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NEW YORK

President: Mr Paul J. F. LUSAKA
(Zambia).

AGENDA ITEM 9

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. TALASASA (Solomon Islands): May I first of all congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. With your vast experience as a diplomat and as an outstanding representative of your good country, Zambia, I am sure you will guide the deliberations of the Assembly with success and distinction.

2. Also, I should like to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Jorge E. Illueca, of Panama, for his skilful leadership of the thirty-eighth session.

3. I join previous speakers in extending a warm welcome to the friendly country of Brunei Darussalam as it joins our family of nations. I congratulate the Government and people of Brunei Darussalam on the achievement of independence and offer them my Government's and my people's best wishes for the future. We look forward with pleasure to working closely with the delegation of Brunei Darussalam in the Organization, its related agencies and the Commonwealth.

4. Last year, my Prime Minister, in addressing this great assembly of nations, voiced the concerns of the Government of the Solomon Islands about certain international issues. Today, I shall make no apology if I again touch on some or all of those same issues. In my humble opinion, it is our duty not to lose sight of the major issues that come within the sphere of responsibility of the Organization: disarmament for peace and security; social and economic development for human betterment, including human rights; the eradication of the traces and remnants of colonialism; and the development of international law and justice.

5. Those are the noble aims and ideals for which this great Organization was founded; those are the issues that we must continue to address in our efforts to achieve those objectives, even if it takes us an eternity to achieve them hoping that meanwhile the world is not blown up by the pressing of a button.

6. It is timely, I believe, to remind ourselves that four decades ago a single nuclear bomb brought peace to the world and today only man can keep that peace. This is the crucial question that should be answered honestly by those concerned. For us, small peace-loving nations, the threat of imminent bombing brings the nightmarish realization that our planet

will no longer be safe unless a genuine effort is made to bring about peace in all the corners of the world. Thus, my Government earnestly urges the super-Powers to resume disarmament negotiations at the earliest possible opportunity—not for the attainment of superiority, but for the definition of civilized behaviour in arms control.

7. Twelve months ago, we were concerned about global peace and security, threatened as it was by the instability in certain regions. That same threat is still with us today, in spite of the noble resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the courageous and diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General. My Government's position remains unchanged, in that the unstable situations in southern Africa, the Middle East, Asia, the Korean peninsula and Central America are still threats to global peace and security.

8. In southern Africa, the question of delaying Namibia's independence is a cause for concern and my Government would like to see the early settlement of this question, in conformity with the principles of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Related to the question of Namibia is the evil system of *apartheid*. Solomon Islands has consistently condemned that system and will maintain and uphold its condemnation until that inhuman and uncivilized practice is totally eradicated.

9. The situation in the Middle East is also of concern to all of us. Peace in that region is an important objective of the United Nations. The principles of secure territorial integrity and sovereignty are involved here. The position of the Solomon Islands has always been that Israel's right to exist must be recognized and that the Palestinian people have a right to self-determination. But the attainment of this depends on the search for peace by all the parties involved.

10. In the Asian region, the occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet forces and of Cambodia by Vietnamese forces perpetuates the threat to peace in the whole region and in the adjacent region of the South Pacific. Therefore, we call again for the withdrawal of those forces from those respective countries.

11. With regard to the Korean peninsula, Solomon Islands will support a negotiated reunification process, which should be pursued without outside interference. In the mean time, we would see merit in the admission of the two Koreas to the United Nations as a necessary step towards the process of reunification.

12. I now turn to the danger we face in the South Pacific region, that is, the danger of nuclear pollution. We are convinced that our reefs and seas are endangered by the nuclear-testing activities that have been carried out in our region. Hence we have condemned and will continue to condemn the nuclear testing by France in Mururoa atoll. We are totally

opposed to that and to the proposal by Japan to dump nuclear waste in the Pacific Ocean. Japan has heeded our objections thus far and we are grateful.

13. France, on the other hand, has shown no sign of willingness even to listen to our protests. Instead, it has had the arrogance to invite a team of scientists and to show them what they should be shown by the authorities in Mururoa. To this sort of unfriendly gesture, all I can say is that we are not developed industrially but we are humanly mature enough to tell truths from lies and rights from wrongs. It is morally wrong to lay the foundations for killing the source of our livelihood, that is, the resources of our seas and reefs, and for endangering our lives. The team of scientists made it abundantly clear that they were not allowed the freedom to observe certain crucial aspects of the nuclear-testing activities on Mururoa atoll and their conclusion is equally clear that there is no guarantee that, either in the short term or in the long term, there will be no adverse effects on our region and on future generations.

14. In this connection, I should like to endorse the statements by my colleagues from the South Pacific who have already addressed this session with regard to our collective decision to work towards a nuclear-free zone in our region. We regard this as fundamental and important because the island States in this region depend very heavily on the resources of our seas. In fact, many of our people depend almost exclusively on marine resources.

15. This is why we attach such importance to keeping our seas free from nuclear pollutants; this is why we subscribe so strongly to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which stipulates the 200-mile exclusive economic zone and the 200-mile fisheries zone; this is why we are concerned about the spirit of international co-operation and about the fact that certain countries are still creating a serious obstacle by their refusal to recognize this Convention in its entirety.

16. I have dealt with the issues that are a precondition of successful economic and social development. What will be the good of the development of our islands' economic and social infrastructures if they are to be destroyed by nuclear pollutants and bombs? Of course, with modern technology these can be repaired in a matter of days, but for whose benefit? For the benefit of those who destroy, certainly, for they will manufacture equipment and machinery for repairs and reconstruction.

17. Thus, in order to come to grips with the problems of economic and social development in small island nations such as mine, we have to appreciate and understand the fundamental and practical obstacles to development.

18. Today's global economic situation must surely be the reflection of our unstable world. While economic recovery seems to have taken place in some industrial countries, the developing countries are still struggling and in the process are becoming worse off.

19. There can be no universal economic recovery, in my view, unless there is a new international economic order which aims to bridge the development gap between industrial countries and the heavily populated developing countries; a new international economic order which allows for a fair and free flow of trade between countries and relaxed and investment-generating regulations for international

and multilateral financial institutions. Unfortunately, the global negotiations on a new international economic order are still in limbo.

20. Herein lies the interdependence of peace and security on the one hand and social and economic development on the other. The stalling of the global negotiations on a new international economic order is a direct result of the breakdown in genuine disarmament negotiations. The arms build-up, which has given rise to economic recovery in certain quarters, is a drain on scarce resources that are needed for development in the developing third world countries, which are the hardest hit by the recession.

21. As I mentioned human rights in relation to social and economic development, I would like to assure the Assembly of the high regard for this principle in my country. All the fundamental human rights and freedoms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are provided for and safeguarded in our national Constitution. There are also various legislative frameworks within which are spelt out detailed provisions concerning certain constitutional obligations, such as our leadership code to govern the conduct of our leaders in the exercise of their powers and the fulfilment of their responsibilities when in public office, and the Ombudsman Act to protect and safeguard the rights of individuals in their dealings with Government and statutory institutions.

22. In this context and in line with our policies and laws to safeguard human rights, I am pleased to see continuing efforts to work towards some regional and subregional institutional arrangements for the protection and promotion of human rights in the region of Asia and the Pacific. The proposal that resulted from the Seminar on National, Local and Regional Arrangements for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Asian Regions,¹ held at Colombo from 21 June to 2 July 1982, can be commended for further consideration. We welcome the objective of establishing an open-ended working group to continue the overall analysis with a view to further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including questions relevant to the work of the Commission on Human Rights within the United Nations system.

23. These are noble goals, but here I sound a note of caution regarding regional institutional arrangements. Every care should be taken to avoid overlap and duplication, and, whatever we do, we should be mindful of the danger that such institutions, conceived in good faith, sometimes tend to lose sight of the purposes for which they were established and concentrate their efforts on self-promotion and self-perpetuation.

24. Turning now to decolonization, I remind the Assembly of the communiqué of the South Pacific Forum relating to the question of New Caledonia, issued after its fifteenth meeting, held in Tuvalu on 27 and 28 August 1984. The relevant parts for our purposes are as follows:

"The Forum reaffirmed its support for the transition of New Caledonia to independence in accordance with the wishes of its people and in a manner which guarantees the innate and active rights of the Kanaka people and the rights, interests and aspirations of all its inhabitants. It urged the French Government and all political and community groups, including the Independence

Front, to keep talking to ensure that this transition to an independent, multiracial New Caledonia is achieved speedily and peacefully within a shorter time scale than presently envisaged.

"It was the Forum's view that the process of decolonization would be advanced by a public statement by the French Government that independence was the desirable, logical and acknowledged outcome of the Act of self-determination currently planned for 1989, and that this referendum should be brought forward by agreement between all parties involved.

"The Forum believed that France should transfer additional political and administrative powers to the Territory to ensure that it is adequately prepared for independence and take the practical steps necessary to guarantee the full and active participation of the Melanesian community in the Territory's educational, vocational and administrative institutions."

25. The persistent refusal by France to reinscribe New Caledonia on the list of Territories to be decolonized reflects a fundamental breach of the principle of self-determination and independence. My Government condemns this.

26. The underlying fact is simply that the people who were actually colonized—the Melanesians, and not the settlers—are the very people who are asking for self-determination and independence. It is these people who are asking for their disengagement from being a Department of the French Republic. There is a very genuine request and appeal to the United Nations, and we, their Melanesian brothers, very much appreciate their desire for independence. It is therefore my Government's obligation to put to the Organization the urgent proposal that New Caledonia be reinscribed on the agenda for decolonization during this session.

27. The Melanesian people of New Caledonia are being indoctrinated with two basic negative considerations: first, that they are not ready for independence and, secondly, that if France left their Territory, their peace and security and that of the South Pacific region would be endangered.

28. With regard to the first point, New Caledonia is the most developed Territory in the South Pacific. The city of Noumea is far more developed than the capitals of all the independent island States in the region. What, then, is the basis for readiness? Is it political, social or economic development? If it is all of these, then, as the Melanesians themselves are saying, they are ready, and France should accept this. With regard to the second point, what threatens the peace and security of our region is the presence of colonial Powers.

29. Independence has brought about the establishment of cordial and happy relations between the countries of our region, including Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Western Samoa, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands. This augurs very well for the peace and security of our region. Therefore, I ask all members to think very seriously about the situation in New Caledonia, for the longer we postpone the consideration thereof, the more serious the threat to peace and security in our region will become.

30. Closely related to the question of global peace and security is the question of international co-operation. There is still much room for fairness. We

have seen, and are seeing, injustice in the application of the new status of certain countries.

31. I now turn to the United Nations itself. Much has been said about its inadequacies and weaknesses. There have been comments from certain quarters that the Organization is heading in the wrong direction. While these might appear to give cause for concern, we believe that, under the able leadership of the Secretary-General, anything that needs to be improved will be attended to. Over all, however, one thing is certainly very clear: the Organization has the vital role of serving as the forum within which we can meet and try to resolve our problems through dialogue instead of confrontation. The United Nations holds humanity's last hope of maintaining peace and security. It has also done much, and is now doing more, for the development of the developing countries.

32. Solomon Islands is committed to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. That is why, in spite of our difficulties in the areas of manpower and finance, we are trying to participate as effectively as we can. Thus, I am obliged to conclude this brief statement by reaffirming our commitment to this great Organization.

33. Mr. BEYE (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): Next year we shall commemorate with enthusiasm a double anniversary—the fortieth anniversary of the Organization and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

34. At a time when we are drawing up balance sheets, we must note that the world is in crisis—political crisis and socio-economic crisis—which seems to arise from self-interest, the power complex and mutual fear. Never have men been dying in such numbers for freedom, or from hunger and malnutrition in this world of surplus food.

35. Yes, the freedom fighters are still falling under the bullets of anachronistic colonial wars, and the *apartheid* system is persisting with ever more insidious, virulent and arrogant practices and the flagrant violation of the elementary human rights of peoples. At the same time, for most of the world population, the present and future are immersed in a situation of absolute poverty because of the absence of appropriate solutions to development problems. We are very far from achieving one of the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, namely, the promotion of social progress.

36. The peoples of the world continue to live in a nightmare of uncertainty and in growing insecurity, because there is no significant progress in negotiations on general, complete and controlled disarmament. Worse still, the nuclear danger raises the ever more threatening spectre of a new holocaust. The world is dumbfounded by crises and is virtually on the threshold of war. Diplomatic language has become more and more abrasive. The international situation is explosive.

37. It is therefore comforting that, at a time when there is a growing tendency to turn away from this remarkable institution, the United Nations, a happy combination of circumstances has led to you, Mr. President, guiding the work of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. It is a pertinent symbol. The eminent President of the United Nations Council for Namibia is a worthy son of the southern part of Africa, which is in the vanguard of

the African peoples' struggle against the bastion of *apartheid*. Your outstanding election to the presidency of the thirty-ninth session is not only an honour to your country, Zambia, a friend of my country, but also a tribute to the entire African continent. There is no doubt that, thanks to your outstanding qualities as a man of dialogue, prudence, tolerance and compromise, the work of the session will be successful. It goes without saying, of course, that you can be sure of the full co-operation of the delegation of Mali in carrying out your delicate mission.

38. It is also a pleasure for me to convey to your predecessor, Mr. Jorge Illueca, now Head of State of his country, Panama, my respectful congratulations on the competence, dedication and calmness with which he guided the work of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

39. It is also encouraging that, on the eve of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Organization has welcomed to its midst the 159th Member—the State of Brunei Darussalam. My delegation offers this new Member of the Organization its sincere congratulations on the freedom it has gained and assures it of our readiness to seek frank, full and brotherly co-operation with it—co-operation which has already commenced within the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

40. The United Nations has thus moved one step further towards the achievement of one of the fundamental goals set forth in the Charter signed at San Francisco, namely, universality. There is reason to hope that very soon Namibia will be able to join this great family of the United Nations, in accordance with the principles contained in the historic General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

41. That would, in any case, be fair recompense for the untiring efforts made with great openness by the Secretary-General, to whom we pay a special tribute for his devotion to the cause of the Organization. I am very happy to express to him the gratitude of the people of Mali and its leaders, who will always remember his friendly visit to our country. The Secretary-General also visited other countries in the Sahel and saw the extent of the disaster there. Then, in New York and at Geneva and wherever he had an opportunity to do so, he found the simple, decisive words needed to awaken the international conscience further and, in agreement with the countries concerned, was able to define a new approach to the problems of drought and desertification and to formulate a global strategy for combating those disasters which, I can never repeat enough, constitute a universal calamity.

42. The agony created among the people of the Sahel through the constant deterioration of the ecosystem—the causes of which do not yet seem to have been studied in depth and the scope of which is not fully understood—is due to a more disturbing phenomenon than that attributed to cyclic variations in the balance of the world ecology. Desertification has become a fact, one which presents a challenge to our knowledge and which is shaking our belief in our mastery over nature. The scope of desertification can be found in the frightful spread of the phenomenon, year after year, to the point where drought now afflicts every continent, without exception. It has been established that, in 1983, the vegetation line in

Africa shrank by 230 kilometres in comparison with 1982. During that period, the food situation in Africa reached a critical threshold. Twenty-five years after independence, Africa is, alas, the only continent where per capita food production has shrunk. Thus Africa has replaced Asia as the main beneficiary of food aid. Indeed, per capita food production south of the Sahara is less than it was 10 years ago, and even 20 years ago.

43. Mali, like other Sahel countries, has been experiencing this disaster for more than 12 years. My country has devoted the greater part of its resources to fighting the phenomenon through an appropriate restructuring of its development programmes, by mobilizing all its means of production and by an acute awareness of the phenomenon of desertification to the point where the Head of State, President Moussa Traoré, called upon all Malians to live with the phenomenon and to integrate it into our economy. That appeal is universal in scope, for in the gigantic battle against drought that has become universal, the devotion of a single people, however courageous or determined, is not enough. Therefore, in dealing with this global vision of the preservation of nature, we talked from this very rostrum about the establishment of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, about its goals and the hope that animated its partners and its development programmes and about that Committee's hope of reviving affected regions of their countries. None the less, as is so correctly recognized in the *World Economic Survey 1984*:

“ . . . in addition to the reforms which these countries can undertake on their own, others require investments which are beyond their capacity at the present time. Adequate external support is therefore essential to help sub-Saharan countries accelerate progress in what has become a painful adjustment process.”²

44. Twenty-one African countries decided at Dakar, last July, to combine their resources to fight desertification, and once again they have appealed for international action to counter predictions to the effect that African countries were running the risk of being wiped off the face of the earth because of the implacable desert creep.

45. To be sure, in spite of its relative slowness, international support in the struggle against desertification has not always been lacking. Subsidies or assistance granted to the Sahel countries by friendly countries, international organizations such as the World Bank, the European Economic Community, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations system will never achieve the desired goals unless the volume and quantity of assistance are adapted more and more both to the rationalization of existing economic machinery and to the extent of the damage.

46. The strategy for combating drought is essentially composed of two parts: emergency assistance and medium-term programming. Among the measures to be taken within the framework of emergency assistance is that of giving priority to restoring food supplies in order to meet the acute and pressing needs of the population. The appeal made in Rome, at FAO, last January by the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel is part of that strategy, although it also deals with the concerns for the future. In this context, the food strategy tends

to transform food assistance into development assistance, and that depends on the political will of our people. Refusing to settle into a mentality of dependence, and convinced—as President Moussa Traoré has constantly repeated—that the noblest and most useful assistance is that coming from themselves, the people have entered the fray, which involves a wholesale revision of our assumptions concerning desertification.

47. The harmonious evolution of our society depends upon the attainment of progress by all. It is dependent also upon our capacity to assure a collective security, without which there is no development. The United Nations, which has been created precisely to weave strands of harmony and peace among peoples, is undergoing a crisis because of the fact that some negative attitudes are paralysing its essential organs and preventing them from realizing their ideals. At this time, when the Organization has reached the age of maturity, we call upon all nations present here to show a little more wisdom and determination so as to restore to our peoples all the hope they have in this remarkable instrument of close co-operation. I refer here to rehabilitating the world Organization in terms of scrupulous respect for the sacred principles of non-resort to force, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and abandonment of all forms of political or economic domination.

48. One of the cardinal principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations is, in fact, the refusal to resort to war, in order to save succeeding generations from “untold sorrow.”

49. Refusal to wage war implies resorting to peaceful means in order to resolve conflicts. Last year, it was our task in this very Hall to insist upon the creative dynamics of dialogue in the search for solutions to disputes arising from the errors and vicissitudes of history. That is the keystone of Mali's foreign policy. Mali constantly cultivates and strengthens its good-neighbourly relations with all the surrounding countries on the basis of fraternal and fruitful dialogue.

50. In Africa, a land of dialogue, this step is more than ever necessary to resolve the painful crisis of the Western Sahara, especially since the ways and means of resolving that question were carefully defined by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its nineteenth ordinary session,³ held at Addis Ababa from 6 to 12 June 1983. That dialogue, I say, is more than ever necessary at a time when the Organization of African Unity [OAU] needs to mobilize all its resources to preserve its indispensable unity and meet the difficult problems of development that beset the continent on all sides.

51. It has already been our task to recall the deep historic wellsprings from which Western Sahara and Morocco have drawn their common civilization. That civilization, which is shared by our entire subregion, elevates man to his full grandeur, in all his dignity, with strict respect for his ideals—ideals which imply in particular respect for political and economic choices, and therefore the principle of self-determination for all peoples. It is only natural, therefore, for both parties to the conflict in the Western Sahara to have accepted the principle of the organization of a general, free and orderly referendum on self-determination.

52. The African Heads of State, in adopting at Addis Ababa the resolution on Western Sahara, pointed out the path to the restoration of peace in the subregion to which Western Sahara belongs by urgently inviting the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO⁴ to engage immediately in direct negotiations to define practical modalities, internationally recognized by the Organization, for a referendum on self-determination in the Western Sahara so that there will at last be a further clasping of hands in restored friendship and will for co-operation, hands which, in spite of the vicissitudes of history, have woven the fabric of brotherhood down through the ages. This urgent appeal which we reiterate to Morocco comes from our assessment of the outstanding role that country has had to play in its own liberation and in the liberation of other countries under foreign domination and of its capacity as a founding member of the African organization.

53. In these times of grave uncertainties, the OAU, the pride and hope of all sons of Africa, needs to use all its resources in order to work towards the fulfilment of the aspirations for freedom and progress of its peoples—peoples who, in spite of the enormous wealth of our continent, remain the most disadvantaged peoples on earth.

54. The principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes must also prevail in order to end the four-year fratricidal war between Iran and Iraq, two brother countries, Members of the United Nations, of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It is time, high time, for those two countries to heed the voice of reason and wisdom and achieve a speedy settlement of that tragic conflict, which is constantly growing, in a region where the situation is already very worrisome.

55. Similarly, unless care is taken, the Korean peninsula is again in danger of losing its peace. The artificially created barriers to reunification of that country are unacceptable. They oppose the will of the Korean people, they are contrary to all international commitments made at the end of one of the most painful wars ever fought, and they herald even bloodier conflicts.

56. Fidelity to the Charter of the United Nations and commitment to its ideals therefore demand not only refusal to wage war but also, and perhaps above all, refusal to prepare for war. Unfortunately, the proverb that says “Let him that desires peace prepare for war” has not been disproved.

57. Thus persists the dangerous illusion of maintaining security through accumulation of weapons, through possession of the ultimate weapon. In reality, the safeguarding of international security resides in confidence among nations. It is strengthened by the desire to bring peoples ever closer and not make them live in the nightmare of uncertain days. It is strengthened by a firm political will in negotiations on disarmament and not by research and the abusive stockpiling of weapons, the perfecting of which is constantly postponed by ever newer findings on the part of science and technology.

58. Thus we see the perpetuation of the arms race with the development of anti-satellite and anti-missile systems. Dialogue has virtually ended in the Conference on Disarmament. Reciprocal accusations made by the major military Powers with regard to disturbing the balance of forces do not deal with the

real object of disarmament, because this imbalance can exist only in people's imaginations. The appeals made by world leaders, and in particular by the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries tends precisely to treat the question of disarmament on the basis of the real facts in a climate of confidence and collective responsibility, without which Star Wars will soon cease to be a game shown on the movie screen. It would be enough really for a slight error of calculation to take place, or for some equipment suddenly to fail, and our planet would be transformed into the last volcano.

59. Impediments to the launching of decisive negotiations on general and complete disarmament will remain so long as measures to ensure collective security are perceived as the special preserve of those who, thanks to the strength and quality of their weaponry, only threaten that security.

60. Disarmament is dependent on trust and acceptance of responsibility for saving and enriching our common civilization. The incredible waste of resources in the service of war thus becomes more than disturbing. I need make no comment on the ever-rising spiral of expenditure on weapons, but we must highlight the fact that, in this world which longs for social justice, 30 children—I repeat, 30 children—die from hunger each minute while during that same minute \$1.3 million is spent on weapons. The cost of a single nuclear submarine is the equivalent of the operations and equipment budget of the world's 23 least developed countries. All the studies on the world economic and social situation have shown that senseless expenditure on arms is one of the direct causes of the present world crisis, which is itself the cause of so many nightmares both in the developed countries and, in particular, in the developing countries.

61. It seems to my delegation that, in the light of the disturbing developments in the international situation, rejection of preparations for war should be as much a duty as non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.

62. Regarding this principle, the conflict in Chad—which for us is a cause for great concern and distress—can only, we repeat, be settled nationally. Therefore, we urge the people of Chad to resume the path of negotiations to reconcile their differences—differences which can arise in any society but should not be allowed to destroy it—and not to stray from the path of wisdom and honour. We support them in this noble initiative, for the sovereignty of Chad can be maintained and remain inviolable only by the will of the people of Chad, free from all outside interference. The withdrawal of all foreign forces from Chad, which is now under way, should make a positive contribution to national reconciliation. Then the sons of Chad will be reconciled and the external aspect of the crisis will be more easily dealt with, because with unity peoples have always known how to respond to threats to their sovereignty, integrity and independence.

63. Outside Africa, after long years of wastage of energy and resources in terms of human lives, peace has yet to be restored in Afghanistan and Kampuchea. The intercommunity talks have been suspended in Cyprus. Central America is more deeply engulfed in armed conflict. We must accept the fact that these unfortunate situations cannot be resolved by military means.

64. We had hoped that after the glorious sacrifices made in South-East Asia a new era of fruitful and fraternal co-operation would begin for the peoples and the age-old culture of that subregion, through respect for the principle of good-neighbourliness and through joint efforts. Unfortunately, however, that has not been the case. Mali calls on the countries concerned to embark on and broaden the path of dialogue in order to settle the conflicts which only expose them to interference of all kinds.

65. We call upon the sons of Kampuchea to undertake such negotiations, without outside interference. They would gain much by joining together to face the priority tasks of development. For its part, the Government of Mali will support any action towards a political—and therefore negotiated—settlement of this tragic question.

66. It is impossible to overemphasize the fact that the solution to the tragedy of the Afghan people must be a completely political one. Only peaceful negotiations carried out with a true political will to achieve a genuine solution can enable Afghanistan to regain its unity and its status as a non-aligned country. Mali pursues the same objectives regarding the disturbing situation of the Cypriot people. My country is a member of the contact group of non-aligned countries on the Cyprus question, and, while welcoming the Secretary-General's tireless efforts, we invite the two communities to negotiate and engage in fruitful dialogue so that this conflict, the source of international tension, may be resolved in a way that is just and will protect the unity and territorial integrity of Cyprus.

67. In Latin America and the Caribbean, just as in South-East Asia, interventionist activities are also taking place. In the Final Communiqué adopted by the Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries held at Managua from 10 to 14 January 1983⁵ on the situation in Central America and the Caribbean, among other things, and, more recently, in the Quito Declaration, adopted by the Latin American Economic Conference held at Quito from 9 to 13 January 1984 [see A/39/118, *annex*], the attention of the international community was drawn to the fundamental problems facing South America and the Caribbean. To the problems of development, unfortunately, another must be added. I refer to interference of all kinds. Here, as elsewhere, this is a matter for the peoples alone. They demand only to live in peace, with respect for their chosen political, economic and social systems, the differences in which sometimes show originality and are a source of further progress.

68. Reason always triumphs in relations among men of good will. It is on the basis of reason and understanding of the true interests of Latin America and the Caribbean that the Contadora Group is attempting, with remarkable patience, to put an end to futile conflicts over boundaries and sovereignty between countries which are the heirs of Simón Bolívar, who considered them all to be one and the same homeland.

69. Year after year, in the face of the many problems that we have just outlined, we end up believing that the United Nations is incapable of resolving the crises that break out in various places and spheres.

70. In Africa, racism is becoming increasingly insidious and virulent. Colonial wars continue.

71. Only one year after its establishment, the United Nations came into conflict with South Africa over the political future of Namibia. For 18 years, the people of Namibia, under the banner of the South West Africa People's Organization [SWAPO], its sole authentic representative, has faced with increasing success, despite extremely difficult conditions, the army of South African invaders. SWAPO would have been easily crushed had it not genuinely embodied, expressed and defended the deepest aspirations of its people. SWAPO has consistently fulfilled its national responsibilities. Its political maturity and its devotion to the ideals of peace need no further proof. It is a model for authentic national liberation movements: it shows firmness and persistence in struggle and openness to dialogue and concessions without capitulation. We, in Mali, would like to believe that Africa is incapable of betraying an African cause, and that the great diplomatic activity seen recently between South Africa and some of its immediate neighbours is explained only by irresistible economic necessity brought about by the timid support of African States for the front-line countries, division in the OAU, a lack of effective and active support from friends of Africa, and the requirements of the long and complex struggle of the peoples of southern Africa.

72. Thus, the war for the independence of Namibia is more than a national liberation struggle. Its nature and scope can be compared to those of the determined, universal struggle against racism, nazism and fascism, the triumph of which led to the drafting of the Charter of the United Nations and the founding of the Organization. That fact is clear, and it explains why, despite much resistance and much culpable accommodation with the *apartheid* régime, the United Nations has associated itself with the liberation struggle of the Namibian people while constantly pointing out the peaceful paths that could lead to its success. The most recent initiative is reflected in Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the implementation of which, six years after its adoption, is still being blocked by the simple fact of South Africa's ingrained hostility to the principles that are the glory of the United Nations: democracy, freedom and respect among peoples.

73. The stumbling-blocks placed in the way of the rapid and proper implementation of resolution 435 (1978) are therefore serious and of great concern because they are highly prejudicial to international peace and security. While such acts of procrastination can delay Namibia's accession to independence, they can never prevent it. Such dilatory manoeuvres exacerbate tensions in southern Africa rather than reducing them in the interest of peace. Respect for the ideals enunciated in the Charter calls for the full implementation of resolution 435 (1978), which was adopted with the favourable vote of four of the Powers that have the right of veto. The United Nations cannot be indifferent to the agony suffered by the Namibian people.

74. You, Sir, who have presided tactfully and effectively over the United Nations Council for Namibia, know that the history of decolonization teaches us that negotiations entered into in good faith have often been long and arduous. They have, none the less, made it possible to resolve many colonial conflicts.

75. In the past, prior to the holocaust, people believed that nazism was merely an epiphenomenon. They were wrong and, alas, mankind paid dearly for it. Today, in southern Africa, the strategy of the Nazi leaders is resurfacing: we see the deliberate violation of the borders of neighbouring countries and racist confiscation of fundamental freedoms. Today, here and there, we can still see shields being raised up in defence of human rights, sometimes on behalf of peoples that have not even asked for that much, but, on the other hand, powerful information media, the most modern weapons and facilities of every kind are, with inadmissible complicity, being placed at the service of *apartheid*.

76. Last June, the fortieth anniversary of the Normandy landing was celebrated in Europe. We reverently recalled the glorious sacrifice of millions and millions of men deprived of their lives in order that liberty might prevail, in order that racial hatred should not be handed down to future generations. The *apartheid* leader took part in those commemorative ceremonies. He most certainly must have taken advantage of the occasion to spit upon the graves of the non-whites who lie in the far-distant soil they helped save from tyranny.

77. The electoral farce that was quite rightly and widely boycotted by the Indian and coloured communities is part of the same strategy of revamping *apartheid* in order to make it look presentable.

78. The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations calls for redressing assaults on its purposes and principles through peaceful means, and states that armed force shall not be used—save, as it makes clear, "in the common interest". The presence of South Africa in Namibia is an insult to history, to logic and to the lofty purposes set forth in the Charter. It is in the common interest to isolate and destroy the hateful system of *apartheid* by all available diplomatic, cultural, economic and, above all, military means, in keeping with the relevant provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter. Thus, history will one day reproach us for having tolerated this abject system for so long and in so shameful a way, and mankind will not have to suffer another mistake with incalculable consequences.

79. In view of the ethic that has served to support the Pretoria-Tel Aviv axis, the Palestinian people, too, continue to carry their heavy cross. Having failed to find an equitable solution to the question of Palestine, the Middle East ceased decades ago to be one of the privileged meeting grounds for different races and cultures. The Government of Israel has waged war there on the pretext of protecting the Jewish homeland, but to the detriment, none the less, of the Palestinian people's right to preserve their own identity and draw strength from the teachings of their age-old history, to build their own future on the basis of their own values and aspirations. However, like all wars of liberation, the war forced upon the Palestinian people will also end with the triumph of right over injustice, with the triumph of faith in fundamental human rights and with the advent of an era of reconciliation among all the children of Palestine. This is inevitable and will come to pass notwithstanding the occupation of Arab territories by force or the proliferation of settlements and the systematic and savage bombardments of Palestinian refugee camps.

80. We shall never tire of repeating that the question of Palestine lies at the heart of the Middle East crisis. Its solution is not to be found in an augmented arsenal of armaments but in recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, especially its right to independence and national sovereignty.

81. Despite the difficulties inherent in the protracted state of tension, Lebanon has entered a new phase of national reconciliation, the success of which depends primarily on the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from that territory.

82. Peace derives strength from movements towards peace. The glimmer of hope that has appeared in Lebanon could extend to the whole of the Middle East if the reality of Palestine prevails. In recognizing, in its various resolutions, the right of the Palestinian people to a national existence, the United Nations has faithfully reflected international public opinion.

83. The Organization has called for a new dialogue to re-establish confidence in this troubled and highly sensitive region of the Middle East by advocating, in General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East. The reactions of Governments to that sound recommendation have demonstrated the need for such an initiative, one that has also been advocated by many international organizations. The people of Mali, a people of peace, will spare no effort to ensure that that conference takes place—a conference that will be responsible before history, one representing hope to all the peoples of the Middle East who are victims of endless and bloody wars that lay waste their legitimate aspirations to security and economic progress.

84. Obviously, the holding of such a conference would be pointless without the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization [*PLO*], the sole and authentic representative of the Palestinian people. Its agenda will be limited if it does not include the root causes of the growing deterioration in the situation in the Middle East, namely, and in particular, the recognition of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and non-interference in the internal affairs of States of the region. A decisive step towards peace will be made if the largest possible number of countries can participate in that conference and, obviously, all those Powers to whom the Charter has given special responsibilities in the area of safeguarding and maintaining international peace and security.

85. In addition to these serious political crises that are tearing the world apart, one of the major threats to international peace and security is posed by the overall world economic situation, which continues to be alarming. In its deterioration, the economic social crisis has passed through several critical stages. It represents a kind of structural violence that is becoming endemic.

86. The economic situation in the developing countries is disastrous. For some of them, even that word is a euphemism, since negative factors affecting world economic growth are compounded in those countries by additional climatic and ecological factors that are depriving them of the meagre resources from which they already derive paltry benefits. For most of the poorer countries, we are unfortunately witnessing so-called bad development, since their

development is being blocked by the weakening in the flow of official development assistance, the crushing burden of debt servicing, which forestalls any improvement in the standard of living, the rise in interest rates, the relentless collapse in raw commodity prices with the concomitant deterioration in terms of trade and, lastly, the alarming reduction of the share of developing countries in world trade.

87. For the developed countries, the announced economic recovery becomes a mere assumption with the collapse of the world economic structures. The development and intensity of the present economic crisis rest on many factors which have been amply described in many manuals and publications, and we therefore do not need to dwell on these. If we cited too many figures, we might mask the tragedy which lies behind this situation.

88. The scientific studies on the chronic balance-of-payments deficits, the uncontrolled rise in the cost of borrowing and the foreign debt burden hide a simple reality, namely, that our economies are at a standstill. While the burden of indebtedness—\$800 billion—prevents any economic progress or improvement in the standard of living of the developing countries, the repayment of this debt is gradually becoming impossible. This explains the awesome words of one exasperated leader, who asked: "How can that debt be repaid except through the hunger of our people?". Already, \$500 billion has been deemed lost—that is, more than the total capital of the Western banks. Chain reactions are taking place which endanger the economic and social system in the so-called developed world, and it is impossible to forecast what can emerge from this chaos except greater poverty and violence. The world economy will remain at a standstill because of the absence of the co-operation needed to take the necessary action. This situation will persist until a responsible dialogue taking into account mutual interests is begun on the establishment of a new international economic order which will safeguard the sovereignty of States over their resources.

89. Renewed co-operation between the North and the South is an absolute necessity if we wish to maintain a climate of peace and understanding in the world.

90. The African States, in adopting the Lagos Plan of Action,⁶ demonstrated their desire to contribute to the building of a world in which the progress and happiness of all would be promoted. The Lagos Plan, based on the strategy of collective autonomy and designed to encourage and strengthen South-South co-operation at the subregional and regional levels, is one of the main components of the new international economic order which must be built in a spirit of harmony and solidarity in order to respond to the deeply felt aspirations of man. That is also the strategy of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Indeed, the non-aligned countries, noting that the exacerbation of East-West confrontation not only threatens world peace but also dangerously jeopardizes co-operation between nations, decided, surmounting the problem of blocs, to build a new international economic order which would ensure peace and justice for all. The global negotiations, which have not yet gone beyond the stage of exploratory contacts, must be continued. The present world economy, because interdependence is a fact, cannot be adapted to the natural order of things simply by willingness to do this. As we have stated, the

harmonious development of international society hinges on the achievement of progress for all. It can be maintained only by our ability to deal with international problems in their entirety and to find global solutions for them.

91. The third world, the Group of 77, must continue to demonstrate open-mindedness in order to achieve steady progress.

92. The world horizon is dangerously uncertain. The international situation is one of growing insecurity, injustice and human tragedy. Monetary and financial chaos, the slowing-down of trade, poverty, social deprivation—particularly hunger—desertification and poor employment prospects for coming generations are the ills which threaten to destroy our international society. In the face of these real dangers, I wish, on behalf of the people of Mali and President Moussa Traoré, to make an appeal to reason and unity of action. Indeed, while we fear that the developing countries are headed for disaster, we doubt very much that they will be alone.

93. Mr. RADRODRO (Fiji): Today, Sir, my country celebrates the fourteenth anniversary of its independence and it is a singular pleasure for me to extend to you my delegation's congratulations on your election as President of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. It is also a great pleasure to welcome to the Organization, on behalf of my delegation, the 159th Member State, Brunei Darussalam.

94. All Member States have solemnly undertaken to maintain international peace and security and to settle international disputes by peaceful means. Events around the world indicate a drifting away from that undertaking. The list of crises and conflicts is ever increasing. This trend must be checked, and it can be if there is an international resolve to act in the interest of peace. The United Nations resolutions on these crises and conflicts provide ample basis for that kind of resolve and action.

95. A manifestation of the lack of resolve to undertake negotiations and dialogue as a means of settling disputes between States is seen in the upsurge of terrorism and terrorist activities throughout the world. Respect for the rule of law and the principles and rules of international law governing norms of behaviour is of such paramount importance that any deviation or persistent breach of those norms could easily lead to anarchy. The recent incidents of the bombing of the American Embassy in Beirut and the appalling bomb attack on the Republic of Korea's high-ranking officials in Rangoon last year should be condemned by all. For its part, my Government has unequivocally condemned those acts of terrorism and urges all States to contribute to the elimination of such acts.

96. A number of items on our agenda refer to crises. I would like to refer to a few of them. My delegation will no doubt be referring to others in due course.

97. With regard to the situations in Afghanistan, Cyprus and Kampuchea, the international community has repeatedly called for comprehensive political solutions, and we fully subscribe to this. The relevant resolutions of this Assembly call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces and respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of those countries. In this connection, we continue to support the determined efforts of the Secretary-General and urge all parties directly con-

cerned to co-operate with him in order to settle those crises.

98. The Korean peninsula remains an area of persistent tension. We continue to support the aspirations of the Korean people to a speedy resumption of the dialogue between North and South in order to settle the Korean question by peaceful means and without any external interference.

99. The question of the Middle East is becoming even more complex. Ever since its inception, the United Nations has sought a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, but a solution has eluded the Organization to this day.

100. The question of the Palestinian people remains at the core of the Middle East crisis. There will be no durable peace in the Middle East until the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to a homeland, and the rights of all States in the region, including Israel, are assured. To move in that direction, dialogue and negotiations between all the parties directly concerned are essential. But, for them to succeed, conditions conducive to peace have to be created. To this end, the most immediate need is the withdrawal of all unauthorized forces from occupied Arab and Lebanese territories.

101. As a Member of the United Nations, Fiji remains fully committed to doing all it can to contribute within its modest means to the attainment of peace and stability in the Middle East. Our participation in the United Nations peace-keeping operations in Lebanon is a tangible manifestation of this. It would, however, be remiss of me if I did not mention the drain on our limited financial resources as a result of our participation. Other troop contributors also feel the financial strain. Yet this situation would not have arisen if all Member States had met their financial obligations.

102. It is, regrettably, all too clear that serious violations of human rights are taking place in many parts of the world. We, the Members of the Organization, have a special responsibility to take action on violations of human rights wherever they occur and to endeavour to find solutions which can contribute to putting an end to such violations.

103. Nowhere is such violation more flagrant and agonizing than in southern Africa, where the evil policy of *apartheid* is systematically perpetuated and consolidated. The international community must redouble its efforts to work towards the dismantling of that policy and it must reject categorically the recent so-called constitutional reforms, which, instead of eliminating the policy of *apartheid*, serve only to consolidate it further.

104. The United Nations has a proud record in the area of decolonization, yet we cannot become too complacent. We must continue to work towards the elimination of the remaining vestiges of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations in various areas of the world. Undoubtedly, our biggest challenge in this area is in southern Africa. In defiance of the United Nations and of the global consensus on the urgent need for independence for Namibia, South Africa continues its illegal occupation and exploitation of that country. Fiji is of the firm view that Security Council resolution 435 (1978) must be implemented fully and urgently and that attempts to link the independence of Namibia to what is happening in another country must be rejected.

105. In my own region, my Government has followed with close interest and attention the developments in the neighbouring Territory of New Caledonia. At its recent meeting in Tuvalu, the South Pacific Forum leaders took the opportunity to examine closely the situation evolving in that Territory. They welcomed the administrative and land reforms which have been instituted as part of the movement towards the granting of self-determination to the people of New Caledonia and called for further administrative and political reforms in the Territory as a preparatory measure for independence. In calling for those additional measures, the Forum leaders recognized the critical importance of ensuring the active participation of the indigenous Melanesian community in the Territory's educational, vocational and administrative institutions, to facilitate the Territory's early and peaceful achievement of independence.

106. In this regard, Fiji and other members of the South Pacific Forum would welcome an unequivocal affirmation by France of its commitment to the independence of New Caledonia and to bringing this about speedily, in accordance with the wishes of the Territory's entire multiracial population, including especially its Kanak community.

107. If there is a single issue which alarms the world today it is the nuclear-arms race and the threat of a nuclear holocaust. The lack of any real progress in the arms negotiations leading to disarmament and the strained relations between the super-Powers have heightened that alarm.

108. It is true that nuclear disarmament will depend primarily on the nuclear-weapon States, and especially the super-Powers. This forum, however, provides an opportunity for all States to voice their concern. The nuclear-weapon States cannot and should not ignore that concern; the survival of everyone is at stake.

109. It is my delegation's hope that the concern and deliberations in this forum will provide an important and necessary impetus to meaningful negotiations leading to the halting of the arms race and eventually to arms reduction and disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States. It is with that hope that my delegation welcomes the continuing inclusion of items that are pertinent to this issue on our agenda. It is also with that hope that we once again urge the reconvening of the stalled Geneva and Vienna negotiations between the two super-Powers. Without any meaningful agreement, the arms race will continue. Ultimately, the failure to check this unremitting arms build-up and thereby avert a nuclear holocaust will render irrelevant all other issues on our agenda.

110. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*] is an important security measure and we hope that the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in 1985, will promote positive co-operation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We look to the nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate their good faith in our disarmament efforts.

111. A moratorium on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons constitutes, in my Government's view, the most basic and the most essential element of our disarmament efforts.

112. The conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty should continue to have high priority on our

agenda. While we are concerned at the lack of progress towards such a treaty, we nevertheless urge the Conference on Disarmament to pursue in all earnestness the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

113. Apart from the considerations that I have referred to, my Government's concern lies closer to home. One of the major nuclear-weapon States continues to conduct its nuclear testing programme in the South Pacific. This it has done persistently for the last decade now, disregarding the overwhelming opposition and condemnation of my Government and the Governments of our South Pacific neighbours. Needless to say, the nuclear tests carried out in the region pose real threats to our marine environment and our peoples. At their meeting in Tuvalu recently, the South Pacific Forum leaders reiterated their strong opposition to the continuation of nuclear testing by France in our region. We are heartened in this regard by the support of the shared concern expressed in a declaration conveyed to the Secretary-General by the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, our Latin American South Pacific neighbours.

114. With the combined calls of the Pacific and Latin American countries for the cessation of all nuclear testing in the South Pacific, my Government had hoped that France would abandon its nuclear testing in the South Pacific. Instead, in complete disregard of the feelings of the peoples of the region, France has announced its intention to continue its nuclear testing programme in our region for the next 15 years. In response to this announcement, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, only two days ago, reiterated the strong opposition of my Government. The Minister also made it clear that if the testing is safe, as it is claimed to be, it would be logical—as it is advisable and expedient for all concerned—to conduct it on European soil.

115. In recognition of the overwhelming desire of our peoples to remain free from the risk of nuclear fallout, the South Pacific Forum leaders have taken a collective decision to work towards the establishment of a nuclear-free zone for the region. Their concern for the safety of their peoples and their environment is also manifested in the position that member countries of the Forum have taken in the ongoing negotiations on a treaty on the development and protection of the natural environment of the South Pacific region.

116. Our commitment and resolve in the South Pacific to protect our environment from nuclear contamination stem from our anxieties and concerns as island peoples. With the limited land area of most island States in the region, our seas and their resources are of overwhelming importance to our survival. We therefore reiterate our request to the United Nations and its agencies for assistance to the small island countries in the South Pacific to enable them to elaborate and implement ocean development policies that will ensure the optimum and rational utilization of their living and non-living resources, for the benefit of their peoples and their region.

117. As a small island developing country, Fiji attaches great importance to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. All-encompassing in its nature and scope, it is in our view one of the very few legal instruments that attempt to redress the inequity of the past, in favour not of one but of all

and devoid of partisan doctrine. It was for this reason that we were the first to ratify the Convention, and it is for this reason that we now urge Member States to ratify it so as to bring its provisions into force. When that happens it will represent an important instrument for international co-operation for the economic and social development of all peoples.

118. I conclude by reaffirming my country's support for the Organization. The United Nations remains the only organ through which the international community can address our common enemies of war, colonialism, human rights violations and poverty. Undoubtedly some of its deliberative organs need to be strengthened. Its principles, however, are as valid as ever. Fiji will continue to support those principles.

119. Mr. BONGO (Gabon) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me to extend to you, Mr. President, on behalf of the Gabonese Government and people, as well as on behalf of Mr. Omar Bongo, President of the Republic, the warmest congratulations of the Gabonese delegation on your unanimous election to preside over the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. You are a worthy son of Zambia, a friendly country with which Gabon has the most brotherly relations, and your election does us honour. You have earned the admiration and support of the international community as represented here by your unswerving dedication to the principles of the self-determination and independence of peoples and your personal contribution to the efforts to bring about lasting world peace—particularly peace in southern Africa—and the independence of Namibia, notably in your capacity as President of the United Nations Council for Namibia.

120. I should like to include in these congratulations Mr. Jorge Illueca, President of Panama, for the way in which, as President of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, he conducted our work. His constant availability and the qualities he demonstrated in fulfilling his responsibilities, despite his difficult and important duties, enhanced his personal reputation and his country's prestige.

121. In the same vein, the exemplary dedication to duty and the pragmatism of the Secretary-General guarantee that the questions submitted for our consideration, no matter how sensitive, will be tackled with the determination needed to find solutions to them in the appropriate framework and through negotiation.

122. Finally, I take this opportunity to welcome most cordially the sovereign State of Brunei Darussalam as the 159th State to become a Member of the Organization. I pay a whole-hearted tribute to the delegation of that country, and to the delegations of all the other States that champion the noble ideals of the Charter of the United Nations.

123. Once again, we are gathered here to discuss the major problems of our time and together to seek ways and means to help strengthen international peace and security and consolidate multilateral co-operation in a way more in keeping with reality. The climate of generalized insecurity which we are experiencing, compounded by a frenzied arms race, indeed demands that peace and détente be given a new chance. It is in this context that the Gabonese delegation, going along with the general consensus, supports all efforts to enhance the Organization's effectiveness and enable it better to discharge its

primary responsibilities, namely, the maintenance of peace based on justice, on the one hand, and the contribution of all to the strengthening of international security, on the other.

124. Respect for the Charter and the relevant resolutions that we have adopted here is naturally part of those concerns. We must encourage all States Members, and particularly the major Powers, to turn this political will of theirs into reality, that is, to have recourse, as required, to one of the fundamental principles of the Charter, namely, dialogue, which is the primary tool for the settlement of conflicts, which the Gabonese Government has chosen as the backbone of its foreign policy. It is on the basis of that conviction that I should like to revert to and stress some issues to which Gabon attaches the utmost importance and to the settlement of which we would like to make our modest contribution.

125. First, disarmament. It is essential to pursue relentlessly the quest for an open dialogue and full co-operation between the two blocs in order to reduce tensions and establish a climate of confidence which is now lacking. Détente, a *sine qua non* of the maintenance of peace, should be part of a world-wide system of peaceful coexistence, encompassing all regions of the world and all aspects of State relations. It must be based on respect for territorial integrity and the political independence of all States, non-interference in internal affairs and non-use of force. To achieve a lasting peace, détente must also be sought in the context of a universal effort to achieve general and complete disarmament. All the more so since, at the thirty-eighth session, the General Assembly adopted resolutions—we shall not mention them all here—which have the virtue of showing quite clearly the links that exist between disarmament and development. That is the case with regard to resolution 38/71 of 15 December 1983, which establishes a proper relationship between those two ideas. Thus, Gabon whole-heartedly hopes that the various negotiations on the control of armaments will soon lead to specific and positive results making possible the resumption, as soon as possible, of the negotiations that have been suspended.

126. The Gabonese Government also supports certain initiatives which have been put forward from various quarters, particularly those which stress the need to hold an international conference on military expenditures and the different implications of the relationship between disarmament and development, such as the initiative taken on 24 September last from this rostrum by the President of the United States [4th meeting] who suggested to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the establishment of regular ministerial or governmental meetings between their two countries on those issues.

127. I turn now to the situation in southern Africa. I continue to believe that the attitude of certain States which have important interests in that region—a mercantile approach which chooses to ignore the inhumane dimension of the policy of *apartheid*—cannot fail further to exacerbate tensions between the black and white communities and expose the entire South African society to upheavals that will not be confined to that area alone. That is why Gabon is of the view that a progressive disinvestment of the transnational corporations that operate in South Africa and the halting of all new investment would help bring about a peaceful solution to this problem.

128. As we have done in all our meetings, we have continued to call for strengthening the United Nations role and wish tirelessly to work to achieve respect for the resolutions adopted for the benefit of Namibia. In this connection, Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which provides for Namibian independence and elections to be held under United Nations auspices, must be strictly implemented. South Africa must prove to the international community its desire to put an end to its despicable policy of *apartheid* and establish with its neighbours and the rest of the world relations based on mutual respect, non-interference and non-intervention. I therefore appeal to the conscience of statesmen who still support South Africa and whose countries have as the very foundation of their constitutions the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and call upon them to promote on a global, non-selective basis those rights wherever they have as yet not been achieved, in particular in South Africa, where the authorities, with reference to the recent constitutional reforms, have elevated discrimination to the level of a governmental system.

129. The double defeat suffered by Pretoria following the sham parliamentary elections organized in August 1984—which have been declared null and void under the terms of Security Council resolution 554 (1984), confirmed a few days ago by the General Assembly at this session—becomes a warning and seems to us to constitute both encouragement and a guarantee of the justness of the heroic attitude of the black population.

130. The Gabonese Government takes this opportunity to reaffirm its staunch opposition to this new strategy, which is now dividing the South African community into antagonistic classes. Gabon believes that that strategy cannot ever be a proper solution for the problems existing in that part of our continent. Therefore, my delegation supports and will always support the position that only the total eradication of the system of *apartheid* by means of sustained international pressure will enable us to overcome this tragic situation that victimizes the black majority.

131. Still with reference to Africa, I wish to mention two cases of conflict of particular concern to my delegation. I am speaking of Chad and Western Sahara. Without reverting to the efforts already made in the past by the Gabonese Government and, more specifically, by President Bongo for the settlement of those two conflicts, I should like once again to voice the hope that an African and peaceful solution will be found. We can therefore most solemnly reaffirm here the role to be played by the OAU, which in our view is the appropriate place for the various parties to these conflicts to meet around the negotiating table. Gabon whole-heartedly hopes that the African continent may become a haven of peace and security and we will always support all initiatives to this end.

Mr. Al-Sabbagh (Bahrain), Vice-President, took the Chair.

132. Other hotbeds of tension in the world continue to be a source of concern for us. In the Middle East, first of all, the Gabonese Government is convinced that a settlement that would not take into account the deeply felt aspirations of the Palestinian people cannot be a lasting one. In this connection, we reaffirm the right of the Palestinian people to a peaceful existence and to remain permanently within secure and recognized boundaries, like all other

peoples in the region. Once again, we call upon the Government of Israel to put an end to its settlements policy in the occupied territories, a policy that is endangering the chances of an overall settlement of the conflict.

133. Iraq and Iran continue to wage a war which has grave consequences not only for their populations but also for the very security and balance of that part of the world. The Gabonese Government supports the initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General to help those two fraternal countries to engage in an effort at de-escalation of that war. We again renew a pressing appeal to the two sides to cease hostilities immediately and begin a dialogue with a view to achieving a settlement of the conflict, which has lasted all too long already and which clearly serves neither their interests nor those of the other peoples in the region.

134. Finally, as regards Lebanon, a country with which Gabon maintains excellent relations, we wish to express appreciation for the efforts at national reconciliation made by President Amin Gemayel, who has always worked very hard to help his country recover its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Here, the important thing is that all foreign forces should withdraw from the territory.

135. With respect to South-East Asia, and more specifically the situation in Kampuchea, Gabon reaffirms its support for the principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty and the inadmissibility of the use of force in international relations. All States of the region must embark upon a dialogue leading to a settlement of their disputes and the establishment of lasting peace and stability, as well as the elimination of interference, threats of intervention and the hegemonistic designs of outside Powers.

136. Concerning the Korean peninsula, I should like also to stress that Gabon is following with special interest the development of the situation and we remain committed to the idea of a negotiated solution designed to bring about the peaceful reunification of the two countries.

137. Finally, my delegation favours a political settlement of the question of Afghanistan on the basis of the withdrawal of foreign troops, full respect for its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and strict observance of the principles of non-intervention and non-interference.

138. We cannot examine the hotbeds of tension which in our times are threatening world peace and security without mentioning the disturbing events in Central America and the Caribbean. Gabon believes that, despite the progress achieved recently by the Contradora Group and the five countries of Central America through the adoption of the document stating the objectives worked out in Panama,⁷ the situation in Central America continues to be a matter of concern and we believe that we must put an end to it on the basis of the universally recognized principles we have just mentioned and, in particular, dialogue. Better understanding among all peace-loving men largely depends on this.

139. It was on the basis of this same spirit of dialogue, understanding and *rapprochement* among peoples bound by the same culture and ideals that our Head of State undertook the felicitous initiative of proposing to his counterparts in Central Africa the establishment of the International Centre for Bantu Civilizations, grouping together some dozen coun-

tries for the benefit of 170 million people. I take this solemn opportunity to pay a tribute to all the institutions and men of good will that worked to ensure the creation of this organization on 8 January 1983 by signing its constitution.

140. The gravity of the international economic situation is of no less concern to us than the political questions we have just mentioned. Indeed, the serious recession which has so severely stricken all countries, in particular those of the third world, and the difficulties faced by our countries at the present time are a source of great concern, inasmuch as the survival of our populations hinges on their solution. Thus, for the developing countries, the hope of a new international economic order is an earnest guarantee of better control over the world economic system based on the observance of major imperatives, without which there cannot be any improvement in relations between rich and poor countries.

141. Thus, for the delegation of Gabon, solidarity is the only asset that can truly reconcile the interests of the international community as a whole.

142. The political and economic interdependence of the world in which we live indeed implies that we must manage the world as a single entity for the benefit of mankind as a whole. What else could we do when we know that one of the tasks entrusted to us by the Organization is precisely that of preparing a better world for future generations? And yet we must say that the way current economic relations are developing does not show a will on the part of some countries to fulfil this task.

143. In this regard, I should like to stress the gravity of the current economic situation, characterized in particular by the instability of the prices of commodities, which has disastrous consequences, such as fluctuations in the export earnings and deficits in the balance of payments of the poorer countries.

144. We must therefore emphasize the dimensions of the present threat to world trade, which is steadily shrinking because of the deterioration in the terms of trade and the instability of international liquidity. We must therefore seek ways and means to undertake an in-depth realignment of international economic structures so that the developing countries may be able, because of the quality, diversity and competitiveness of their products, to ensure their exports and thus obtain the financial resources they need for their growth and harmonious development.

145. Moreover, the problem of the indebtedness of the third world countries appears day by day to be a serious matter for concern, reflecting the extent of the difficulties facing this category of countries.

146. The paralysis of most third world economies causes us to argue in favour of a new definition of policies of development assistance. The success of such policies depends not only on the necessary co-ordination of efforts by the various partners but also on a better adaptation of the international financial institutions which must administer those policies.

147. The experience of recent years makes it clear that it is becoming increasingly difficult to organize the appropriate co-ordination between the countries of the North and of the South. The failure of the sixth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held at Belgrade from 6 June to 2 July 1983, and of the Fourth General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, held at Vienna from 2 to 19 August 1984,

reflect better than anything else the lack of the will on the part of the rich countries to reach joint solutions in co-operation with the countries of the third world, especially on such fundamental questions as borrowing rates and industrialization. It is well known that industry in our countries represents only 11.9 per cent of the world economy.

148. Notwithstanding the frequent failure of international economic conferences, Gabon reaffirms its support for the launching of global negotiations, without which the world economy will never really be able to regain its momentum.

149. My delegation therefore believes that the present deadlock in the dialogue between the industrialized countries and the countries of the third world should lead the latter to achieve self-sufficiency and promote the conditions for their internal, self-reliant development, thus making possible genuine, mutually advantageous South-South co-operation.

150. With regard to the strengthening of horizontal co-operation, 18 October 1983 has become a memorable date for the countries of Central Africa, because on that day we saw the fulfilment of another initiative of President Omar Bongo: the establishment of the Economic Community of Central African States, covering a vast economic region comprising approximately 60 million people and endowed with immense and diverse natural resources. I have no doubt that the Community will make resolute efforts to permit our States to take control of their economies and thereby improve the living conditions of their populations.

151. All the matters I have mentioned have in common the interdependence of the political, economic and human factors. They also have in common the need for reliable international institutions. That is why, as I have already had occasion to say, the role of the United Nations must be strengthened. All things considered, there is no viable substitute for the United Nations system in our efforts to build a new and better world, even if that system is far from perfect. But what work of man can ever be perfect?

152. That is why Gabon, since its admission to the United Nations, has been grateful to benefit from the work of the Organization and, in its turn, within the limits of its modest resources, has constantly supported United Nations programmes and its efforts to achieve a more peaceful world, a more just world, a better world.

153. With that noble ideal in mind, my delegation remains convinced that the Assembly will devote itself at the thirty-ninth session to strengthening the capabilities of our international system, on whose harmonious functioning peace, security and balance in large measure depend.

154. Developments in international economic relations have not always been satisfactory, and the political situation is shaky, but my country, on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, supports the idea of intensifying international co-operation and believes that our efforts to this end must be encouraged, stimulated and renewed.

155. A few years ago, His Holiness Pope Paul VI rightly declared that "the new name of peace is development". If the efforts of the Organization are aimed consistently at that noble objective, our hopes cannot fail to be fulfilled. Buoyed up by those same hopes, the Gabonese delegation is ever ready to co-

operate fully with the Assembly so that the work of this session may be truly successful.

156. Mr. MADI SOILHI (Comoros) (*interpretation from French*): I wish first of all to join all the speakers who have preceded me in sincerely congratulating Mr. Paul Lusaka on his unanimous election to the presidency of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. My delegation is convinced that his eminent qualities and long diplomatic experience at both the national and the international level guarantee the success of our work. My delegation rejoices at the choice of a worthy representative of our African continent and of a brother country, Zambia—with which my country, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, maintains close and friendly ties of co-operation—as President of the present session. We wish him every success in carrying out his heavy but inspiring task and assure him of our full co-operation.

157. We also thank his distinguished predecessor, Mr. Jorge Illueca, President of the Republic of Panama, for the skill and wisdom with which he carried out the functions of President of the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.

158. I wish to pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General, for his tireless, unceasing efforts to defend the sacred principles of the Organization and to preserve peace in the world.

159. My delegation welcomes to our midst the State of Brunei Darussalam, whose admission to membership strengthens the universal character of the Organization. We assure its people of our friendship, wish them every success as an independent nation and are ready to establish with them frank and mutually beneficial co-operation in all areas.

160. We meet here again in this forum to reassess, as we do each year, the work done by the Organization since the thirty-eighth session and also to sketch out a picture of the world political and economic situation.

161. To our great regret, we are forced to acknowledge that not only have our efforts been slow in yielding results but that, far from having improved, the international situation, both political and economic, has considerably worsened. Indeed, all over our planet, hotbeds of tension persist and in some instances show a tendency to spread. The increasing super-Power rivalry as well as the unbridled arms race do not contribute—quite the contrary—to relaxing the climate of tension that prevails in international relations. Any hope we might have had of the abatement of the economic crisis was quickly dashed. And, as always, it is the weakest countries, in particular the countries of the third world, that are bearing the heavy cost of this tragic situation. In one place and another, might prevails over right, and *fait accompli* replaces dialogue and joint effort. In other words, in a world in such turmoil, the role the Organization must play is even more important. It must play a primordial and capital role if we want to avoid our planet being subjected to a new war—with consequences that everyone agrees would be disastrous for the very survival of the human race.

162. In Africa, certain hotbeds of tension remain explosive and are of the greatest concern to the OAU, as well as to the international community as a whole. In southern Africa, although certain recent events—such as the Nkomati Agreement,⁸ the motivations for which we can understand—have contributed to

lessening the tension to a degree, the overall situation in that region none the less remains very precarious. Indeed, Namibia has still not attained its independence, despite the relevant resolutions of the Organization, and that country is still being illegally occupied. My country, which categorically condemns the inhuman system of *apartheid*, reaffirms its total support for the struggle being waged by the Namibian people for their independence under the leadership of their sole, legitimate representative, SWAPO. We remain convinced that only a prompt implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) will make it possible to achieve the peaceful decolonization of Namibia.

163. For the time being, it is up to the international community to take the measures necessary to guarantee the existence and independence of the front-line countries that are experiencing a constant threat of destabilization.

164. The situation in Chad calls for very special vigilance. Indeed, that country, a founding member of the OAU, has for 17 years been living through the tragedy of a civil war that is leaving it torn apart and in ruins. That is why my country welcomed with great satisfaction the agreement on complete and simultaneous disengagement that was signed by France and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. We dare to hope that, once foreign forces have left Chad, the leaders of N'djamena and the opponents of the régime of President Hissein Habré will manage to evidence reason and wisdom in sparing the people of Chad further futile suffering in order to begin rebuilding their country.

165. With regard to Western Sahara, my country fully subscribes to the decisions taken at the eighteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held at Nairobi in June 1981, and that it remains convinced that a satisfactory solution to this serious problem involves the implementation of the resolution calling for the organization of a referendum on self-determination by the people of that country. In that connection, my country welcomes the commitment made here at this very rostrum on 27 September 1983, at the 8th meeting of the thirty-eighth session, by King Hassan II of Morocco to abide by the results of such a referendum.

166. My country remains concerned, as do other countries in the region, over the continued strengthening and increase of the military presence in the Indian Ocean. Such a situation, further exacerbated by the continuing rivalry between the great Powers, is creating a climate of explosive tension that is of concern to the littoral countries. Desirous of preserving peace and security in that region, my country unreservedly supports the idea of establishing a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, in keeping with the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace [*resolution 2832 (XXVI)*], and we reiterate our hope that the international conference scheduled for that purpose will be convened at Colombo.

167. For more than 30 years, the Middle East has frequently been shaken by murderous wars and no end is yet in sight. As we have already stated many times in the Assembly, there can be no doubt that it is Israel's intransigence, dictated by its annexationist and expansionist plans, that stands in the way of a lasting solution to this problem.

168. The Israeli Government's policy in the occupied Arab territories and the mistreatment daily meted out to the indigenous population of those territories clearly demonstrate that the Zionist entity has no intention of implementing the pertinent resolutions of the United Nations. So long as Israel persists in its attempts to destroy by any means available to it the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, there can be no lasting peace in that region. I should like to reaffirm here once again my country's unswerving support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO.

169. Despite the many problems that still persist in Lebanon, problems that are the consequences of a lengthy civil war, the situation in that country has improved greatly, and once again there is every reason for hope. We feel that the plan adopted by the new Israeli coalition Government for the withdrawal of its troops from southern Lebanon, if it is translated into deeds, would greatly contribute to the establishment of peace in that country. My country hopes, therefore, that that plan will be rapidly implemented so that there may be a return to normal life in the tortured land of Lebanon.

170. My country watches with great sadness the continuing fratricidal war between Iran and Iraq, two neighbouring Muslim and non-aligned States. Tens of thousands of men, women and children have already fallen on the field of battle in that bloody war. We appeal once again, solemnly and urgently, to both belligerents to cease hostilities forthwith and to replace hatred and intransigence with wisdom and reason. In this connection, we hail the offers for a cease-fire that have been made many times by the Iraqi Government, and we urge the Iranian Government to accept them, convinced as we are that in that war, which is as futile as it is absurd, there can be neither victor nor vanquished.

171. The question of Cyprus continues to be included in the agenda of the General Assembly [*item 42*]. My country, for its part, has always been in favour of a just and lasting solution that can preserve the peace, unity and sovereignty of Cyprus. We believe, nevertheless, that such a solution, in order to be acceptable to all, must of necessity take into account the legitimate aspirations of both the Greek and the Turkish communities. We encourage the two Governments, Greek and Turkish, to persevere with their negotiations in order to reach a satisfactory solution that will preserve the interests of both communities affected by this problem.

172. In Asia, foreign interference is continuing and hinders solutions to the problems presented by the hotbeds of conflict that have for many years shaken that region. In spite of the numerous resolutions adopted by the United Nations, foreign armed forces continue to occupy Afghanistan illegally, thereby forcing more than 3 million people to flee into exile. If this situation were to continue, it could seriously threaten world peace and security. We appeal urgently for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and reaffirm once again our support for the brotherly Afghan people.

173. With regard to Kampuchea, we note with deep disappointment that the States involved in the occupation of that country continue to ignore the appeals made by the international community and the decisions of the General Assembly calling for the

immediate, unconditional withdrawal of foreign troops from that country. The people of Kampuchea must be able to choose in complete freedom the system of government they desire and finally to achieve peace and freedom.

174. The situation in the Korean peninsula has not yet been resolved. My country notes the commitment of the States of the North and of the South to reach an agreement on the independence and peaceful reunification of the country. In this regard, we support the idea of direct negotiations between the two Governments as essential for the attainment of a happy and successful solution of this serious problem. We also feel that the admission to the United Nations of the Republic of Korea, and even of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, would greatly contribute to the search for the desired solution, namely, the reunification of the country.

175. The world economic situation is not much more promising than the international political situation, which I have briefly outlined. Indeed, beset on all sides by many problems which are both cyclical and structural, the developing countries, in particular the non-oil-producing developing countries and, among them, the weakest in the world, the least developed countries, face a situation which is often desperate.

176. Indeed, the developing countries face a continued fall in the prices of their raw materials, thus reducing their export income and thereby the resources available to the State at a time when the burden of indebtedness, made heavier by the skyrocketing dollar, is becoming less and less bearable. This crisis does not spare the fragile economies of the least developed countries. It seriously accentuates their underdevelopment and makes more difficult their access to international financial markets, where there is an ever-greater tendency to lend only to the richest.

177. My country, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, which is one of the least developed countries, suffers particularly from the harmful effects of this crisis. Indeed, an island country with very limited resources, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, in spite of the efforts at rehabilitation which have been undertaken since 1978, has suffered a continued fall in its export income, which has clearly involved a very substantial drop in its purchasing power. In order to overcome those difficulties, to get back to the path of growth and to improve the living standards of the population, the Comorian Government, under the enlightened leadership of President Ahmed Abdallah Abderemane, has drawn up a development plan based on the recommendations of the new programme of action, the Lagos Plan of Action⁶ and the Final Act of Lagos.⁹ The fundamental purpose of that plan is both to improve as quickly as possible the living conditions of the population and to reduce the dependence of the country as regards food, technology and finance. Therefore, the plan envisages accelerated, balanced growth of national production through the rational and intensive use of the resources of the country. Within the framework of the liberal option chosen by the Government, that task will be entrusted mainly to private enterprise and the State will be responsible for providing the infrastructures and the basic studies and establishing appropriate structures and institutions.

178. The major priorities are still those defined in the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s, which the Government presented to the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Paris from 1 to 14 September 1981,¹⁰ namely: food self-sufficiency, ending economic isolation, reducing energy dependence, satisfying water needs and developing human resources. Those same goals are contained in the national document which the Comorian Government prepared and submitted to the countries and international organizations which participated in the first international solidarity conference for the development of the Comoros, which was held at Moroni, our capital, from 2 to 4 July 1984.

179. By the overwhelming response to our appeal, the many countries and bodies which were kind enough to participate actively in that conference not only showed their solidarity with and confidence in the Comorian Government and people, but also acted in line with the resolutions of the Organization regarding assistance to the Comoros. This is thus a happy opportunity for me today to offer them once again, on behalf of the Government and people of the Comoros, our sincere thanks and our deep gratitude for their contribution to our development effort.

180. The first international solidarity conference for the development of the Comoros was a great success in terms of the quality of the documents presented. The credit for this must clearly go to the international bodies, especially UNDP, and to the many friendly countries for their unstinted efforts. The very positive results of that conference encourage us to redouble our own development efforts. A great step has just been taken, but an enormous amount remains to be done.

181. The Comoros, which are peaceful and stable islands, will not be able to go forward without increased and sustained assistance from the international community. The Comorian Government, firmly committed to the spirit of enterprise, appeals to all those who can make a contribution to our work of reconstruction.

182. I cannot conclude my statement without referring before the Assembly to a question which is of the greatest concern not only to the Comorian people and Government but also to the entire African continent, and even to the entire international community. I am of course referring to the problem of the Comorian island of Mayotte. As members know, this question is still on the agenda of the General Assembly [*item 27*] and will so remain until it is satisfactorily settled. This year again it will be the subject of a specific debate. We shall return to that subject in detail when the time comes.

183. Today, without going into too much detail on this subject, I should like to inform members that the relevant resolutions adopted by the Organization and by regional organizations involved in this question have not been implemented. That explains the deep concern of the Comorian people, because this problem has lasted too long and while it persists the Comorian people will be in the tragic situation of a divided nation, a nation that cannot develop and flourish in perfect harmony.

184. We believe that, because of the age-old links of friendship between France and the Comoros and the goodwill which the Comorian side has constantly shown, this problem should already have been

solved. The situation in Mayotte today benefits only those sad, nostalgic individuals for whom the return of Mayotte to the midst of the entire Comorian nation would signify a loss of their grip on and their political and economic domination of the island. There is no doubt that the interests of those people are diametrically opposed to those of the local population of Mayotte. Those people, in our view, must be denounced, just as their ambitions and their domination must be ended.

185. In this connection, we welcome the statement made recently by a senior official of the French Government in which he publicly and explicitly recognized the soundness and legitimacy of our claims. That statement, like other statements made by French officials at the highest level, confirms, if confirmation is needed, the justice of our cause. That is why we feel that it is time to go beyond short-term measures and take the decisive step that will lead to the settlement of this problem.

186. The Comorian people, for its part, remains determined to press its claim, strengthened by the unanimous support of the international community. No argument, legal or strategic, can shake its determination, because for it this is a question not only of right but also of justice.

187. At a time when we are preparing to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Organization, my country, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, solemnly reaffirms its faith and confidence in it. Naturally, there are conflicts with regard to which the Organization can only admit its impotence when faced with national selfishness and ideological intransigence. Nevertheless, we have every right to say that for us it constitutes the last bulwark against a widespread war the incalculable consequences of which would be fatal for the future of the whole of mankind.

188. My country, for its part, always remains faithful to the great principles of peace, freedom and justice that characterize the Charter of the United Nations. It is in this spirit that the Comoros will continue to make its modest contribution to the Organization, so that it can effectively fulfil the noble mission we expect of it, namely, the safeguarding and preservation of world peace and security.

189. Mr. BARON (Dominica): I wish to take the opportunity afforded me today to add my bit to those who have congratulated the President on his election to the presidency of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. His election is a further manifestation of the high esteem in which he is held by the members of this body and an expression of confidence in his ability to guide this session of the Assembly through its deliberations. I have no doubt that his experience and well-known diplomatic skills will contribute immensely to making this session a memorable one.

190. I also wish to offer our appreciation and congratulations to the outgoing President, the President of Panama, Mr. Jorge Illueca, who so ably and successfully presided over the thirty-eighth session.

191. I wish to join with others who spoke before me to welcome Brunei Darussalam, the 159th Member of the United Nations.

192. Nearly four decades ago, a world bleeding and spent by the ravages of war pledged itself to the goals of and objectives enshrined in a Charter of hope and promise for its nations and peoples. One hundred

and more wars and countless economic and social crises later, the Secretary-General, in whom is reposed the responsibility for applying the letter and spirit of the Charter, has stated in rueful terms that the United Nations as a peace-keeper is being frustrated by a proliferation of resolutions that are not being implemented.

193. Since that day, 24 October 1945, when the Charter of the United Nations came into force, countless lives have been sacrificed with shocking frequency in many dispersed theatres of conflict; millions of infants have been weaned and nurtured in environments of insurrection, villainy and hate.

194. The sensibilities of civilized man have been repeatedly stunned by the wanton rape, torture and murder of women, men and children, even in countries where long-standing religious practice and commitment should have been expected to have secured the sanctity of human life.

195. And, as if that were not sufficient, incidents recur of ordinary men, women and children harassed and harried from their homes across tense frontiers, through inhospitable seas infested by marauding pirates. And so, on and on, this morbid period in the history of man's inhumanity to man continues, untouched, it appears, by contemporary pretensions of civilization, sophistication and intellectualism.

196. Like a doomsday book, the record continues to include issues of personal survival for some billions who live in conditions of abject misery, victims of disease from the womb to an early tomb. Even as multinational sales cynically promote death-dealing chemicals across the borders of third world countries, other billions of emaciated, famished and dispossessed beings shift from hope to economic hopelessness as financial crises beyond their control fetter them to an existence of daily, cruel privation.

197. Little wonder then, as pangs of common frustration and deepening depression bind these masses together across national frontiers in ever-expanding communities of despair and resentment, unstable and unreasonable radicalism fills the void between the conservatism of traditional leadership and the virulent anger of desperate followers. And contemporary notions of East versus West or North versus South pale before the potential of an apocalyptic conflagration which any diabolical exploitation of this scenario of mass resentment could ignite.

198. How then, now or in the future, do we discharge our trust to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom and to fulfil the noble purpose of the United Nations?

199. It is our submission that our predecessors, with their predisposition to the cause of mankind's welfare and security, envisaged the evolution of an international society with characteristics no less societal for being international, characteristics of common, basic moral values, of common ethical norms, instinctively pervasive, and of common language with all its nuances fluent among the international community.

200. It is our view that the escalating fragmentation of international society into entities such as third world, East and West, North and South, and non-aligned nations, is a clear reflection of pressure groupings in search of areas of commonality which,

notwithstanding the Charter's noble precepts, have not yet been translated into universal practice.

201. It is our prognosis that, as more and more States with less and less commonality with their predecessors are admitted to the Organization, more and more will the fragmentation of interests outside the ambit of the United Nations society increase, with inexorable and agonizing costs that the architects of the Charter did not intend for its beneficiaries.

202. Yes, the world situation that the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly is called upon to address is not a substantial improvement upon that which faced the thirty-eighth session. These major problems persist in nearly every sphere of human endeavour, and in some cases have worsened. It is not an entirely comforting thought that, notwithstanding the efforts of the United Nations and its agencies, very few significant changes have been effected in those areas most concerned with the development and enhancement of the human condition. The lack of progress in efforts to bring about meaningful change is of great concern to us, because in nearly every case the least able among us are called upon to bear a disproportionate burden and sacrifice.

203. Recent hurricane damage in North America forces us to recall that just over five years ago, when the Commonwealth of Dominica had begun the process of adjusting to its newly independent status, Hurricane David devastated our small island State, severely crippling our limited productive capacity. The effort to repair the damage of that hurricane is still under way, but it has to be understood that a small nation which, prior to 1979, was hard pressed to find the resources to maintain and upgrade its infrastructure found the task doubly difficult in the ensuing years.

204. Some members of the international community came to our assistance, and we are grateful to them, but, even with the bilateral and multilateral aid the Commonwealth of Dominica has received over the past five years, the struggle to revive our economy, rebuild our infrastructure and provide minimally decent standards of living for our people has at times been hard and frustrating. But the experience has been invaluable, and at every level the people of the Commonwealth of Dominica have shown the determination, industry and leadership qualities necessary to meet the situation.

205. Reference is made here to the problems experienced by the Commonwealth of Dominica because in normal times they are duplicated every day in small island States everywhere, and even in the larger States of the third world, and the arrangements by which the international economic system is meant to be regulated have demonstrated profound weaknesses and an inability to deal effectively with those problems. Inevitably, the problems will most likely grow worse, with disastrous consequences for all, unless new approaches to the world economy are developed to meet the recurring crises that have repeatedly impinged upon, and severely impeded, the development effort of third world countries.

206. We have seen the high inflation and low growth of the 1970s followed, in the 1980s, by the longest recession in 50 years. There are reports of recovery in the industrialized countries, but the benefits of that recovery are not immediately apparent to us. High prices for industrial products, coupled

with decreased demand for our exports, have left the economies of small island States such as the Commonwealth of Dominica in a depressed condition, a situation further aggravated by the protectionist policies being pursued by the industrial countries. Exhorted to place reliance on market forces, the Commonwealth of Dominica finds its attempt to diversify is less than successful, because the major markets will not readily accept the new products resulting from its diversification.

207. The world economic situation should be of concern to all nations, and, in an effort to ameliorate some of the worse effects upon the Caribbean region, the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community and Common Market took some action at their fifth summit meeting, held at Nassau from 4 to 7 July 1984. However, the Caribbean Community and Common Market can affect the situation only in a rather limited way, given that international economic relations are so closely interwoven.

208. The Commonwealth of Dominica views with concern and even alarm the international debt situation, which has assumed crisis proportions over the last few years. Admittedly, the ability of the Commonwealth of Dominica to borrow is limited, but, in the face of greatly increased costs, the servicing of whatever debt we have incurred only imposes an additional economic burden on a small State struggling to meet existing obligations.

209. Moreover, our concern goes beyond our own immediate plight. The debt problems with which the international community is at present faced have already resulted in the slowing of economic growth in many third world countries. That has necessitated the adoption of new policies geared to meet the changed conditions. Optimistic forecasts have given way to a gloomy outlook, and aspirations and dreams have been shattered. The new realism is that those who have very little will have to make do with less, and the social implications have already manifested themselves in some areas.

210. The Commonwealth of Dominica believes that the best hope for developing countries lies in a determined and concerted effort by the international community to increase concessional aid to those countries. The Committee for Development Planning spoke eloquently to that issue at its twentieth session, held from 17 to 21 May this year.¹¹ Noting that "there is disorder verging on chaos in several areas critical to the economic life of all nations", the Committee found that, while "the heaviest burdens are falling on the weakest and poorest economies and therefore on the people within human society least able to bear that burden", concessional "flows have declined in real terms and now face special jeopardy". The Committee views the situation as "little short of an international scandal" in the light of the fact that in present economic conditions "sustained concessional flows to the poorest countries . . . assume an even greater importance than usual".

211. Economic development is ideally undertaken in an international climate that is peaceful and free from tension. In more than one way, development is linked to arms reduction and disarmament, and that is one of the reasons why the Commonwealth of Dominica deplors the continuing arms race at every level. The ever-growing arsenals of nuclear weapons

in the possession of the super-Powers are alarming, and the desire of an increasing number of nations to acquire a nuclear potential is frightening. The continuous stockpiling of nuclear arms is the single most important problem facing the world today.

212. Nuclear disarmament and arms reduction must be the goal of all members of the international community. The attainment of that goal is a duty owed to every human being on Earth, and one we cannot shirk. The question is a recurrent theme of General Assembly debates, and the United Nations has convened special sessions to deal with the matter. Regrettably, however, in the face of a lack of co-operation by the nuclear Powers, the United Nations has been unable to make real progress in that important area. But lack of concrete achievement should not dissuade the international community from raising its collective voice against the trend to add to the existing arsenals. Nor should the world be persuaded by the deterrent argument, which, in the light of proliferation, is far outweighed by the potential for disaster resulting from mistake or irrational behaviour.

213. In the endeavour to stem the tide of nuclear proliferation and to proceed on the path leading to the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, serious consideration should be given to the establishment of nuclear-free zones. The Treaty of Tlatelolco,¹² signed by the Latin American countries, should serve as a guide in that regard.

214. International peace and security are threatened not only by nuclear weapons but also by the ever-growing trade in conventional arms of increasing destructiveness. That extensive trade in arms, by nations large and small, increases tension, intensifies fear, and adversely affects the stability of regions world-wide. Pursued in the name of national security, it invariably leads to regional insecurity. Militarily weak States feel threatened by their stronger neighbours, especially when there appears to be no correlation between objective security needs and the range and accumulation of arms.

215. The Commonwealth of Dominica, along with its neighbours in the Eastern Caribbean, is not unaware of the problem. Not so long ago, it experienced the potential threat posed to its existence as an independent State by a massive arms build-up in the region by a State whose security could not possibly require armaments of the nature and in the quantity that ultimately came to light.

216. Billions of dollars spent for arms by third world countries keep the munitions factories of the arms-exporting countries operating at full capacity, while economic development programmes stagnate for lack of funds. Five per cent of the amount spent for arms world-wide, if allocated to development programmes, would make the world a much better place for the majority of its inhabitants. It is lamentable that nations apparently see nothing sadly wrong in committing such tremendous energy and resources to potential wars of destruction rather than to the immediate war against increasing hunger, rampant disease, widespread malnutrition and illiteracy, unacceptably high infant mortality and the need to provide homes for millions of people.

217. The ability of the United Nations to maintain world peace and security is being severely tested by the local conflicts that are being waged with mounting intensity in various parts of the world. In many

cases, super-Power rivalry, especially in the Security Council, obstructs the United Nations in the search for solutions to those grave problems; but more than that, it aggravates and exacerbates the conflicts themselves, transforming them into proxy wars and giving them new impetus and rationale. That appears to be the case with respect to the struggles in Central America.

218. The Commonwealth of Dominica believes that the conflicts in Central America are the products of complex social, economic and historical factors endemic to the area, and the infusion of larger amounts of arms into the region is not likely to result in any lasting solution. The conditions that engendered the conflicts must be addressed seriously and urgently, and, in pursuit of that goal, negotiation presents advantages that will surely be absent in any resolution arrived at by military means.

219. The efforts of the countries of the Contadora Group—Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela—in the search for a formula for negotiation and dialogue must be considered the only real hope for some measure of peace in the region. Those efforts should command the active support of all nations that desire an end to the tragic loss of lives and wanton destruction in Central America.

220. Despite the temporary lull in the fighting, the Middle East remains an area of tension threatening international peace and security. Year after year we have taken note in this body of the situation in the Middle East and the threat that it poses to the larger international community, but the central questions remain unresolved. The adverse claims of the antagonists are not irreconcilable; but decades of fear and suspicion have precluded the realization that the nations of that region have a community of interests which, if recognized, should lead them to abandon confrontation and embrace reconciliation and progress.

221. The Commonwealth of Dominica, having gained its freedom less than six years ago, values its independence and unequivocally supports the principle of self-determination for all peoples. Therefore, we cannot but support the claim of the Palestinian people to a homeland and its right to decide its own future under the leadership of men and women freely chosen by it. At the same time, there is a corresponding right of the State of Israel to exist in peace within secure borders. The assertions of those rights are not mutually exclusive. It only requires courage and statesmanship from the leaders of the region and balanced commitment and support from the rest of the world. That is the task which faces the peoples of the Middle East and the rest of the international community, and it does not appear to be beyond our collective effort and resolve.

222. As we assemble today, Lebanon, once a prosperous country of the Middle East, remains divided, its once flourishing institutions in shambles, and its territory occupied by foreign forces. No nation deserves the fate of Lebanon. The Commonwealth of Dominica condemns the continuing violation of the territorial integrity and independence of Lebanon and joins with other Members of this body in calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanese soil in as expeditious a manner as possible.

223. The war between Iran and Iraq has dragged on for four years, and there does not appear to be any end in sight. Thousands of lives, including those of

innocent civilians, have been lost, but the attention span of the world community appears to be brief and sporadic. That tragic conflict does not seem to have been a great preoccupation of the world community until recently, when the attacks on oil tankers posed a threat to the economic well-being of certain industrialized countries. It is indeed a sad commentary on the state of world opinion that it appears to accord to property damage higher consideration in the scheme of things than it does to the loss of human life.

224. By any yardstick, the Gulf war between Iran and Iraq deserves greater diplomatic effort than it has received in the past, and we believe that the United Nations should seriously undertake an effort to energize all interested parties in an attempt to find a solution to that war.

225. With respect to the situation in Korea—a country that has been divided for nearly as long as the Organization has been in existence—there is an urgent need for a peaceful solution. In our view, this can be done only through direct negotiation among the different factions. Dialogue can dispel the existing antagonisms and distrust and lead ultimately to reconciliation. To this end, this thirty-ninth session should consider favourably the admission of both Koreas to the United Nations fold as full Members, thereby fostering their peaceful existence.

226. Even as this session got under way, the stark realities of the pernicious system of *apartheid* were forced upon the consciousness of the world by the violence of the forces of the South African Government against the black majority peacefully attempting to assert rights recognized by everyone. On the day before the beginning of the general debate, 500 black South Africans were arrested and detained by the police of the minority Government of South Africa for no other reason than that they had attended the funeral of a 22-year-old man.

227. The abominable system of *apartheid* has received the justifiable condemnation of the civilized world but the internationally ostracized régime of South Africa, in defiance of world opinion, has embarked on a policy of further entrenching that odious system by a shameful constitutional arrangement that isolates the black majority of South Africa and fixes it permanently, as it were, beyond the pale of popular representation.

228. The defiance of world opinion by the *apartheid* régime of South Africa is made possible by the glaring inconsistency of some nations which, while condemning the international canker that is *apartheid*, eagerly conduct business as usual with the South African régime. The Commonwealth of Dominica believes, therefore, that in condemning *apartheid* we must also deplore the actions of those nations that serve as an underpinning for the system, and we must also reject the reasons advanced for their actions. Otherwise, many might justifiably accuse us of sophistry and of crystallizing formalisms.

229. The *apartheid* régime of South Africa continues its illegal occupation of Namibia despite the clear responsibility of the United Nations for that Territory and notwithstanding the many resolutions of this body calling upon South Africa to bring its illegal occupation to an end. The people of Namibia have a right to self-determination, freedom and national independence, in accordance with resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2145 (XXI), as well as subse-

quent resolutions of this body in connection with Namibia. Further, we support the just struggle of the Namibian people under the leadership of SWAPO, and we do not believe that South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and its repression of and violence against the Namibian people can be legitimately linked to other events in southern Africa.

230. The founding fathers, in drafting the principles by which the United Nations should be guided, called upon all nations "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person" and "in the equal rights of men and women". That summons was further strengthened by Article 55 of the Charter mandating the United Nations to "promote . . . universal respect for . . . human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion". Concern for human rights by the United Nations also led to the adoption in 1948 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

231. The Charter and the Declaration represent the clearest expression by the international community of the belief that mankind's progress in every field should be consonant with the preservation of individual freedoms and human dignity.

232. The promotion and protection of human rights is a duty imposed on all Members of the United Nations. The evidence of widespread violations of human rights on every continent of the globe should therefore provoke moral outrage in all of us on a scale much larger than is at present evident.

233. The question of human rights violations is ritualistically included in the agenda of the General Assembly, but the selective basis on which condemnation is meted out by this body belies the pretended concern by the United Nations for the victims of human rights violations. That the violation of human rights should be condemned wherever and whenever it occurs is a position unshakably held by the Commonwealth of Dominica, and we believe that condemnation limited to a few States merely heightens scepticism regarding the Organization and tarnishes its reputation.

234. The search for peace and the general welfare of mankind is not a new concept. Yet mankind still seeks to resolve its differences by conflict of one sort or another. Man himself, in panic and hysteria, has in recent times endeavoured with his intellectual resources and through instruments and mechanisms of his own design to circumvent the golden rule.

235. I wish to suggest that the Organization may yet fulfil its mandate before it is too late if only we can reach out with a bridge of justice, love, truth and understanding across the widening gulf of jingoistic mistrust which now plagues our family of nations.

236. Perhaps the Organization has grown too accustomed to viewing the world as it is. We believe that, in the spirit of the men at San Francisco 39 years ago, we should, in the words of George Bernard Shaw, "Dream things that never were and ask why not?".

237. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Guatemala, who wishes to speak in exercise of his right of reply.

238. Mr. FAJARDO-MALDONADO (Guatemala) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation would like to refer to the statement made yesterday by the head of the delegation of Belize, Senator Carl Rogers, when he referred to the position regarding the controversy over that territory. In view of the importance of that matter, my delegation wishes to offer the following clarification to the representatives of the international community gathered here

239. First, without going into too much detail, the Government of Guatemala has explained and maintains its reservations and its rights with regard to Belize. It therefore does not recognize the unilateral granting of independence to that territory by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. That is why negotiations are taking place effectively and directly with the sole colonial Power, the United Kingdom, with which, historically, we have had this dispute. We reject any other interpretation of these facts as false. Our position is based on the true facts, and within this context we are trying to find a just and honourable solution that will be in keeping with and will safeguard the rights and legitimate interests of the parties concerned.

240. The Government of Guatemala reaffirms its desire to continue to participate in the informal exploratory meetings that are taking place, not only in order to arrive at a just and honourable solution but also to ensure that the ties of co-operation with the people of Belize are reaffirmed and strengthened. It is in this spirit that we make this statement.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.

NOTES

¹See A/37/422, annex.

²See *World Economic Survey 1984: Current Trends and Policies in the World Economy* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.II.C.1), chap. I, p. 20.

³See A/38/312, annex, resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX); see also General Assembly resolution 38/40.

⁴Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro.

⁵See A/38/106, annex.

⁶Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its second extraordinary session, held at Lagos on 28 and 29 April 1980. For the text, see A/S-11/14, annex I.

⁷See A/38/599, annex II.

⁸Agreement on Non-Aggression and Good Neighbourliness between the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique and the Government of the Republic of South Africa, done and signed at the common border on the banks of the Nkomati River on 16 March 1984.

⁹A/S-11/14, annex II.

¹⁰United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.8, part one, sect. A.

¹¹See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1984, Supplement No. 7 (E/1984/17)*.

¹²Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634, No. 9068.