reverend Archbishop Makarios, President of the Republic of Cyprus.

216. I should now like to express my thanks to all the speakers who, in response to the invitations addressed to them have contributed to this solemn commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The ceremony is now concluded.

217. Lastly, I wish to inform Members of the Assembly that, at the request of the Chairman of the Afro-Asian Group, I have agreed to extend the time limit for the submission of proposals on agenda item 64, entitled "Question of Namibia", until Wednesday, 11 December, at 6 p.m.

*The meeting rose at 6.50 p.m.*